



Shelter WA Update

June 2010

The State Budget

In broad terms the total Budget revenue for 2010-11 is an anticipated \$22,591M. Expenditure of \$22,305M is projected with almost 50% directed to Health and Education. Households face slightly more than 9% total increase in fees and utility charges, on average paying \$368 more over the year. Government expenditure growth for the public service is projected to decrease to a growth rate of 4% from over 12% last year. However, government spending on the public service has grown on average 8% pa every year for the past 10 years and it is not evident how the rate will be so significantly slowed. Several large infrastructure projects are funded or part funded and these include metropolitan and regional hospitals and prisons, sporting facilities, bike paths and a stadium, the Ord River project, Oakagee Port, Browse LNG and planning for the waterfront and City Link. New policy bodies are being formed including a Partnership Forum chaired by Professor Peter Shergold to support change resulting from the recommendations of the Economic Audit Committee. The government has continued to honour the Non-Government Indexation formula, with 3.1% reflected in the projection. Two new social innovation grant and community development investment streams have been established with \$2M this year and \$4M each year thereafter for the grant fund and a loan pool of \$10M for the investment stream.

Housing overview:

\$175m was spent on new housing construction in 2009-10. \$115m has been budgeted for 2010-11, higher than the forward estimate of \$45m. The State Government is contributing \$81.6m less to Dept Housing – which is being made up by increased internal and commonwealth revenue. Overall expenditure by the Dept Housing will increase by \$16m in 2010-11. As of April 2010, a total of 13 high value properties have been sold at a total value of \$13.3 million. Ten properties have been spot purchased so far with the proceeds, at a total cost of \$4.3 million. What the other \$9m has gained is unclear. Expenditure on community housing in 2010-11 will be \$4.96m, consistent with last year's forward estimate. The State Government commissioned an independent third party audit of all lands held by State land development agencies or by local authorities that have the potential to be developed for the purpose of social housing and, in particular Community Housing. A new Office of Land and Housing Supply has been announced.

National Rental Affordability Scheme:

1,114 dwellings are to be built in Perth and southern WA to be rented out at least 20% below market rate to tenants who meet income eligibility requirements (Aust. Govt. Media Release, Tanya Plibersek, 18/05/2010).

The State Government has allocated \$380m over the 4 year forward estimates for housing its own workforce, constructing 250 units in 2010-11 and a further 150 units in 2011-12

- 144 in the Pilbara,
- 109 in the Kimberley,
- 64 in the Wheatbelt,
- 24 in the Mid West,
- 20 in South West and Great Southern,
- 19 in the Goldfields

No announcement was made for housing for community service workers. WACOSS will advocate for eligibility to the \$380m for the non-government sector. Development of a strategic policy is uncertain. The Residential Tenancies Act has now been applied to housing tenants in remote communities. \$6.9 million for the essential maintenance of Aboriginal Hostels in addition to the \$6.3 billion committed to Closing the Gap programs by the Commonwealth, states and territories through COAG from 2008-2014. Reportedly on track to build 320 new houses in remote areas and refurbish 587 in 2009-10. The State Budget Papers suggest the NPA will enable up to 295 new houses to be built and up to 1,000 houses to be refurbished from March 2009 to June 2013.

Royalties for Regions funding: \$13 million from 2010-11 to 2012-13 for **Indigenous Visitor Hostels:**

- 30 bed centre in Kalgoorlie
- 50 bed centre in Broome.

Roebourne Housing Initiative: \$5 million demolition and rebuilding of 12 new units.

Remote Area Essential Services Program: An additional \$20.4m in 2010/11 to continue the provision of power, water and wastewater services to 91 remote indigenous communities (approx 11, 000 people).

Accommodation Support Service: Support for people with disabilities to live in a range of accommodation options such as hostels, group homes or their own home. Support includes personal care and assistance with independent living skills. \$300m – 09/10, \$330.5m – 10/11

Individual Support Service: provision of aids, equipment and support to people with disabilities to access positive and constructive day options, maintain health and wellbeing and develop skills and abilities \$107.5m – 09/10, \$109m – 10/11.

Individual Coordination: Local Area Coordination, to assist people with disabilities, their families and carers plan, organise and access supports and services which enhance their participation in local community \$22.65m – 09/10, \$24.05m – 10/11

Family and Carer Support: Provision of a range of flexible family support and respite services to support families and carers in their primary care-giving role \$55m – 09/10, \$63.2m – 10/11



Community Access and Inclusion: community awareness and education about disability and the provision of support to State and local governments to ensure people with disabilities can access facilities, services and supports. \$1.687m – 09/10, \$1.746m – 10/11.

Several health initiatives are welcomed.

\$117.4 m over four years (\$29 million each year) to improve Indigenous health through the NPA for: tackling smoking; delivering primary health care; transition to adulthood programs (working with the MH Commission); improving services in prisons; and health care system education. \$17.1m invested under element two of the **Indigenous Early Childhood Development** NPA for programs focusing on pre-pregnancy, ante-natal, sexual and reproductive health (Commonwealth government). An amount of \$11.3m over 5yrs under element three of the **Indigenous Early Childhood Development** NPA to improve health outcomes for Indigenous women and children is committed. The **Mental Health Commission** has been established with discrete funds of \$445m in 09/10 and \$508m in 10/11.

The Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes also includes a \$22million reform program allocated to the Commission to establish a dedicated state-wide **Aboriginal Mental Health Service**. **The Drug and Alcohol Office** has received an extra \$4.3 million in funding to focus on prevention and early intervention through campaigns and education, as well as working with NGOs in clinics. \$55.2m in 09/10, \$59.5 in 10/11

Emergency Ambulance Services: \$150 million over five years to improve the delivery of emergency ambulance services

Additional School Support Staff (\$28m over 4 years): \$3.2m – 09/10, \$6.7m – 10/11

Independent Public Schools: \$3.3m – 10/11 \$19 million over four years to assist those schools that have decided to become Independent Public Schools.

Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee: A cross-government group focusing on effective coordination of service delivery and support to Indigenous people across the state. In addition, the WA Aboriginal Advisory Council has been re-established and has developed a strategic plan. The Government is investing \$49.7 million over 4 years (\$12.4 million per year) for community child health services, focusing on speech pathology, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. This will create 45 child health specialist positions. WACOSS called for 105 child health nurses specifically to be appointed in order to address the gap across the 310 child health centres across in WA – so while this announcement is welcome it still falls short of what's required. Additional funding of \$2.3 million in 2010-11 to provide for the costs of children and young people in care to meet expected rises in foster care subsidies, children's expenditure and leaving care costs. The average cost per day for a child in care continues to rise, from \$160 in 09/10 to \$171 in 10/11, and average of \$4000 per child pa.

Responsible Parenting Program

In order to enact the Parental Support and Responsibility Act 2008, \$28 million over four years is being provided for the Responsible Parenting Program in the Murchison and Great Southern regions in 2010/11 and other areas of the State over the following two years.

Shelter WA gratefully acknowledges WACOSS for the Budget Briefing Papers and the WA Department of Treasury and Finance for sharing their data. To see the budget please visit the Department of Treasury and Finance WA website [here](#)

Street to Home – New Services to Respond to Homelessness in WA

See the list of new Homeless Services and the NPA initiatives at the Department for Child Protection website [here](#)

The combined effect of the National Partnership Agreements for Social Housing and Homelessness along with the Nation Building Jobs Program and Stimulus monies have created the platform for a long awaited environment of growth in services for WA's homeless and disadvantaged. While the approximately 147 WA former SAAP funded services are being retained as Homeless Services under the National Affordable Housing Agreement at ~ \$40M pa, the NPA Homelessness will inject \$135.1M over 4 years toward Early Intervention, Breaking the Cycle and Improving and Integrating the service system, interdepartmentally, across government and non-government sectors.

A joined up approach between the Departments for Child Protection, Housing, the Mental Health Commission, Corrective Services, Employment, Education and Training services and Centrelink is being driven with 14 new initiatives ranging from integrating housing and support such as Foyer and Common Ground models, programs working with young people leaving state care, street present people with substance abuse and mental health issues, domestic violence outreach and safe at home programs, services to support children in families with experience of DV to retain connection to school and child health, remote rough sleepers services and assertive outreach in the Kimberley and Goldfields.

An exciting community Mental Health initiative, a Mobile Clinical Outreach Team (MCOT) combining community psych nurses, a Registrar Medical Officer and a Psychiatric Consultant to provide liaison, advise, consultation and support to Assertive Outreach Teams and Housing Support Workers is progressing. This service will undertake engagement and motivational interviewing, specialist assessment, dual diagnosis treatment and time limited shared care. Importantly this agency will not be required to wait for and acute episode of such severity to deliver a diagnosis and trigger care, symptomatology will prompt engagement. It is hoped that this model will support a broadening of the nurse role toward nurse practitioners trained and authorised to deliver extended care, prescribe and administer some medications. Information sharing, a partnership and collaborative approach and truly engaged and responsive mental health care to this group of people is very welcome.

45 additional Housing Support Workers have been funded to work in agencies including St Bartholomews, 55 Central, St Pats, Salvation Army, Foundation Housing, Ruah and Anglicare with these workers carrying smaller caseloads and employing an intensive case-management approach. These workers will also have access to discretionary brokerage funds in order to meet the costs of whatever is deemed necessary to more effectively assist in transitioning clients to stable and sustained long term accommodation, linked to adequate community supports. Many community workers know what a difference discretionary funds can make to the success of any intervention, and this initiative and resource is invaluable.



WA Peaks Forum & WACOSS Opportunities for Community Agencies to get Low Cost Human Resources for [Jobs2Communities](#) and [Climate Change Readiness Projects](#)

New help is now available to the community service sector in Perth.

On behalf of the WA Peaks Forum, the WA Council of Social Service has an agreement with the Commonwealth Government through the Jobs Fund to enhance the capacity of the West Australian community services sector, while responding to emerging and current needs of the labour market, and to help not-for-profit organisations be prepared for higher energy and utility costs, improving environmental sustainability and reducing carbon emissions.

The Project [Jobs2Communities](#) will provide job seekers with a gateway into a career in the community services sector, and provide the community services sector with a work-ready workforce.

[Jobs2Communities](#) will establish 3 pools of retrenched workers from the business and corporate sectors with skills in information technology, quality assurance, administration, grant/tender writing and marketing. These people will be assigned to work in organisations who have applied for a project worker to undertake organisational development tasks.

To date [Jobs2Communities](#) workers have assisted NGO agencies to review and update their Policies and Procedures Manuals, develop detailed contact and member databases, develop systems to collect and report inquiries, requests and referrals, review and record library and document resource holdings and refresh their websites.

The Climate Change Readiness Project allows for NFP organisations to have an energy and water audit of their building premises undertaken with a report identifying what can be done to save on energy and water costs.

Applications for both projects are now open. Organisations who wish to take advantage of the opportunity to have an energy audit or [Jobs2Communities](#) worker need to make an application. All details can be found at www.wacoss.org.au

Shelter WA Seeks Founders and Early Members for 30 Year Anniversary

Shelter WA was established in 1979 by a group of committed, passionate individuals who recognised the need for a peak body to advocate for a housing system that effectively responded to the needs of low-income and otherwise disadvantaged housing consumers including those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The founders of Shelter WA lobbied the State Government and negotiated with the then State Housing Authority to contribute to development of policies and procedures in public housing and private rental and boarding houses and night shelters.

Since those early days, several other housing peak bodies and advocacy services were developed, that had their germination in Shelter WA, including the Tenants Advice Service WA and Community Housing Coalition of WA.

We have recently become aware that there are people who have been granted Life Member status, but with the passage of time these records and historical knowledge is lost.

Shelter WA is very keen to reconnect with our Founders and Life Members and those who have played a part in Shelter WA from the early years and encourages our readers to spread the word and get back in touch if you are one of these important people.

Shelter WA Nominations to the Management Committee

Shelter WA is an Incorporated Association with a Management Committee that provides corporate governance, strategic and policy direction. We are currently seeking nominations from interested members to join the Committee and become part of a team dedicated to the health and wellbeing of Shelter WA. The Committee meets at 4.30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of every month in Claisebrook Lotteries House East Perth. Please phone 9325 6660 or alternatively email at exec@shelterwa.org.au, for further information.

Conferences and Workshops

National Homelessness Conference 1 - 3 September 2010 [here](#)

National Community Legal Centres Conference 25-27 October Victoria [here](#)

Australia New Zealand Third Sector Research (Sydney) 15-16 Nov [Conference](#)

Australian Law Reform Commission Submissions Due: 4 June [Family Violence Inquiry](#)

Learning Centre Link & Anglicare Results Based Accountability Training 8 or 9 June

Ph: 9263 2122 email: rto@anglicarewa.org.au

Men's Advisory Network 9 August [Conference Seminar](#):

Australasian Housing Researchers (Auckland) 17-19 Nov [Conference](#):

6th National Homelessness (Brisbane) 1-3 Sept [Conference](#)

The 20th Mental Health Services (Sydney) 14-17 Sept [Conference](#)

Suicide Prevention (Brisbane) 17-20 Nov [Conference](#)

National Self Help and Support Group Awareness Day 8 September

International Social Housing The Hague (Netherlands) 13-14 Oct [Summit](#)



Vincent housing spat

by KATIE BASTIANS and DAVID BELL

A MAJOR affordable housing lobby group has slammed Vincent mayor Nick Catania for saying the town's proportion of public housing should not rise.

Shelter WA chief Bronwyn Kitching says Vincent has a "measly four per cent" public housing which is far below the proportion of similar inner-city areas internationally.

The mayor, a former Labor MP, is opposed to Shelter WA's desire for the town's public housing percentage to rise to six per cent.

"Mr Catania fails to appreciate that 50 per cent of public housing tenants are people with disabilities and people on aged pensions," Ms Kitching said.

"In the UK 38 per cent of housing is council or community owned, in the Netherlands and other European countries it can be up to 60 per cent.

"This sort of comment is purely scare-mongering and sensational."

The mayor says the town is doing its fair share.

"We accept our public housing responsibility and we've shown that because we have a fair representation of public housing in the town," he said.

"However, we don't want to have an over-representation of public housing.

"We want [it] to blend in with our housing stock and our community



attitudes."

Shelter WA and Homeswest argue public housing works best when built in inner city areas like Vincent as it's close to public transport and essential services.

Mr Catania's comments follow the WA housing department's plan to build 309 public and social housing units in a small parcel of land near Claisebrook train station.

Another 10 are on the way for Claisebrook Road, 49 for Fitzgerald Street and 61 along Newcastle Street.

Ms Kitching acknowledges the merit of "spreading it evenly" but says it's more important to get public housing built quickly to "accommodate people in housing crisis".

Prominent East Perth resident John Collins supports the Claisebrook plan, saying it encourages families into the area who stay longer than the "transient" young professionals attracted by high-priced private rental apartments.

• John Collins supports public housing around the Claisebrook train station saying it encourages diversity and families rather than "transient" young professionals.

rather than be looked upon as a negative in our community where we create large parcels of public housing land which in the past has proved very unproductive and very negative to public

Houses of shame

Street youth crisis

By PHIL HICKEY

ILLEGAL boarding houses crammed with street youths as young as 15 are operating across Perth because of a lack of crisis and emergency care.

Homeless support network Shelter WA is investigating a flood of reports of unregulated boarding houses that have sprung up around the city.

The charity said it was investigating one case of up to 16 people living in a single-bathroom house where living rooms were partitioned and rented separately.

Drug-taking and alcohol abuse in such rental houses was rife, authorities said.

Shelter WA chief executive Bronwyn Kitching said the illegal boarding houses were used by the desperate homeless, while an "underground system" of unregulated international student accommodation was also an issue.

"There is little legislative protection for boarders and lodgers. Tenants have no rights to privacy, security of tenure, exclusive occupation, guaranteed rent levels and are vulnerable to theft, eviction and financial exploitation," Ms Kitching said. "We believe there are some operators out there offering rooms without complying with any local government laws."

Uniting Care West executive man-

ager Lesley Wilkinson said unregulated boarding houses were a problem, particularly in winter.

"Sadly the people who run these unregulated homes are not the most straight up and down citizens," she said. "I can't help but think the people who choose to stay are being ripped off."

Salvation Army spokesman Warren Palmer said he was aware of a number of unregulated boarding houses that had lured many renters.

He said people, in their desperation to find a safe bed, would resort to living conditions that were not healthy or acceptable.

"Unregulated boarding houses leave vulnerable people open to abuse, often sharing cramped and squalid conditions," Mr Palmer said.

"These boarding houses provide little privacy or dignity and we as a community must see this as counterproductive and an unacceptable form of accommodation."

The City of Perth said it was not aware of a rise in illegal boarding houses, though a spokesman said one landlord on Beaufort St was advised of the council's concerns about the building being used for emergency accommodation.

City officers have visited the premises regularly and police are kept informed of who is staying there, City of Perth chief executive Frank Edwards said.

