

Housing Update



Identifying Community
Housing Needs

The Community Housing Coalition of WA

Spring 2008

Affordable rental scheme to supply more dwellings

The Australian Government has committed \$623 million over the next four years to create up to 50,000 new affordable rental dwellings under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). The scheme provides a new opportunity for Government, the business sector and not-for-profit organisations to work together to increase the supply of affordable rental housing.

Under the scheme, successful applicants will be eligible to receive a National Rental Incentive for each approved dwelling on the condition that they are rented to eligible low and moderate income households for 10 years at 20 per cent below market rates.

NRAS is targeting financial institutions with an interest in this new class of residential property investment. Such institutions may include banks, superannuation funds (excluding self-managed superannuation funds), credit unions, property trusts listed on the ASX and unlisted property trusts.

Companies and not-for-profit organisations with relevant expertise in the property and/or tenancy management sectors may also apply for incentives under the scheme. Projects sponsored by a consortium of institutional and/or commercial investors and not-for-profit organisations are encouraged for the purposes of the scheme.

The recently launched scheme aims to create 50,000 new affordable rental properties for low and medium income earners in Australia over four years and up to 100,000 in the next 10 years. The Federal Government has called for Expressions of Interest in the scheme.

Former WA Minister for Housing

and Works Michelle Roberts said under the NRAS, investors who build new rental accommodation and lease it to low and moderate income earners at 20 per cent below market rents will receive an annual \$6,000 rental tax incentive per dwelling for up to 10 years. She said the State Government will contribute a further \$2,000 per dwelling. "This investment will boost social housing stock by more than 1,100 units, improve affordability for private renters, secure strategic landholdings for affordable residential development and provide more housing in regional areas for Government workers and for crisis accommodation," she said.

Colin McClughan, executive officer of the Community Housing Coali-

tion of WA, welcomed the NRAS announcement. "Community Housing WA welcomes initiatives which seek to increase the stock of affordable rental accommodation," Mr McClughan said. "In our view, NRAS certainly has the potential to help alleviate WA's chronic shortage of flexible housing options for low income earners." People seeking general information on NRAS and the Expression of Interest document should contact the Department of Families, Communities, Housing and Indigenous Affairs NRAS Hotline on 1800 334 505.

The CHCWA's Board has also announced that CHCWA is considering the possibility of acting as a broker

• More Page 2

Homeless Persons Week a success



Former Minister for Child Protection, Sue Ellery, launches Homeless Persons Week in Forrest Place in Perth on Monday, August 4, 2008. It is the first time the event has been staged in Perth and it was a success in raising community awareness about homelessness in WA.

Full story and more pictures centre pages.

From the Executive Officer...

New triennial funding period starts

Welcome to the spring edition of the Housing Update for 2008 and all the promise for this time of year, including renewal, growth and recharging our batteries. The Community Housing Coalition is now into a new triennial funding period 2008/2011 with a Strategic Plan, which has as its key objective: To promote a financially, environmentally and socially sustainable community housing sector that values and reflects diversity.

One of the strategies we have in place to meet our key objective is: To ensure CHCWA contributes to the forefront of development, evaluation and implementation of registration mechanisms and housing standards whilst supporting diversity within regulatory framework to allow quality outcomes for clients.

Some key performance indicators which measure the success of this strategy involve how we work with small or specialist housing providers. One of those performance indicators involved forming a small provider subcommittee with the aim of engaging all small

housing providers to assist them with registration, including gap assessment and training. For those small providers who want more information, please email eo@communityhousing.com.au or telephone 9221 7933. To date a survey has been sent to small providers and we are now awaiting collation of this information so members' concerns can be dealt with.

We are also discussing with larger housing providers how they might help small providers with systems and mentoring through to achieving registration augmented by training from CHCWA's Best Practice Unit managed by Daniel Guise and assisted by Louise Leicester

CHCWA has been approached by the Indigenous Community Housing branch of the Department of Housing and Works to assist it in assessing and providing training to Indigenous Housing Organisations throughout WA. Currently eight organisations in WA look after many communities in remote areas.

In August, we completed two projects which have kept some staff



busy during the last few months and they were Homeless Persons Week and the publication and launch of CHCWA's latest book, *The Affordable Housing Crisis: Where to from here?*

The Homeless Persons Week launch on August 4 was opened by The Hon Sue Ellery, MLC, former Minister for Child Protection, Communities, Women's Interests, Seniors and Volunteering and also speaking was The Hon Lisa Scaffidi, the Lord Mayor of Perth. The event was the first for CHCWA and was a success in raising awareness of homelessness.

The Affordable Housing Crisis is our second publication, the first one, *People with Heart and Hope*, was published in 2004. I would like to thank all members who contributed to the book and articles produced by the Commonwealth Minister for Housing, The Hon Tanya Plibersek, former State Housing Minister, The Hon Michelle Roberts, and the Director of Housing and Urban Research Institute of Curtin University, Professor Fiona McKenzie. I would also like to thank Tony Whitbread, CHCWA's Marketing and Membership officer for the tireless work he did in sub-editing and proof reading the publication. To date we have distributed more than 700 copies of the publication to members, Government, academia, high schools and libraries.

In conclusion, on behalf of the CHCWA board of management and staff I would like to thank you for your continued support as we move into another exciting chapter in Community Housing within WA.

Colin McClughan

Rental scheme launched

• From Page 1

in the NRAS for its members.

CHCWA is seeking Expressions of Interest to find out if members have properties they consider would qualify for NRAS funding. If individual members do not have the minimum requirement of 20 units for the funding, members' housing projects could possibly be grouped under one application. This would ensure qualification and it would also make the proposal more attractive for the Commonwealth Government to consider.

Although this initiative may appeal to small housing providers, those members who do have the minimum number of units of accommodation and feel they would like to be part of an application are also encouraged to participate. If enough interest is shown, CHCWA will consider a more comprehensive survey.

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indige-

nous Affairs held an information session on the NRAS in Perth on August 15 for interested parties such as financial institutions, developers and land holders, Local Governments, not-for-profit groups, property managers and housing groups.

An Interest Register has been established to assist organisations interested in participating in the scheme but who may need support to identify possible partners. Interested organisations can register their interest by emailing nationalrentalaffordabilityscheme@fahcsia.gov.au and they will be directed to an appropriate Partnership Facilitator. Partnership Facilitators have been engaged by FaHCSIA to support the implementation of the NRAS through coordinating potential partnership or consortium arrangements between organisations interested in participating in the scheme.

More information is available at <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/fahcsinternet.nsf/housing/nras.htm>

Group launches CRiB Campaign

The campaign group of CHCWA, Shelter WA, the WA Council Of Social Services (WACOSS) and the Tenants Advisory Service (TAS) which developed the Creating Room in the Boom (CRiB) campaign officially launched the program at Wellington Square in East Perth prior to the State election.

The group is calling for an increase in the level of social housing from around 4 per cent to 6 per cent of total housing stock in WA. The campaign launch was filmed by a Channel 10 news crew and announced by radio station 6PR as well as being referred to in an article in *The West Australian* newspaper.

The CRiB campaign group wants the Government to address community service bottlenecks and gaps, rental housing stress experienced by low-income and otherwise disadvantaged households and the overall shortage of appropriate, secure and affordable housing.

The low availability and high cost of housing, both to rent and purchase in WA is severely impacting people on low incomes who are increasingly facing difficulty accessing accommodation that meets their needs.

The CRiB campaign identifies four primary areas which the group says require immediate action.

1. An increase to 6 per cent (from the current 4 per cent of all housing stock) of social housing including public and community housing.



CHCWA Executive Officer Colin McClughan being interviewed by Radio 6PR journalist Russell Quinn at the launch.

2. Reducing the large numbers of people in financial stress in rental housing by increasing the range and provision of Private Rental Loan, Subsidy or Grants Schemes, increasing the number of short-term, crisis and transitional accommodation places, exploring the development and implementation of an authorised and approved 'Social Landlords Register' for landlords and private citizens to offer rental homes, rooms or other facilities to low income or otherwise disadvantaged consumers unable to access housing in the mainstream private rental market, explore improved provision of income support and rent allowance

for low income housing consumers in private rental, encourage implementation of the National Rental Affordability Scheme by facilitating partnerships with community housing providers Local Governments and financial investors and encourage development of current undeveloped, titled and serviced urban land focusing on dwelling construction along transport routes and in regional centres.

3. Improve tenants' rights, including legislative protection against excessive rent increases and outlawing residential tenant blacklist databases, end no-cause evictions, remove option fees and bring Boarders and Lodgers under the protection of the Residential Tenancies Act.

4. Address the funding shortage for homeless services and staff by increasing funding to the non-Government sector both for salaries and service delivery, increase the provision of transitional and ongoing case management, practical supports, financial and advocacy services.

The Creating Room in the Boom Campaign group strongly encourages the WA Government to deliver the benefits of current economic windfalls in WA to all people but particularly those with fixed and low incomes and other risk indicators of social exclusion who are most affected by the current shortage of affordable housing.



(Left to right) WACOSS CEO, Sue Ash, TAS EO, John Perrett, Shelter WA CEO, Bronwyn Kitching, CHWA EO, Colin McClughan and WACOSS Director of Social Policy, Irina Cattalini at the CRiB campaign launch.

Former State Housing Minister

Former State Housing and Works Minister Michelle Roberts marked Homeless Persons Week on August 6 this year with the launch of a publication that explores opportunities for the community housing sector to provide more affordable housing in WA. Mrs Roberts said the Community Housing Coalition of Western Australia's (CHCWA) publication, 'The Affordable Housing Crisis - Where to from here?' presented a range of views on housing demand and the role of community housing in meeting that demand.

"The State Government is working to reduce homelessness and improve housing affordability in WA," she said. A common theme in the book is the provision of more affordable housing through partnerships with community housing providers. The Department of Housing and Works recently invited community housing organisations to register as growth providers to establish housing providers that could deliver more homes through economies of scale and the capacity to leverage private investment.

"The State Government is working with community housing providers to increase affordable housing across the State," Ms Roberts said.

The book launch was held at the Irish Club of WA in Townshend Road, Subiaco.

CHCWA's latest book is the hard-



Former State Housing Minister Michelle Roberts and Great Southern Community Housing Association Development Manager, Des Bray.

hitting sequel to its initial publication, 'People With Heart and Hope' released in 2004. Skyrocketing rental costs and rapidly escalating house prices force many Australian families onto the streets and the book endeavours to ensure the problem stays in the public arena until a solution to the crisis is found.

CHCWA's publication seeks the opinions and ideas of a wide cross-section of its 112 member organisations from the Pilbara Region in the State's north through the metropolitan area to Albany in the Great Southern. Al-

though their opinions vary, the common thought throughout those organisations is that the problem, and therefore the solution, lies with both Federal and State Governments and the community as a whole.

CHCWA's book brings together ideas of a wide range of people who can hopefully work together to initiate changes in attitudes and thinking to bring about necessary reforms in the Governments' and the community's approach to tackling homelessness in Australia.

Professor Fiona McKenzie, the Director of the Housing and Urban Research Institute of WA at Curtin University of Technology in her Foreword to the book says in a wealthy country like Australia, no citizens should be forced into homelessness so it is ironic that at a time when there is unprecedented personal and corporate wealth there is an increasing number of people who, often through no fault of their own, struggle to keep a roof over their head.

The Federal Housing Minister, Tanya Plibersek, was asked for her views on the housing affordability crisis and what the Federal Government plans to do to alleviate the problem for future generations. "To get affordable housing, we must increase supply but, although this seems an incredibly simple answer, it is actually a lot more complex," Ms Plibersek said.



The Department of Housing and Works Community Housing Director Roger Guinery and Community Sector Banking General Manager Pat Cavanagh.

launches CHCWA's latest book

"In addition to a skills shortage, we have a market that is unadventurous and slow to react. We also have an extraordinary shortage of rental properties and the rental market has not responded as one might expect by building more affordable rental accommodation. "There is a need to investigate where those market failures are. It is equally important to address issues like skills shortages, availability and affordability of land, fees and charges, taxes, and the lack of adventurous and creativity of local authorities, builders and developers who determine the type of housing stock that could and should be built," Ms Plibersek said.

Michelle Roberts was asked for the WA perspective and she said the strong WA economy had placed significant pressure on people who are living on social security and low pay rates. She said the number of people being attracted to WA by the mining boom had taken up much of the available rental accommodation.

Mrs Roberts said the book explored opportunities for the community housing sector to provide more affordable housing in WA and it presented a range of views on housing demand and the role of community housing in meeting that demand.

Mrs Roberts said Southern Cross



(From left) Lyn MacLaren formerly of WACOSS, Professor Fiona McKenzie, Director of the Housing and Urban Research Institute of WA at Curtin University of Technology and Shelter WA EO Bronwyn Kitching.

Care (SCC) became the State's first registered Growth Provider. "Several potential projects have been identified to be developed in partnership between Southern Cross Care and the State Government," she said. "They include the redevelopment of a Southern Cross Care site in Dianella and Embleton with the potential to yield up to 59 units for seniors' accommodation.

"Other significant projects in the 2008-09 State Community Housing Investment Program are being devel-

oped with Foundation and Access Housing with yields of up to 94 units in Clarkson, West Perth, Westminster, Ellenbrook, Maddington and Hamilton Hill."

Mrs Roberts said opportunities will continue for smaller and more specialised community housing providers through a range of initiatives including strategic alliances with growth providers and programs such as the successful Joint Venture Housing Program and Community Housing and Crisis Accommodation Programs.



(Left to right) CHCWA Chair Lynne Evans, Melville Mews Board Secretary Roma Lewi, CHCWA Board member Don Tunnecliffe, Community Sector Banking General Manager, Pat Cavanagh, Former State Housing Minister Michelle Roberts, CHCWA Board member Kathleen Gregory, Professor Fiona McKenzie and the CEO of Narrogin Cottage Homes, Julie Christensen.

Homeless Persons Week

The inaugural Homeless Persons Week in WA was a success and, according to the organisers, there are things that can be done better next year but the foundation is in place to make the event bigger and more prominent.

Homelessness Australia executive officer Simon Smith was here for most of the week and that he choose to visit WA for the event is testimony to the great support shown by CHCWA members and other organisations.

Former Communities and Child Protection Minister Sue Ellery launched the week and former Housing and Works Minister Michelle Roberts launched CHCWA's book as part of the week. The book demonstrates and displays the work that is being done by CHCWA members and it includes real life stories about people who have experienced homelessness.

CHCWA would like to acknowledge the support of Michelle Roberts in launching and contributing to the book as well as John Cole, the Department of Housing and Works acting director general, Professor Fiona McKenzie and the other book contributors. CHCWA also thanks the various organisations that featured in the book and attended the launch.

The director of Community Housing at the Department of Housing and Works, Roger Guinery, was also present at most of the events during



Perth's Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi speaks at the launch of the week.

the week. Federal Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek could not make it to the event but she was in Perth soon after and met CHCWA staff while she was here.

Perth Lord Mayor Lisa Scaffidi also spoke at the launch. The week was well supported by several organisations which took part in the launch in Forrest Place as well as staging various events during the week.

Support was received from all kinds of organisations including the shops around the launch venue in Forrest Place and Jim Messiha of N and M Security who provided his security service at-cost.

Although not all of the media got behind the week, support was received from some community newspapers, the WA Business News and regional papers including the Geraldton Guardian and the South Western Times.

ABC radio provided the most media support during the week with its successful Statewide 'Drop your Jocks' campaign that collected new underwear and toiletries for clients of CHCWA members around the State.

The Creating Room in the Boom campaign also started during the week. The multi-organisational campaign is organised by CHCWA, WACOSS, Shelter WA, TAS and YACWA. A forum was held as well as lunchtime street surveys to get feedback from the general public on their perception of homelessness.

About 100 people attended the SAAP SAC forum during the week and Ginger's Garage attracted many young people eager to share the experience of what it means to be young



Sharon Wayland of St Patrick's Community Support Centre in Fremantle.

debut in WA a success

and on the streets at a photographic exhibition which was organised by the Youth Affairs Council of WA and Propel Arts. The exhibition, which included pictures taken by homeless people, attracted more than 250 people on launch night. CHCWA is already planning next year's event and is eager to receive any feedback on this year's event for the organising committee to consider.

As part of Homeless Persons Week, 55 Central, a crisis accommodation centre in Maylands, held a free sausage sizzle for residents and guests to raise awareness of the growing issue of homelessness. The event attracted the attention of The Guardian Express Community Newspaper which ran an article and a photograph of 55 Central's new Executive Officer Ernie Hansen with CHCWA's Executive Officer Colin McClughan on Tuesday, August 5.

Ernie was quoted in the article as saying the demand for people applying for crisis accommodation far outstrips the availability of a room. 55 Central has 24 beds and it accommodates more than 500 men every year. The centre is currently turning away about 20 people a day. Colin McClughan was quoted in the article as saying as well as community housing providers turning people away, the Department of Housing and Works has a waiting list of almost 17,000 people.

CHCWA and the ABC worked together during Homeless Persons Week to promote the week which had the national theme, It's Not who you think. The ABC interviewed various members around the State looking for stories about homelessness and the work that is being done by members.

The ABC also partnered with CHCWA and collected items for CHCWA members to distribute to their clients wherever the need existed. Called the 'Drop your Jocks' campaign, the ABC, through its radio network and website, asked people to donate new underwear and toiletries. The ABC had collection points in ABC Bookstores around the State as well as at the ABC offices and studios. The campaign ran for the duration of Homeless Persons Week.



Roger Guinery of the DHW speaks to Catriona Mackay Macleod of St Pat's at the Central 55 Crisis Accommodation Centre's sausage sizzle.



The Spirit of the Streets Choir which sang at the launch.



Some of the results of the ABC's 'Drop Your Jocks' Campaign.

Regulation focus for the BPU

For the Best Practice Unit, this year has been dominated by the introduction of Regulation. Compliance with the National Community Housing Standards is now the goal of every Community Housing Provider seeking to expand their housing stock.

The BPU has, in response to the sector's greater need for training and resources, increased the frequency of its training sessions in the metropolitan area and travelled extensively across the State.

All of the training courses now heavily reference the National Community Housing Standards. The number of people attending the courses is also up significantly on last year.

The rent setting calculator has been streamlined to be even more user-friendly and the course continues to be popular in light of the VGO Market Rent figures being replaced by a greater use of Australian Tax Office (ATO) benchmarks.

I am currently in discussions with the ATO, the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (DOCEP) and the Department of Housing and Works (DHW) to determine the best way for us to determine an equitable 'market rent' for properties in WA.

The BPU's main focus this year has been getting its training and resources out to as many Community Housing Organisations as it possibly can. The unit has regularly contacted member and non-member organisations alike to advertise upcoming training session and new resources.

When a regional trip is planned, every Community and Indigenous Housing Organisation in the area is contacted repeatedly to ensure everyone has a chance of attending.

The BPU's proven approach to regional training has not only increased membership of CHCWA but it has also, most importantly, exposed a greater number of organisations to best

practice policies and procedures.

This year the unit has delivered on its promise of improving access to its training by visiting Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie and Broome.

Recently, the unit has been invited by Aboriginal Housing Services to tender for work helping Indigenous Housing Providers implement various improvement strategies and updated policies and procedures.

While this work has taken up a lot of the BPU's time in the last two months, the linkages to its core function and mission are numerous and should lead to the publication of some new resources for small to medium providers in the near future.

The BPU is also well underway to organising the next WA Community Housing Conference and Awards. However it is never too late to get involved so if you are interested in helping out please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Louise.

Daniel Guise, BPU Manager

Small Providers Committee survey

The first meeting of the Small or Specialist Provider Steering Committee consisting of Roma Lewi, Wayne Press, Roy Smith and Gary Kleyn was held recently.

The aim of the steering committee is to engage with other small or specialist providers who may have various issues or concerns relating to regulation, their legal status, management

structure or amalgamation.

One of the committee's first tasks was to ask small provider members to participate in a survey to find out the challenges they face in regulation, amalgamation and the high demand for their services. The results of the survey will also assist CHCWA in facilitating and providing the information relevant to our membership.

Thirty one responses to the survey were received out of the 96 small providers, including four with 50 to 100 properties, 32 with 11 to 50 properties, 58 with 10 or less properties and four Associate Members.

The small provider committee thanks all who took part in the survey and members are happy with the response and with the quality of the responses.

The survey results show a concern about how the Department of Housing and Works interacts with CHCWA members. The committee therefore feels it is important that this receives immediate attention and in response the DHW has agreed to address CHCWA members on the concerns expressed in the survey.

The DHW will address the Small Providers Forum on Friday, October 24, from 3pm to 5pm in the Conference Room at Claisebrook House, 33 Moore Street, East Perth. If you would like to hear what the DHW has to say, please attend the forum which follows the CHCWA annual general meeting.

'Gimme Shelter' DVD launched

A DVD titled, 'Gimme Shelter,' an outreach project that Notre Dame Communication students and staff worked on in support of St Pat's Community Support Centre, Fremantle, was launched recently.

The DVD promotes the work St Pat's does for homeless people in the Fremantle Community. Staff, students and special guests, which included the Mayor of Fremantle, Peter Tagliaferri and Chair of the Board of St Pat's, Dr Pat Colgan, gathered for the launch and to watch the DVD in the University's Communications Laboratory.

The Dean of the School of Arts and

Sciences, Professor Neil Drew, outlined in his welcome the importance of the project for Notre Dame. "This project exemplifies the commitment that the University has to community service, social justice and reconciliation. It is important to us to not only graduate good scholars but also good people," he said.

Dr Colgan addressed the gathering on behalf of St Pat's. He said the DVD raised the plight of disadvantaged in the community. He noted the support of the Mayor for St Pat's, particularly their re-location to the new larger site in Queen Victoria Street, Fremantle.

2008 Training Calendar

Date	Event	Details
August	'Navigating the Statistical Sea'	DHW reporting requirements.
August 5	Risk Management	Risk Management for Community Housing Providers.
August 18 to 22	Regional training – Goldfields- Kalgoorlie	Training will be tailored to the region based on direct consultation with providers.
September 2	Asset Management	Learn how to develop an asset management plan that outlines a strategy and budget for maintenance, re-developments, sales and acquisitions.
Mid-September	Regional training – North West WA	Training will be tailored to the region based on direct consultation with providers.
September 19	Rent Setting How to Maximise CRA - Perth	A workshop detailing how to maximise rental income while still providing affordable rents.
October 6	Developing Policies and Procedures	A workshop on utilising a policy template to assist in policy development.
October 29	Risk Management	Risk Management for Community Housing Providers.
November 11	Asset Management - Perth	Learn how to develop an asset management plan that outlines a strategy and budget for maintenance, re-developments, sales and acquisitions.
November 21	Rent Setting How to Maximise CRA - Perth	A workshop detailing how to maximise rental income while still providing affordable rents.
December 3	Developing Policies and Procedures	A workshop on utilising a policy template to assist in policy development.
Late December 2008	Networking Sundowner	To be advised

Training and Events Calendar for the BPU July, 2008, to December, 2008

For more information on any of the events please contact Daniel Guise on (08) 9221 7933 or bpu@communityhousing.com.au

Strong support for awareness campaigns

The last quarter has been dominated by Homeless Persons Week, the Federal Government's Green Paper on Homelessness, the 'Creating Room in the Boom' campaign and more recently, the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

CHCWA organised Homeless Persons Week in WA and worked with Homelessness Australia to develop the theme, Homelessness: It's not who you think. The week, which ran from August 4 to 10, received strong support from CHCWA members, the State and Federal Governments and the City of Perth.

Thanks to the support of members, who hosted events during the week, Homelessness Australia announced that WA had the most events of any State or Territory in Australia. CHCWA was honoured to have Homelessness Australia executive officer Simon Smith attend for most of the week.

Federal Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek was invited to the week but she was unable to attend. However, in a short visit to WA shortly after, she arranged a special meeting with CHCWA representatives.

In June, CHCWA submitted its views on the Green Paper on homelessness and in the submission encouraged the Government to consider expanding the SAAP program to allow SAAP providers to better handle the increasing number of homeless people.

CHCWA spent time helping develop the Creating Room in the Boom campaign with WACOSS, Shelter WA and TASWA. The campaign was brought forward because of an early State Election so that it came to the attention of politicians on the campaign trail. At a public debate organised by the Australian Christian Lobby held during the election, both Liberal leader Colin Barnett and new Labor leader Eric Ripper indicated their willingness to tackle the homelessness issue. In speaking to a CHCWA representative after the debate, both said they were keen to strengthen the role played by the community housing sector and indicated an interest in speak further to CHCWA about how to increase housing stock.



Creating Room in the Boom committee members John Perrett of TAS, Gary Kleyn of CHCWA, Lorilee Beecroft of WACOSS and Heidi Stewart of Shelter discuss aspects of the campaign.

The Creating Room in the Boom Campaign calls for spending on social housing to be doubled to halt the decline in social housing stock that has been occurring since 2001. More than 2000 houses need to be added to public housing stock per year until 2020 to bring it back to the 2001 level of 6 per cent of the total housing stock.

Since the change in Federal Government, there appears to be a renewed focus on dealing with the housing affordability and homelessness issues. Central to this has been the National Rental Affordability Scheme which plans to add 50,000 new affordable dwellings in the next four years.

Australia's peak body of community housing associations, the Community Housing Federation of Australia, is acting as a facilitator to bring community housing providers, financiers and developers together. CHCWA is assisting CHFA in this project which has the potential to double the size of the community housing sector in the next few years. Anyone who is interested in becoming involved in the NRAS scheme please call CHCWA on 9221 7933 or email policy@communityhousing.com.au.

CHCWA has been working closely with small community providers re-

cently and a committee was formed following discussions with members who indicated they had concerns with regulation and amalgamation. The committee comprises Roma Lewi, Wayne Press, Roy Smith, Kim Cullen and a CHCWA representative. One of the committee's first tasks was to develop a survey to find out the opinions of other small providers the results of which were useful to the committee. Many of the survey respondents had concerns with the general lack of clarity about regulation.

The Department of Housing and Works has indicated a willingness to address those concerns and work closely with the sector. The DHW has agreed to address members at a forum to be held on Friday, October 24, following CHCWA's annual general meeting. Please make this time free as it will be an important meeting to attend.

In the next few months, CHCWA will continue to keep members informed about the NRAS as well as seeking discussions with the newly formed State Government. Members are encouraged to convey their concerns to CHCWA to enable those discussions to be effective.

Gary Kleyn, Policy Officer

Community Housing Conference 2009

The next combined Community Housing Conference and Awards for Excellence event, planned for late next year, is shaping up to be one of the most memorable ever held.

A WA Community Housing Conference Steering Committee has formed and comprises CHCWA's Colin McClughan, Daniel Guise and Louise Leicester, the Department of Housing and Works' John Hughes, Foundation Housing's Tina Merry, St Patrick's Victor Crevatin, FOHCOL's Kim Cullen and CentreCare's Joanne Walker. The committee's first meeting will be in October.

If anyone else is interested in becoming involved with the organisation of the Conference, your ideas and in-

put will be welcome. To express your interest or for further details contact Louise Leicester on 08 9221 7933 or training@communityhousing.com.au

The Community Housing State Conference in November, 2007, was the big ticket item of the year and proved to be a huge success judging by the feedback CHCWA received.

The Awards for Excellence in Community Housing recognise the achievements of individual community housing organisations and encourage excellence within the sector. The awards are based on the National Community Housing Awards that were previously managed by the National Awards Council under the auspices of the National Community Housing Forum.

CHCWA is coordinating the ad-

ministrative support for the steering committee which establishes the awards guidelines and which coordinates the State Community Housing Conference. The committee also appoints a panel of judges for the awards, the members of which have expertise in community housing management, community services, consumer experience or any other area of knowledge or experience the committee considers relevant.

The awards are open to all large and small organisations involved in the development and provision of community housing that can demonstrate best practice. Now is a good time for all providers to think about nominating for the awards before the call for nominations early in the new year.

Affordable Housing Round Tables

CHCWA representatives attended the WA National Affordable Housing Agreement Round Table with professor Julian Disney, hosted by Shelter, on Thursday, August 21, 2008.

Also in attendance were representatives of the Department of Child Protection, the Department of Housing and Works, the department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Housing Industry Association, Curtin University, the University of WA and the WA Council of Social Services.

Professor Disney opened the Roundtable with a synopsis on the developments of the NAHA group work to date and then invited the participants to put forward the views of their organisation as it impacts in the WA context.

He said the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) had decided that most Commonwealth grants to the States would be made through five major Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs), one of which is for affordable housing. There will also be some National Partnership Payments (NPP) for more specific purposes, some of which will relate to particular housing programs.

COAG has decided that the SPP and NPP arrangements for affordable housing will be based on a National

Affordable Housing Agreement to take effect from January 1, 2009. It will replace the current Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) which was due to expire at the end of June this year but has been extended to the end of the year.

Professor Disney said it appears the new National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) will be negotiated under the auspices of COAG in accordance with COAG meetings in the remainder of 2008.

In October, it will consider new Statements of Objectives, Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures

and firm up reform proposals and in December it will finalise the overall funding package and Agreement.

The COAG Housing Working Group will be responsible for developing key proposals for consideration at the October meeting and the Commonwealth and State Treasuries will recommend the funding package to the December meeting.

After the meeting closed and informal discussions took place with some participants, CHCWA presented a copy of its recent publication, 'The Affordable Housing Crisis, Where to from here?' to Professor Disney.

First Homeless Connect

Perth's first Homeless Connect is on Wednesday, November 26, 2008, from 9am to 3pm at Citiplace Community Centre, Upper Level City Railway Station Complex, Wellington Street, Perth. The event is about helping disadvantaged people get connected with a range of services and advice.

Homeless Connect is a 'one-stop-shop' model based on a program initiated in San Francisco and it will be held in capital cities around Australia. The goal is to facilitate access to a range of services that will assist people who are disadvantaged to find new pathways

and connections.

The range of services available on the day include accommodation assistance, support and counselling, legal advice, employment options, free health check-ups with GPs, podiatrists and ophthalmologists, massage and natural therapy treatments, food and beverages, personal hygiene assistance including hair cuts, showers and clothing, identification, budget and financial counselling and employment and training services.

For more information about Homeless Connect, telephone the City of Perth on (08) 9461 3111.

Who we are and what we do

The Community Housing Coalition of WA is the peak representative and service body for organisations delivering non-government social housing in WA.

CHCWA's role is to

• **Represent the interests of local government and non-government social housing providers in WA.**

We make representations on behalf of the community housing sector to state and federal governments and also through our membership of relevant state and national committees including the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP), The Community Housing Federation of Australia, the WA Housing Minister's Forum.

• **Promote and expand local government and non-government social housing in WA.**

CHCWA is intimately involved in the ongoing promotion and expansion of community housing. This includes working with national, state and local governments to increase their commitments to community housing.

• **Improve the delivery of local government and non-government social housing in WA.**

CHCWA also works at a grassroots level to improve the delivery of community housing through advice, resourcing and training. CHCWA is the agency responsible for administering the Code of Practice for the community housing sector in Western Australia.

• **Identify unmet social housing needs**

Since merging with the Council to Homeless persons in 1999, CHCWA has become increasingly involved in homeless issues and now works to clearly identify unmet social housing need.

Becoming a member

Community housing providers are a diverse group of organisations, but there are issues which affect the whole sector and which require a united voice.

Membership of CHCWA ensures that individual providers can make a difference, shaping the political and social landscape in ways that best serve the needs of providers and tenants.

CHCWA speaks with a strong voice for the sector, as well as providing a platform for discussing policy direction and best practice.

Full membership of CHCWA is open to:

- Incorporated non-government, not-for-profit organisations that have the provision of community housing as their main objective.
- Incorporated organisations that manage or sponsor community housing projects as part of their operations.
- Unincorporated organisations that have the provision of community housing as their main objective.

Other organisations and individuals are welcome to join as Associate Members.

Membership benefits

Improve the operating environment for your organisation by providing input into policies, positions and practices relating to community housing.

We take your suggestions and represent your views to politicians, Government departments, the media, special interest groups and other stakeholders, ensuring that your concerns are heard and resolved.

We also offer members:

- Training in Managing Challenging Behaviour, Introduction to Community Housing, New Workers Induction, Asset Management, Developing Policies, Risk Management and Rent Setting.
- Regular meetings, to enable members to offer input into CHCWA policy.
- Members-only social **functions**, giving you an opportunity to meet other providers in a social setting.
- Workshops and forums to discuss technical, business and political issues.
- Realistic discounts on training fees.
- Access to research and statistical information.
- Members' section on the web site, where you will find current events, training opportunities and invitations to members-only functions.
- Opportunity for free advertising on our website.
- Free publications

Membership Fees:

Fees are based on the number of dwellings managed by the applicant:

Full membership:

0 - 10 = \$ 80

11 - 50 = \$190

51 - 100 = \$400

101 - 250 = \$520

251 - 400 = \$750

401 - 500 and above = \$1100

(GST included)

Associate Membership:

Individual = \$45

Organisation = \$95