

Young People's Housing Policy Update

Since September, six young people's housing consultations have been held across Queensland from the South West, Sunshine Coast and South East Queensland to North Western region. Participants in the consultations included service providers, SAAP workers, youth workers, education providers, accommodation providers and other services that are engaged with youth people. We have also had input from Queensland Shelter's branches.

Many issues raised have been echoed across Queensland with similarities faced by services both metropolitan and regional. Listed below are the topics raised within the sessions along with some of the issues given as examples.

- Affordability / Income
 - Benefit income restricted by age; affordable housing not achievable on young people wages; share housing may not be safe or appropriate for some YP
- Supply and Access to housing
 - Limited single unit accommodation available; very low vacancy rates; limited supported accommodation; youth hostels are limited
- Young people's access to One Social Housing System
 - No YP target group; limited CRS intake; lost relationships between SAAP and CRS providers; single people low priority
- Private Rental
 - Discrimination faced due to age, ethnicity, income levels, occupation; TICA debts; limited rental experience; perceived property risk
- Indigenous young people
 - High levels of discrimination experienced; overcrowding; high level of transiency; YP low status within family dynamic
- Disability and health
 - Limited support services available; mental health access very poor; HACC services for the aged but needed to support YP to stay at home
- Support and life skills
 - Young people need additional support within varying stages of life; lack of life skills on how to sustain a tenancy for example budgeting, cleaning; need safe and secure accommodation; lack of exit points;
- Homelessness
 - Hard to quantify true number with YP; high amount of couch surfing; very young people presenting at services; YP do not ring HPIQ due to high costs from mobile
- Government procedures and policies
 - System has not evolved technologically unlike YP; breaches and notices sent via post to old addresses; lack of education and poor literacy prevents many engaging with paper driven systems; crisis handling/management and not prevention
- Transport
 - Affordable accommodation far away from good public transport and services; high cost of fuel if old enough to a car; timetables may not line up with work times or class times.

Additionally there are issues that were regionally specific which are listed below.

- Boom town mining economies
 - Higher rental prices for properties; very low vacancy rates; YP earning money but cannot compete in economy with high mining incomes
- Tourist or seasonal issues
 - Properties rental rates change during peak seasons e.g. summer for coastal or picking season with people moved so agencies can charge more
- Rural and remote issues
 - Lack of services and facilities in rural areas; referral systems may have to be with next town rather than within the same area; people from city drawn by affordable rent or available social housing unused to rural living for example tank water, generator power
- Small community issues
 - Family history worn by young people; information shared within small community; inability to avoid risk factors or groups when trying to make positive life changes

The next stage of the process is now under way with consultation sessions being held with young people. We are also organising a working party for to work on developing the recommendations and solutions to the issues raised. It is also planned to meet with industry bodies and providers to look at issues raised and develop workable solutions to deliver more positive housing outcomes for young people in Queensland. From there young people's housing policy will be drafted and go to the membership to be voted on before inclusion to the Queensland Shelter policy platform.

To find out more information please contact Noelle Hudson on 3393 2433 or on policy3@gshelter.asn.au