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To: Karel Eringa
Subject: [SWA Update] Shelter WA Housing News: 20 July 2005
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SWA Update: Shelter WA Housing News - 20 July 2005

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1. Happy 5th Unbirthday *Housing Strategy WA*

“In July 2000, the Office of Housing Policy began some background research in preparation for the development of a housing strategy for Western Australia, in order to provide a robust framework for the advice it provides to Government. The thinking behind the work was that in order to fulfil its role of advising the Minister for Housing and Works and the Department of Housing and Works, on broader housing issues, it needed to take a holistic approach to the housing sector and the relationships between the various segments. On taking government in February, 2001, the Labor administration moved to consider the applicability of the work done so far, to their pre-election promise to undertake a housing strategy.”^[1]

No housing strategy has been forthcoming since the above words were written in September 2001. Originally due for release in September 2002, the *Housing Strategy WA* has suffered extensive delays. Since this time, the Department of Housing and Works has prepared extensive background research papers. The Housing Advisory Committee has been drafted to provide advice on the project and drafts of the strategy have been presented to various levels of Government. Luminaries like Brian Howe and Vivienne Milligan have been called on to provide direction.

All of this background work has confirmed from multiple vantage points that the supply of private rental housing is dwindling, social housing is not expanding, and affordability has fallen so low that average families can no longer afford to purchase even an entry level house. The situation with regard to vulnerable groups such as Indigenous people is simply unacceptable. Most significantly, the research has confirmed beyond doubt that the above issues have structural causes, and require an integrated solution.

Shelter WA will continue to use HAC and other avenues to keep calling for the State Government to finally release at least the discussion draft of the strategy. As the *Housing Strategy WA* website states: “A great deal of research has been completed and ideas sought from stakeholders. It is now time to ask the community for their input and ideas about housing in WA.”^[2]

^[1] Office of Housing Policy, *Outcomes of the Workshop to Establish a Vision and Goals for the Strategy*, Department of Housing and Works, September 2001

^[2] Office of Policy and Planning, *About Housing Strategy WA*, Department of Housing and Works, www.dhw.wa.gov.au/housingstrategywa, accessed 18 July 2005

2. Shelter WA Urgent Response Network

Shelter WA will launch an urgent response network on Thursday 28 July. The purpose of the network is to inform Shelter WA members about emerging housing issues and guide the development of Shelter WA's position on the issue. Urgent response network members will receive notification by email of new and contentious housing issues, and will then have the opportunity to feed their comments back either confidentially to Shelter WA or as an open comment accessible to all list members. Current and past issues discussed on the Network will be available in a special members only section of www.shelterwa.org.au.

The network is open to Shelter WA financial members who provide their email address will be added to the network automatically. If you are a financial member and haven't provided your email address, please contact Karel Eringa at karel@shelterwa.org.au. If you are not a financial member of Shelter WA and wish to join the network, please go to www.shelterwa.org.au/membership.htm to find out about membership options.

Finally, the Urgent Response Network is intended to complement rather than replace SWA Update. Associate members of Shelter WA will continue to receive email updates via this list free of charge.

3. National Housing Conference

Western Australia is hosting the 4th National Housing Conference at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre from 26 - 28 October 2005. Organised by the Western Australian Department of Housing and Works in conjunction with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), this Conference will bring together social housing practitioners, policy makers, housing advocates, planners, architects, developers, real estate managers and housing researchers for lively debate on a broad range of issues facing Australia's housing system.

The Provisional Conference Program is now available on the conference website: www.nationalhousingconference.org.au. If you have not yet registered for the conference and wish to take advantage of the early bird registration fees, please be sure to register before 29th July 2005. To register, please visit the conference website at the address above and follow the links to the online registration page or download the form and fax it back to Debrett's Conference & Event Management on (08) 9386 3292.

4. Housing Jobs: Tenant Advocate @ Welfare Rights and Advocacy Service

Welfare Rights & Advocacy Service is a Commonwealth and State funded community legal centre which provides assistance in relation to Social Security and Tenancy matters. This service is seeking a Tenant Advocate to work 2 days per week pro rata of full time rate of SACS Award CSW 4/5. Experience as a tenant advocate will be highly regarded. Selection documentation will be needed by applicants and may be secured by contacting this service on (08) 9328 1751. Applications close at 5.00 pm on Monday 1st August 2005.

5. Housing Jobs: Membership and Publications Officer @ CHCWA

The Community Housing Coalition of WA requires the services of a part time (9 hours per week) Membership and Publications Officer with good communication and organisational skills. Your duties will be to ensure the organisation provide quality services to the membership. Your skills in communication, organisation and the ability to work as part of a small team will be needed to secure this position. The position is permanent part-time subject to continued funding. The salary is based on SACS level 5 (currently \$39,951 to \$42,023 – pro rata). You can download an information kit at www.communityhousing.com.au/pdf.php?pdf_id=372 or ring CHCWA on (08) 9221 7933. The closing date for applications is 5.30pm Monday the 1st of August 2005

SWA Update is Shelter WA's housing email list. SWA Update is available to associate and full members of Shelter WA and appears roughly fortnightly. Go to www.shelterwa.org.au/subscribe.htm to become an associate member (currently free of charge).

Shelter WA also has an Urgent Response Network, which is restricted to financial members. If you are a financial member of Shelter WA and wish to join the Urgent Response Network, please email karel@shelterwa.org.au.

To remove yourself from this list, please send a blank email with Subject "UNSUBSCRIBE" to listserv@shelterwa.org.au

Please email karel@shelterwa.org.au with any other queries.

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For fortnightly updates on housing policy and research in Western Australia, go to www.shelterwa.org.au/subscribe.htm

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