

Think Tank 3: Repurposing property

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Meanwhile Use Housing

A pragmatic short-term response to increasing affordable housing supply and sector capacity, within existing resources.

WOMEN'S
COMMUNITY
SHELTERS

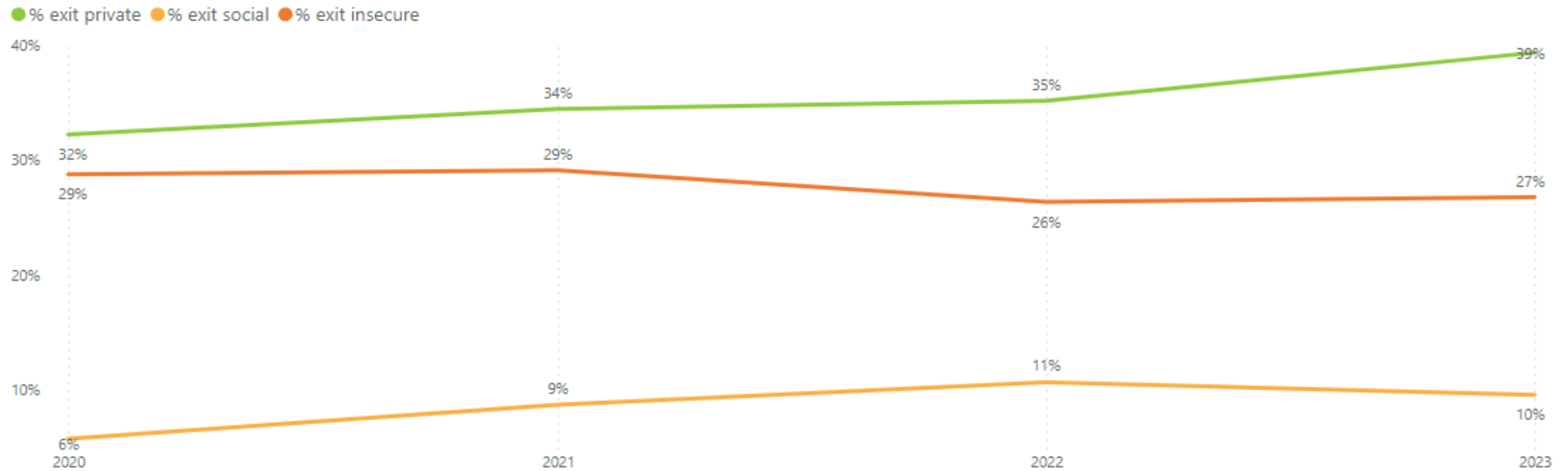
Transitional housing can be an essential part of a woman's journey, providing a stepping stone to finding permanent affordable housing ...

Illustrative client journey



... unfortunately, despite increasing client exits into private housing, a large proportion of clients still exit WCS services into insecure accommodation, highlighting a gap in affordable housing pathways.

% of client exits from WCS services, by housing type



One of the responses to increasing supply of affordable housing is to activate meanwhile use projects to deliver transitional housing

First WCS meanwhile use property

- 3-bedroom residential property
- Developer owned
- Part of larger site to be developed
- Vacant awaiting development approval
- Approx. 3-year development timeline



The first WCS meanwhile use housing model was a tripartite partnership between the property owner (PAYCE), a community housing provider (Bridge Housing) and WCS as the specialist domestic violence service

Initial tripartite meanwhile use model



This model has been replicated at multiple locations with various owners, community housing providers and WCS shelters

Current meanwhile use model



Beecroft house was established in 2019 from a disused aged care facility and can accommodate 18 women over 55

Beecroft house



Mosman house was established in 2020 from a former private hospital and can accommodate 18 women over 55

Mosman house



Abbie house was established in 2021 from student accommodation and could accommodate 14 women of all ages

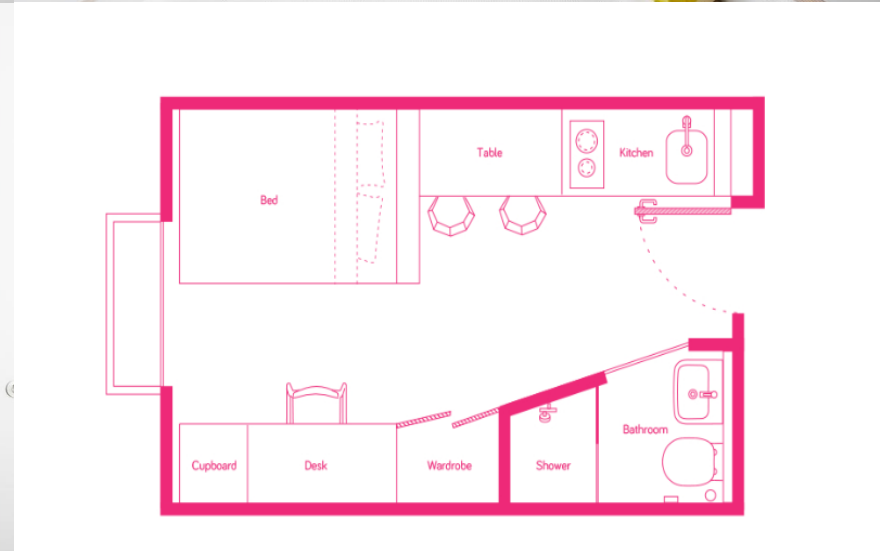
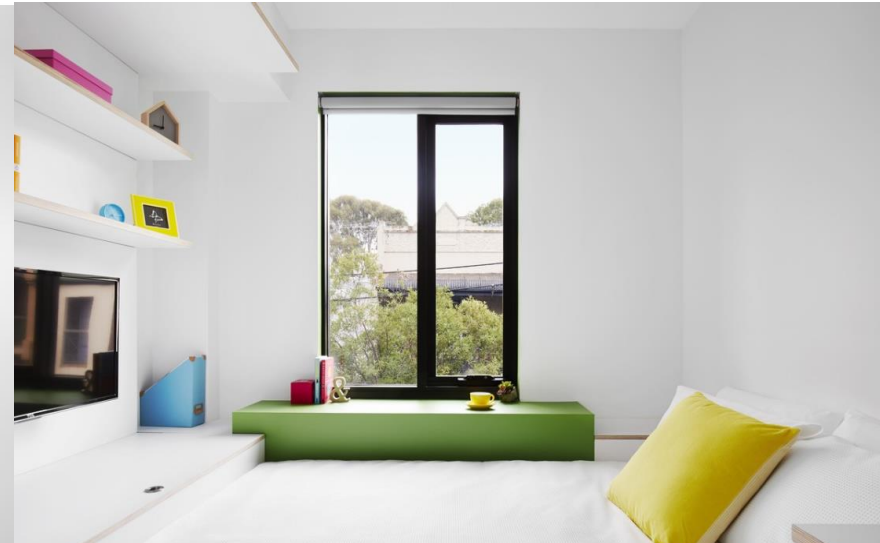
Abbie house

WOMEN'S
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CITY WEST
HOUSING

scape



Allawah house was established in 2022 from a disused aged care facility and can accommodate 14 women over 55

Allawah house

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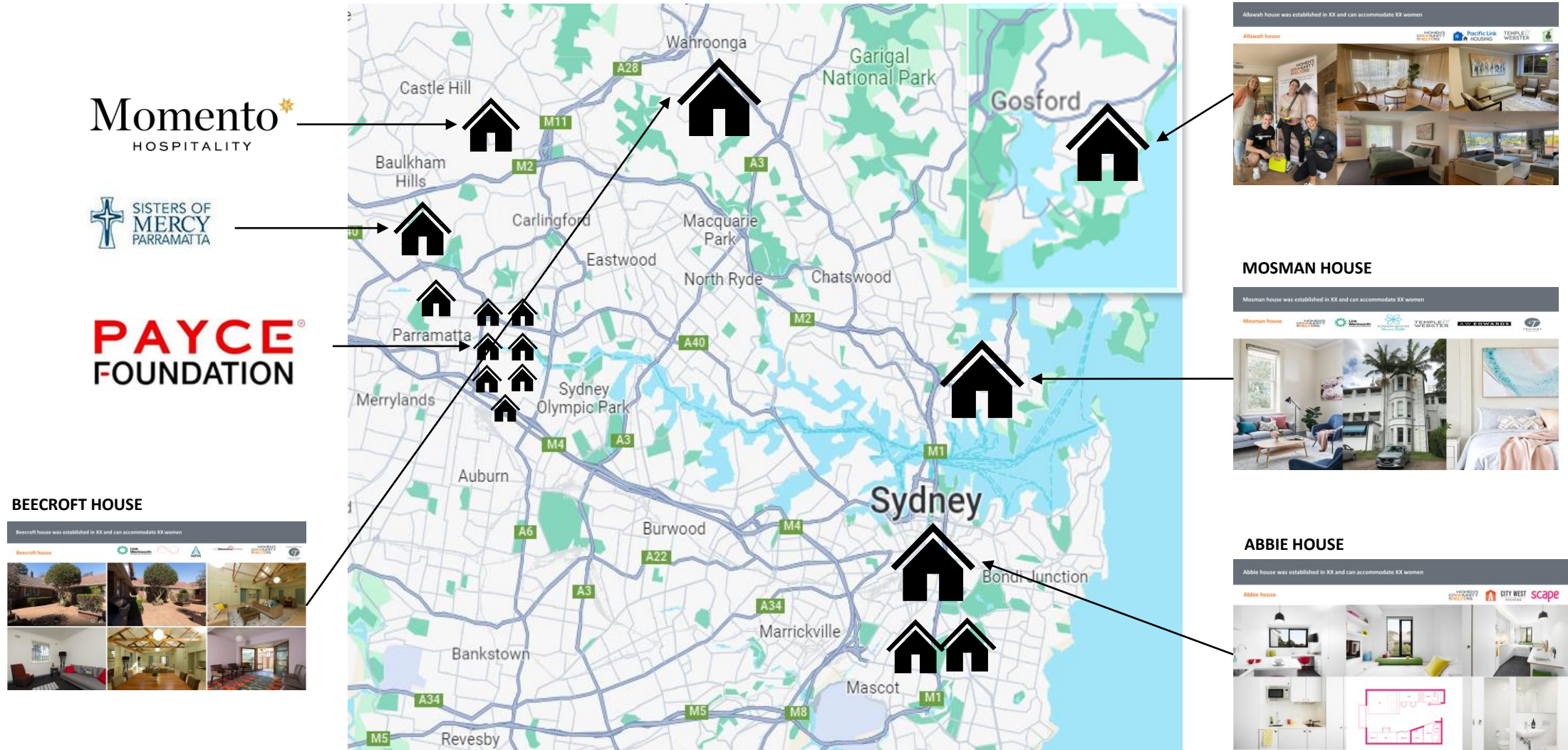
Pacific Link
HOUSING

TEMPLE &
WEBSTER



WCS now has a network of 16* meanwhile use properties, accommodating up to 75 women and children across greater Sydney

Current WCS meanwhile use network

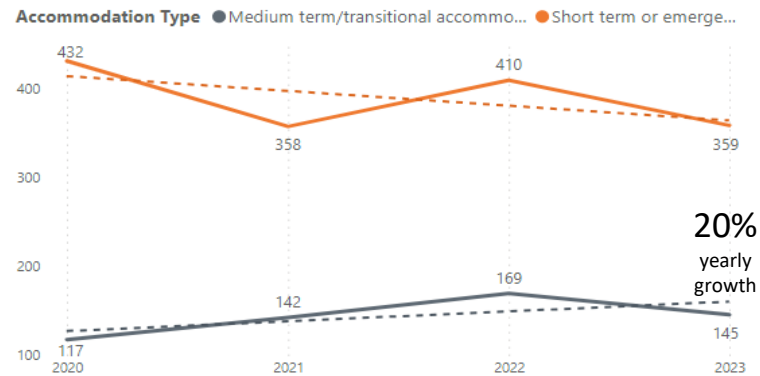


*Abbie house was closed in early 2023 and returned to the owner for original use

WCS has added significant capacity to the sector (over 94,000 transitional bed nights since 2020) and the number of women accommodated in WCS transitional housing continues to grow by 20% every year

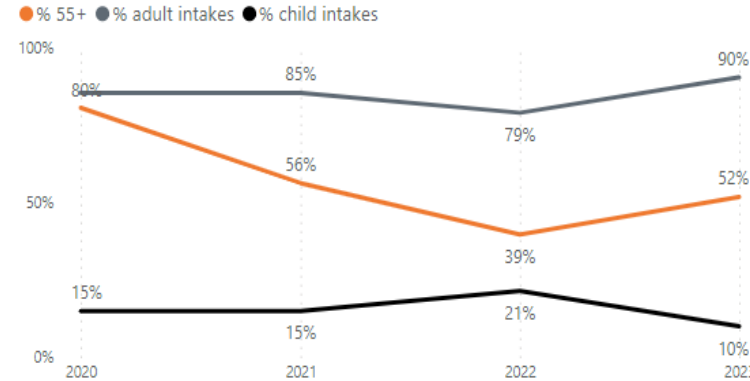
Key transitional housing trends*

Number of women accommodated, by program



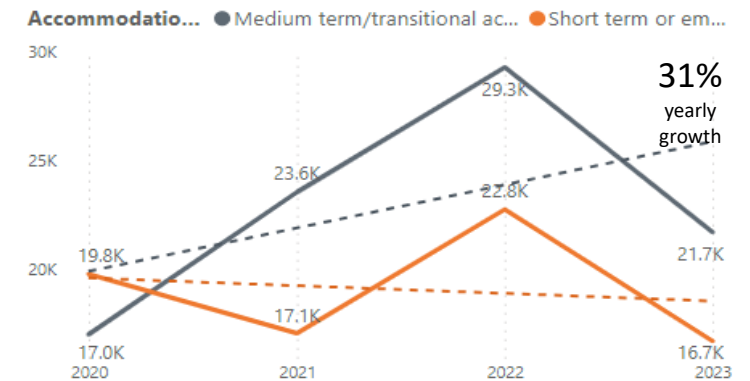
The number of women WCS is accommodating in transitional accommodation is growing by 20% every year

Age demographics of women in transitional accommodation



Women over 55, form over 50% of the adult clients in WCS transitional accommodation, highlighting a specific need for this demographic group.

Bed nights, by program



WCS has provided more than 94,000 nights of extra transitional accommodation capacity across the sector since 2020 and bed night capacity is growing at 31% per year.

*This data includes non 'meanwhile use' transitional housing which accounts for ~10% of capacity. 2023 data is YTD up to Jul 2023.

Based on WCS experience, there are several key success factors that need to be considered for a successful meanwhile use model

Key success factors



Building/property type

Quality and type of building matters – age, amenity, former use



Operating model

Clear and agreed shared policies and processes



Duration of project

No less than 2 years duration



Tenant suitability

Need to be able to live independently with minimal support. Complexity not always immediately obvious – strong referral, intake and assessment process is needed



Owner and community good will

Property provided at no or low cost + in kind and/or pro bono support + community engagement – donations and fundraising



Tenant number

Dependant on amenity



CHP partnership

Importance of integrated support. Community housing providers play a key role in linking meanwhile use with the wider housing system



Financial model

Financial model has the potential to be self-funding



Onsite support

Staffing hours



"I couldn't believe places like this existed... in four months I've made so much progress... I'm going to get a tattoo done that says, "Eat My Fear." These places are too few... we need more of them."

Su, Mosman House