

**From:** Julie Parker [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 19 October 2020 8:32 AM  
**To:** Anne-Louise Lindner (DJCS) <[Anne-Louise.Lindner@igem.vic.gov.au](mailto:Anne-Louise.Lindner@igem.vic.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: Follow up to focus group - temporary modular housing

Hi Anne-Louise,

Thankyou for facilitating the focus group and listening to us have a whinge ... hopefully we didn't come across as to negative – because there are lots of positives!

Below is our experience regarding the short term modular housing that I touched upon at the last gathering.

Inadequacy of short term Modular Housing offered by BRV.

No pre-programme consultation, demographic requirements or economic evaluations were done with our community prior to the Modular housing programme being established.

The temporary modular housing option for many fire affected family's and individuals in Mallacoota are unsuitable due to size restraints of fire effected properties and seemed to be designed for individuals or couples. The temporary houses might be suitable for a retired couple on a farm in Sarsfield, but are not suitable for average house blocks in Mallacoota. Who's the profile ? Elderly access ? Family size ? We are not a rural community we are a small village, many of the lost houses were on smaller blocks...600m Sq. Designing an option from a city desk and not consulting with our fire effected community seems to have resulted in a very small uptake of this temporary house option.

The houses are also unsuitable due to size of the structures ... for example the house that we have been offered (3 bedroom) for 4 (sometimes 5) adults has 1 bedroom large enough for a double bed and 2 bedrooms only large enough for single beds. We understand (and it has been reiterated to us over and over again) 'they are only temporary' however, as a fire effected friend (who has a husband and 3 teenage children) said to me 'Our family is already suffering emotionally enough by loosing everything ... we would all murder each other if we had to live in such a small space, on a small block of land while trying to rebuild. Where are we supposed to put all the furniture we have had to replace?, where are we supposed to swing our cat?' Unfortunately, during a time of mourning and high stress the temporary house option provided many with a false sense of hope and options ... had we have had input into what might be suitable rather than 'this is what you get' the programme would have been more appealing.

Another issue with this programme has been the lack of information available to individuals who feel they are being pressured into accepting the offer of a temp house. For example, I had the contracted building owner/manager come to our land and tell me that our house would be arriving in the coming weeks, he was here to organize site preparation. When I told him that we thought the building was too small for us, he said since sending out the first 3 bedroom floor plan they have increased the sizes. I asked if he could show me the new

floor plan which he displayed on his mobile phone, I asked if he could send it through to me so I could evaluate it further he said no ... it's confidential. I told him that I hadn't signed off on the short term modular house offer ... he promptly got on the phone to the Shire to cancel the building permit application and then told me that I should complete the paperwork or I will miss out. I feel that perhaps he would make a great car salesman. Not enough clarity for me to commit to uprooting my adult family (again) and 'jump out of the fry pan into the fire'

In addition, for individuals (many of whom I know personally) who are in low wage brackets, to have to rent a shoebox on their own property, for only \$25 to \$60 less than the house they are already renting is not at all financially appealing.

Also, rental properties lost during the fire leave lower social economic tenants without the option of a temporary home resulting in a public housing issue.

Our Shire Camp park is currently facilitating homeless people in caravans ... would it not have been an option to place temporary houses ... well spaced out in this vast area of the camp park for others in need of more space or room for family's thus utilizing services already available in the park and allowing construction on house sized blocks free from the restraints of a temporary housing structure.

In conclusion, fire effected community consultation and some demographic research prior to the programme commencement would have been beneficial for not only fire victims but also the programme as a whole.

Thanks Anne-Louise, have a great week.

Cheers,

Julie

Name - Julie Parker

Publishing of submission - yes

Were you in any area where the fires occurred - YES

Were you involved in responding to the fires - yes

Were you or do you continue to be involved in supporting individuals or communities affected by the fires - yes

LGA - East Gippsland Shire

Postcode/town - Mallacoota

Age group - 50's

Gender - woman

Do you wish to be kept up to date with the Inquiry - yes,