

Better not bigger

READER Susan Bowes (Letters, March 26) rightly outlines the shortcomings of our State Government's wish for a population increase from 515,000 to about 650,000 by 2050. But what after that? Recently you featured an excellent Talking Point article by Jan Davis (Mercury, February 28) "Population rise poses global, local challenges". Indeed, continuing population growth clearly is the beginning of the end for civilisation as we know it.

Already Planet Earth is feeling the pains of overpopulation with, to quote columnist Simon Bevilacqua (Mercury, March 24), "more than 65 million people have fled their homes in recent times to escape famine, climate change and war", the result both directly and indirectly of greed, growth and overpopulation.

Closer to home we now have for the first time homeless families camping out at Elwick Showgrounds, for the same reasons.

It was pleasing to read prior to the recent state election that Cassy O'Connor released a population strategy that in-

cluded development of a settlement plan and appointment of a state demographer. Hopefully both would have looked well ahead, way beyond the next election, and included assessments of the impact of overpopulation on our environment. So here is a challenge to the Government — how about setting an example for the rest of Australia and make Tasmania better, not bigger.

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