

West Winds Boys' Home

1967 – 1983

Other Names:

- Westwinds
- Westwinds Boys' Home

Details

West Winds Boys' Home, run by the government, opened in Woodbridge in 1967. It accommodated boys from the age of five. The Home closed in 1983.

In 1963, the Social Welfare Department bought a property of 44 acres with a timber house on it at Woodbridge, south of Hobart, which they intended to develop as a Home. As a temporary measure, they leased it to a couple who took in boys at the same rate as foster mothers. This became known as Woodbridge-West Winds Receiving Home. By 1970, the new buildings were apparently complete and the Receiving Home closed.

The new West Winds Boys' Home took up to 20 boys aged between five and 15 who were assessed as having intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties but able to attend Woodbridge Area School. According to a Select Committee report, many of these boys were at Ashley, which the Committee did not think was suitable for them. The government established West Winds to take them instead. Intelligence testing in the 1960s was still unreliable so it is likely that many boys at West Winds did not have an intellectual disability.

The Government Medical Officer and a psychiatrist examined the boys when they first entered the home. A Clinical Psychologist then tested them. After that, the psychiatrist often prescribed medication. In 1970, 12 of the 20 boys were taking medication. In 1975, the Superintendent described West Winds as a 'long-term treatment centre' with some of the boys living at the Home for four or five years. Most stayed for two years.

Some boys went home for the holidays or stayed with friends. They learned craft work from instructors living locally who were employed on an hourly basis.

There was a Farm Hostel where boys who had left school learned farming, market gardening, and animal husbandry.

In 1971, in a request to the Public Service Board for four more staff at West Winds, GC Smith, the Director of the Social Welfare Department, said that they frequently worked over 14 hours a day. There was often only one male officer on duty. He wrote: 'it is unreasonable to expect an officer to maintain a balanced attitude and an effective programme over such a long day'.

During the early 1980s, West Winds offered respite care under the Domestic Service Assistance Scheme.

West Winds closed in 1983 because the government wanted to reduce the number of children in residential care and redirect resources to alternative community based programs. The number of children at West Winds had declined.

More info

Chronology

- Woodbridge-West Winds Receiving Home (1963 - 1967)
 - **West Winds Boys' Home (1967 – 1983)**

Related Entries

Run by

- [Child Welfare Division \(c. 1953 - 1980\)](#)
- [Social Welfare Department, State of Tasmania \(1961 - 1983\)](#)
The Social Welfare Department ran West Winds Boys' Home.

Related Events

- [Inquiry into the Control and Management of Ashley Boys' Home, State of Tasmania \(1951 - 1953\)](#)
The recommendations of the Inquiry may have led to the establishment of West Winds Boys' Home even though this did not happen until 1967.
- [Listen to the children: review of claims of abuse from adults in state care as children, Ombudsman Tasmania \(2003 - 2006\)](#)

Related Concepts

- [Stolen Generations](#)

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records held by other organisations

- [Correspondence Files \(1919 - 1998\)](#)
 - [Correspondence and Associated Papers Relating to Building for Government Departments Arranged Alphabetically by Department \(1929 - 1980\)](#)
 - [General Correspondence, Public Service Board \(1973 - 1985\)](#)
 - [Ministerial Files-Unregistered \(1982 - 1985\)](#)
 - [Reports to the Minister, Child Welfare Advisory Council \(1967 - 1971\)](#)
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