

# ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK SOUTH AUSTRALIA



## MEDIA RELEASE

July 16, 2024

For Immediate Release

## **Housing Trust Issues Are Bigger Than An Individual**

Katie: Our Housing Tragedy Is A Structural Issue

Since Katie Fattel's story has been shared in the media, Katie, and APN-SA (Anti-Poverty Network SA), are concerned that the structural and political issues that lead to her situation are being forgotten. Instead there has been a focus on scape-goating an individual for a systemic problem.

Katie and her family should never have been in a situation where someone believed that the best chance for finding a home was magic. The government has failed to realise that with how bad the public housing shortfall is, magic is just as viable an option. Katie has said:

*"I do think the fundamental message has been lost and instead a public servant – who is fundamentally as powerless as the clients she works with – is being scapegoated. She isn't the problem. The e-mails are a symptom of the wider systemic problem, not the problem itself."*

The housing vacancy rate in South Australia is currently the lowest in the country.[1] This, and skyrocketing rents, have helped create enormous demand for public housing, with over 15,000 people on the waiting list. It is structural and political problems that caused this issue. Jasmin Witham (APN-SA Media Spokesperson):

*"This story reflects the inadequacy of the entire public housing system. It's not about individual workers, most of whom we acknowledge are doing their best with incredibly limited resources. It IS about an individual family though. A family who are in great need, and who cannot access suitable housing through other means – nor*

*can they access it through our public housing system, because it's inadequate. And several hundred extra public homes won't change that – it barely touches the edges.”*

With this in mind APN-SA is calling for some quick measures, including an immediate rent-freeze, to help renters catch their breath, along with a vacancy tax to get some of thousands of empty, perfectly-habitable houses in the state, onto the rental market.

**Further Info:** Call David Winderlich on 0401 380 782, Duncan Bainbridge on 0434 045 805, or Brendan Folwell on 0428 741 601 or e-mail [info@apnsa.org](mailto:info@apnsa.org).

[1]Shelter SA 2024,*There's Something About Renting*, Housing Matters, viewed 14 July 2024, <<https://mailchi.mp/d4bd8d2938da/theres-something-about-renting>>

Yankovich G. 2024, House Fools, The Advertiser, 12 July, P.1,6-7.

Digital Team, *Mother facing homelessness with disabled son told to use 'spells' to 'manifest' home*, 7 News, , viewed 14 July 2024, <<https://7news.com.au/video/news/adelaide/mother-facing-homelessness-with-disabled-son-told-to-use-spells-to-manifest-home-bc-6357711307112>>

Alderson B., *Adelaide mother and disabled son awaiting public housing told to 'manifest a home' or consider living in tent*, ABC News 2024 , viewed 14 July 2024, <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-07-12/mother-and-disabled-son-facing-homelessness/104089060>>

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