HOBART WOMEN'S SHELTER
BUY A BRICK CAMPAIGN LAUNCH
OPENING REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WELLS AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
SOUTH HOBART, WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2026

Thank you, Belinda, and good afternoon, everyone. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to be here today as we launch the Hobart Women's Shelter's Buy a Brick Campaign for 2026.

I too would also like to acknowledge the Palawa people as the First Peoples of Lutruwita/Tasmania, the Traditional Custodians of this beautiful land and I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and to any Aboriginal people with us today. Your continuing contribution to the cultural, social and spiritual life of our State is deeply valued.

Today we gather on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This is a day that calls on all of us to reflect, to listen, and to act.

Today also marks the beginning of the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, a global campaign that shines a light on an issue that sadly affects communities in every corner of the world.

This year, these 16 days are focused on ensuring justice, protecting survivors and ending impunity for violence against women and girls.

Violence against women is not an abstract issue. It is happening in our homes, in our communities and in our online spaces every single day.

Here in Tasmania, the reality is particularly stark. Our State has the highest rate of intimate partner violence in Australia.

An estimated 43 per cent — almost half — of all Tasmanian women have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence since the age of 15 and 75% of residents at Hobart Women's Shelter report having experienced family violence.

These figures are deeply troubling. They should concern every one of us.

Yet behind these numbers are real people. A woman whose sense of safety has been shattered. A child whose life has been shaped by fear and uncertainty. A family who no longer has somewhere secure to call home.

We must never lose sight of the human stories these figures represent.

In Tasmania, the intersection between family violence, homelessness and housing insecurity remains an urgent challenge.

That is why we are here today. Our conversations will explore the importance of community action and housing security, as well as how we can collectively work to end violence against women.

We know that ending homelessness and creating safer futures for women and children cannot be achieved by one organisation or one level of government alone. It requires governments, businesses, philanthropy and the community working together.

The Hobart Women's Shelter's Buy a Brick campaign is a powerful example of what can be achieved when a community comes together behind a common purpose.

It reminds us that everyone can contribute, and that collective generosity can create lasting change. Every contribution will help to strengthen support for women and children seeking safety and a fresh start.

Thank you to the whole Hobart Women's Shelter team, for inviting Rob and me to be a part of today's Buy a Brick campaign launch. We are proud to support this campaign and its vision to provide safe, secure and appropriate housing for women and children in Tasmania.

I look forward to joining our discussions shortly and hearing Julie, Samantha and Janet's insights into how, together, we can work to create pathways to safety, stability, and hope.

Thank you.