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Shelter WA Housing News: 13 January 2005

1. Discussion Paper for Shelter WA / WACOSS Pre Election Housing Forum
2. Shelter WA Newsletter December 2004: State Election
3. Housing for Humanity Tsunami Appeal

1. Discussion Paper for Shelter WA / WACOSS Pre Election Housing Forum

The discussion paper for the Shelter WA / WACOSS Pre Election Housing Forum is now available. The paper provides a comparison of the housing policies of the political parties participating at the forum. It finds that while all parties "have expressed a degree of concern regarding falling housing affordability ..., a shortcoming across all parties, with the exception of the WA Greens, is the lack of specific targets and funding commitments to back up the good intentions expressed in the platforms ... Overall, the ratings indicate that there is significant scope for improvement".

The paper contains:

- * a brief overview of current housing issues in Western Australia,
- * the responses of the various parties to a questionnaire on key housing issues distributed by Shelter WA in November 2004,
- * the housing policies of the various parties as listed on their websites
- * a brief comparison of housing policies
- * the agenda for the forum

The forum will be held as follows:

9.30am-12.30pm followed by a light lunch
Tuesday 18 January 2005
Conference Room
City West Lotteries House
2 Delhi Street, West Perth

The Minister for Housing (Hon Nick Griffiths MLC), the Opposition spokesperson for housing (Hon Ray Halligan MLC), the WA Greens spokesperson for housing (Hon Giz Watson MLC) and representatives from the Australian Democrats (Ms Pat Olver) and Family First (Mr Nigel Irvine) have agreed to speak at the forum.

Go to www.shelterwa.org.au/housing_news.htm to download the discussion paper.

2. Shelter WA Newsletter December 2004: State Election

Shelter WA recently released its December newsletter. The theme of the newsletter is the upcoming State Election. The newsletter contains the housing policies of the political parties who will be addressing the pre election housing forum organised by Shelter WA and WACOSS on Tuesday 18 January 2005. The Minister for Housing (the Hon Nick Griffiths MLC), the Opposition spokesperson for housing (the Hon Ray Halligan MLC), the Greens (WA) spokesperson for housing (the Hon Giz Watson MLC) and representatives

from the Democrats (Ms Pat Olver) and Family First (Mr Nigel Irvine) have agreed to speak at the forum.

Further details on the forum are available inside the newsletter. In addition, the newsletter contains an article by WACOSS putting housing in a broader social context, an update on Homeswest policy changes and News in Brief.

The newsletter is available at www.shelterwa.org.au/newsletters.htm.

3. Housing for Humanity Tsunami Appeal

Habitat for Humanity is to house up to 25,000 families in a first-phase response in tsunami-affected countries that will require an investment from donors and others of some \$33 million. Groundbreaking for the first replacement homes is set to begin later this month, in Sri Lanka. Habitat's initial response plan calls for transitional and permanent housing projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

"The families most impacted were the very poor", said Steve Weir, Vice President for Habitat for Humanity in Asia-Pacific, "and there is a serious need to get them out of the camps and back onto their own land as soon as possible. Not only are many of the relief camps unsafe and growing more unsafe, but they have moved families away from the limited sources of livelihood that they have. Getting them back into shelter on their own land sooner rather than later must be our first priority."

The transitional "core" house will consist of a permanent one-room structure with a veranda and sanitary facilities. The preference is to build the structures on land sites already owned by the families. The transitional houses are built on Habitat's "First Shelter" model for disaster relief and will not require repayment. To move more quickly and reach more people in some locations, Habitat also will offer simpler "kit" versions comprising a frame and a roof that, if necessary, can be dismantled and relocated. Flooring and walls will be made of temporary materials. Later, Habitat will work with families in transitional housing to extend and improve the structures with additional rooms and facilities, built on the Habitat model of homeowner involvement and purchase of the homes.

Go to www.habitat.org.au/involved/asia_tsunami.htm for more information, or make a donation at <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/secure/giving/donate.form?appealId=603>

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