



I'm so over El Niño and La Niña - those kids are not all right ... there are appalling and unseasonable floods in Queensland, and thunderstorms, fog and humidity in SA.

Peter Goers



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Some like it hot – and I'm one of 'em

Peter Goers



(low 30s) weather is expected this weekend but I'm not holding my breath.

I'm so over El Niño and La Niña – those kids are not all right.

Meanwhile, there are appalling and unseasonable floods in Queensland, and thunderstorms, fog and humidity in South Australia. Most of us live in SA because it lacks horrible humidity. Summer in Oz is about fun in the sun with requisite protection.

Much as they keep adding to LGBTQIA2S+, we used to be encouraged to slip, slap, slop in the sun, then seek and slide were added but when will they add sit, sulk, surrurate, sleaze, snooze, slurp, stoop, slum and get shickered to the list? Those more indoor activities are more suited to this summer because we ain't going to the beach or outdoors much.

At Christmas I felt sorry for all the kiddies to whom Father Christmas had given beach towels and boogie boards that have gone unused, as kids who need exercise are back to sitting on their increasingly large bums killing people on computer games. (Equating computer games with killing people inflames gamers much as the insistence that bikes be registered inflames cyclists who refuse to take responsibility for their shocking and

dangerous behaviour on the roads. But I enjoy stirring those possums.)

I feel for the many families who take their annual trip to a beach or river town, shack or luxurious holiday home. I feel for ice cream vendors and those businesses depending on the summer economy.

A cooler summer empowers all those idiots who deny climate change science, and climate change is much more than global warming, but a bit more global warming in SA over summer won't kill us – or perhaps it will. OK, so we don't necessarily want a slew of days over 40C as in summers past, but some good mid-30s weather or even 100 degrees in the old money would be nice.

At least people's electricity bills will be less horrifying if they are not using their aircon as much, and it's always awful when both SA and the eastern states get heatwaves because SA always loses power because, of course, the eastern states are always more important than us.

Hopefully, the weather will heat up to a scorcher for the Fringe as it gives all those visiting Pommy comedians something else to complain about.

I relish the Australian speech (fast disappearing) and in very hot weather someone always sidles up to you and says, sardonically, "Hot enuffor ya?"

Perhaps I should move to Dubai where 50C is common. My critics will cheer but that's a horrible, fake place. Bring on our patented, expected dry heat which SA is famous for. We always used to say, "it's always hot when the kids go back to school". But it hasn't been for years.

Perhaps we're now all too cool for school.

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Is it my fault? Ever since I took my sea change and moved to glorious Glenelg seven years ago, we've had seven mild summers in a row.

I'm sick of "coolth". I know cooler weather suits a lot of people but some like it hot and I love basking heat. It could be 40C every day and I'd be happy. I love to swim (or at least bob around like a cork) but I'm a wuss and don't swim unless it's over 30C and thus, so far this cool summer, I've had just one dip.

We've only had one really hot day and that was in November. And it's even been cold. I was still using an electric blanket in December. It's weird. What's added to the problem of this disappointing and widdershins weather is that the good folk at the Bureau of Meteorology (now increasingly centralised in Brisbane) predicted a very hot summer with appropriate dire warnings. This prognostication has come to naught, thus far. At the time of writing, warmer

HOT

MISS Saigon at the Festival Theatre is flawless and unmissable with not a dry eye, or empty seat, in the house. **NO** new development on the parklands. **MATT** Thistlewaite, Minister for the Republic.



NOT

BLOODY e-scooters. Get rid of them. **WHY** are the James Place public toilets never open? **DAVID** Warner – if the cap fits, wear it and get lost. **THE** Royal Hotel – shockingly bad SA movie, though Hugo Weaving is good.

Fix our warped housing or face social instability

Wendy Hayhurst



As the Prime Minister seeks ideas to ease the cost of living in his May budget, he must prioritise housing.

Housing costs eat up a huge proportion of incomes and have soared in the past few years. In the past 12 months alone, average rents have rocketed by \$100 a week, and even more in our biggest cities.

Less than 1 per cent of advertised rentals are affordable for a minimum wage earner.

If nothing is done, the number of households experiencing homelessness, overcrowded homes or rental stress will soar from 640,000 in 2021 to 940,000 by 2041.

Australia's warped housing system is creating a new class of working poor. It is crunch time. Choosing to be timid is a huge risk to social stability.

Places like California and London illustrate the consequence of inaction. If you walk through downtown San Francisco today you will see streets lined with tent encampments of people with nowhere affordable to live.

California needs 2.5 million more homes, but San Francisco approved less than one new dwelling per day in the first half of 2023.

London's housing crisis has spawned a cottage industry of slum landlording.

People pay a small fortune for a makeshift lean-to or a damp, rat-plagued room with exposed electrical wiring. Meantime, London is set to miss its target of 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s.

So if we don't want London or San Francisco as the new normal, what's the alternative path?

We need more new homes in every part of the market.

The National Housing Accord says NSW must build 75,000 units a year, mostly in Greater Sydney. Yet, updated forecasts for Sydney predict just 36,000 a year for the next five.

We must be equally focused on the right type of supply, in the right locations. Over the past decade social housing declined to a 40-year low of about 4 per cent of overall housing stock.

A fair slice of new homes must be targeted at low to moderate-income households.

As an immediate first step, the \$10bn Housing Australia Future Fund must at least be doubled on the back of commodity-fuelled budget surpluses.

This would boost the housing subsidy revenue stream and add to the 30,000 homes already pledged over the next five years.

Then governments must also use planning powers to generate social and affordable housing by requiring developers to set aside 5 to 10 per cent of new stock to be rented below market rate for low to moderate-income earners.



London's housing crisis has spawned a cottage industry of slum landlording

Property developers will factor this obligation into the prices they pay for the land, just as they do in many other countries – and even now in the City of Sydney.

A well-designed and publicised scheme should not increase project costs.

These approaches must be uniform across the nation.

Australia must also revisit tax breaks for private landlords.

These do not expand supply but cost the commonwealth \$8.5bn in 2021 and are forecast to soar to \$20bn in the decade.

These arrangements are 25 years old and would not be introduced today.

A steady rollback will release resources to deliver real change. Housing is a big, complex problem. Ignoring it is simply not an option.

Wendy Hayhurst is chief executive of the Community Housing Industry Association



A slice of new stock needs to be set aside for low to moderate-income housing.