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## Providing safe places to help vulnerable women and children 'turn over a new leaf'

Imagine trying to flee a violent partner but having nowhere to go.

That's the terrifying reality facing many Australian women. They desperately want to leave their abusive partner but are unable to find another place to call home – or even temporary shelter.

Leading not-for-profit organisation Junction Australia has submitted a proposal to the State Government to establish a new crisis and accommodation and transitional housing facility in Adelaide's northern suburbs to help fill the shortfall of housing options for women and their families.

The proposed village would provide up to 150 families who are homeless or have experienced domestic violence with emergency accommodation. An additional 20-30 families would be provided with transitional accommodation for periods between three and 18 months.

"Domestic and relationship violence is blight upon our modern society that should not be tolerated," Junction Australia Chief Executive Officer Graham Brown said.

"When it does occur, it's very important that women and children are able to access safe and appropriate accommodation while they catch their breath and determine their next steps.

"The New Leaf Village proposal has strong support from key community agencies in the Northern Adelaide region and will serve as a regional hub for people seeking access to services and support."

The Northern Collaborative Group approached Junction Australia to develop this Village in Adelaide's north, where homelessness is expected to spike after Holden's closure, and the next step is getting Government support.

"We are at the stage where the State Government has been asked to provide a property with appropriate facilities where the New Leaf Village can be established," Mr Brown said.

One State Government-owned property at Davoren Park has been flagged as a potential location.

Women would be referred to the New Leaf Village by welfare support services. Crisis accommodation would be offered for up to 21 days, while short-term transitional housing would be available for between three and 18 months.

"Junction Australia is working collaboratively with government agencies and other community organisations to ensure that people living in the village would have ready access to the support of professional services," Mr Brown said.

Village residents would also be able to offer each other support and encouragement while they have a period of interim stability.

Families would be supported to ‘turn over a new leaf’ in life and start a new chapter of their lives. The Village will be place where community organisations would work together to provide integrated support to help women develop confidence and new skills.

“When people are living in fear, they are vulnerable to the three social plagues of the twenty first century; hopelessness, helplessness and disconnection,” Mr Brown said.

“It’s not acceptable for fearful women and their vulnerable children to be staying in dangerous circumstances just because they have nowhere else to go.

“Access to alternative accommodation is a key to assisting women and children to escape from domestic violence. There is an urgent need for improved access to emergency and transitional housing in many SA communities and we need to act now. Otherwise the terrible alarming figures that show at least one woman in Australia is killed by her partner each week will continue.”

“Junction Australia will be seeking financial support from South Australians who share our determination to address the scourge of domestic violence in our state.”

“We need to find a home for this village, so women can be supported to escape from domestic violence,” Mr Brown said.

“Junction Australia and our collaborating partners are committed to assisting vulnerable people to become the authors of their future, rather than the victims of their past.”

*Junction Australia is a trusted provider of quality, affordable housing and integrated community services that currently manages 1,700 properties across South Australia. We firmly believe that by working together we can take steps that enable people to navigate their way from ‘Crisis to Connectedness’. Our clients are supported to overcome barriers, access opportunities and pursue their hopes and dreams.*

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