

Shelter WA Update: Shelter WA Housing News - 29 June 2007

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1 Housing Issues in Broome

From 2005 through to the end of 2006 the Perth housing market underwent an unprecedented increase in median housing prices and private rents and as a result was constantly under the eye of the media. Receiving less media attention was the Town of Broome in the Kimberley region which has also seen house prices rise well beyond the reach of low income households. But, unlike Perth, the Broome housing market has had very high median housing prices and median rents over a much longer period. It is broadly recognised that the supply of affordable housing dried up in Broome well before it became widespread in the metropolitan region.

Because of the urgency of the housing situation in Broome – it has the second highest rate of homelessness rate per 10,000 head of population in WA, second only to East Kimberley - Shelter WA decided to conduct its own evaluation of the Broome housing system. The report forms part of Shelter's ongoing work identifying regional housing issues in West Australia.

The paper looks at various components of Broome's housing system in an attempt to draw out some of the underlying problems related to the inadequate supply of affordable housing and social housing. The report examines:

- Demographic factors affecting housing demand and housing need;
- The private housing system and the public rental system; and
- Homelessness

The paper also includes some policy ideas for discussion that are aimed at addressing Broome's growing housing problems.

The full report: *Housing Issues in Broome: A Shelter WA Discussion paper, 2007* is available at www.shelterwa.org.au/publications.htm.

2 Peel Affordable Housing Plan: The Next Phase

Over the last six months Shelter WA has provided community representation on the Peel Region Affordable Housing Steering Group (PRAHSG). The Group comprises a range of key government and non government agencies and is chaired by The Hon Dr Sally Talbot MLC Member of South West. Executive support is provided by Peel Development Commission with additional support provided by the Department of Housing and Works. The aim of the PRAHSG is to develop a Peel Region Affordable Housing Plan (PRAHP) and identify opportunities to increase the supply of affordable

housing through major infrastructure projects. The PRAHP is nearing completion.

Shelter WA is strongly behind the Peel initiative. We identified the potential for regional affordable housing strategies to become a key part of Western Australia's social housing system when it was first proposed in *Housing Strategy WA, 2005*. We believe a regional housing framework should complement the bigger role played by the State Housing Authority (SHA) in the provision of public, community and affordable housing. What this means in theory is that it has the potential to add to the social housing stock provided by the SHA and provide pathways to attract private investment in low cost private rental. There is an opportunity for this type of framework to be replicated in other planning regions in Western Australia.

Over the next six month period, Shelter WA will continue to provide policy input and report on the progress of the (PRAHP).