



# Shelter WA September Newsletter

September 2013

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## Conferences

UDIA (WA)

*Streamlining the Urban Development Process in WA (11 September)*

Australian Housing Institute

*Tenant Participation Seminar (17 September, Sydney)*

Planning Institute of WA (WA)

*Smart, Global, Connected (19-20 September)*

UDIA (WA)

*Where are we heading? The economics of housing affordability and supply (26 September)*

National Seniors Australia (WA)

*WA State Convention (21 October)*

Men's Shed (WA)

## Shelter WA News

**Shelter WA** is conducting a [survey](#) to identify gaps in homelessness services in WA and barriers to getting people into appropriate services. The results of the survey, along with in-depth interviews, will be used in our ongoing advocacy on behalf of the homelessness sector in WA. In Shelter WA's role as representative on both National Shelter and the Council for Homeless Persons Australia, the results of the survey and interviews will also be used to inform policy at a Federal level. The information gathered will inform a report to help shape advocacy into the future of the National Partnership Agreements on Homelessness and the National Affordable Housing Agreement. If you work in the homelessness services sector or a related field or have experienced homelessness please fill out the survey by clicking [here](#). It will take less than 5 minutes.

**Shelter WA** has just released its Election Statement. We are calling for major parties to commit to the development of policies addressing housing affordability and homelessness in Australia, which have become major issues for the Australian electorate.

Chantal Roberts, Executive Officer of Shelter WA, stated: "There are some alarming statistics on housing affordability and homelessness in Australia, which necessitate some action in the form of realistic policies at the federal level, but which both major parties have been silent on during their campaigning. Further, neither of the major parties has responded to housing and homelessness peaks' calls to take up some of the recommendations in the Henry Tax Review".

The full media statement can be accessed on the [Shelter WA website](#).

**SHELTER WA ELECTION STATEMENT**

WHAT ARE LABOR AND THE COALITION DOING ABOUT IT? **NOTHING**

**NO POLICIES, NO FUNDING COMMITMENTS...**

KEY HOUSING STATISTICS

- 268,292 mortgage holders in housing stress (1 in 10)
- 593,085 rental households in housing stress (1 in 4)
- >500,000 shortfall of rental dwellings for low-income earners
- 105,237 homeless persons in Australia
- 84% of people polled on Auspoll believe 'housing affordability' is of concern

Shelter WA wants to see a commitment to:

- retaining a Cabinet-level Minister for Housing and Homelessness
- growth and development of affordable housing across Australia
- addressing homelessness
- taxation changes to facilitate affordable housing
- increase income and housing supports to realistic levels

Sources: National Shelter (2013); CHFA (2013); Homelessness Australia (2013); Auspoll (2013)

**Shelter WA** made a submission to the Department of Housing's 'Community Housing Rent Setting Policy. Proposals for change - for comment'. This is an important document and therefore this review

[2013 WA Men's Shed Seminar \(14<sup>th</sup> October\)](#)

AHURI

[8<sup>th</sup> National Housing Conference \(30 October, Adelaide\)](#)

State of Australian Cities

[National Conference \(26-29 November, Sydney\)](#)

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## Links



must be treated with high importance, especially in terms of policy changes, as they will affect community housing providers and also tenants.

Our response is available [here](#). We look forward to the next phase of this process and hope to have the opportunity to provide further input into the Department's rent setting policy for the community housing sector as the process of review continues.

**Housing Research Reviews** In February 2013, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia released its report entitled [Cancer of the bush or salvation of our cities? Fly-in, fly-out and drive-in, drive-out workforce practices in Regional Australia](#). The committee sought to explore the benefits and downsides to the practice of fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) on regional Australia. While recommendations from the report are Australia-wide, a significant proportion of the research was conducted within WA and many of the recommendations could have a significant impact on the Western Australian housing market. Our analysis of this report can be found [here](#).

Housing affordability continues to deteriorate across capital cities and regional areas around the country, and Western Australia has fared worse than most other states. This Housing Research Review provides an insight into the economics of the Western Australian affordable housing market. It is a summary of a full dissertation, conducted by Melissa Piscetek, a Masters student at Curtin University. The complete dissertation can be downloaded from the [Shelter WA website](#). Melissa's work analyses two policies that aim to improve housing affordability. The first policy analysed deals with the reform of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA), which would make housing more affordable for low income private renters. The second policy analysed is the abolition of stamp duties, as this would make housing more affordable for new homeowners. The review can be found [here](#).

## Housing and Homelessness News

**State Government** has developed an '[Affordable Housing Portal](#)' in combination with the Department of Housing. This is designed as a single entry point for consumers to access government and other information about affordable housing. The portal provides access to information about low-cost and low-entry home loans, affordable rentals and affordable properties for sale, financial assistance for renters in the private market and advice on renting and buying property. The Affordable Housing Portal can be accessed by visiting [affordablehousing.wa.gov.au](http://affordablehousing.wa.gov.au)

**The Salvation Army** has implemented a night outreach program, "[Street Team](#)". The program aims to assist rough sleepers; providing support with food, transport to services, sleeping bags and links with crisis accommodation and detox programs where required. The Street Team currently works in collaboration with Street to Home services, and aims to link in with Noongar Patrol in the future. If you would like to connect with this service, to obtain assistance for yourself or on behalf of someone sleeping rough, please contact Kris



on 0458 600 946, or 9326 9599 (BH). The new service operates Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday nights between 8.00 and 11.30pm.

**City of Perth** has updated its directory of **Homeless Services in the Inner City**. This directory is a "one stop shop" self help information directory for homeless persons or those at risk of homelessness who require information on where to seek assistance. It is also helpful for agencies assisting homeless persons or those at risk of homelessness. The service directory can be accessed on the [City of Perth website](#).

**WACOSS** responded to the release of the State Budget raising concerns about the potential impact of service cuts and highlighting affordable housing as the most pressing issue for the WA community. A more detailed analysis of the State budget can be found on the [WACOSS website](#).

**The Australian Greens** released their plan for a 'Better Deal for Renters' which outlines a set of national standards to help renters and make rental properties safer, more efficient and more affordable. The plan has been informed by their Rental Health Check survey which aimed to get a snapshot of where, how and to what extent tenants and people looking for rental properties are struggling. This program is detailed [here](#).

The Greens have also released a plan to deliver 85,000 new rental homes, 70,000 of these through the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), and another 15,000 through a Convert to Rent program which will convert empty properties to low-cost rental homes. Both of these initiatives come under the **Greens Rental Revolution Package**, details of which are available [here](#).

Further details on The Australian Greens' housing policies, including the recently released homelessness and social housing initiatives, can be found on the [Australian Greens' website](#).

**National Housing Conference** is fast approaching, being planned to commence on 30 October. [New speakers have been announced](#). The overarching theme '**A New Way Home**' is all about new ways of solving contemporary housing problems and will be exploring six major program [themes](#):

1. DisabilityCare and Housing Provision
2. The roles of Government and NFP in housing supply
3. Economic development and Indigenous communities
4. Homelessness prevention through mainstream services
5. Urban renewal and the supply of affordable housing
6. Housing in the economy

More information, including registration information, can be found at the [event website](#).

**National Information Centre for Residential Aged Care (NICRAC)** launched a pilot initiative to make the transition easier for those entering residential aged care. This is an important resource for consumers needing to access financial information. NICRAC specialists can discuss fee types and the costs, products and strategies that may be used to minimise fees and/or maximise cash flow in residential care, and can also refer callers to other relevant resources. This service operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on (02) 6280 0234.

**Dr Duncan Green Public Lecture 'From Poverty to Power'**. Make Poverty History and Oxfam are presenting a public lecture by Dr Duncan Green on Friday 6 September. He will discuss our evolving understanding of the nature of poverty, and the opportunities and assets required to break the cycle of poverty and inequality. More information can be found at the [event website](#).

**St Patrick's Community Support Centre** has secured a new worker for their innovative non-government partnership project. The South Metropolitan Partnership Project will bring together government and non-government agencies, especially with the appointment of Dr Karin MacArthur as St Pat's inaugural Community Partnership Broker. More information on this, as well as other programs and services, can be found on the [St Pat's website](#).

**Strictly Hypothetical** is a new brand of community dialogue about to arrive in Perth. These dialogues will explore a range of issues from climate change to the end of gender. They will be held at Rosie O'Grady's in Northbridge from 5 September – 17 October. More details are available on the [event website](#).

#### **Federal Election Statements/News:**

- **National Shelter**, the peak housing advocacy organisation for low income Australians, released its Federal Election Media Statement. It expresses deep concern that neither Labor nor the Coalition have offered any direct affordable housing policies. Major parties need to commit to affordable housing, and to halve homelessness by 2020. This statement can be viewed on the [National Shelter website](#).
- **Australians for Affordable Housing** released its 2013 Election Statement. They are calling on the political parties to ensure that everyone has access to an affordable home. This election statement outlines how this can be achieved. The statement from the AAH can be viewed on the [AAH website](#).
- **WACOSS** launched a [Federal election website](#). This site lists the priorities of Western Australian community services for policy and funding commitments, campaign statements and community events. The organisation also released a media statement calling for housing affordability and poverty reduction strategies. This statement can be found on the [WACOSS website](#).
- **Community Housing Federation of Australia** recently released its Federal election platform, called 'A Future for Affordable Housing', available on the [CHFA website](#). CHFA state *"Our housing market is failing us. Across Australia, median rents have risen at a rate far greater than incomes, which impacts people on low and moderate incomes who are heavily reliant on the private rental market."*
- **Property Council** offered 60 policy recommendations for government coming into the 2013 Federal Election. Key recommendations for housing include: Establish urban infrastructure bonds; Increase housing supply with a national housing partnership; Tax reform; Green incentives for older buildings; Clearing of red and green tape blockages. The full release can be viewed on the [Property Council's website](#).

## **Media**

**Shelter WA's** Executive Officer, Chantal Roberts, was interviewed by ABC News on 15 August, about the political flyers appearing in the City of Swan. These flyers imply criminality stemming from persons residing in public housing - which is both offensive and erroneous.

This news article can be found on the [ABC News website](#).

**Shelter WA's** Executive Officer, Chantal Roberts, was quoted and Shelter WA referenced in an ABC News article focusing on the Department of Housing's Disruptive Behaviour Management Strategy.

Shelter WA has been pursuing changes to the 'three strikes' policy since its introduction in 2011. Shelter WA is urging Housing Minister Bill Marmion to abandon the policy of evicting tenants for minor disturbances such as excessive noise, minor property damage or public disputes.

Ms Roberts was quoted as saying "What our report is asking for is those minor criteria - such as children being overly noisy - to be removed, because they don't exist in the private sector".

"People are not evicted because of noise complaints in the private sector, there are other avenues for people to complain about that." she said.

The full article can be accessed on the [ABC News website](#). For a copy of Shelter WA's letter to the Minister, click [here](#). If you support Shelter WA's views on this issue and would like the situation to change, please e-mail or write to Minister Marmion.

#### **Federal Government announcements:**

[Labor government reaffirms its pledge to halve homelessness](#)

#### **State Government announcements:**

[Federal Government short-changes WA](#)

[State Budget 2013-14: Protecting our Community - \\$34 million to promote Aboriginal home ownership in the West Kimberley](#)

[State Budget 2013-14: Investing in infrastructure to support our growing State – Government funds 500 more affordable homes](#)

## **Research**

**September Parity Call for Contributions** The September 'Reforming Homelessness Services' edition of Parity is calling for contributions. The fundamental aim of this edition is to examine and discuss the progress of homelessness services reform in all states and territories and provide a clear snapshot of the development and implementation reform agenda. Submissions must be made by Friday 20 September. More details are available by emailing [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au).

**Wesley Mission** has released a report into 'Homelessness and the next generation'. It looks at the immediate and long-term issues facing homeless mothers, their children and those experiencing homelessness as a child. This was done through an in-depth review of existing studies, as well as interviews with Wesley Mission clients and a policy and practice workshop.

**Homelessness Clearinghouse** contains numerous reports of interest this month. 'Keeping off the Streets: Update on service models in three states' is a report which provides an update on services delivering **Street to Home** programs in South Australia, Western Australia, and services engaged in similar activities in the Northern Territory. This is the second report in a longitudinal study which aims to fill the gap in evidence on services that are designed to respond to the needs of people sleeping rough.

'Coordination of services for Aboriginal homelessness in Western Australia Mid-West region' examines responses to Aboriginal homelessness in three towns in Western Australia: Meekatharra, Carnarvon; and Geraldton. Causes of homelessness included overcrowding, young people leaving home to avoid drug affected adults and also domestic violence. 'Indigenous Homelessness in Regional Australia' draws together the findings of five previous research projects into Indigenous homelessness.

'Working to "Turn off the Tap": The role of frontline services in addressing homelessness' report considers the way that *frontline services* interact with people who are homeless. People experiencing homelessness have complex needs and many will have frequent interaction with services such as ambulances, police, and hospital emergency departments.

Other reports of interest include:

- [Geographical analysis of the risk of homelessness](#)
- [Homelessness and the role of Information Technology in staying connected](#)
- [Housing \(In\)stability during Apprenticeship training](#)
- [The Role of Local Government in Reducing Homelessness](#)
- [Beyond Charity: the Engagement of the Philanthropic and Homelessness Sectors in Australia.](#)
- [Integrated Responses to Homelessness in Australia: What works and why?](#)
- [How Do We Decide What Works? Success and Risk in Homelessness Programs](#)
- [Addressing Later Life Homelessness](#)

**AHURI** released research into '[Design innovations delivered under the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan - Social Housing Initiative](#)'. This project will develop a new integrative development model for greyfields that can contribute to affordable housing provision. It will do this through case study research into housing associations' developments, surveying public housing land holdings and developing and testing design propositions for the redevelopment of this land.

AHURI also released an 'evidence review' into '[Why tax policy is housing policy](#)'. The review seeks to understand how current federal, state and territory tax laws impact housing supply and affordability. AHURI also released an evidence review into '[Leaving domestic violence, staying home](#)', which explores families experiences leaving domestic violence, but also the financial pressures and disadvantages stemming from this. Another AHURI project is looking at '[Successfully reducing anti-social behaviour](#)' and how having a safe, stable and affordable home can achieve this.

The [AHURI research agenda for 2014](#) is now available. The priority areas are: service use by homeless people, NRAS delivery, housing markets and productivity, demographic change and future housing subsidy, and housing and support responses to NDIS.

**Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)** released the 2013 edition of their biennial 'Australia's Welfare' report. The summary section of housing provides insight into house prices outstripping household income growth. It also gives an insight into the forms of housing assistance accessed across Australia, including Commonwealth Rent Assistance and the First Home Owners Grant. Social housing statistics and shortfalls were also explained.

The full report can be accessed at the [AIHW website](#).

**Australian Bureau of Statistics** released a discussion paper entitled '[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspectives on homelessness](#)'. This paper seeks to engage further in the field of homelessness, and the best way to capture this with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons.

The ABS also released its 2011-12 issue of '[Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia](#)' report. This looks at a variety of aspects of housing occupancy and costs, and gives insight into home ownership and housing affordability, particularly for low income households. Another paper released by the ABS in August explores the '[Perspectives of Regional Australia – Housing Arrangements – Home Ownership in Local Government Areas, 2011](#)'.

**The Equality Rights Alliance** released a [Housing Stress-O-Meter](#) quiz. This is a 2 minute quiz designed to uncover "hidden housing stress". It asks questions relating to quality,

appropriateness and adequacy of housing to examine the decisions people are making to keep out of 'housing stress'.

## Awards, Grants and Funding

**Grants to End Homelessness** are being offered by the Mercy Foundation. The foundation is now accepting Expressions of Interest for its Grants to End Homelessness program. These grants are available for initiatives, services, projects and research that will contribute to the goal of ending homelessness.

The EOI form, grant criteria and further information about the grants are [available on their website](#). EOIs must be received by 14 October. Interested organisations are advised to contact the CEO prior to lodging their EOI.

**Youth Mentoring WA Social Media Competition** was launched by the Department for Local Government and Communities and the Youth Mentoring Reform Project. \$500 cash prizes are up for grabs in the new #thankamentor video competition. To enter, just send in a short two minute video explaining how your mentor has made a difference. More information can be found on this [Facebook page](#).

## Other

**Australian Regional Development Conference** is calling for abstracts focused on the issues of 'economic, planning, environmental and community development' for the national conference. More information is available through the [ARDC website](#).

**Planning Institute of Australia** is calling for papers for its 'Connecting People & Ideas Planning Congress' on 16-19 March 2014. PIA is seeking papers from prospective speakers in planning and allied professions to connect and inspire dynamic and engaged discussion. A focus will be on the 'built environment' and hopefully inspire some discussion about the affordable housing agenda. More information can be found on the [event website](#).

Shelter WA publishes a monthly newsletter and welcomes your input. We accept articles, reports, new housing and support services updates and information, and are happy to promote events, training etc.

If you require further information contact Robert on 9325 6660 or email [project@shelterwa.org.au](mailto:project@shelterwa.org.au)

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