



MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF WALKERVILLE

24 June 2025

Hon Nick Champion MP

Minister for Housing Infrastructure
Minister for Housing and Urban Development
GPO Box 11032
Adelaide SA 5001

By email: MinisterChampion@sa.gov.au

CC:

Lucy Hood MP – Member for Adelaide
Hon Nat Cook MP – Minister for Human Services
Hon Stephen Mullighan MP – Minister for Police

Dear Minister Champion,

Nick

**Re: Ongoing community concerns surrounding housing trust complexes in the
Town of Walkerville**

I write on behalf of the Town of Walkerville to express our deep concern following the fatal incident at the SA Housing Trust Bentzen Court property on Walkerville Terrace, Gilberton, on Monday, 16 June 2025. This tragic event has reignited strong community fears about ongoing antisocial and criminal behaviour occurring within and around housing trust complexes in our Council area.

Council is consistently approached by residents who are distressed about safety, repeated disturbances and the apparent lack of action taken to address long-standing concerns around these State Government-managed properties. The incident on Monday evening has intensified these concerns and placed significant pressure on our Council Members and staff to provide reassurance and clarity.

While we understand investigations are ongoing and appreciate the efforts of South Australian Police in responding swiftly, we urge the State Government to treat this matter with urgency.

I thank you for reaching out to Council and look forward to discussing this matter in more detail with you next week.

We request that your office undertake the following:

- 1. Undertake urgent action to address ongoing issues at SA Housing Trust properties in the Town of Walkerville – including cleaning up neglected sites, such as Bentzen Court, strengthening tenant screening and management, greater consideration to tenant mix, and promptly addressing any antisocial and criminal behaviour;**
- 2. Enhance collaboration with Council by engaging with us on local safety strategies and identifying what additional supports can be provided to communities living near housing trust sites;**

The Corporation of the Town of Walkerville

PO Box 55 Walkerville SA 5081 Telephone (08) 8342 7100 Email walkerville@walkerville.sa.gov.au

ABN 49 190 949 882

3. **Participate in a round table discussion with other agencies, stakeholders and Council, to determine strategies to address community concerns; and**
4. **The State Government develop and publicly release a clear, time-bound action plan to address anti-social behaviour/resident management at Bentzen Court to the Town of Walkerville Council. This should include specific interventions, timelines and accountability measures, drawing on learnings from the Mellor Court experience, to ensure outcomes are delivered, not just discussed.**

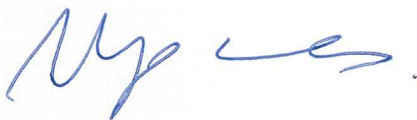
The Town of Walkerville has long advocated for proactive solutions in this space. In 2020, Council passed a motion to investigate options for greater oversight of SA Housing Trust sites and to invite the SA Housing Authority and SAPOL to a Council meeting (CNC379/19-20). Council has also previously written to your office regarding serious crime at Mellor Court and requested information on tenant screening and security measures, as well as noting several issues at Elliot Lodge, particularly in relation to litter build-up and dumping.

More recently, we have taken a number of practical steps within our own remit to help address resident concerns, including improvements to waste management and maintenance coordination. To address our community's concerns on safety, Council is preparing to roll out new community safety initiatives as part of our 2025/26 budget, including security patrols and a residential safety grant program.

We have had positive engagement with Lucy Hood MP regarding matters within Council's remit, but our view is that further steps are required regarding matters within the State Government's remit. There is a limit to what Council can do independently and our community rightly expects that the State Government take direct action where it has the authority and responsibility to do so.

We ask that you give this matter your urgent attention and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your representatives to discuss how we can work together more effectively to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Town of Walkerville residents, whether living in Housing Trust buildings or not.

Yours sincerely,



Melissa Jones

Mayor of Walkerville

The Corporation of the Town of Walkerville

PO Box 55 Walkerville SA 5081 Telephone (08) 8342 7100 Email walkerville@walkerville.sa.gov.au

ABN 49 190 949 882