

Frequently Asked Questions

New Supported Temporary Accommodation Service for Women in Swansea

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is opening a new supported temporary accommodation service for women at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

We understand that changes in your neighbourhood may raise questions. Below are some answers to common queries you might have about the new service.

Thank you for welcoming this important initiative into your community. Together, we can provide safety, dignity, and hope to those who need it most.

Q. What is the new service?

This is a safe, supported accommodation facility for women experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It offers more than just a place to stay, residents will receive individual case management and wraparound support to help them move towards stable, long-term housing.

Q. Is this a crisis shelter?

No, this is not a crisis shelter or walk-in service. It is a referral-based supported accommodation service where each resident is assessed for suitability and supported with structured case management.

Q. Who will be staying at the premises?

The service will support:

- Women aged 55 and over
- First Nations women aged 50 and over
- Women aged 18 and over who receive the Disability Support Pension
- Any children or dependents of these women

These are some of the most vulnerable members of our community, often facing housing insecurity through no fault of their own.

Q. How many people will the facility accommodate?

The redeveloped facility includes 32 secure rooms, each designed to support the privacy, dignity, and safety of residents.

Q. What kinds of support do the residents receive?

The goal is to help each woman transition into stable housing and regain independence. Each resident receives individual case management and access to services like:

- Healthcare and counselling
- Housing navigation
- Life skills and education programs

Q. Will the facility be staffed?

Yes. The service will be staffed seven days a week by two support workers and a dedicated case manager. In addition, after-hours on-call support will be available to residents to ensure 24/7 assistance.

Q. Will there always be supervision on-site?

Yes. The facility is staffed every day by trained support workers and a case manager, with after-hours on-call staff available 24/7. This ensures appropriate supervision and swift responses to any issues, though these are rare in such services.

Q. Will this affect safety in the neighbourhood?

No. The facility is secure and professionally managed, and the residents are women in need of stability and support, not individuals who pose a risk to others.

Residents are selected based on eligibility and need, many have simply fallen on hard times and are seeking a safe place to rebuild. The service is designed to be a calm, respectful, and safe environment for both residents and the broader community.

Q. The facility is next to a primary school - is it safe for children?

Yes. The safety of both residents and the surrounding community is our priority.

The service is:

- Secure and professionally staffed every day
- Operated by a reputable organisation with decades of experience in managing supported accommodation
- Housing vulnerable women, not individuals who pose a risk to the community

Q. Will there be any impact on school operations or children's daily routines?

No. The facility will operate quietly and respectfully, with no disruption to school operations, pick-up/drop-off routines, or playground activities.

Q. Will schoolchildren come into contact with residents?

The facility has its own secure entrance and exit and is self-contained. However, just like any other neighbour, some casual and friendly interaction may naturally occur, similar to any residential community.

We understand that the proximity to the school may prompt questions, and we are keen to maintain an open and transparent relationship. We'd also be delighted to explore ways your school community might connect with or support the women accessing the service, whether through donation drives, community projects, or educational activities that build compassion and awareness.

Q. How will the service handle any incidents or concerns?

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has clear procedures and professional protocols in place to manage incidents. In the rare event that concerns arise, the service will respond promptly and work cooperatively with local stakeholders, including the school if needed.

Q. Why was this location chosen?

We are beyond grateful to have been gifted this former aged care facility by the Sisters of St Joseph of Lochinvar. It is rare to receive a building that is already well-suited to residential accommodation and located within an established community close to services and public transport.

We are currently in the midst of a housing crisis, and the need for safe, supported accommodation has never been greater, especially for older women.

This gift is an opportunity to change lives. By opening this facility, we can help vulnerable women, provide stability in a time of crisis, and support their journey toward long-term housing.

Q. How is the service funded?

The service is funded through a combination of government and community support.

Funding has been secured through the NSW Homelessness Innovation Fund 2024–2025. This ensures the service is sustainable and delivered using a best-practice, person-centred model.

In addition, the service is supported by funding from the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, allowing us to deliver a high-quality, person-centred model of care.

Q. How is this different from other homelessness services?

Supported temporary accommodation provides short-term housing with on-site support services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or facing housing instability. This model of care will help move away from reliance on hotels and motels for temporary accommodation and instead offer more stable, secure, and supportive accommodation.

Q. Does the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW have other services in the area?

Yes. This new service enhances the Society NSW's already significant footprint in the region. We currently operate the Matthew Talbot Hostel in Newcastle, which provides crisis accommodation and case management for men; an assertive outreach team supporting rough sleepers; Vinnies Vans; and a number of local Member-led Conferences.

Q. Can neighbours or community members get involved with the service?

Yes, we would love to collaborate with the school and families to support women in our community. Whether you'd like to learn more, volunteer, make a donation or explore partnership opportunities, please get in touch.

Q. Who can I contact if I have more questions?

If you have any further questions, would like more information, or are interested in supporting or connecting with the service, we warmly welcome you to get in touch via email, SwanseaSTA@vinnies.org.au