



LIVING WITHOUT THE BASICS

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ENERGY, WATER & HOUSING CONFERENCE / 2021

Wednesday 19 May
Adelaide Convention Centre

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Dear Delegate

Welcome to the 2021 SACOSS Conference *Living Without the Basics*. The theme of this year's conference - our tenth in the series - examines the critical intersection of housing policy with energy and water policy. Where people live and whether they have tenure on their homes shapes their access to decent housing and consequently, the affordability and accessibility of energy and water. When combined, these issues contribute enormously to disadvantages in health, well-being and costs of living.

In Australia, we are now seeing record numbers of people in rentals and public housing. Living in these types of housing often comes with increased financial burdens related to energy and water consumption, and limited access to solutions that cut down costs. In some cases, people may not be able to access these essential services **at all** due to where they live.

Of course, these are not just problems for individuals, but also key issues for our sector. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we witnessed incredible supports being provided to protect people from homelessness and loss of income. As those supports have been wound back, our sector is facing unprecedented calls for financial and housing assistance. To ease the burden on our sector, we need action to be taken that addresses the root causes of these problems.

A vital step forward is working collaboratively to create targeted, informed and collaborative policy solutions. Our conferences excel at bringing people together from various sectors, such as the community services sector, government, higher education, the energy and water industry. Together, we hope to break down silos and provide opportunities to benchmark against other areas, gain and share ideas, and learn from best practice.

Particularly, we are excited to launch a SACOSS-commissioned report on improving drinking water services for regional and remote communities in SA, and preliminary findings from SACOSS energy efficiency research. Our conference will examine a range of housing-related areas which are extra topical now, including a panel session on the state of rental housing in South Australia. As always, we strive to provide cutting-edge research, and foreground the experiences of people with lived experience, those who are affected by the policies, and people who work with and advocate for them.

This is an opportunity to learn, share and network, connecting with colleagues, and hearing from expert speakers, with opportunities to engage with and influence policy in these fundamental areas. And after a remarkable year of operating at a distance, we feel very fortunate to be able to provide these opportunities in person.

Yours sincerely

Ross Womersley
CEO, SACOSS



AM

AM

PM

9:00	Conference Opening - David Panter (Chair) & Ross Womersley (CEO)
9.15	Welcome to Country - Rodney O'Brien
9.20	Opening Ministerial Address by the Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP
9.30	<p>Opening Keynote: Report Launch - Falling through the gaps: A practical approach to improving drinking water services for regional and remote communities in South Australia</p> <p>Keynote speaker: Rachel Barratt, Associate Director, Aither</p> <p>Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Rathman AM PSM • Dan Jordan, Department of Environment and Water

PARALLEL SESSIONS

10.10	<p>Session 1: Water Security in Regional and Remote Communities</p> <p>Session sponsored by SA Water</p>	<p>Session 2: The State of Rental Housing in South Australia</p> <p>Session sponsored by Anglicare SA</p>
	<p>Discussing the findings of the <i>Falling through the Gaps</i> research, and identifying gaps, opportunities and next steps.</p>	<p>Analysis of the Report on Government Services (ROGS) Housing data</p>
	<p>Facilitated by Rebecca Law - SACOSS</p>	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Greg Ogle, SACOSS • Dr. Alice Clark, Shelter SA • Prof. Chris Leishman, University of Adelaide • Belinda Hallsworth, SA Housing Authority <p>Facilitated by Ross Womersley, SACOSS</p>

10:55	MORNING TEA
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PARALLEL SESSIONS

11.15	<p>Session 3: Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards for Housing</p> <p>Discussion of SACOSS' energy efficiency research, why energy efficiency incentives often have low uptake for renters and practical steps needed to make rental homes liveable for people.</p>	<p>Session 4: Tenants as Water Customers</p> <p>Session sponsored by ESCOSA</p> <p>Discussing the experiences of tenants as customers of SA Water, access to hardship supports and dispute resolutions processes, and opportunities for reform.</p>
	<p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joel Dignam, Better Renting • Dr. Lyrian Daniel, University of Adelaide • Rob Murray-Leach, Energy Efficiency Council <p>Facilitator: Maureen Boyle, SACOSS</p>	<p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Sonia Masciantonio and David Coombe, SA Water • Mark Henley, Uniting Communities • Barbara Johns, SACAT <p>Facilitator: Rebecca Law, SACOSS</p>

12:00	Closing Keynote & Wrap Up - Professor Emma Baker, University of Adelaide
12.45	Lunch & networking
2:00	Conference close

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



RACHEL BARRATT

Rachel Barratt leads Aither's Strategy and Performance Service across Australia.

Rachel has worked extensively in water planning and policy with a career spanning 20 years. During her career Rachel has worked at the forefront of strategy, policy and program development, including providing strategic and policy advice to the Chief Executive of the SA Department for Water and the SA Minister for the River Murray, being a member of the South Australian Natural Resource Management Board and playing a key role in the development of Water for Good, South Australia's Plan to secure water until 2050.

Prior to joining Aither, Rachel was Chief Executive Officer of the Water Industry Alliance. Prior to this she was Director of Consilius Pty Ltd, a consulting firm which provided high level policy, strategy, program and engagement solutions to the water and natural resource sector. Rachel has also held several senior positions within government including being the Director, Strategy for the South Australian Department for Water, Principal Water Policy Officer in the SA Department for Environment and Water.

Rachel holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Studies and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Geography and Politics. She continues to supplement her tertiary qualifications with accredited training courses in Stakeholder Engagement and Facilitation, Risk Communications, Media Training and Freelance Journalism.



PROF. EMMA BAKER

Emma Baker is Professor of Housing Research at the University of Adelaide, where she leads the Housing and Healthy Cities Research Group and is Director of the Stretton Institute's 'Building a City for the Future' research program.

Emma's research examines the cumulative effects of housing, environmental, locational and socioeconomic vulnerabilities on wellbeing, with particular interests in utilising large longitudinal, administrative datasets to create knowledge that responds to real policy problems.

Professor Baker currently leads the development, collection and public provision of the Australian Rental Housing Conditions Data infrastructure, the largest public access dataset describing Australian rental housing quality and conditions. She has a track record of successful collaboration with industry, government and non-government organisations. Recent academic and policy publications include commissioned policy background papers for the planning and housing strategies of South Australia, a big data analysis of long run housing trajectories in Australia, an analysis of the effects of cold housing on individual health, and papers analysing the influence of multiple housing problems on health and wellbeing.

SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS



HON DAN VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN MP

Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP is South Australian Minister for Energy and Mining.

Minister van Holst Pellekaan was elected to Parliament as the Member for Stuart in 2010. He was promoted to the Shadow Cabinet in 2011 and has held the Energy and Mining portfolios since June 2014.

After his re-election at the 2018 State Election, he was sworn in as Minister for Energy and Mining in the Marshall Liberal Government.

Minister van Holst Pellekaan started his working life as a labourer before playing four seasons in the National Basketball League and at the same time gaining a Bachelor of Economics. He then spent ten years with BP Australia before entering the small business sector as a shareholder and operator of Outback roadhouses for seven years. This was followed by three years developing cycle tourism in the Southern Flinders Ranges immediately before entering Parliament.

Minister van Holst Pellekaan's electorate extends from Kapunda at its southern end, all the way up to the NT border. It heads east to the NSW border. It includes the Mid North agricultural region, all of the Flinders Ranges and the vast north-east pastoral region surrounded by the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales. The regional city of Port Augusta is its main population centre.



MAUREEN BOYLE

Maureen is Senior Policy Officer with the South Australian Council of Social Services, with a focus on energy policy. Maureen's academic background is in sustainable development, energy studies and international relations. Her doctoral research was focused on prioritising equity in Cambodia's rapid energy development pathway. Maureen has also worked extensively in the energy sector including with the Australian Energy Renewable Agency and the United Nations Development Programme in Vietnam. Within SACOSS, her role is focused on ensuring that energy services, including household energy efficiency, are accessible and affordable and that the current energy transition does not further entrench disadvantage for people.



DR. ALICE CLARK

Alice commenced at Shelter SA in 2011 with a wide range of skills, well-suited to policy and advocacy work. With a background predominantly in the community services sector, Alice is also a nationally and internationally published author who has worked for State Government and as a research only academic at the University of South Australia. Alice's research background provides strength to the evidence-based policy analysis Shelter SA undertakes in both qualitative and quantitative methods, and community engagement. Alice is passionate about social justice and how social policies impact people's lives, particularly for children and those living on low incomes.



DAVID COOMBE

Over a 25-year career serving customers, David has worked across public, private and not-for-profit sectors and has held senior management positions across a wide range of disciplines including contact centres, field-based technical services, media, communications, community relations and business relations. As Senior Manager Customer Experience at SA Water, David and the team have responsibility for bringing the voice of the customer into the business, promoting and supporting a culture of customers at the heart, deriving insights and helping teams to translate these into action to improve experiences for SA Water's customers.



DR. LYRIAN DANIEL

Lyrian Daniel is a Research Fellow (Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning) and Lecturer (Geography, Environment and Population) in the School of Social Sciences, the University of Adelaide. Lyrian's research focusses on the relative risk of housing disadvantage, households' lived experience of poor housing conditions, and the implications for population health and wellbeing. Lyrian has an established research program across housing precarity (e.g. affordability and instability) and indoor cold (including upstream problems of energy hardship).



JOEL DIGNAM

Joel Dignam is the founder of Better Renting. He is a leading community organiser with broad experience in non-profits, unions, and electoral politics in Australia and the UK. Previously he worked as Network Organiser for Climate Action Network Australia, and he has also worked with United Voice and the Australian Youth Climate Coalition. Joel has studied "Leadership, Organizing and Action" with Professor Marshall Ganz through Harvard's Kennedy School of Executive Education, and he holds an Advanced Diploma of Management from the Groupwork Institute of Australia. He is a 2019 Churchill Fellow and the 2020 Gill Owen Scholar.



BELINDA HALLSWORTH

Executive Director of Strategy and Governance at the SA Housing Authority, Belinda is a passionate executive with 20 years' experience improving customer and community outcomes. She has delivered large-scale reforms across the housing system, including legislative change, strategy development and project delivery.



MARK HENLEY

Mark Henley has been actively involved with community services in SA for 45 years. He works for Uniting Communities as their Manager of Advocacy and Communications and is a Life Member of both SACOSS and the Youth Affairs Council of SA. He has been concerned about the cost of essential services for lower income people ever since the SA Government began discussing the privatisation of electricity supply in SA and is a member of the Board of the Energy and Water Ombudsman in SA. Mark is President of the Economics Society, SA Branch, and enjoys growing rare and unusual fruiting plants.



BARBARA JOHNS

Barbara currently holds the position of Deputy President, South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT). She is also an Auxiliary Magistrate. Barbara has been a Tribunal member on State and Federal tribunals since 2008. Before focussing on tribunal work, Barbara held a number of different roles as a lawyer including in private practice and the public sector. Barbara has also worked in the area of governance and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Barbara is currently the Convener of the South Australian Chapter of the Council of Australasian Tribunals.



DAN JORDAN

Dan Jordan is Director, Water Security, Policy and Planning for the SA Department for Environment and Water.



REBECCA LAW

Rebecca is Senior Policy Officer at the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) with key responsibility over the water portfolio. She has a background in psychology and is experienced working across the education and community sector. At SACOSS, Rebecca engages in policy development, research and consumer advocacy to ensure that all South Australians, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to affordable and reliable essential services such as energy and water. Rebecca has led SACOSS work on waged poverty and concessions, and co-developed the Utilities Stress Indicators concept.



PROF. CHRIS LEISHMAN

Professor Chris Leishman, University of South Australia (UniSA Business) is Professor of Property and Housing Economics. Chris has taught on, designed, launched and managed Bachelors and Masters degree programs in Housing, Property, Property Development, Real Estate, Planning and Regeneration since the late 1990s and has extensive experience working to RICS, RTPI and CIH accreditation rules in the UK. His research interests cover three main areas: (i) Modelling, forecasting and understanding housing markets; (ii) Analysis of development processes, developer decision-making and the dynamics of land markets; (iii) Estimating economic impacts arising from public policy decisions, including housing policy, affordable housing requirements and other interventions. Chris is currently an editor of the learned journal *Urban Studies* and a past editor of *Housing Studies*. He is a member of AURIN's scientific advisory committee, and a member of the Centre for Population's (Commonwealth Treasury) expert advisory group. He is a non-executive director of Housing Choices Australia, one of Australia's leading Community Housing Providers which operates nationally.



DR SONIA MASCANTONIO

As Customer Experience Design and Delivery Lead at SA Water, Sonia champions for the needs of customers to be at the heart of new or improved products or services, by bringing people across the organisation into the work of customer experience design and delivery.

Sonia has more than 15 years' experience in contextual research from within academia, state government and private industry. She uses her expertise and qualifications as a socio-cultural anthropologist to bring the voice of human experience into her work at SA Water. Sonia guides SA Water's staff from various divisions, including contractors and partner organisations, in connecting with the experiences of customers, and injects customer empathy into decisions about products and services and their delivery.



ROB MURRAY-LEACH

Rob Murray-Leach is the Head of Policy at the Energy Efficiency Council, Australia's peak body for energy efficiency, energy management and demand response. Since its formation in 2009, the Council has been putting energy efficiency at the centre of Australia's energy policy.



DR. GREG OGLE

Greg Ogle is Senior Policy and Research Analyst for the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) and leads policy and advocacy work around digital inclusion, cost of living and economic issues. He has published reports on telecommunications affordability for SACOSS and the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN). He also sits on the Australian Communications and Media Authority's Consumer Consultative Forum, and is the lead author of SACOSS' *Connectivity Costs* report on waged poverty and telecommunications affordability. He has a PhD in political economy, a background as an environmental campaigner, and has been with SACOSS for ten years.



DAVID PANTER

Dr David Panter is passionate about championing the rights of older people to self-determine how and where they live including the right to a good and respectful death at home.

David has worked in health and social care services for almost 40 years and has operated at Chief Executive level for 26 years. David's previous experience included roles in both the UK and South Australia.

David is currently the Chair of the SA Council of Social Service, a Director of SACOSS, a Director of Leading Age Services Australia and a member of the Every Age Counts coalition steering group.



DAVID RATHMAN AM PSM

Uncle David Rathman AM, PSM, FIML, was born and raised in the city of Port Augusta, South Australia. From 1976 through to 2014 he held a number of public service positions across South Australia, including Aboriginal Community Worker, Senior Aboriginal Community Worker (Staff Development), being a member of the Australian Government Committee advising on the future of Aboriginal education, Director: Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Chief Executive: Department of State Aboriginal Affairs, Executive Director: Aboriginal Education and Employment Services, and Executive Director of Student, Aboriginal and Family Services.

Uncle David was awarded the Public Service Medal in 1993 and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Managers and Leaders. On Australia Day in 2000 he was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), receiving his medal for services to Aboriginal Affairs, particularly for the delivery of SA Government services in the areas of education and community welfare. He was also awarded a Centenary Medal by the Australian Government.

He continues to serve the Aboriginal community in South Australia as a member of the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Board, the Chair of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, and the Ambassador for the Aboriginal Arts and Cultures Centre. He operates a small consultancy which has undertaken work for several Government agencies, non-Government groups and private sector companies.



ROSS WOMERSLEY

Ross has had an extensive involvement in community services over many years and is driven by the idea that we live in a community in which everyone is included and has access the good things in life. He is the CEO of the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) - the peak body for the non-government community and health sector leading the fight against poverty. Across time he has filled many roles including as a manager, advocate, teacher, leader, evaluator, mentor and consultant. He has served on a range of boards and committees, and has been deeply involved in both training and the evaluation of human services. Ross has a formal background and qualifications in Psychology. Ross continues to deepen and extend his understanding of many of the issues he has always been passionate about, including the social determinants of health, as he works to assist SACOSS fulfill its aspirational vision - that there is justice, opportunity and wealth for all South Australians.

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CHANGING OUR
THINKING.**

ALBERT EINSTEIN



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SACOSS acknowledges traditional owners of country throughout South Australia, and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to elders both past and present.