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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

Work to start soon on new 50-bed Hobart men's shelter

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is taking serious action on homelessness and more access will soon be available for safe, secure and modern purpose built accommodation with an expansion of a shelter in Central Hobart.

The Government is embarking on a record 10-year, \$1.5 billion housing package to build and acquire 10,000 homes by 2032 – the single largest housing investment in the State's history.

Tasmanian building company Fairbrother Pty Ltd has been awarded the contract to build a new 50-bed crisis and transitional accommodation facility on the site of the former Waratah Hotel.

The Tasmanian Government, through the Department of Communities, is funding the \$20 million construction of the new 50-bed facility with works expected to begin later this month.

This is a massive increase on the current Bethlehem House, which is at the end of its economic life and no longer fit for purpose, and has capacity to help 32 men each night.

The new facility will provide increased capacity with 24 crisis beds, 18 transitional units and eight units specifically designed for people with mental illness.

The design includes lounge areas, recreational space, a cafeteria-style kitchen and manual workshop training room for skills development.

The Tasmanian Government recognises that some people who are homeless may be sleeping rough to avoid giving up their pets, which are vital to their mental health and wellbeing.

The new Bethlehem House design will include two secure kennels and an exercise area for men with pets who need shelter.

The new Bethlehem House will complement the 24-bed supported accommodation facility that has

been operating on site since the beginning of 2021.

The Tasmanian Government purchased the site for \$5.3 million in September 2019 and spent \$4.5 million on renovation works. The overall cost of the project is \$31.2 million.

This new facility adds to the list of measures the Tasmanian Liberal Government is taking to address homelessness and provide more crisis accommodation across the State.

This includes current works on a 15-unit expansion of the Launceston's Women's Shelter, 23 units of crisis and transitional accommodation for young people in the North-West, an eight-unit homelessness facility for men in Devonport and a new 26-unit Youth2Independence facility in Hobart - as well as the recent completion of a new three-bedroom home for domestic violence crisis accommodation service Jireh House in the State's South.

If you are at risk of homelessness, please contact Housing Connect, 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 1800 800 588.

NOTE: Video flythrough available at <https://vimeo.com/581911680>