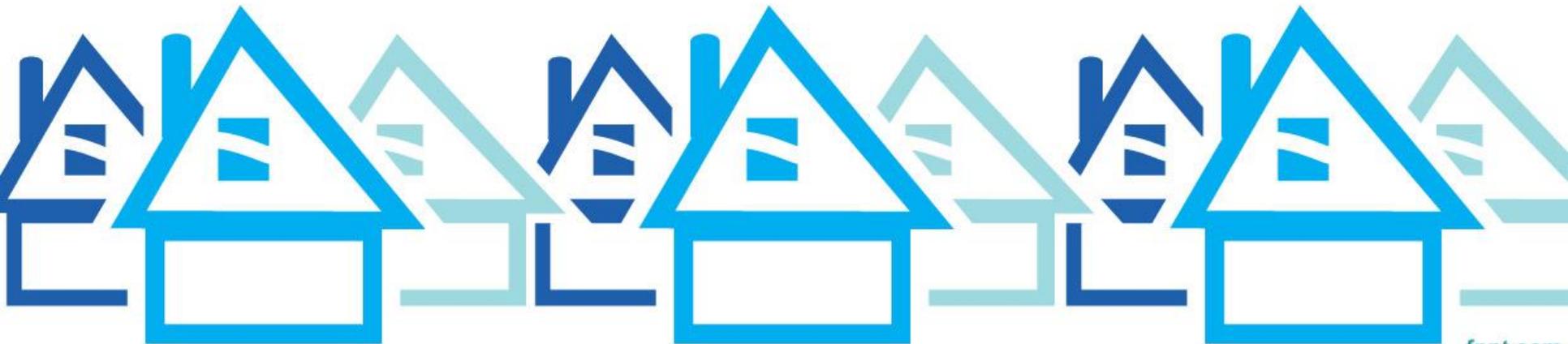


# Housing as an infrastructure of care

**Associate Professor Kathy Mee (University of Newcastle) &  
Dr Emma Power (Western Sydney University)**



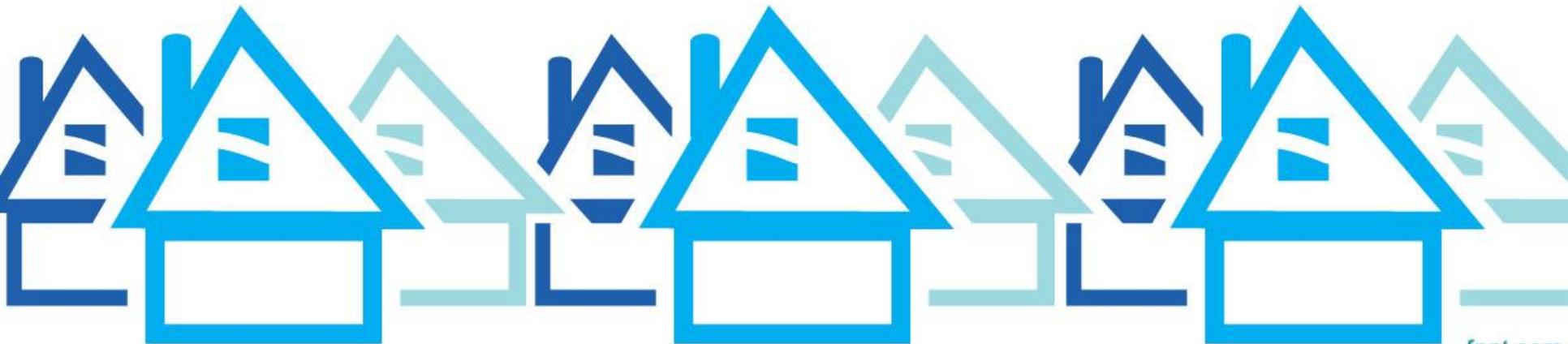
# Housing the New Urban Agenda and SDGs

- Housing as
  - Basic service
  - Equal Opportunities



# Housing and care

- Living in public housing has permitted me to care for my family. As a sole parent with 2 young children and no child support help I found it impossible to manage in the private sector. Without public housing accommodation I could not have managed. My health was poor, my job opportunities limited. Being able to afford the rent in public housing made a huge difference to our lives and opened opportunities to pursue further education.



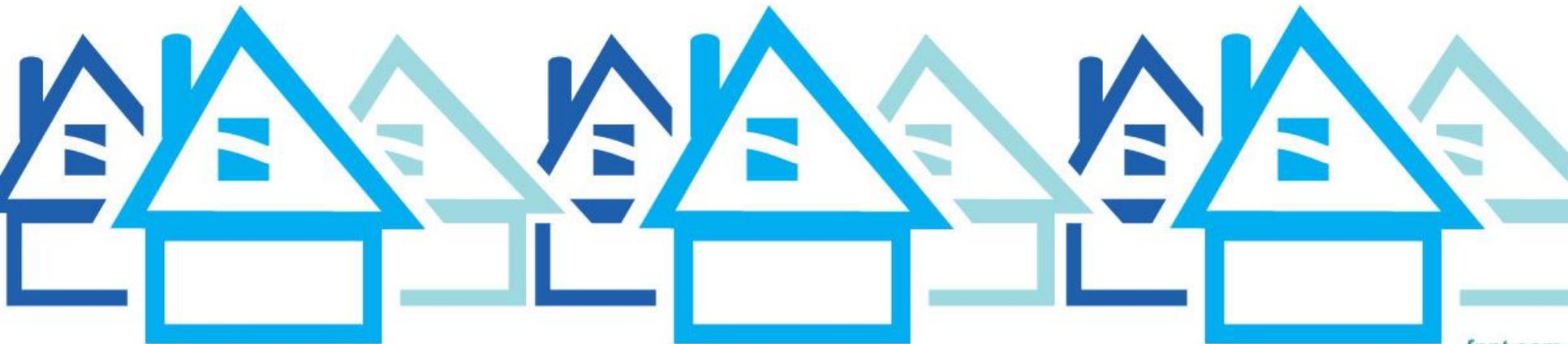
# Housing and care

- There's that more care factor, wanting to help them. Where, you know, my real estate is not going to ask if I've got a job and how to get one. We've got that care factor for them.
- That relationship with the tenants, we care about our tenants, I'm not saying the others don't, it's just that passion that we have to make sure they're all safe.



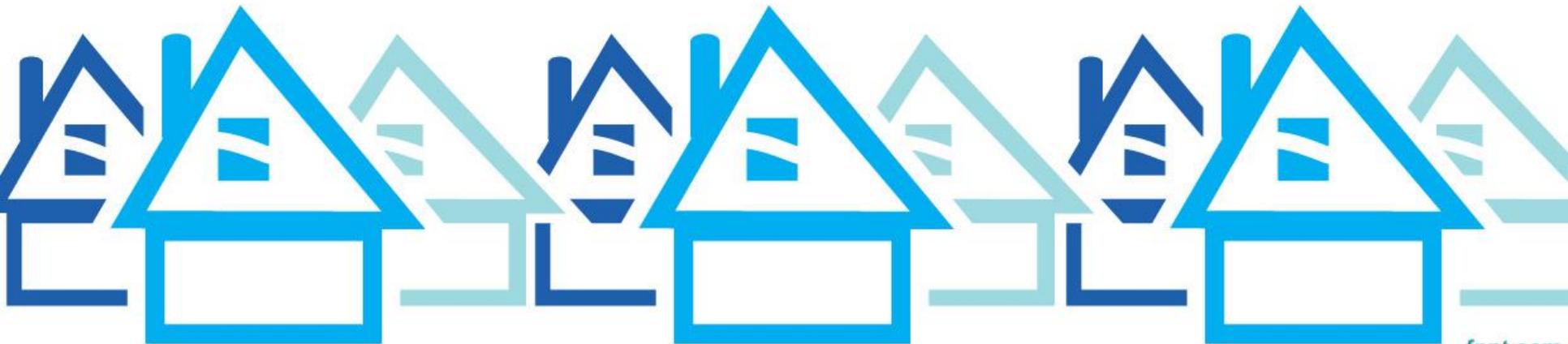
# Housing and care

- .. there were gaps around all the windows and all the doors where literally, when it was windy, the curtain would blow and the wooden shutters, the wooden blinds would actually blow. It was unsafe because there was two steps from the kitchen to the bathroom that were wobbly. So while it might have suited somebody young with no disability, it really wasn't that safe.



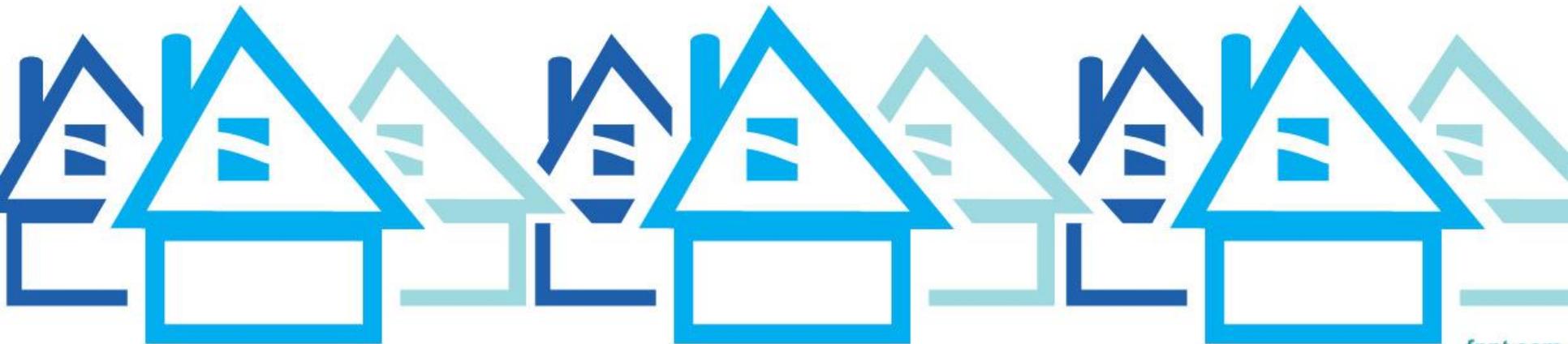
# Housing and care

- ‘there’s things that need doing and if they’re only minor things I can do it otherwise I just get on the phone to [provider]. Like I said if it’s urgent they’re here within an hour or two, if it’s not, and that is not like, put it this way, they’re better than any other real estate.’



# Housing and care

- ‘What do we provide that makes people feel at home in their house? I guess there’s a few things. Mostly we try to make sure as best we can that maintenance is done as quickly as possible within our timeframes.’





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**Compass Housing Services** ✓



15 mins · 🌐

When it was discovered that a water leak had done extensive damage to the floor and cupboards in a [Compass](#)-managed property in Albion Park, a full kitchen replacement was completed based around the needs of the people with disability in the house.

Staff and residents were extremely happy with the outcome and are happy to share these before and after photos with you. This home is a Specialist Disability Housing (SDA) property.



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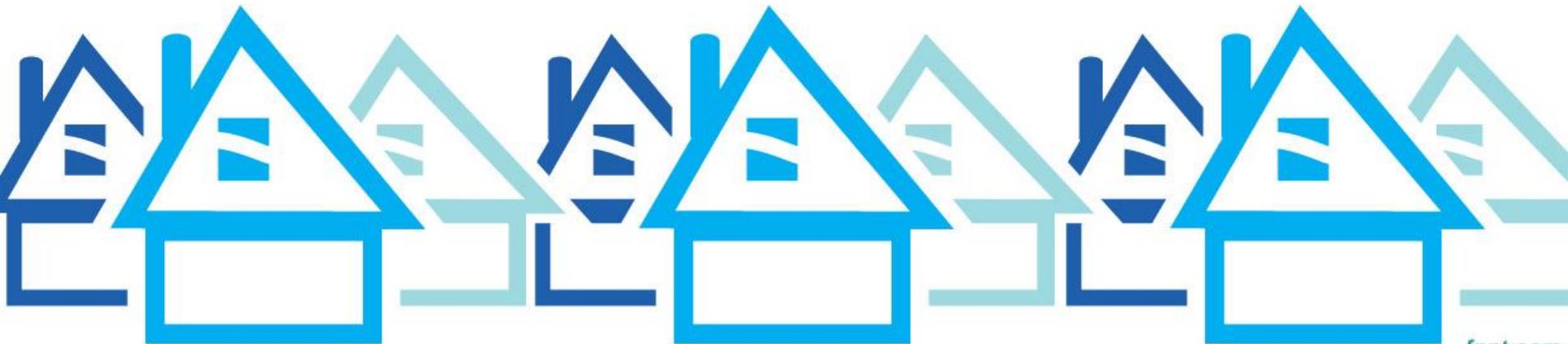
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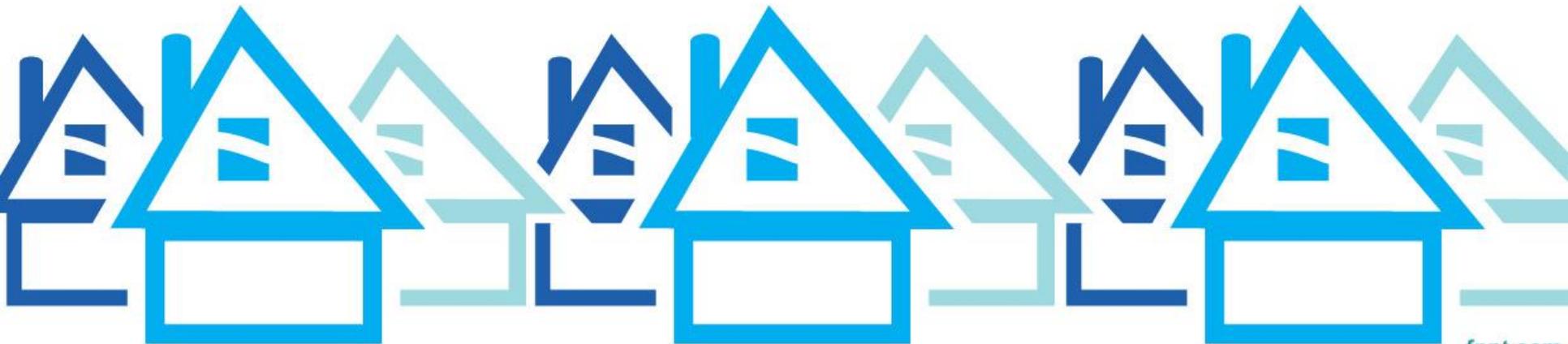
# Care

- everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web. (Fisher & Tronto 1990: 40)



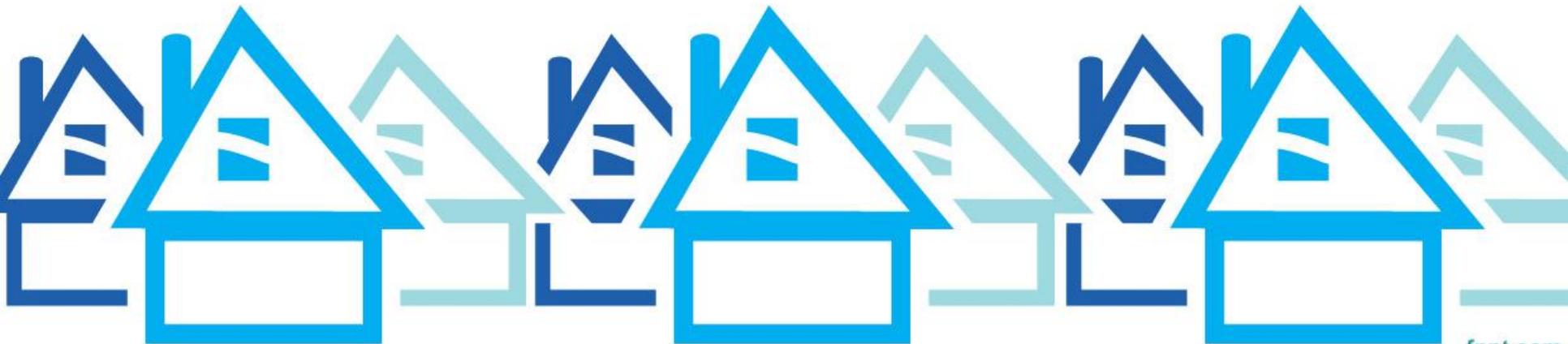
# Geographies of care

- the proactive interest of one person in the well-being of another and the articulation of that interest (or affective stance) in practical ways. Care may thus be present in everyday encounters between individuals who are attentive to each other's situation, who perhaps provide practical assistance or who simply make the time to listen to what the other has to say (Conradson 2003: 508).



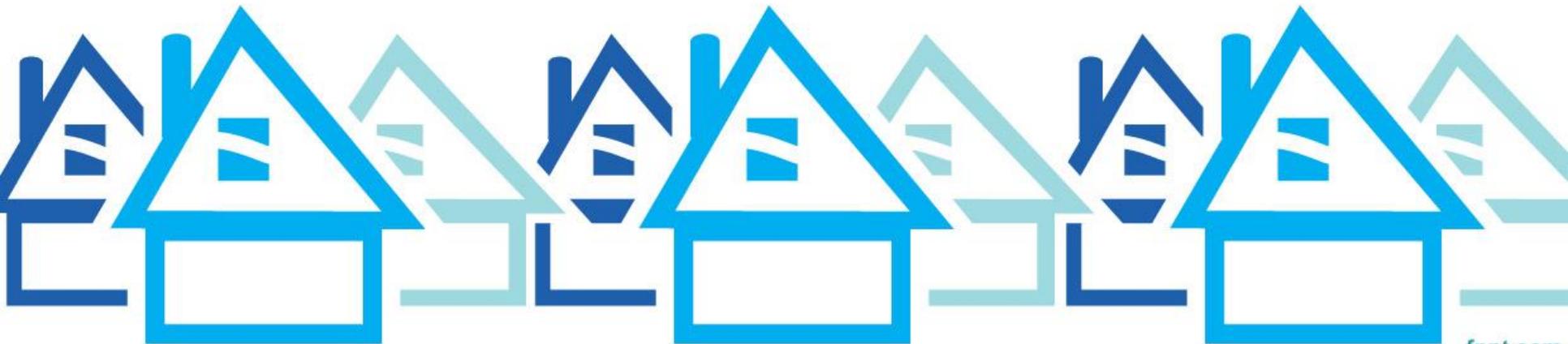
# Housing and care

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# Infrastructural Project

- making visible neglected activities we want to see more 'valued' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017, p12)



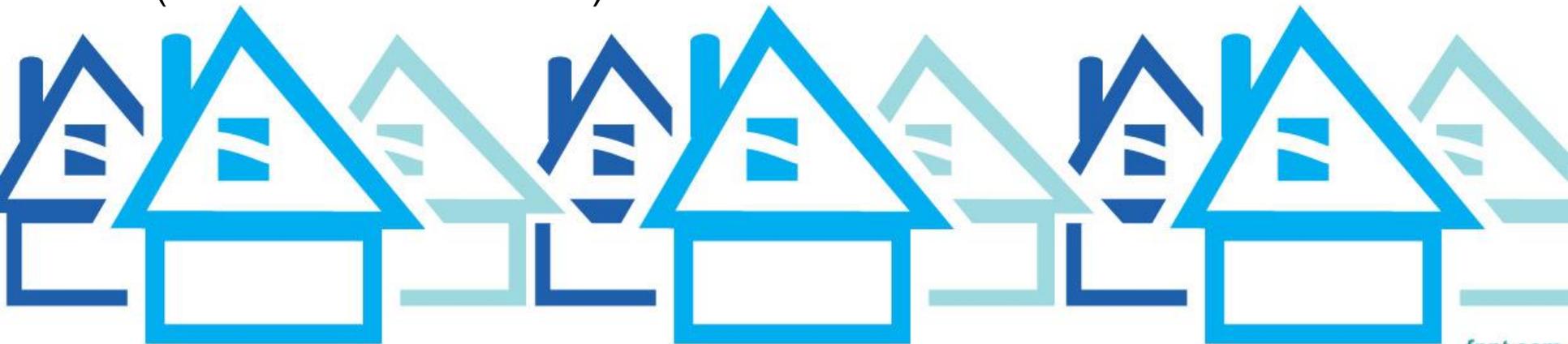
# Infrastructural glitch

- at some crisis times like this one, politics is defined by a collectively held sense that a glitch has appeared in the reproduction of life. A glitch is an interruption within a transition, a troubled transmission. A glitch is also the revelation of an infrastructural failure. (Berlant 2016, p. 393)



# Baggy infrastructure

- a system or assemblage that includes physical and immaterial elements, usually intended to operate in the background, and [that] is intended to facilitate living and activity: in some cases, for the well-being of a population public good, social demand, in others, the profitable activity of businesses. What this framing makes clear is that the interest in infrastructure applies not only to technology or to literal immaterialized objects; it also includes a sense of systems, management, and energy, as well as planning and design—hence, discourse, symbols, and, arguably even affect. In many situations, these systems provide the structures on which sociality hangs (Wilson 2016: 273-274).



# Conclusion

- Make visible housing as an infrastructure of care
- relations foster care for some things rather or more than for others (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017, p166).

