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Guy Barnett, Minister for Building and Construction

## Forum Promotes More Accessible Homes

Building to ensure greater accessibility for all is the focus of a forum in Launceston today that challenges the building and construction sector to think beyond the minimum standards.

The Universal Access Forum highlights the Hodgman Liberal Government's commitment to better supporting Tasmanians living with disability and to encouraging a more modern building industry.

The Government has been working closely with industry in introducing our nation-leading reforms to building legislation to make it fairer, faster, simpler and cheaper to gain approval to build in Tasmania.

We are also investing through our Affordable Housing Strategy in providing more homes for Tasmanians in need.

While building codes and legislation require public and commercial buildings to be accessible for people living with disability, challenges can remain in the built environment, particularly in homes.

That's why the Universal Access Forum is being held to encourage builders and designers to consider approaches that support the needs of all people, not only now but into the future.

This will ensure greater access to housing without the need for costly and time-consuming renovations and alterations.

State Government agencies and local government have collaborated in hosting the forum, which includes presentations from building designers and architects, the Heritage Council of Tasmania, Lifetime Homes Tasmania and council employees.

In an example of the excellence of our building industry, I was also pleased to acknowledge this afternoon Aldanmark Consulting Engineers for its award-winning work on the University of Tasmania Inveresk Residences project.

Aldanmark recently received the Australian Engineering Excellence Awards Tasmanian 2016 Building and Structures Award.

The 120-apartment student residence complex is noted for its aesthetic and innovative prefabricated, modular, lightweight timber technology.

The use of engineered timber in the project is part of a growing trend that we are also seeking to encourage as it has great potential for Tasmania's forest industries.

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