

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the last edition of Queensland Shelter Journal for 2006.

In this edition we take a look at how our actions impact on homeless people, the good and the bad! From move on powers that do nothing to combat homelessness to picnics in the park that aim to encourage empowerment and social integration.

We highlight the preliminary findings from the United Nations Human Rights Council on housing in Australia and on a state level find out what the Department of Housing have been doing to help solve some of the many problems. We complete the picture at a local level by exploring the Make a Difference Project in Brisbane that works with asylum seekers and refugees.

Adrian Pisarski, the Executive Officer, reports on his work as Chair of National Shelter, including the National Forum on Affordable Housing and the National Housing Alliance amongst others. He highlights the readiness of key players in the sector to come together to contribute to the processes involved in making changes.

Queensland Shelter recently held its AGM during Anti –Poverty Week and we now welcome in our new Management Committee, and feel privileged to introduce you to our new Chair Mark Cook –Long.

We hope that you find our latest Journal informative and insightful.



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# Queensland Shelter Quarterly

**Volume 2, Number 3  
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## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Editorial</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Queensland Shelter</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>National Shelter</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Queensland News</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>National News</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>New Initiatives</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Research</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Sports Pages</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>45</b>



### Homeless People Deserve Better Treatment from Police

by Adrian Pisarski, Executive Officer, Queensland Shelter

At a time when housing has reached new levels of unaffordability, when rents are rising at 5-10 times the inflation rate, when vacancies in the rental market are looking more and more like hen's teeth or feather backed frogs, one might expect a higher level of tolerance to homeless people.

Yet on Sunday October 8, 2006 four Queensland police brutally arrested a 65 year old homeless man at a public toilet. The incident was captured on CCTV at the facility and showed the 4 police throwing the man to the ground and using knees and in our view, excessive force, to contain him. The man was changing in the toilet after attending church.

This incident raises questions about police training and about the establishment of move on powers across Queensland.

Last year Shelter, QPILCH, RIPS, the Homelessness Task Force and others wrote to government arguing against the introduction of powers to enable police to move people on. We were concerned about the treatment of homeless people and particularly the more vulnerable homeless. We felt that move on powers did nothing to address homelessness merely shifting the situation from one location to another.

The HTF wrote to Police Minister, The Hon. Judy Spence, urging her to reconsider as we believed it may lead to vulnerable

homeless people being exposed to more rather than less danger as they would be forced into more marginal, less visible spaces. We did not imagine they would be targeted by police.

Queensland Shelter trusts that police are trained to carry out their duties, to respond consistently to situations. We expect police to be highly trained to be able to respond quickly and consistently. If the behaviour of police in this incident reflects their training then we must call for a review of training methods.

We have also suggested the establishment of a statewide homelessness protocol so that for all government agencies contacting homeless people there is a consistent method and process that ensures homeless people are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

Homeless people deserve as much.

The Hon. Robert Swarten, Minister for Housing, Public Works and Information Technology recently predicted that homelessness in Queensland might become as bad as it was in the 1930's depression. Family units are increasingly presenting at services for assistance. They will increasingly occupy areas of public space. They deserve to be treated fairly even if they have offended. Police behaviour, like that which was seen in dealing with a homeless man, perpetuates an image of police as above the law.

***“...four Queensland police brutally arrested a 65 year old homeless man at a public toilet. The Incident was captured on CCTV at the facility and showed the 4 police throwing the man to the ground and using knees and in our view, excessive force to contain him.”***

## Queensland Shelter AGM and Rent Event

*by Adrian Pisarski, Executive Officer, Queensland Shelter*

The AGM this year was marked by having a new constitution which relies on postal ballots. It meant being more organised in advance of the AGM but it allows far more members to be involved and vote for management members and in due course, policy development.

There were a couple of glitches in our system and our thanks to members who raised them with us, it helps us improve these processes.

There is a good balance of old and new faces on the new Management Committee, but before I get to that, and on behalf

of all members and staff, we thank Tracey Douglas for her stewardship as our Chairperson for the past three years. Tracey is now concentrating on her work with Connect the Coast and grand parenting and we wish her all the best. Tracey has guided us through a period of change both at Shelter and in Government policy.

We now have a new constitution which changes our structure to have an Executive Committee comprising of:

- ◇ Chairperson Mark Cook-Long
- ◇ Vice Chairperson Wynn Hopkins, Cairns
- ◇ Treasurer William Small, Gold Coast
- ◇ Secretary Ian Hawkins

- ◇ Assistant Secretary Gavin Coman

And a Management Committee including the above plus:

- ◇ Ann Langley, Logan, Ordinary Member
- ◇ Ken Graham, Ordinary Member
- ◇ Natalie Wilson, Brisbane North, Ordinary Member
- ◇ Tracy Green, Ordinary Member

This still leaves one casual vacancy that may be filled by the Management Committee through co-option.

We also held another Rent Event as our contribution to Anti-poverty week. We heard from Dr Tim Seelig updating rent data for Queensland; which shows that despite some growth in lower end rental supply there is still a growing shortfall of rental housing particularly for low income earners.

Prof Peter Spearritt and Kingsley Gum from the Brisbane Institute also presented; giving an account of what has happened to rental yields (being the return on investment for

rental properties) over the past decade in SEQ. This data shows that rental property has not been a good investment unless your timing was impeccable and you bought at the



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bottom and sold at the top. Even so the return on investment does not come from the rent but from the capital appreciation of the asset over time.

Stacey Holt from the REIQ responded to both presentations and also took questions from the floor.

The key issue emerging from the discussion was the increasing incidence of rental auctions of one kind or another.

In all it was a lively event with very good levels of discussion and copies of the data will be available on our website.

## Homelessness

*by Adrian Pisarski, Executive Officer, Queensland Shelter*

### Homeless Man Arrested in “Absurd Situation”

On Sunday October 10 a 65 year old homeless man, Brendan James Rowe, was arrested by police after being called to a public toilet. The homeless man was occupying a cubicle getting changed after attending church. We are not clear exactly how police determined their next course of action, but captured on CCTV was a scene which was described to me by one journalist as “A Rodney King” type scene.

The video footage showed 4 police forcing the man to the ground and using knees, excessive force and violence to subdue him. Even the Police minister agreed the force seen on the TV footage “looked dreadful”, but she defended the state's tough public nuisance laws, saying they had widespread community support.

"People who are engaging in threatening, intimidating behaviour, we want police to be able to take some action against them."

"Frankly we make no apologies for trying to make our public spaces in the state as safe as possible for everyone."

Mr. Rowe was arrested for refusing to leave a public toilet in the Queen Street Mall. He claims he was simply trying to change out of his church clothes at the time.

"I had been to a gospel meeting, I only wanted to change out of my clothes and I found myself in this absurd situation, I couldn't believe it was happening."

The issues here are:

1. The incident raises serious concerns about police training
2. That a homeless man was unnecessarily arrested
3. That current practice around the treatment of homelessness allows this to occur
4. That Government defends such action

Queensland Shelter understands that police respond to situations based on extensive training to ensure consistency. It begs the question of how are Police trained to deal with people in this situation? If excessive use of force is based on their training then police need retraining urgently. It seems absurd to us that Mr. Rowe should have even had to face such aggression when he was going about his normal business, and then have to be locked up and face court.

That Police Minister Spence, although admitting the footage “looked dreadful” should leap to defend both the police and current policy is a concern. If this is a result of current policy and practice then it should be reviewed not defended. We would understand that as Minister she would want to get the police story as well, but why do police get the benefit of the doubt when they didn't give it themselves on this occasion.

### “Bigger than the depression”

Meanwhile Minister Robert Swarten has claimed that our growing levels of homelessness could be worse than the great depression. We hope this does not come to

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pass, but none the less, it means we really do need to make sure that when official arms of government (Police, Mental Health teams, Hospitals, local government rangers etc) have contact with homeless people there ought to be a protocol that they follow that ensures homeless people are treated with dignity and respect and assisted into appropriate services if they so desire.

The government is developing a “public space” protocol, for inner Brisbane but it is not only public space that concerns us and a protocol should be broader than Brisbane as there are many other hot spots in the State.

### **Peaks cooperating to deliver better responses and representation**

To attempt to get to a better place around policy development, representation and

improved service delivery, Queensland Shelter has been working with other peak bodies (QCOSS, QYHC, QCHC) to try to develop a submission or submissions to address these issues. At present there is a growing realisation that the most appropriate place to pick up this process is to bring together the various and diverse elements of the homelessness sector. We are now working collaboratively to achieve that end and look forward to engaging the homelessness sector in the new year. We will now approach the Department of Communities to resource a gathering to bring together the diverse elements of the homelessness sector.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.news.com.au/story/0,10117,20673460-1702,00.html?from=public\\_rss](http://www.news.com.au/story/0,10117,20673460-1702,00.html?from=public_rss)

## **Homeless Taskforce Picnic in the Parks**

The Homeless Taskforce has received funding from Brisbane City Council to organise 4 picnics in the park before the end of June 2007. The first picnic in the park will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> December between 12 – 3pm at the Rotunda, New Farm Park.

The objectives of the picnics are:

- ◇ Promotion of behaviour change that incorporates harm reduction and healthier lifestyles
- ◇ Social empowerment and reintegration into the community at large
- ◇ Providing a forum to access information and support in a non-threatening environment
- ◇ Building social skills and community networks
- ◇ Developing trust, teamwork and a sense of community
- ◇ To provide basic essentials such as food, toiletries and services to improve the basic health of people in the Brisbane



Metropolitan Region

◇ Facilitate and foster collaborative

partnerships between relevant stakeholders to address factors affecting the health, housing and fundamental human rights of those marginalised in the broader community.

The HTF have invited Premier Peter Beattie to this event but if he is unable to attend people who do attend are guaranteed access:

- ◇ To service providers: services attending will be encouraged to set up information tables
- ◇ To healthy food and drinks
- ◇ To healthy activities and recreational pursuits e.g. soccer, circus training
- ◇ To other live entertainment

For more information on the picnic initiative or to confirm your attendance please ring Gary (HCQ) 3238 5704, Tara (BYS) on 3252 3750 or Lana (QuIHN) on 3620 8171.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

## United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing in Australia

by Sally Barwell, Policy and Research Officer, Queensland Shelter



On the 22nd September 2006, Mr Miloon Kothari, a UN Special Rapporteur, gave a speech to the Human Rights Council on his preliminary findings on the right to an adequate standard of housing.

Kothari visited several developing countries (such as Cambodia and Iran) and at the invitation of the Government of Australia, visited this country with the general objectives of:

- ◇ Examining and reporting on the status of the right to adequate housing and other related rights.....with particular attention to aspects of gender, equality and non-discrimination.
- ◇ To engage in dialogues with the Government and civil society in the effort to secure these rights.
- ◇ To identify practical solutions and best practises in the realisation of rights related to this mandate.

The full report will be presented to the Human Rights Council early in 2007 but preliminary reporting has expressed general concern that the “implementation and realisation of the right to adequate housing is not only a matter requiring attention by developing countries”<sup>1</sup> indicating that Australia has yet to get to grips with many fundamental issues relating to the provision of adequate housing supply.

Whilst acknowledgement was given to the range of programs that make housing more accessible to all Australians and the efforts

of housing agencies to cope with the growing demand, it is the belief of the Rapporteur that Australian is facing a housing crisis “especially in terms of the growth of homelessness, issues of affordability, and access to public housing and private rental housing”<sup>2</sup>.

The Human Rights Council were told that the scale of the problem in many areas was particularly significant because of the wealth of the country and the apparent lack of acknowledgement and reliable data on the extent of the problem. “Throughout his visit and consultations, the Special Rapporteur has come to believe that there is a serious hidden national housing crisis in Australia”<sup>3</sup>. His immediate observations were concerned with the following:

- ◇ The general housing condition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- ◇ Widespread unaffordability
- ◇ Overcrowding
- ◇ Homelessness
- ◇ Inadequate and ageing public housing stock
- ◇ Stigmatisation of people living in public housing
- ◇ Waiting list for up to ten years
- ◇ Discrimination in accessing private housing
- ◇ Lack of emergency and medium-term accommodation and transitional housing.

These are issues that we are all too familiar with, but Kothari went further and questioned why such systemic problems; that have been present for decades, have yet to be addressed. He stressed the impact that adequate housing has on all other aspects of

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life, a cry that Queensland Shelter, along with many other agencies, has been continually promoting.

“The Special Rapporteur would like to once again stress that poor housing conditions has a direct effect on many aspects of other rights of those affected including the right to health, to education, to safety, to public participation, to exercise civil and political rights, access to justice itself and the right to be free from discrimination – all of which Australia has committed itself internationally to protecting and promoting”<sup>4</sup>.

The report goes on to observe the amount of material, in terms of data and recommendations that has been presented to governments over time that has gone unheeded. It talks about the very real need to have a national comprehensive approach to housing that facilitates, not hinders the provision of housing. Kothari, irrefutably challenges Australia on its conviction that housing is a commodity, and as such denies the central role that housing plays in the foundation of society.

His preliminary report makes initial comments on each of the headings outlined above but singled out the plight of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as being ‘particularly disturbing’

“..of major concern in Australia are the housing and living conditions of indigenous peoples. The communities I visited have been living in severely inadequate conditions for decades. It is critical that the Australian government urgently address what has now become a humanitarian tragedy”<sup>5</sup>

Miloon Kathari’s full report will not only examine the housing issues that exist in Australia but will be stressing the connection between adequate housing and individual human rights. His mandate includes making recommendations to the Australian Government and to raise areas of concern with the Human Rights Council in Geneva for further consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Second session 25 September 2006.

Statement of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr Miloon Kothari pg 7

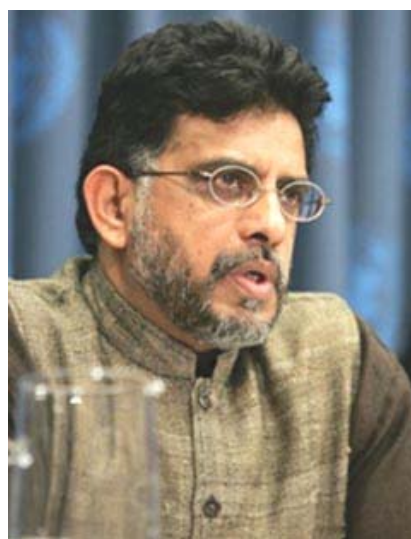
<sup>2</sup> as above pg 7

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing Miloon Kothari, Mission to Australia, Preliminary observations pg 4

<sup>4</sup> as above pg 4

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate Housing Miloon Kothari, Mission to Australia, Preliminary observations pg 7

*Miloon Kothari was appointed in September 2000 by the UN Commission on Human Rights as Special Rapporteur on adequate housing. His mandate involves reporting annually on the status worldwide of the realization of the rights related to adequate housing and identifying practical solutions and good practices towards this end. An architect by training, he has extensive experience in the areas of housing and land rights. Mr. Kothari is also the coordinator of the South Asian Regional Programme of the Habitat International Coalition’s Housing and Land Rights Network and a founding member of the International NGO Committee on Human Rights in Trade and Investment. He is a member since 2005 of the Leadership Council of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS*



**Photo:** Miloon Kothari at a Press Conference

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## The Year in Review 2005-2006

by Sally Barwell, Policy and Research Officer, Queensland Shelter

The Department of Housing has just released its Annual Report for 2005 – 06 which outlines the years' major achievements, activities and financial statements for the year.

### What They Say.....

The Department have highlighted the main achievements in their "Year in Review Brochure" which has been circulated this month. The Department draw our attention to the major accomplishments that have unfolded during the last financial year. It will come as no surprise that the central theme concerns the work being done with the new strategic directions which encompasses both public housing and the vital role of the community housing sector.

Through 2005 – 06, the department assisted more than 242,300 households, including assistance with loans and grants to access or remain in private rental housing or homeownership.

They engaged with up to 7,800 residents in Community Renewal Zones to plan 128 projects across the renewal zones to help build sustainable communities.

They managed a property portfolio valued at \$10.3 billion, with total operating revenue of \$649 million!

The brochure also draws attention to the increased efforts by the department to assist services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Significant programs

included providing long term social housing to 3,022 households, funding a range of Community Renewal projects and funding Aboriginal Shire and Torres Strait Island councils to the amount of \$34.6 million.

Extensive work has also been structured around assisting people with a disability or people with mental health issues, with the aim of providing appropriate accommodation according to their needs. In this year the department provided direct rental accommodation to 21,577 households with a person a disability which is an overall increase of 1,600 households from the previous year.

Amongst the many assistance packages that have been made available this year a worthy mention of the role that the department staff made in helping to rebuild those communities that were devastated by Cyclone Larry in March 2006 is highly significant. They assisted 900 people affected by this crisis, including arranging for emergency accommodation for 265 households as well as the provision of temporary accommodation within the impacted area.

If you have yet to receive a copy of 'The Year in Review 2005-06' take a look at the full Annual Report on the departments' web site at [www.housing.qld.gov.au](http://www.housing.qld.gov.au)

<sup>1</sup> The Community Housing New Direction statement was released in May of this year.

## Around the Branches

by Deirdre Coghlan, Branch Resourcing and Network Worker, Queensland Shelter

Queensland Shelter branch members come from a wide spectrum of the community. However they have one thing in common and that is their desire to be part of a strong policy and advocacy team which represents the interests of those Queenslanders in need of appropriate housing. That advocacy for appropriate housing can range from what is

essential to respond to the needs of our most marginalised citizens, to how do we work to develop housing options in those areas of the state undergoing industrial and demographic growth?

The housing crisis in Queensland has reached unmanageable proportions with

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supply being non-existent in some centres and the private rental market continuing to keep a proportion of people in housing poverty, while in many areas of the state being completely unable, or unwilling to house those most in need.

Department of Housing regional offices and Community Housing organisations are being overwhelmed with the numbers of Queenslanders urgently needing housing. Every day housing workers in community organisations have desperate situations which either cannot be resolved or to which they can offer only very short term and temporary solutions. The stories of tent cities are emerging reminiscent of the depression days of the 1930's, and this in a state which is enjoying a period of industrial and economic boom.

The clear message from the branches is to increase the supply of affordable housing in the remote communities, in the provincial towns and cities, in the rapidly expanding industrial areas and in the metropolitan centres of the state. Until this supply of housing is addressed the social costs to individuals, families and communities will continue to escalate to a point where the

damage is irreparable.

Branches continue to work towards housing solutions. Most of the branches report that activity for their branch is diminished at this crisis time. The pressure of work in responding to escalating housing need has impacted on their time to advocate for change. The irony is that in the time of greatest need for change there is frustration with the range of options available and lack of time to address the broader policy issues.

However Queensland Shelter branches continue to meet and members work together around a range of housing policy and advocacy issues and we would draw your attention to the Branch reports in the Queensland Shelter Annual Report to illustrate their diversity and the breadth of their activities.

2007 the challenge will be to head off the irreversibility of the housing crisis in this state. Queensland Shelter branches and their members are ready and willing to work with all levels of government and the public and private housing sectors to achieve sustainable and long term housing outcomes.

## **Boarding House Action Group Workshop**

*by Deirdre Coghlan, Branch Resourcing and Network Worker, Queensland Shelter*

On 25 October 2006 the Boarding House Action Group (BHAG) held a workshop in Brisbane to:

- ◇ bring participants up to date with the reform package for Residential Services;
- ◇ identify gaps and emerging issues for boarding house tenants;
- ◇ clarify the ongoing role of Boarding House Action Group within the policy and advocacy role of Queensland Shelter.

The workshop was facilitated by Ann Tierney and resourced by the Queensland Disability Housing Coalition and

Queensland Shelter. Participants in the workshop came from a broad range of community housing and advocacy organisations as well as community housing service providers and representatives from Fair Trading Dept, Residential Tenancy Authority and the Tenants Union. Participants gave a roundup of issues facing boarding house and hostel tenants and presentations were given by Fair Trading Dept, Residential Tenancy Authority and the Tenants Union on current legislative reviews and at what stages the different reviews were at.

Karol Battams from the Office of Fair Trading gave a report on the progress of accreditation of residential services.

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Accreditation officers have conducted accreditation audits with 59 Level 3's, 10 Level 2's and are presently working through 189 Level 1's. Karol informed us that all businesses set up either Levels 1, 2 and 3 Boarding Houses must apply for accreditation within six months of commencing business. It has been an endeavour by officers in Fair Trading department to keep accreditation and compliance issues separate.

Discussion was held around the links between accreditation and closures and that numbers of closures were significant. This situation needs to be continuously monitored closely and a whole of government approach taken to lessen the impact on people affected by the closures.

Participants were advised to visit the Fair Trading and Residential Tenancies Act websites follow through for further information regarding both accreditation and review of the Act.

David Breen from the Residential Tenancies Authority spoke to the discussion paper released early in October in response to the consultation rounds and submissions received in 2005. This paper has been sent to all individuals and organisations that made submissions and is available on the Residential Tenancies Authority website. The Residential Accommodation Act has a timeline of September 2007 to be presented to Cabinet and consultations and discussions will be held over the next two months before the final shaping of the draft legislation will occur.

One key change to the draft Act will be the inclusion of student accommodation if this is classed the principal place of residence.

Carolyn Perry from the Tenant's Union spoke of the increasing problems of homelessness linked to both increasing lack of supply and the increasing costs of singles accommodation. Figures quoted were from \$120 to \$150 per week for a room and with food provided climbing to as much as \$500 per week. The range of issues around

conditions within existing boarding houses in the private market remains critical in many areas of the state while tenants in single accommodation covered by the Act still have huge issues around accessibility to support and opportunity to report and have recourse to systems which can address breaches of the Act.

Emerging issues which are affecting this sector are:

- ◇ changes to the use of houses to singles accommodation in outer suburbs and provincial centres;
- ◇ changes in student accommodation
- ◇ local government planning measures.

Participants at the forum determined that more information needs to be gathered state wide around these issues.

Adrian Pisarski from Queensland Shelter addressed the workshop on the BHAG's past role within the organisation and the sector and put to participants the importance of an advocacy and policy planning role for the future. He described and showed participants the outcomes of the current BHAG project which is a draft of stories from boarding house residents on what is happening to them today in their bid for secure, affordable singles housing in the current climate. It was agreed that they illustrate well the issues that had been raised at the workshop and would serve as excellent examples for change in the upcoming review.

Community participants at the workshop agreed to:

- ◇ gather information from Queensland Shelter branches and other organisations on the current state of boarding houses and singles accommodation across the state
- ◇ meet at a BHAG working party at **10 am 22 November at Queensland Shelter 167 Logan Road Woolloongabba** to further develop responses to the Discussion Paper on

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the review of the Residential Tenancies Act and to incorporate examples from boarding house tenants stories (with their permission).

The Boarding House Action Group would like to thank all who attended the workshop and for the valuable input received from the

Office of Fair Trading, Residential Tenancy Authority and the Tenant's Union. Please feel free to attend the working party meeting on the 22 November or contact Karin on 33913433 or Deirdre on 33932433 for further information.

## Profile: Mark Cook-Long

### Where do you work?

The Haven Association, which is a SAAP and Long-Term community housing provider for young people.

### What do you do – what's your title?

I am the Coordinator which means that I am responsible for service delivery coordination, financial management, human resource management, community engagement, reporting etc.

### What's your housing background?

1992 to 1999 I worked as a CRS housing manager with Toowoomba Community Housing Service. From 1999 to 2006 I worked as a tenant advocate with the Tenant Advice & Advocacy Service (Qld) at Toowoomba Community Legal Service Inc / The Advocacy & Support Centre Inc. I have been involved with the management committees of Toowoomba Community Housing Service, The Haven Association, Tenants Union of Queensland, and currently Queensland Shelter. I have also been involved with the Toowoomba Branch of Shelter for the last 3 years, RTA Industry Forum on behalf of the TAAS sector, member of the Tenancy Database Action Group, and authored submissions to the 2000 RTAct review and the 2004 review of the PAMDA legislation. I have been a home renter, a home owner, as well as both social and private lessor. In my latter role as private lessor I have deliberately under-



rented my rental property because I have been acutely aware of the spike in private market rents over the last couple of years, and that existing lessors often capitalise on the unit-cost increases experienced by new investors in a booming market that mean they have to ask higher rents to get a marginal rental yield.

### Why did you choose to go into the housing field?

I was still at Uni finishing an undergraduate degree, 18 months married, and an opportunity to work part-time as a housing manager with a special interest in youth came up with the local CRS. I guess now it's in the blood.

### How long have you been a Qld Shelter member?

As an organisational member about three years. As an individual maybe 12 months.

### Why do you think affordable housing is important?

The private market is an inadequate vehicle to meet the housing costs of low-income earners regardless of government rhetoric suggesting that it can. Public housing – more and better stock – needs to be the bedrock of this State's, and this country's, social housing strategy. The costs involved in subsidising private providers may be better spent in creating broader and deeper bedrock in the form of public housing.

### What do you think is most important ingredient in implementing affordable

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**housing?**

That's difficult as the housing problem in Australia is a paradox. On the one hand the obvious (and obviously true) response is more stock! However the complexity of the housing market, multi-dimensional social need, poverty and wealth drivers such as interest rates, exchange rates, domestic and international economic factors, issues that affect indigenous communities, young people, newly arrived Australians, the aged – anyone who is structurally marginalised – complicate the housing situation and necessitate more fully articulate consideration of the shifting economic and industrial landscapes that are likely to impact on homelessness might be somewhere to start. Also there seems to be a multitude of research findings and statistical data that support the need for a more holistic approach to housing, including the relationships between the housing sector and other government and non-government agencies that can provide support to try and ensure that peoples' housing experiences are positive and successful ones.

**Why do you think Qld Shelter is important?**

Who else can speak effectively on behalf of disadvantaged Queenslanders about the inequities in the housing system in Queensland, and participate in the same discussion nationally? I would like to see government departments including the Department of Housing view Queensland Shelter, as well as other peaks and statewides, as legitimate stakeholders and equal contributors to policy development, rather than just as one of many funded services in a broad service system.

**What's your aspirations of the social housing sector?**

One that is diverse in terms of stock provision and type, management and ultimately in terms of the capacity to meet a very diverse population, but that also meets the needs of the most disadvantaged first. This must not exclude people in the crisis housing domain that is not popularly thought of as social housing. Aren't homeless people part of our social domain? And aren't crisis housing services part of the broader social housing system?

**Who has been a great influence/mentor for you?**

I have met a great many people in this sector all of whom have had positive impacts on me and my core beliefs. It sounds corny but my partner has been my centre-of-gravity, and my kids keep me alert (to say the least!)

**What's your best advice to someone new to the housing industry?**

Run! Run for your life!.....but if you stay – network, network, network! It is a great sector for anyone with a social conscience, a core belief centred around social justice principles, a bent for activism and a desire to see social change as it happens.

**As the new Chair for Qld Shelter, what can we expect from your leadership?**

Not sure how to answer that – behind the scenes support for staff, support for policy in turn that supports and develops branches, and encouragement for the organisation to continue to be proactive in addressing housing need in Queensland.

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**Treasury 2006 - 2007**

William Small was appointed QShelter Treasurer 2006 – 2007.

I am aware of the generally accepted and historical opinion that a Treasurer is a

dealer in, and mover of, historical fact by adding up and subtracting within a column environment.

Well get ready Treasury 2006 – 2007 will

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not be encumbered with an end of year bias it will progress through the period as a pro active cell, in QShelter executive, prepared to step outside the columnar thinking in the progress of particularly your branch projects.

Treasury will provide assistance in any branch financial/account management.

Treasury has a clear understanding that all projects require funding and that every funded project has unique elements of need, importance and timing. How often are projects not progressed because of perceived problems in getting the project funded, don't abandon a project because of perceived funding problems:

- ◇ put your dream projects to Treasury,
- ◇ ask Treasury for critical funding viability assessment,
- ◇ challenge Treasury to get it funded,
- ◇ push Treasury to hit a time line

requirement,

- ◇ ask Treasury, how! What to change! Nuts and Bolts! Dollars & Cents.

Treasury will, if requested, assist with number crunching in the development and authoring of project submissions for funding.

Treasury is looking forward to working with you and your goals. We will still, with enthusiasm, at the appropriate time add up and subtract the historical numbers in the columns. That will allow the review of our performance and build the platform from which we will celebrate our collaborative effort during 2006 – 2007.

The 2006 – 2007 Treasury will, with you, conduct an 'Orchestrated Financial Progress'.

And I mean it!

William Small, Treasurer.

## **Date Claimers**

*For upcoming Date Claimers go to the events section to our website*

### **November**

20th - ASHRAM Branch Meeting

21st - 2006 Symposium (The Academy of Social Sciences in Australia) - Canberra ACT

23rd - A Forum on Housing Rights "The Hidden Crisis" - RSVP campaign@justrightsqld.org - Brisbane QLD

23-24th - ACOSS Conference 2006 - Sydney NSW

24th - Toowoomba Branch Meeting

24th - 7th Australian Conference on Quality of Life - Toorak VIC

28th - Far North Queensland Branch Meeting

28th - South West Branch Meeting

### **December**

1st - Women's Housing Network Branch Meeting

5th - Sunshine Coast Branch Meeting

5-8th - Population, Policy and Australia's Destiny (Australian Population Association) - Adelaide SA

14th - Mackay Branch Meeting

20th - Homeless Taskforce Picnic in the Parks - QShelter

## National Shelter Survives Ten Years with no Funding

*by Adrian Pisarski, Chairperson, National Shelter*

National Shelter met in Darwin for the first time in October holding its Annual General Meeting at Mindil Beach Sunset Markets. It honoured a commitment from all states and territories of spreading meetings around and highlighting the issues surrounding our appalling record housing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This meeting marked our tenth year without funding from the Federal Government and demonstrates the determination of National Shelter to remain, to stay relevant and to have some capacity for action despite being de-funded as one of the first acts of the Howard Government.

The main business of the meeting was to discuss the development and launching of a new National Shelter Policy Platform which will occur in April 2007 in Melbourne at the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The new platform will highlight the growing and chronic situation in rental markets around the nation, promote the need for a national approach bringing together all governments around a new National Affordable Housing Agreement, highlight the appalling state of Aboriginal and Torres Strait housing conditions, and bring a critical eye to the Howard Government's blindness to these obvious problems.

Whilst much of our work is done in partnerships and strategic alliances we have still been active in promoting a Shelter voice.

In 2005/06 National Shelter delivered



papers at;

- ◇ The National Housing Conference in Perth (Nov 05),
- ◇ NSW Shelter conference (May 06),
- ◇ N S W Federation of Housing Associations conference in Newcastle (August 06),
- ◇ Chaired a session at the AFHO conference in Sydney (May 06),
- ◇ Helped sponsor and organise the National Affordable Housing Forum held at Old Parliament House in Canberra (August 06),
- ◇ Attended the National Civil Society Dialogue (October 06),
- ◇ Held a meeting in Victoria in April to help develop appropriate representative structures around housing for that state,
- ◇ Met with Minister John Cobb, and Opposition spokesperson Senator Kim Carr; and
- ◇ Issued four press releases to highlight the lack of affordable housing nationally.

As Chairperson of National Shelter I met with Mr Miloon Kathari the U.N. special rapporteur for housing and contributed to his overall consideration of housing in Australia.

Financially, using a levy on State and Territory affiliates, we have maintained a healthy, if fairly restricted, budget and we have committed to meeting in Victoria at least once a year and to hold a meeting with

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housing representatives to ensure a Victorian voice is not missed.

We have had a representative on the National Community Housing Forum until its wind up and we await the final outcome of the distribution of finances from the Forum. The Forum voted to distribute any residual funds to National Shelter and the Community Housing Federation of Australia, however we understand the Commonwealth is disputing some aspects of this decision which may mean we never receive anything or that we receive a lower amount than was left at the windup.

National Shelter will also be looking at its

constitution to bring it up to date with our current situation and we hope to be able to endorse a new or revised constitution at our next AGM.

In closing the following were elected as office holders:

- ◇ Chairperson, Mr Adrian Pisarski, Queensland Shelter
- ◇ Vice Chairperson, Ms Pattie Chugg, Shelter Tasmania
- ◇ Treasurer, Mr Gary Wilson, Shelter S.A.
- ◇ Secretary, Mr Paul Pendergast, Shelter W.A.

## Have Chair Will Travel

*by Adrian Pisarski, Chairperson, National Shelter*

Over the past 3 months I have been attending a fair array of functions, conferences, events and meetings. Particularly in my role as chairperson of National Shelter I have been to Canberra three times, but also to Darwin and Newcastle.

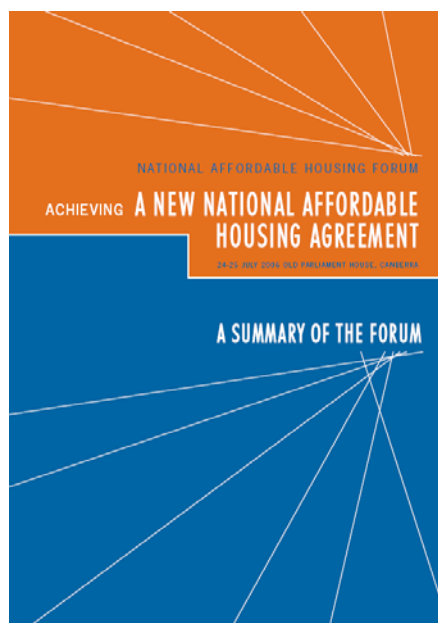
It is a balancing act between travelling in Queensland and outside it, but in many ways the work done at national level has the potential for far greater affordable housing outcomes than can be achieved at the state level. I have also been doing work at a far more local level but feel you may be interested in where I have been and what I have been up to.

Much of this travel is at the cost of National Shelter rather than Queensland Shelter, but regardless it is never a bad thing to provide an account of these so members and readers are informed of the work and where it is headed.

So starting with the nation's capital, I attended the National Forum on Affordable Housing which brought together leaders and representatives from the community sector, business, industry, unions, academia and local government to consider elements of a

new National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA). Convened by the ACTU, ACOSS, HIA and the National Housing Alliance, the forum invited about 60 "experts" to contribute their knowledge and thinking to the process, seeking a convergence of views rather than a consensus.

A summary of this forum and the associated background and other papers can be obtained from our website at [http://www.qshelter.asn.au/Recent Research/](http://www.qshelter.asn.au/Recent_Research/).



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Essentially what we are after is a national commitment (being all levels of government and the community) to rebuilding social housing, developing means to attract significant private institutional (superannuation and other financial institutions) investment into affordable housing, adjusting taxation and other fiscal policy to ensure affordable housing is not disadvantaged against other forms of investment and developing mechanisms that planning systems can adopt to play their part in affordable housing development and planning.

This would come together through a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) process and could be one headline agreement like the CSHA or an articulated set of policies working together from different parts of government.

The forum was held in late July and achieved a high degree of convergence. We have now followed up that trip by meeting with a variety of State and federal representatives and are hopeful that in the new year COAG will take up the baton. On my last trip to Canberra we met with federal Labor members and advisors addressing a combined meeting of Labor committees who have some responsibility, in December we will be meeting Coalition committees, senior bureaucrats and further pressing our agenda.

In August I attended the NSW Federation of Housing Associations conference in Newcastle, appearing as part of a panel to explore the NAHA and also to chair a session of the conference.

In October I travelled to Darwin for the National Shelter AGM and in another article there is a summary of that meeting.

Also in October, I attended the National Civil Society Dialogue in Canberra. Convened by another coalition of interest (ACTU, ACOSS, Aust Conservation Foundation, Aust Council of Churches) the dialogue was an opportunity to share and discuss the development of broader social

movements which bring together the concerns of NGO's in different spheres. It was a very stimulating event and we heard from many eminent speakers and built on the work to draw together economic, environmental, social and spiritual realms in recognition that all have a role and may add value to each other's work. As papers become available on their website we will make sure you know where to get them.

But it is not all national and in mid year and based on the very good work undertaken by our North Moreton branch, we addressed the Redcliffe City Council about the growing lack of affordable housing there. As a result of this meeting, and due to the very good work of Dr. Patricia Rose and the branch Redcliffe Council have now allocated \$10,000 towards an initiative to explore how their planning system may encourage more affordable housing development.

This month will see Deirdre in Cairns, I will be attending the ACOSS congress and revisiting Canberra to engage the government about affordable housing. We are also organising meetings with Treasury and other officials, building the case for a new Affordable Housing Agreement.

Next year I will continue this work, but I am also trying to ensure we have a greater focus on regional Queensland as well. The national work is potentially very beneficial but I will not lose focus on the need to build our case in Queensland.

## NATIONAL HOUSING ALLIANCE

*comprising:*

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE (ACOSS); CONSTRUCTION, FORESTRY, MINING AND ENERGY UNION (CFMEU); COMMUNITY HOUSING FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA (CHFA); HOUSING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HIA); NATIONAL SHELTER (NS); AND THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA (UDIA).

## No Vacancy in Cairns Crisis Shelters

CHILDREN'S crisis shelters in Cairns are so overcrowded they expect to turn away more than 300 homeless kids this year.

Just 18 months ago, the six girls and six boys' emergency beds offered by Anglicare North Queensland were only full about twice a week – now it's every night.

"We just have a full house all the time," St Margaret's Girl's House program manager Shirley Pevitt said.

"One bed might become free in the morning and then someone else comes in the afternoon."

The lack of a women's shelter in the city meant the girl's shelter also regularly had to turn away young women who were too old to stay because they were over 20 but who had nowhere else to go.

Ms Pevitt said most girls stayed about a week before moving on – just enough time to have a shower, do some washing, eat a few solid meals and get a few good nights' sleep.

"You see the same ones again and again, it's a bit of a circle... you're always waiting to see the change," she said.

But Ms Pevitt said the housing crisis was making it increasingly hard for the youngsters to get their own place and "make a go of it".

With many people competing for the few rental properties around, she said teenagers on youth allowances were hardly a landlord's top choice, no matter how hard they tried.

"All these new units are going up but none of them are affordable for kids or families," Ms Pevitt said.

"Somewhere along the line there needs to be a community focus (to youth housing) – even if it's subsidised by government – because these young kids are our future."

Most children did not choose to be homeless but were fleeing families that had broken down, usually because of violence, drugs and alcohol abuse that arose when people lived in poverty, she said.

Anglicare's NQ chief executive officer Shaun McIntyre agreed there was an urgent need for affordable housing so kids living in crisis had "exit points".

Also urgently needed were more skilled youth workers, with Mr McIntyre "madly recruiting" to try to meet increasing demand for services.

"At the moment we're sharing workers across our various services to plug the gaps," he said.

[Source: The Cairns Post, 14 September 2006]

## Families Living in Tents

*by Melanie Christiansen*

RENTAL properties in southeast Queensland are now in such short supply some accommodation help agencies are handing out tents to desperate families.

National housing advocacy group National Shelter has warned the situation facing poorer families is now dire.

"When we hear of services giving out tents and advising people about where they can camp, we know things are really bad," said chairman Adrian Pisarski.

He blames a severe shortage of affordable rental properties, compounded by increased demand from those no longer able to afford

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to buy a house.

The latest figures from the Queensland Government show a vacancy rate for rental properties of 1.9 per cent in the June quarter. Around Brisbane, that falls to just 1.7 per cent and 1.3 per cent in the inner city.

Mr Pisarski says that makes southeast Queensland's rental market one of Australia's worst.

He says it has also pushed rental prices out of the reach of many families, helping to create a new class of homeless people.

"Traditionally, people who become homeless have gone through a family breakdown, or have a mental health problem

. . . but now increasingly it is just ordinary families."

Mr Pisarski a growing number of families had been forced into caravans and tents at campgrounds around the state.

Just north of Brisbane, the Caboolture showgrounds is now home to several young families, including young mum, Helen Wilshire, her partner and six-month-old baby.

They have spent the last seven weeks living in a two-room tent.

"We had to leave the house we were in because it was supposed to be demolished," she said.

With a fridge, a gas barbecue, a second-

hand lounge and a portable cot, Ms Wilshire says the family is managing.

"But it's a bit hard with the baby. It gets too hot."

In a caravan nearby, Sam Bassett is living with her partner, four-year-old son and a seven-month-old baby.

Ms Bassett says her family was evicted after falling behind in the rent.

They lived out of a car for several weeks, before getting a tent and then a hire caravan.

"It's not as bad as what I thought it would be, but I would prefer to be in a house for the kids," she said.

Accommodation support services, such as the Caboolture Family Haven, say many other families are facing the same plight.

"In most regional centres you go to the local showgrounds and what's normally the royal agricultural showgrounds is full of people who are camping out," said Caboolture Family Haven program manager, Matthew Binestock.

His service is currently supporting about 200 families, while Brisbane Boarders, in the inner city, has 807 people on its books.

"I don't think in the 10 years I've been in social housing we've seen anything quite as bad as what's now developing," said Brisbane Boarders CEO Wal Ogle.

[Source: The Courier Mail, 19 October 2006]

## Rental Crisis Hits Home

*by Melanie Christiansen*

THE homeless crisis in Australia could soon rival that of the Great Depression, Queensland's Housing Minister has warned.

Robert Schwarten has conceded the waiting time for public housing in Queensland is up to a decade in some places, with demand driven up by sharp rises in private rents.

Figures from the Australian Housing and

Urban Institute, released yesterday, show the cost of renting in Queensland is now rising twice as fast as inflation, with rents in some areas jumping nearly 25 per cent in a year. In Brisbane, the average new rental in July cost \$350 a week, up 9 per cent in a year.

"It is a crisis of supply in affordable

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housing," said the Institute's Queensland-based housing researcher Tim Seelig.

Mr Schwarten does not dispute that.

"The private rental market in Australia has collapsed in most parts," Mr Schwarten said. "If you go around the Mackay, Whitsunday areas . . . you've got people on incomes of \$60,000 and \$70,000 a year unable to rent a private dwelling."

The Minister admits public housing has not kept pace with demand from those forced out of the private rental market, despite State funding for social housing doubling in the last eight years. "I've said we will see homelessness in this country like we haven't seen since the Great Depression," he said.

With about 37,000 people waiting for public housing in Queensland and rising private rents, the Queensland Public Tenants Association is also warning of an explosion in homelessness to come.

"Unless somebody starts to wake up soon, we're going to look at ourselves and say 'My

God, we've turned into America'," said association president Merrilyn Rowler.

Demand for public housing is highest on the Gold Coast, where waiting lists are up to 10 years, well beyond the reach of Tweed Heads pensioner Ron Connor.

"I went to my local member and I said is there any chance that I can get a housing commission place and he said, 'Ron how old are you', and I said 67 and he said, 'mate, you won't live long enough to get a place'."

Mr Schwarten partly blames the Federal Government for cutting funds for public housing in favour of rent assistance for low-income earners.

But Opposition public housing spokesman Ray Stevens says the Queensland Government could have built more public housing out of the GST money allocated to the state.

[Source: The Courier Mail, 20 October 2006]

## Rental Bidding Wars

*by Melanie Christiansen*

DESPERATE house hunters are prepared to enter bidding wars to get into southeast Queensland's fiercely competitive rental market.

It is now commonplace for would-be renters across the region to offer more than the asking price for a property.

Housing advocacy group National Shelter said some rental applicants in Queensland were now being gazumped – a disturbing trend at a time when a tight property market and long waiting list for public housing have fuelled a homeless crisis.

According to the latest State Government figures, the vacancy rate for rental properties around Brisbane is 1.7 per cent, falling to 1.3 per cent in the inner city.

"There are kind of informal rental auctions going on," said National Shelter chairman

Adrian Pisarski. "A property might be advertised at a price but with an open house around it and then as people are coming through, they may be asked if that is their best offer."

Mr Pisarski said the emergence of bidding wars for rental properties was contributing to increased homelessness, even among families with young children, with some forced to live in tents and caravans.

"We do have a desperate situation, particularly for those low-income earners and they're the ones who are going to end up homeless," he said.

Rental property manager Barbara Walker said that while she did not accept offers above the asking price, it was certainly becoming more popular for renters to offer above the asking price.

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"If I advertise a property at \$350 a week, many a time people say to me, 'look Barb we're prepared to pay an extra \$20 to get it'," Ms Walker said.

"It's like a dutch auction."

Ms Walker said her firm, Access Home Rentals, had more than 200 rental properties from Coomera to Caboolture on its books, with only one vacancy.

"We don't even have to advertise," she said. "It's word of mouth and we've probably got three or four applications on every home."

"Within I would say 30km of the CBD, there's nothing available. You can't get it."

She said with the shortage of properties pushing up rents, those on low and fixed

incomes were missing out.

"It's the lower end of the market where you've got single mums etcetera, they're the ones being pushed out," Ms Walker said. "They're the ones who are desperate."

It's a concern shared by the community housing service, Brisbane Boarders.

"You've got a rising rental market, less stock and therefore real choice for landlords," said Brisbane Boarders CEO Wal Ogle.

"So therefore people on the lowest rung, people we deal with most of the time, haven't got a chance."

[Source: The Courier Mail, 23 October 2006]

## **Is it Better to be Down and Out in Ascot or Homeless in Hastings Street**

*Anti Poverty Week 2006 review*

This is a review of the debate held during Anti-Poverty Week organised in conjunction with QCOSS, Brisbane Institute and UnitingCare. please circulate

***The mini debate on poverty in a wealthy society with a touch of tongue in cheek ... and a LOT of laughter!***

The mini debate on Wednesday 18 October 'Is it better to be down and out in Ascot or homeless in Hastings Street' was a huge success and the Brisbane streets weren't the only ones cracking up. The lack of entry points into Brisbane didn't affect the number of people who turned out for the event with over 80 people attending.

The dynamic Peter Spearritt chaired the event and as always set the scene for a night of laughter and light hearted comedy, with a serious undertone. Jeff Cheverton (Qld Alliance) opened the debate with such innovative ideas as "Queensland Beg-Smart" and a tribute to 'HORSY' – a coalition of compassionate Ascotians offering deportment and communication skills to people begging in their area. Handy

tips on timing, like asking people for money while they are waiting for their food, rather than afterwards, would greatly increase returns. On a more serious note, he did inform the audience that last year the law was changed to make begging illegal!

Jeff was followed by Sharon Marshall from 10 News talking on behalf of the wonderful Noosa lifestyle. Who could feel down and out in such a paradise? You could just stroll your blues away down the beaches. The line of the night was delivered by Jan Power who argued that Noosa is no more than Esk with a beach and that people that live in Ascot own holiday houses in Noosa anyway, so the comparison really only depends on the weather.

And our last speaker for the night, Mr Bob Abbott the Major of Noosa Shire ... Yes I agree that sleeping in the Ascot race course stables would not be as pleasant as sleeping on the Noosa beach (or under the boardwalk covered with cardboard when it rains) and the horses would be just plain annoying at 4 in the morning.

Overall the night was a wonderful success, especially the wine and donations. Thanks for the suggestion of the donation bowls Sharon - people thought you had to pay for wine and chucked more in!- oh but the money will go to people experiencing homelessness. A big thank you to our

generous donors!

And thanks to the Brisbane Institute, QCOSS, UnitingCare Queensland, and the Centre for Social Justice, the people behind the scenes that put it all together. It was truly a memorable night.

## Information Brief - Rental Housing Vacancy Rates Qld: June 2006

◇ In the June quarter of 2006, the vacancy rate for all types of residential rental accommodation was 1.9% in Queensland and 1.4% in Brisbane. Gold Coast had the highest vacancy rate (2.7%), while Inner Brisbane had the lowest rate (1.3%) (see Figure 1).

◇ The percentage of agencies that believed that demand for residential rental accommodation in their area had increased in the past 12 months was lower on the Gold Coast (46.6%) than Brisbane Surrounds (83.3%) (see Figure 3).

Source: [www.oesr.qld.gov.au](http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au)

Figure 1: Vacancy rates by region

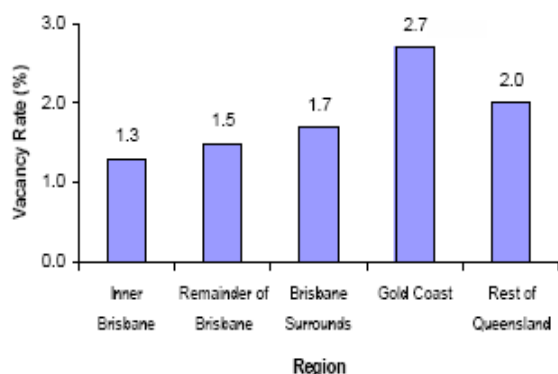
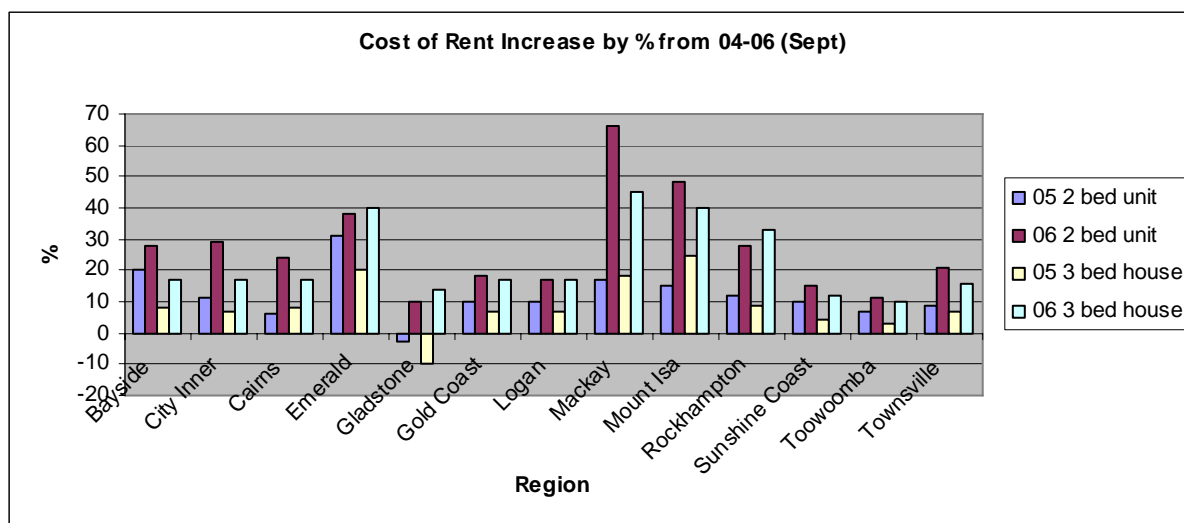
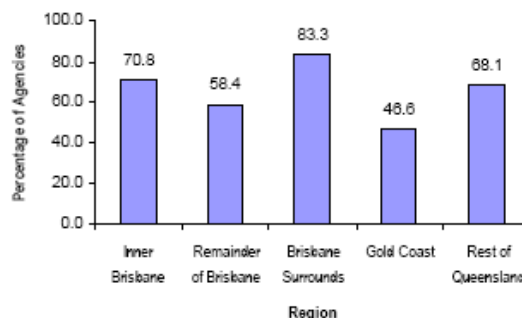


Figure 3: Percentage of agencies that believe demand for accommodation in their area has increased in the past 12 months, by region



Percentage Increase of rental prices against 2004 figures for key regions throughout Queensland.

Data source: RTA Statistical information

### Don't even Whisper about Impending Property Debacle

By Natasha Cica

Much has been made recently of two shocking news items. First, the report of a mortgagee sale in outer suburban Sydney where a brick veneer house sold for 40 per cent less than when it last changed hands in 2003, potentially part of a wider national trend. Second, the belated realisation that Australia has a housing affordability crisis.

Skyrocketing property prices have been wreaking havoc with the dream of Melissa Power and her fiance, Ben Lynn, of buying a house, reported one tabloid newspaper, lamenting the inability of Ben and Melissa both aged just 23, with a \$90,000-plus combined income, to buy pronto into Perth's property market. This came hot on the heels of the Reserve Bank's latest decision to crank up the volume on interest rates, and amid predictions of another increase before Christmas. The Federal Government, the Housing Industry Association and right-wing think tank the Institute of Public Affairs together laid the blame for this state of affairs at the feet of the states, allegedly at fault for not opening up more land for development.

It won't be easy to deflect that well-aimed wedge. As with their federal counterpart, the electoral popularity of state Labor governments owes no small debt to the real estate boom that has made many home owners rich beyond their wildest pre-bubble fantasies, and that's confused windfalls with birthrights. The hands of federal Labor's housing spokesman, Kim Carr, accordingly appear tied. For some time he has been pushing for more joined-up Future Cities thinking on housing and urban policy,

connecting basic socioeconomic dots like dwelling affordability and homelessness, poverty and planning, and urban design, infrastructure and sustainability. But no one in a Labor leadership role seems up for full frontal challenge to mainstream Australia's blinkered faith in intergenerational entitlement to owning bigger, swankier piles of bricks and mortar, and to our national addiction to sprawl.

Recall the awkward truth blurted by Mark just-a-suburban-battler-boy Latham in a 2003 diary entry: the combination of negative gearing, the halving of capital gains tax, high top marginal income tax rates and the end of the stockmarket boom has sent the property market in this country out of control - a spiv's paradise. It's

good economic policy to do something about it. But a hairy proposition politically.

The result so far? Ozblogger The Daily Flute crudely sums up the Coalition's line: 1. Make more money from property; 2. Have a bung (bribe) for buying a property; 3. Borrow shi\*loads at low interest rates. They won't go up while we're around. And Labor's? 1. Make more money from property; 2. Have a bung for buying property; 3. Interest rates are going up. Be scared. This makes Labor almost as crap as the Coalition on housing policy, reckons Flute, and they're missing the main game.

So is most of Australia. Mentioning 100,000 homeless Australians in most local living rooms is a bit like recalling the 353 dead SIEV-X asylum seekers. Watch how fast your companions change the conversational channel. Ditto if you recount the recent visit by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing,

***“a brick veneer house sold for 40 percent less than when it last changed hands in 2003,”***

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Miloon Kothari, to caravan parks and other crisis accommodation around Australia. Shocked by what he saw, Kothari reportedly observed a reluctance for controls on soaring rents. It seemed taboo even to mention it. He had found dwindling stocks of public housing. One senior housing official told Kothari that her job was to "oversee the orderly decline of social housing".

Whisper negative equity and Thatcher's Britain 1989 and that living room air gets palpably cuttable. Directly ask what's your contingency plan if you can't come up with the buckets of bucks you need to keep the bank from your front door(s) and you won't be invited back.

Strange - surely? - given the rampant boomtime smugness of the mortgaged

classes about their canny fiscal management, that's left renters feeling like Bridget Jones on a bad hair day (yes! underneath our clothes our entire bodies are covered with scales!) at a dinner party stacked with Bens and Melissas who've crossed the magic threshold.

Which is not to say that less populist reactions to the housing crisis are necessarily more appealing. Bring it on, RBA - delivered with a hiss of schadenfreude - is all very well. So is the sage reminder that every pendulum swings, every excess ultimately corrects. But blood on exactly whose mortgaged, rental or cardboard walls in the meantime? And precisely who will be responsible?

[Source: The Age, 4 September 2006]

## **PM Dumps Families 100kms Out**

*Media Release: Sen Kim Carr - Labor*

Figures out today prove that the Howard Government's interest rate rises are hitting families hard – spelling the end of the home ownership dream for growing numbers of hard-working Australians.

Sales of new houses and units fell by 3.6% or 7507 dwellings in July, in anticipation of the much discussed August rate rise. These figures clearly show buyers being forced out of the market as another rate rise looms, the third since the Howard Government election promise to keep rates at "record lows".

But despite clear evidence that rate rises are hurting hard-working families, John Howard continues to blame everyone but himself for the affordability crisis that grips the nation.

Yesterday he had the audacity to tell Australians that he believed in the great Aussie tradition of the backyard. So do many Australians, but after ten-long-years of Howard Government many people can't afford to buy a house with a window-box, let alone a backyard.

Howard's solution: expand the sprawl and push hard-working Australians even further from many jobs and services, more than 100km out of urban centres.

John Howard is so out of touch with the Australian people that he thinks he can talk about the housing affordability crisis as though he bears no responsibility for it. Instead he and Peter Costello have spent their time buck passing responsibility to the States.

This is a national crisis. It is not caused by the actions of one or two States. Commonwealth action is required – but the Howard Government does not even have a Minister for housing or urban development, let alone any semblance of a plan.

Howard is happy to take the credit when times are good, but runs a mile when things get rough.

Labor calls on Howard and Costello to roll up their sleeves to look for solutions.

31 August 2006

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## PM Told He's Wrong on House Prices

*By Matt Wade - Economics Writer*

THE Prime Minister's claim that state government land release policies are the main cause of high property prices locking first-home buyers out of the market is not credible, a Macquarie Bank economist says.

The bank's interest rate strategist, Rory Robertson, says federal policies that fuel demand for housing, including capital gains tax discounts and high immigration, have had a greater impact on housing affordability than land release on urban fringes.

Last month John Howard said the "main cause" of the high cost of housing was a shortage of land caused by state government land release policies and state levies on building new houses.

He said interest rates were "not the issue" driving up costs for first-home buyers.

But figures released yesterday suggest higher interest rates have driven many first-home buyers out of the market. First-time borrowers accounted for just 16.7 per cent of new home loans in July, the smallest proportion for more than a year.

Since the Reserve Bank raised interest rates in early May, the share of first-home buyers in the market has fallen by 2.4 percentage points - the biggest decline of an equivalent period for more than four years.

The figures showed the value of new housing loans fell by 1.4 per cent. There was a 7.2 per cent drop in investment loans, but owner-occupier loans rose by 1.3 per cent.

The average home loan size nationally reached a record \$223,500, up from \$215,900 a year ago and \$97,100 in March 1996. The average NSW loan in July was \$251,500.

Mr Robertson estimated the average price of an Australian home had risen from about four times pre-tax annual wages to about

seven times over the past two decades.

"There simply is no getting around the fact that the unexpectedly rapid increase in home prices has significantly devalued the lifetime earnings of non-home owners, particularly young people," he said.

Mr Robertson said increasing land supply in outer urban areas would improve affordability in those areas, but would have only a minor effect on prices in areas where most people lived.

"Any analysis of housing affordability that concentrates on supply-side issues like land release while downplaying or ignoring demand issues - population growth, the halving of interest rates [since the early 1990s] and the extraordinary role of investors in the latest home-price boom - simply is not credible," he said.

This echoes the Reserve Bank governor, Ian Macfarlane, who said last month that property values had doubled in the past decade "almost entirely" because of demand.

Mr Robertson said the needs of first-home buyers were being ignored because most voters were home owners and therefore had an interest in higher, not lower, property prices.

"Neither the Coalition nor the Labor Party in Canberra show any sign of going out of their way to make any significant difference ... [First-home buyers] are not a big enough priority for Canberra to do much beyond blaming the states for not releasing enough land," he said.

The shadow treasurer, Wayne Swan, said Mr Howard's push to increase the supply of land in outer suburbs would slash the value of homes in those areas.

[Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, 9 September 2006]

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# A Crisis in Housing Affordability

*By Andrew Bartlett*

In a 1993 Industry Commission Report, housing was described as a “basic human need”: I would go further and argue that it is basic human right. I also believe that it is a right which is consistently overlooked, when it should in fact be the starting point in any consideration of housing policy. It is sad that dry economic bodies like the Industry Commission and its successor the Productivity Commission seem to see this more instinctively than most politicians.

Australia is currently facing a situation where this basic right to affordable and adequate housing is not being met for a large and growing number of people. Whether it is the housing market or the private rental market, we are in the midst of an affordability crisis which impacts on other areas including health, education and employment. Access to affordable, appropriate and secure housing is fundamental. Without it, Australians are at risk of missing out on opportunities in all these other areas, no matter how much government funds are spent on them.

The serious impact of increased housing costs on lower income earners means that more must be done at state and federal levels of government to address the problem. Low income earners are increasingly being forced into poverty by high rental costs or ever increasing house prices and mortgage repayments. A national approach to housing affordability is as crucial as it is urgent.

The crisis of housing affordability has long been treated by the federal government as an area of states’ responsibility. In reality, housing is a shared responsibility and the federal government cannot continue to wash its hands of the matter, by just pretending it does its bit to assist by providing funding for the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA) and providing rent assistance, while insisting that any failures

are due to state and territory governments’ handling of the matter.

The 2004 Productivity Commission report, *First Home Ownership*, made a number of recommendations aimed at improving housing affordability. The federal Treasurer has recently publicly attacked the states for not adopting the recommendations from the Commission’s report, whilst shamelessly ignoring the fact that he rejected all the recommendations that were aimed specifically at the federal government.

This intellectually and morally bankrupt buck-passing has continued for years, while the affordability crisis has grown steadily worse. More and more Australian families are paying a high price for the Treasurer’s lack of courage and honesty.

A key recommendation of the Productivity Commission was the need for a review of tax arrangements which had encouraged excessive investment and speculation in the property market, including capital gains tax provisions and negative gearing. Other recommendations included a national public inquiry to examine how best to meet the housing needs of lower income households and better targeting of the First Home Owner Scheme, which disproportionately goes to high income earners and may well make its own small contribution to pushing house prices even higher.

Housing can only become affordable if all tiers of government take responsibility for the areas within their control and act to alleviate the problem. As it stands, the cost of negative gearing tax breaks is far in excess of expenditure each year on the CSHA which funds public and community housing. We provide more in tax breaks for higher income earners, who can afford to invest in housing than we provide in housing assistance to lower income earners. Even the welfare recipient targeted rent assistance, which indirectly subsidises

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landlords, now costs more than government puts into public housing.

The Industry Commission in 1993 found that the provision of public housing is a cost effective way to meet government housing objectives, yet this effective mechanism of alleviating housing affordability and availability problems has been pushed even lower down the political agenda in the years since then.

Despite evidence that funding public housing is a more efficient way to deliver housing outcomes, we are seeing a decline nationally in the total number of dwellings.

There can be no doubt that there are many factors at play which affect the cost of

housing but there is also no doubt that we are lacking a national housing strategy to develop the most effective and efficient way to address affordability. We can no longer afford to avoid examining the factors at a national level that add to the housing affordability crisis which is underpinning a growing wealth and opportunity divide in our community.

We urgently need action and leadership at a national level on this issue, otherwise more Australians will not be able to afford to access this most fundamental of human rights.

[Source: *Monday, August 28, 2006, Online Opinion*]

## People Choosing Not to Buy a Home

PEOPLE who cannot afford to buy their own home are unknowingly making the housing affordability problem worse, says an industry body. Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland president Brent Hailey said housing affordability was now so bad, those who could not afford homes were funding their own social and economic problems in the future.

Instead of pouring money into home repayments, he said people who couldn't afford to buy their own property were spending more in other areas, putting pressure on interest rates. And rising interest rates made the housing affordability problem worse, Mr Hailey said. The Reserve Bank will consider raising interest rates at its monthly meeting next week with some observers tipping another rise.

Mr Hailey said this was a "destructive cycle" that would lead to job losses in construction and other industries, as people who moved to Queensland could not find affordable housing to buy or rent.

He said Queensland could end up with a whole generation of renters, as had happened in London and New York, as couples gave up on the dream of owning

their own home. He said the three tiers of government needed to work together to motivate people to enter the housing market. More land should be released to bring land prices down, taxes and charges on new dwellings should be reduced and the First Home Owners Grant should be doubled to \$14,000 for existing homes and trebled for new homes to \$21,000. Infrastructure should be installed before houses were built to encourage people to buy. "Our argument has always been that the infrastructure needs to lead development to give people that perception of quality of life being achieved from the day they move in," he said. Mr Hailey joined the chair of the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, Peter McGrath, in calling for a state summit on the issue.

Queensland Housing Minister Robert Swarten said moves to make housing more affordable would "not get very far" without federal assistance. He said he had devised a plan, Homelink, in April to provide 1000 new, private, low-cost, rental homes to the Queensland market but the Federal Government had not come forward with support. *Wednesday, 01 November, 2006, The Border Mail*

## Catering for the Hungry

*by Leanne Tolra*

Smart restaurants and foodstores are joining the push to produce better food for those in need, writes Leanne Tolra.

DID you shop at the markets this week? Or dine at your favourite local restaurant? Perhaps it was a special occasion and you ate somewhere extravagant. Or maybe you checked out your local farmers' market. Did you buy an unusual jam or condiment, or some seasonal vegetables for a weekend meal?

But for many Melburnians, "eating out" means a visit to a refuge centre.

Admittedly, most of us know more about the first situation. So you would hardly expect there to be much of a connection between the two experiences.

Except that now, there is. Because behind the scenes, an intricate network of food businesses has started creating good-quality meals for those in need. And a growing number of these are the companies and people - including restaurants - that feature in our pages.

The 2001 census counted 20,305 homeless people in our state, and 2 per cent of Victorians access welfare agencies every year. A RMIT university report released in March found that among homeless youths in south-western Victoria, more than 75 per cent aged between 12 and 24 did not consume their daily energy requirements.

Food rescue, or food recycling, uses food that would otherwise be wasted. It's about giving good, fresh ingredients new life in a commercial kitchen and, with a bit of creativity, turning them into healthy, hearty meals.

Until a few years ago, this was illegal. But in 2002, the Victorian Government's

Wrongs Act created new protection for those donating food "in good faith for a charitable or benevolent purpose", provided the food was "safe to consume at the time it left the possession or control of the food donor". In response, restaurants, cafes and food sellers were able to donate goods they were previously forced to dump.

One of Melbourne's newest food rescue groups is Second Bite. This small organisation was formed by a group of friends dining at city restaurant Becco last year. Two of the friends were Alister Paterson, the Liberal member for South Barwon from 1992-2002, and Ian Carson, a former Victorian Liberal Party president.

Second Bite was established six months ago to take donations of fresh ingredients from places where food is left over. A growing band of volunteer couriers collects food from donors and delivers it to places such as the Sacred Heart Mission, St Mary's House of Welcome, Open Family, the Salvation Army and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. This is Second Bite's point of difference - it was set up to take fresh food from one place to another, where most other organisations collect ingredients and packaged food," Paterson says.

The food includes precooked meals from restaurants, fruit, meat, bread and vegetables. It is used in many of the charity organisations' kitchens to prepare or supplement meals.

Paterson says the group is on target to provide more than 75,000 meals in its first year of operation. "We get the impression that there is an almost limitless amount of food and that its use depends on the infrastructure we can create to pick it up," he says.

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Critical to Second Bite's success are the businesses that make donations. Becco, the restaurant where the concept was created, provides a fortnightly donation of vegetable soup, as does city neighbour Bamboo House. Other donors include stallholders at Prahran Market and the Rendezvous Hotel and Catering group.

As Becco co-owner Simon Hartley explains: "The concept was using up food that could still be edible, but was not usable in a restaurant situation. We don't have a great deal of wastage here because of the nature of the restaurant (everything is bought fresh and used daily) so we offered to donate 20-30 litres of soup for them to pick up every second Tuesday." Hartley says the "little bit" his restaurant is doing adds to other charity work, is not much of an extra tax on its staff and is not costly. "We didn't want to be giving Second Bite 'old' food, so we buy it with our own order. It can be whatever we dream up using what's available, or what we get from our supplier, but it always has a high content of vegetables as a base."

Similarly, the manager at Bamboo House, Robert Wong, sees his restaurant's fortnightly donation of 20 litres of beef in black bean sauce as a humble contribution. He says the restaurant had always wanted to do something but had never been approached before.

Because Second Bite picks up the food and delivers it (to the Sacred Heart Mission in St Kilda, on the same day that it collects Becco's soup), the only effort required of the restaurant is to prepare the food.

"We wanted something that would carry well and we know protein is needed, so that's why we chose this dish," says Wong. "It's not leftover food. We buy it especially and make it fresh. During the year we also give away meal vouchers to other charities, so we see this as an extension of our philosophy."

Ripe the Organic Grocer, one of several of stallholders at the Prahran Market donating

to Second Bite, has a similar philosophy. Co-owner Paul Smith says Ripe's contribution takes only "a little bit of effort".

"We have a high turnover, so there's not much waste. We got involved with Second Bite through one of our customers. She comes twice a week and picks up what's left over: fruit, vegetables, bread and dairy products. But we'll also top it up with a bag of apples or a box of potatoes - that's nothing.

"We have boxes labelled for them (and other groups the company donates to, such as the Prahran Mission and the Asylum Seeker Centre in North Melbourne); we fill them as we go," says Smith.

Other Prahran Market donors include Pino's Fine Produce, Cester's Poultry and Game, M. J. Mow Gourmet Potatoes, Neil's Meats, Russo's Fruit Supply and Reliable Fruit and Veges.

Leon Piccinin, the owner of Cester's Poultry, says he was pleased to help when approached. "We will give them sausages, perhaps a flavour that didn't sell well that week, marinated chicken wings, chicken fillets. Sometimes, if I don't have anything left over, I'll donate some whole organic chickens, or some fillets. This is something that we have been wanting to do for a long time. I'm more than happy to donate product, but I haven't got the time to run around and drop it off. We saw so much food thrown out here at the market that it was ridiculous. There is only so much we can freeze or reuse, so if someone else can make a meal out of it, that's great and we feel good about doing it too."

John Narduzzo, of Pino's, says he provides "a trolley load" of the basics: potatoes, carrots, onions, celery, apples and tomatoes. "We always give product away, never money, and I never ask questions. I believe that you can never say no to this sort of thing, because you never know when it can happen to you."

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St Mary's House of Welcome in Fitzroy is one of the groups receiving direct assistance from Second Bite, in the form of bread donated by Aroma Bakery. "I think it's fantastic what Alister has done," says Sister Roseanne Murphy, the day centre manager at St Mary's. "One of the lovely things about Second Bite is that they deliver food to us. We are a very small organisation and we have been going for a long time, but we don't have the staff or the capabilities to go driving around Melbourne picking up food."

St Mary's, established in 1958 by the Daughters of Charity as a crisis meal centre, receives government funding to operate five days a week, but manages to open for an extra day paid for by donations and fundraising. The centre offers two breakfast sittings and one lunch sitting daily. Morning and afternoon tea are offered most days.

Mike Cannon, general manager operations at VicRelief + Foodbank, points out that relief is often given to people who never expected to need it. "It might be a 45-year-old former executive who took a redundancy package, paid off a few bills and expected to find a new job. But five years later, he hasn't found employment, the money has run out, there are bills to be paid and he can't afford to feed the family," says Cannon.

Victorian Relief and Foodbank Victoria merged in February. The result is an emergency relief resource centre for welfare agencies and community organisations that delivers a material aid program including food and household goods.

"As part of Foodbank Australia there are 25 major food companies in Australia who are donors; companies such as Unilever, Cadbury Schweppes, Goodman Fielder, Fontera, Ardmona and SPC. They commit to donate excess stock, or distressed food stock (food that has been over-created, incorrectly packaged or is close to its best-before date)," says Cannon.

He says the biggest problem is supply of "staple" foods. The shelves at Foodbank's

headquarters in Yarraville are filled with snacks and "non-essential items". "We have more biscuits and confectionery than we can use. But what we don't have enough of is canned food or the things that don't go off - rice, pasta, flour and cereal."

The organisation also receives donations from stallholders at Footscray Market, excess stock from Safeway's warehouse, and packaged food from Coles supermarkets. Cannon says that as the big supermarkets and larger manufacturers "concentrate on getting their logistics right, the availability of 'recycled' products will decrease. If we continue to rely on mistakes, that could be the biggest mistake that we make".

Another highly regarded Melbourne charity group working to help the homeless and hungry is One Umbrella.

This group was pivotal in the introduction of the 2002 Wrongs Act and has been operating for almost five years. The organisation is funded by private donations, philanthropic trusts and government subsidies. It rescued 41 tonnes of unwanted food in 2005, much of it from corporate sponsors.

The group's chief executive officer, Martin Cowling, says One Umbrella creates 250,000 meals a year - its goal is 800,000 meals. There are about 300 agencies delivering food in Victoria, he says, and about 50 agencies providing cooked meals in metropolitan Melbourne. But in rural areas, often the problem is more hidden - farmers might be struggling, but they help others and ignore their own needs.

"Our biggest concern as an organisation is how much we waste in Australia. If you took all of the food that we know is wasted in Victoria it would total 750,000 tonnes (worth about \$1.3 billion). That is about 100 times what is needed to meet demand," he says.

[Source: *The Age*, 5 September 2006]

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## Back on the Road

by Michael Lallo

"This is going to sound funny," says 20-year-old Steph, "but I left home because of coffee. I made a cup for my dad and he threw it at me. It knocked me out and I ended up in hospital."

Not long after that, Steph ended up on the streets. At first, that came as something of a relief, but that feeling soon gave way to reality — and hunger and cold were the least of her worries.

"People look at you like you're a piece of dirt," Steph says. "I'm a really friendly person; I say hello to anybody. But people frown at me or go, 'Eugh!'"

I meet Steph aboard the Salvation Army's innovative new approach to dealing with youth homelessness: a double-decker bus. Her response to the alienation she was experiencing on the street was simple: she got a new wardrobe. Tonight she's wearing grey pinstripe shorts, black high heels and a pink plastic flower in her hair. It's mismatched but it works. Passers-by acknowledge her loud greetings with a smile. But for many other kids, says the Salvation Army's Major Brendan Nottle, the "spiral of homelessness" resists simple solutions.

Of the more than 20,000 homeless people in Victoria, almost half are younger than 25. And, according to Nottle, it is the younger homeless who are hardest to help. They tend to avoid drop-in centres because, Nottle claims, the older men there often scare the



females and teens away. The Salvos tried a dedicated youth centre, but that "didn't really work" either.

So Nottle and his colleagues decided something new was in order. If the kids wouldn't come to the drop-in centre, they'd have to take the drop-in centre to the kids. Trouble was, the scheme was well beyond the Salvos' budget. Then, in July last year, insurance company AXA Australia made a \$235,000 donation to fund the project.

Early this year, a double-decker bus was procured and gutted. The top level was crammed with all the usual teenage enticements: video games, computers, a big-screen plasma TV, brightly coloured furnishings and graffiti artwork. The bottom level, meanwhile, houses all the practical stuff: a counselling room, a medical examination table and a barbecue.

Last Tuesday night, the AXA 614 Bus made its maiden voyage. Its aim, Nottle says, is to provide more than just a safe space for kids to hang out (although that's still important). It's also about building trust with young people. Enough trust, say, to entice them downstairs to chat with a volunteer psychologist or lawyer, to get a health check or to create a resume. Anything to get them off the streets, or to prevent them being there in the first place.

The bus operates Monday to Thursday nights. It doesn't actually take kids

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anywhere; instead, it parks at one of several wellknown city hangouts for a few hours. The kids can stay as long as they like. Eventually, the Salvos hope to get it out during days, weekends and at youth events such as concerts.

On the balmy October evening of its first outing, the poverty-fighting Priscilla draws a crowd of about 100. There's been no advertising, so it's all down to word of mouth. The kids jostle impatiently as the bus pulls up on the corner of Flinders and Queen streets. They can't wait to get on board. When they do, it's quickly judged a hit. The boys lay claim to the Xboxes while the girls colonise the plump sofas to watch Australian Idol.

A game of chess is quickly under way. Everyone's shouting in a look what- Santa-brought-me state of excitement. Keeping an eye on things are several plain-clothes Salvation Army employees and volunteers. Despite their endless reserves of patience, this isn't a naive, overly earnest, socks-and-sandals bunch. The handful of AXA volunteers — just a few of the dozens of employees who will regularly help out on the bus — take their cue and blend in. Everyone knows the score, and the kids respect them for it.

"Before I lived on the streets, I was with Mum and Dad," 20-year-old Schmidy says in a slow monotone. But then "I got into violence and stuff". Hard times followed, but he's back at school now, and has even released a hip-hop CD called *My Life and the Way it Should Be*. Tonight he's using the free internet service to update his website: [mcschmidy.piczo.com](http://mcschmidy.piczo.com).

Behind him, 25-year-old Stretch is surfing soccer websites. He's just returned from the Homeless World Cup in South Africa, where he represented Australia. "Before, people knew me as a Big Issue vendor," he says. "But these days they're hunting me down 'cause I'm a celebrity. They ask me to sign their magazines and pose for photos."

Stretch is not about to waste this

opportunity. Soon he'll start training to become a soccer coach, and he has plans to set up a junior squad for other homeless kids. But first, he needs to find a place to live.

"I was living with a few mates, but that fell through as of this morning," he says while toying with his studded neck collar. "One of them went to jail, so we lost the house and we're all homeless again." Not to worry. The way he sees it, this is his fate. "One of the reasons I came to Earth, and even became homeless, is to promote awareness of homeless people."

Kate, on the other hand, doesn't really know why she's here tonight. "I don't normally eat meat," the 16-year-old says as she pushes a sausage into her mouth. "I just eat it if I'm hungry." In a couple of weeks, she'll move out of home into a share house. Why? Her fits of nervous giggling suggest "annoying siblings" are not the real reason.

"Everyone just shits me," she says with a shrug. She's lined up a job as a telemarketer, but her new career isn't exactly off to a flyer. "I was meant to start today, but I was in Sandown with some friends so I couldn't make it," she says, staring at her feet. "I'm going to rock up tomorrow and see what happens." If her job doesn't work out and she can't pay the rent, there's always Plan B. "I'll just squat somewhere."

Kate might also do well to pick up a few tips from the more seasoned operators here tonight. They could tell her about the best spots to sleep (the infrequently used stairwells at Flinders Street Station and Crown casino), the best places to eat (Hungry Jacks and Subway — just pick up a discarded cup and help yourself to the free drink refills), and how to deal with cops (quietly move on when they ask you to, then quietly return when they're gone).

Kris Halliday has a better idea than most what it's like to be homeless. The 28-year-old Salvation Army worker met Brendan Nottle and wife Sandra when he was 13. "I was pretty much in the same position as

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these guys," he says. "I was getting bashed every day at school, spat on, abused, everything possible. I snapped, had a nervous breakdown, and had to leave home."

The Nottles quickly stepped in and became "de facto parents", he says. But there was one hiccup. At the age of 20, Halliday made his first friends — or so he thought. Heroin, alcohol and a "party lifestyle" soon took over. Fortunately, when he decided he

wanted out, the Nottles were there to help. Now clean, sober and managing the Salvos' city community centre and emergency relief program, Halliday says he's well placed to help marginalised youth.

"All it takes is support," he says. "If I didn't have it, I'd be dead. Suicide was a definite option. I've been through it, and that's why I'm here tonight for these guys."

[Source: *The Age*, 17 October 2006]

## Homeless Victims of Lack of Sympathy

*by Adele Horin*

MANY people still believe the typical homeless person is a hobo with a drink problem who is to blame for his predicament, research shows.

That is far from the reality, according to Hanover Welfare Services, which commissioned a national survey and conducted a series of discussion groups.

The service's chief executive, Tony Keenan, said 42 per cent of the homeless in Australia were women, and 46 per cent were under 24. On any night there were 10,000 children under 12 who did not have stable housing.

The public's outmoded view contributed to neglect by governments of the homeless problem, Mr Keenan said. "If there was more knowledge and more compassion, we would have a better chance of getting real solutions to a complex problem," he said.

The survey of 1000 people, to be released today, shows 74 per cent believed poor decisions by the homeless were a big reason for their plight, while 59 per cent cited a lack of effort by the homeless. Drug

addiction, mental illness and domestic violence were cited by 80 to 90 per cent as main causes of homelessness. Only about 40 per cent thought a significant cause of homelessness was government failure to provide for people, or bad luck, or lack of opportunity.

"I have yet to meet someone who chooses to be homeless," Mr Keenan said. "But in the group discussions many people believed there was a degree of choice in becoming homeless."

Drug and alcohol problems and mental illness were part of the homelessness story, he said, but a lack of affordable accommodation was a serious issue that people totally overlooked. A big reduction in public housing stock over 20 years meant it was hard for many people on low incomes - especially those with other problems - to find stable accommodation they could afford.

[Source: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 October 2006]

## Shelter from the Norm

*by Carolyn Johnson*

Shift to permanent housing improves health of homeless...

QUINCY -- To some, it seemed like a disaster in the making: Take people who

have flitted in and out of shelters and emergency rooms for months or years -- people who have mental illness and substance abuse problems, people who just can't seem to get their lives together -- and

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give them a home without curfews or constant surveillance.

But a year after Father Bill's Place in Quincy moved a dozen homeless women into rooms of their own as part of a nationwide push toward housing the homeless instead of sheltering them, even the most skeptical have been impressed with the results.

"No one is more shocked than I am," a shelter staff member said of the early success of the "housing first" initiative in an interim report written by Tatjana Meschede, a senior research associate at the Center for Social Policy at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. "When we had a meeting before, I was pessimistic -- thought, from a medical standpoint, this is not going to work; we are going to have the ambulance over there every day, a lot of drama -- and that hasn't happened."

Indeed, since the women were moved into their own rooms, hospital stays and emergency room visits have dropped, people are using daily living skills like cooking and budgeting, some have reconnected with family, and almost all have an income, according to the report.

The difference is palpable. A year and a half ago, when the Globe visited the women before they moved into Claremont House, Lois Spencer, then 58, said matter-of-factly that she thought she would die in the shelter. But today, Spencer calls herself a "hot-dog freak," raves about Derek Jeter the Yankee, and is recovering from surgery to treat a cancer that she did not even know she had back then, when all she could think about was her rattling cough.

Since spring 2005, when Spencer and her housemates were first moved from Father Bill's, "housing first" initiatives have sprung up across the state -- part of a paradigm shift about the best and most economical way to help the homeless, who often rack up whopping emergency medical bills.

More and more case studies have found that a few homeless people may be responsible for significant emergency medical costs: For example, in Reno, Nev., Murray Barr, nicknamed "Million-dollar Murray," singlehandedly racked up \$1 million in medical costs and other public services over a 10-year period, according to an article by Malcolm Gladwell, author of "The Tipping Point." And over a year and a half, 15 homeless men in San Diego cost the city \$1.5 million in medical costs and other public services, according to Dr. James V. Dunford, medical director of the San Diego Emergency Medical Service.

In Boston, too, the health care costs are high. Dr. James O'Connell, president of Boston Health Care for the Homeless, began following 119 people who were living on the streets in Boston six years ago. The average annual healthcare cost was \$28,436, he said. In contrast, the average annual cost for people who have moved into housing dropped to \$6,056.

The costs are so great that researchers are now trying to prove, with pilot programs like the one in Quincy, that it makes more sense to give people housing, while also giving them a better life.

A 2002 report in the Housing Policy Debate journal followed 4,679 homeless, mentally ill people in New York who were given housing. Each person cost on average \$40,449 of publicly funded services over a year before they moved in. After they were given housing, those costs dropped by \$12,145 per year -- enough to pay for 95 percent of the costs of building and operating supportive housing.

In Quincy, the economic analysis won't be complete until next year, but at the one-year point, the raw cost of housing the women is about \$2,000 less than caring for them in the shelter, according to John Yazwinski, executive director of Father Bill's Place.

And that doesn't include the decrease in expensive emergency medical care. In the year before the women moved into their

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new homes, they collectively racked up 44 days of hospital stays. The year after they moved into rooms, there were only four days of hospital stays. Emergency room visits have been cut in half.

While the analysis will be crucial in justifying the program to taxpayers, O'Connell said what is most disturbing are the health effects of living on the street, where doctors can only treat episodic problems like frostbite, pneumonia, or other maladies that may mask deeper troubles. About a third of the people he studied, whose average age is in the mid-40s, have died over the past six years.

"I can't imagine a more important and necessary condition for good health than having a safe place to live," O'Connell said. "I often wish I could write a prescription: one studio apartment, 30 days, refill for six months. I think it's the only way they'll get better."

The idea, at once straightforward and revolutionary, is catching on. Traditionally, homeless people have been required to earn housing by getting a job, going back to school, and following strict rules -- a difficult feat for people who were often struggling with medical, mental health, and drug abuse problems. Add to that the social stigma of not having an address, waiting in line to get a bed every day, and having to carry all their belongings, and recovery becomes even harder.

But last August housing programs began to move people off the streets in Worcester, Springfield, Boston, and on Cape Cod. The state budget for fiscal year 2007 included a line item for \$600,000 to create about 130 units for chronically homeless people across the state. Quincy itself has set up a second house for homeless men.

And the women of Claremont House have gotten some national attention since the Globe's visit last year: At a Washington conference on housing, one of them found herself speaking before more than a thousand of people about the benefits of

moving into a home.

Meschede's interim report on the housing efforts in Quincy acknowledges a few lapses -- one woman was evicted from the house, and a man had to leave to go to a substance abuse treatment program. But people felt greater self-esteem; they felt better; most had income.

"Moving here saved my life. It really did. I never ever thought that I would be homeless ever in my life," one woman said in the report.

During a recent visit at Claremont House, the four women who were around clearly felt at home, talking and teasing one another with little of the bitter reticence that marked the first visit when they lived in the shelter. There was no chore list, but the common kitchen and bathroom areas were clean. Each room had been decorated with pride -- with houseplants, dried flowers, knick-knacks, or even just a bed piled with pillows.

Spencer hadn't been to the emergency room since she moved in.

Her housemate, Nancy Carroll, had filled her room with books and an old typewriter and was working on writing a mystery novel, planning on taking a class in creative writing, and worked at Father Bill's Place doing laundry and cleaning during the week.

Bonnie Brooker, 50, who went from working part-time at a school and a Blockbuster store to living in her car in Mansfield four years ago, said the house has done miracles for everyone.

"Everyone here knows everybody has an issue, situation, whatever it might be," she said. There are "a couple women who have come so far outside of their shell, doing more, being out. This has got to be one of the biggest ideas ever."

[Source: The Boston Globe, 24 September 2006]

### Make a Difference Project

by Mandy Cox, Project Worker, Communityfy

There are many new settlers in Brisbane with a lot to offer. Business people, industrious workers, artists, sportsmen and women and community builders have fled their countries in fear of persecution and have established themselves in Brisbane to contribute to their local neighbourhood and build a new life.

Countless Brisbane people are welcoming families from the Thai Burma border (Karen ethnic group), Burundi, Eritrea, Afghanistan and many other countries and are joining home tutor programs, sporting activities, fundraising groups (to assist people without work permission) and social support networks to help them feel at home in our city.

The Make a Difference project at Communityfy (formerly Red Hill Paddington Community Centre) celebrates and promotes the activities of these volunteer groups and is joining them in enlisting new members, sharing resources, and to hold forums that bring people together to collaborate and coordinate their activities where needed.



To recruit volunteers and support existing members The Make a Difference workers have been guest speakers at numerous public meetings and volunteer gatherings including

- ◇ Politics in the Pub at the Powerhouse organised by the New Farm Neighbourhood centre
- ◇ Yeronga Park Community picnic organised by Amnesty International
- ◇ AFAR ( Airfares for African Refugees) group gathering
- ◇ VoRTCS ( Volunteers for Refugee Tutor Community Support) session

# community Qld



Women Around Food event at Womenspace where Sudanese women shared stories about their culture and traditions and catered for the event. Offers to assist with English tutoring, business mentoring and to book the catering group for two other private functions has flowed since.

- ◇ Gateway refugee support group
- ◇ Bayside Academic support club
- ◇ Womenspace

The Make a Difference project is also making a DVD that will feature asylum seekers and refugees talking about their needs, hopes and dreams and how ordinary Brisbane people are active in refugee support. The completed DVD will be issued to all refugee support groups in Brisbane to raise awareness of the settlement needs of families coming from war torn countries and to attract more people to volunteer their time.

After receiving funds through the Multicultural Affairs Qld grants program the Make a Difference workers met with the Ethiopian Community Association leader, some members of the Sudanese north-side community, members of the Liberian refugee support group and various other facilitators and advocates within asylum seeker and refugee communities. Since these meetings the Make a Difference workers activities have included

- ◇ Linking Sudanese Nile Delights (a north Brisbane based catering collective run by Sudanese women) with The Gathering

◇ Beginning negotiations to find partners to establish a Kick Ball tournament with the Liberian community. Kick ball is a national sport for women in Liberia. A local tournament can provide opportunities for Liberian women to showcase their skills and break social isolation.

- ◇ Securing a rent free house through an agreement with the Kennedy Tce Uniting church parish who have a strong commitment to social justice to accommodate asylum seekers on bridging visa without work permission.

- ◇ Promoting a sewing machine donation drive to provide sewing machines to tailors and dress makers interested in using these skills and possibly generating a small income. 3 machines have been distributed to the West End Waiters Union sewing enterprise and a sewing group on the north side.

Please contact The Make a Difference project workers Mandy Cox, Ewen Heathdale and Karen Dare for further information and opportunities to contribute on 35102700.

## The Property Industry: Capital Gains in Search of Rental Returns

*By Kingsley Gum and Peter Spearritt, Brisbane Institute*

*Kingsley Gum and Peter Spearritt have been researching capital growth and rental returns in SE Queensland. The capital values data comes from a number of sources, including the Real Estate Institute of Queensland while the rental information comes from the Residential Tenancies Authority. This article draws on their presentation at the Annual General Meeting of Queensland Shelter.*

The property industry and property journalists are captive to a booster view of the world of real estate. You might say they have to be, as their livelihood depends on it. Plenty of industries encourage internal critique and external analysis. Doctors, teachers, even lawyers, criticise their own. But not the property industry, unless outright crookedness is proven. Real estate organisations have distanced themselves from secret commissions and falsely inflated prices. The rise of internet housing information sites, where prospective buyers can get data on all recent sales by postcode, has made it much more difficult to rig a market. You can now actually check the claims made by your local real estate agent, for both owner occupied and investment property.

The banks want to lend us more and more, while the aggressive mortgage lender firms tell us that they offer a better deal than the banks. The insurance industry wants to insure us, except they would love to ditch canal estates, cyclone prone areas and drought-prone farmers. Indeed the insurance industry took climate seriously much earlier than the belated interest now being shown by federal and state governments.

Australian newspapers are addicted to running lists of the increase in capital value in particular suburbs, for the understandable reason that even some tenants find the value issue interesting. And in wealthier streets in Australia the latest auction results are a favourite topic of street conversation. But what nobody wants to discuss is the lousy rental yield on most residential property in Australia. Canny investors are more likely to put their money into commercial property or high occupancy tourism properties, but hundreds of thousands of Australian retirees are now sitting on gradually decaying strata title apartments offering lousy rental yields and – unless they have great views or employment access – uncertain capital gains.

Over the five years 2000-2005, median house prices in Brisbane City, Australia's most popular local government area, rose 112 per cent, from \$169,000 to \$360,000. Median rents for houses rose just forty-two per cent. As so often in urban property markets, if you bought before the boom (in the case of SEQ 2001-2002) you've made a motza. If you bought any later you're lucky if your value has kept pace with inflation. If you bought in the boom and hope to cover your interest payments with your rent, you'd be going backwards.

That is precisely the fate of many apartment owners. The median value of apartments in Brisbane City rose just 58 per cent, from \$174,950 in December 2000 to \$277,000 in December 2005. Rents rose 42 per cent over that period. No wonder landlords, to the dismay of tenants and tenant advocacy groups, are so keen to jack up their rents as quickly as possible. With lower income tax rates in the \$50,000 to \$120,000 level,

negative gearing becomes less and less attractive. Of course there are subsidies, of which the federal government's rental assistance package (in lieu of putting any money into publicly-owned housing units) is the most notable. While the subsidy goes to the tenant, landlords are thankful to tenants who increasingly have to pass on all of this helping hand, especially at the cheaper end of the apartment and house rental market.

The rental yield (the gross annual return on the capital value) on property across greater Brisbane has fallen from five to eight per cent in 2000 to between two and five per cent in 2005. No doubt the yield will increase again, as it too, like capital values, runs to its own cycle. But with current and potential retirees increasingly confident that their superannuation funds will deliver them a 15 per cent return, tax free for many of them, who in their right mind would

invest in property unless they want to live in it (avoiding the uncertainty of tenancy in a society where leases longer than one year are almost unknown) or they are very deft at picking the market. But there are only so many waterfront sites to go around, and capital gains are far from assured in properties without views, especially if they are well away from employment or public transport.

The implications of these developments cannot be predicted with certainty, but it is clear that landlords are unhappy with their low rental yields and will increase rents as quickly as they can, especially in those markets where the vacancy rate is low, from the inner areas of most of our major cities to the boom resource towns, including Mackay, where there is virtually no available rental accommodation. The pressure on remnant public housing lists continues to grow and some of the newer

**Table 1: Percentage Change in Median House Values and Median Rents, 2000-2005**

Median House Value				Median Rent (3 bedroom house)			
LGA	Dec-00	Dec-05	% Change	LGA	Dec-00	Dec-05	% Change
Brisbane	169,900	360,000	111.9	Brisbane	190	270	42.1
Ipswich	85,000	225,350	165.1	Ipswich	140	200	42.9
Logan	109,050	241,000	121.0	Logan	155	230	48.4
Pine Rivers	134,000	299,000	123.1	Pine Rivers	170	245	44.1
Redcliffe	118,000	290,000	145.8	Redcliffe	160	230	43.8
Redland	155,000	347,000	123.9	Redland	175	250	42.9
Beaudesert	127,750	292,500	129.0	Beaudesert	170	250	47.1
Caboolture	117,000	267,000	128.2	Caboolture	na	220	na

**Table 2: Percentage Change in Median Unit Values and Median Rents, 2000-2005**

Median Unit Value				Median Rent (2 bedroom unit)			
LGA	Dec-00	Dec-05	% Change	LGA	Dec-00	Dec-05	% Change
Brisbane	174,950	277,000	58.3	Brisbane	175	250	42.9
Ipswich	96,000	164,750	71.6	Ipswich	120	165	37.5
Logan	70,000	155,250	121.8	Logan	110	165	50.0
Pine Rivers	124,750	220,000	76.4	Pine Rivers	135	180	33.3
Redcliffe	114,750	265,000	130.9	Redcliffe	120	185	54.2
Redland	157,000	250,250	59.4	Redland	155	220	41.9
Beaudesert	na	107,500	na	Beaudesert	115	145	26.1
Caboolture	123,500	229,500	85.8	Caboolture	na	175	na

Sources:

1. Residential Tenancy Authority, Rental bond lodgements
2. REIQ, data published in Queensland Property & Lifestyle

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housing bodies, like the Brisbane Housing Company, will be hard pressed to keep up with demand for affordable housing.

Both the federal and state governments love to pass the buck on affordability issues. The various property lobbies call for more land releases on the urban fringe, with scant regard for the impact on the shape, function and environmental sustainability of our cities. The move in all our major urban centres for medium and high density apartments in inner areas has not contributed one jot to affordable housing.

## **Challenging the Concepts behind Social Housing - UK**

*by Sally Barwell, Policy and Research Officer, Queensland Shelter*



'Inside Housing' magazine, the leading UK social housing commentary has been following the recent work of social housing Professor John Hills. In July of this year the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Ruth Kelly, commissioned Hills to review current housing provision and asked what role social housing should play in the future.

As part of the review The Chartered Institute of Housing are playing an active role in facilitating discussion through events across the country and a web based forum. The information gathered will form part of the research needed for Professor Hills to complete his review. A review which is asking fundamental questions about the future of social housing in the UK.

"The Professor of social policy at the London School of Economics is well into his work to take a wide look at social housing in the 21st century. He pledged to take a fresh look at policy and the eyes of the sector are cast in his direction as he works up his paper, due to be completed in

Most of these developments are aimed at wealthy residents or investors hoping that full fee paying foreign students will push up rents. While the wealthy owner occupiers colonise our harbour, ocean and river frontages, people of limited means will be forced from the inner areas of our major cities and coastal settlements to cheaper sites inland, where access to transport, education, employment and health care will be limited, unless they are lucky enough to land in a well-serviced inland town.

December."

Professor Hills says "This is a way of helping people in the wider debate to think through what we are trying to achieve through social housing and the different policies there are to meet some of those aims"

It would seem Professor Hill will be looking at a wide range of subjects from alternative financing arrangements to policy reform. He will also be looking at the factors that keep people in social housing; the relationship between housing and employment and what happens when individual's circumstances change. The discussion will be taken one step further to include the role social housing plays in the wider community and how it can assist in developing other government objectives.

It is not just those in the UK that should be following his work with interest, here in Australia we may find that many of the subjects currently being scrutinised in the UK are reflected in the discussions taking place around us.

Professor Hills review is due to be completed for the Secretary of State in December, 2006.

[Source: 13 October 2006 Inside Housing]

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# Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) Research

## Research and Policy Bulletins

### [Issue 78: How does security of tenure impact on public housing tenants? \(Research Synthesis\)](#)

Security of tenure gives people a sense of autonomy, identity and control over their living environment resulting in increased residential stability and reduced stress. This in turn benefits children's education and neighbourhood social cohesion, and in some contexts enables workforce participation.

### [National Research Venture Report: Housing affordability and the economy: A review of labour market impacts and policy issues](#)

This report focuses on the issue of (mis)match between labour and housing markets in large, globally connected cities in the current era of globalisation. Inevitably, attention in the Australian context is directed towards Sydney and Melbourne. The basic argument draws on the urban analyses of theorists like Sassen, Fanstein and Marcuse who see the process of globalisation impacting very unevenly across and within countries and who point to the primary role of particular cities and within them, particular regions, as the locus of dynamic economic growth.

### [Positioning Paper: The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of homelessness prevention and assistance programs](#)

This Positioning Paper describes the research design for a study on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of homelessness prevention and support programs operating in Western Australia. It also provides the reader with a brief review of the relevant literature and of the policy context which informs the study.

### [Issue 84: Financing affordable housing: A critical comparative review of the United Kingdom and Australia](#)

Private investment in social and affordable

housing has increased significantly in the United Kingdom over the past thirty years. The reverse is true for Australia.

### [Final Report, A review of housing management tenant incentive schemes](#)

This report is the final output of a study undertaken to review the utility of tenant incentive schemes in the Australian context. It presents the findings from four state-wide case study investigations undertaken in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania.

### [Positioning Paper, The implications of loss of a partner for older private renters](#)

This positioning paper explores the implications of loss of a partner for private renters aged 50 years and over (aged 50+). The scope of the analysis includes singles who turned 50 having previously lost a partner through death, separation or divorce and those who lose a partner after turning 50. The issue is significant not only because of the impact on the individual who has lost their partner, but also because of demographic trends such as the ageing of the population and rising marital separation rates which will find an increasing proportion of the population facing this situation.

### [Research and Policy Bulletin, Issue 85: Housing assistance and disadvantaged places](#)

Increased targeting of housing assistance to those most in need is helping to create places of disadvantage. This bulletin by Lyn Luxford synthesises the evidence from a range of AHURI and other research on housing assistance and disadvantage.

For more information go to the AHURI website at [www.ahuri.edu.au](http://www.ahuri.edu.au) Tel: +61 3 9660 2300, Fax: +61 3 9663 5488

### Melbourne Wins Bid For Homeless World Cup 2008



Melbourne has overcome fierce competition from Britain, Italy and Switzerland to host the Homeless World Cup in 2008.

The annual event – the pinnacle of a global push to encourage disadvantaged youth and adults into playing sport – will take place in a specially-designed street soccer arena in the city's Federation Square in November 2008, and be contested by more than 50 national teams.

The Homeless World Cup is an annual tournament pioneered and organised by the International Network of Street Papers (INSP), an association of some 55 publications like *The Big Issue* in 28 countries. The first competition took place in Graz, Austria, in 2003 and was won by the host nation. Italy emerged as champions

in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2004. While in 2005, host city Edinburgh proved lucky for Australia – the Street Soccerroos took part in their first tournament and came an amazing 7th. This year's cup is scheduled to take place in Cape Town, South Africa. The Street Soccerroos weekly training sessions are open to anybody who wouldn't otherwise get the opportunity to play. Anyone over the age of 16 who has experienced homelessness in the last two years, or is participating in a drug rehabilitation programme, is eligible for the Homeless World Cup. As well as providing a much-needed morale boost for players and their marginalised communities, the tournament gives team members long-term goals and a sense of direction. Melbourne's bid was generously supported by the Victorian State Government, whose funding will also be used to expand a Melbourne-based soccer training programme into regional Victoria in the lead up to the event, and the City of Melbourne. The bid was also significantly bolstered by the enthusiastic support of a number of corporate sponsors including Smorgon Steel, The Body Shop, Goldman Sachs JB Were, BHP Billiton, MECU, Origin Energy, Spotless, Australia Post and The Age.

A major international conference on homelessness will also be held at the same time.

### Russia Wins 2006 Homeless World Cup

30 September 2006, Russia has won the Cape Town 2006 Homeless World Cup, the international street soccer tournament changing lives.

Russia beat newcomers Kazakhstan in the finals today by one goal to nil in front of

packed crowds at the Grand Parade.

Speaking at the press conference this morning Russia's Captain Shelaevskiy Viatcheslav said, "One of my strongest dreams has been realised. Kazakhstan are our good neighbours and good friends. I

will never forget these days. Our main goal when we get home is the creation of a street soccer league. Football helped save me. I've made friends and if anything happens to me, I now have friends to help me."

Kazakhstan's Captain, Kalikov Yergali said: "I am very glad to have participated in this championship, especially in Africa. The venue for the Homeless World Cup gives us huge satisfaction. We are very impressed with the city of Cape Town. Russia are our brothers. Many thanks to sport that unites classes and people."

Mel Young, President and Co-founder Homeless World Cup, praised the players for their spirit at the tournament: "Congratulations to Russia, winners of the 4<sup>th</sup> Homeless World Cup in Cape Town. Each and every player here stands proud, stands triumphant. You have represented your country with honour. You are all fantastic. Congratulations on a great tournament."

Mr. Adolf Ogi, Special Adviser to the



United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, sent his congratulations to the organisers and the hosts of the Cape Town 2006 Homeless World Cup:

"The Homeless World Cup, especially through its capacity to attract media attention, is an outstanding example of how the positive potential of sport can play a vital role in promoting health, education, development and peace. Like many

other events, projects and initiatives, which take place all over the world without being noticed by the broad public, the Homeless World Cup uses sport as an innovative instrument to build bridges between people, to overcome cultural differences and to spread an atmosphere of tolerance."

Mr. Ogi expressed hope that, in view to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the event would inspire all stakeholders in South Africa to initiate and further support projects using sport as a tool for development and peace.

## Street Socceroos Return



The Street Socceroos are back triumphant from the 2006 Homeless World Cup in Cape Town! After playing with more than 500 players from 48 countries over seven days,

they've returned with new friends and a new outlook on the world. Read about the Street Socceroos' adventures in Cape Town in Scott Mackinnon's tour diary. <http://www.bigissue.org.au/>



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# Queensland Shelter Library Bulletin

Issue 7 (3) November 2006

## **Recent Library Additions:**

**University of Newcastle. Family Action Centre.** The Caravan Project - *Beyond the boom gate: considering when working with people moving into or living on caravan/residential park* - Callaghan. NSW. Uni of Newcastle, 2005.

**Residential Tenancies Authority** - *Renting a home: a tenant's guide to the rules for renting in Queensland* - Brisbane. RTA, 2006.

**Brisbane City Council** - *Brisbane City-Shape 2026: the draft* - Brisbane. BCC, 2006.

**Brisbane City Council. Natural Environment and Sustainability Branch** - *Sustainable development incentives policy: draft: quantifying and rewarding new sustainable multi-unit residential and office development in Brisbane* - Brisbane. BCC, 2006.

**Mangrove Housing Association Inc and Moreton Institute of Tafe** - *Survey of housing needs in the Redland and Bayside Region* - Wynnum, Brisbane. Mangrove Housing Assoc Inc, 2005.

**Graham Meltzer** - *Sustainable community: learning from the cohousing model* - Victoria, BC, Canada. Trafford Publishing, 2005

**ACT Council of Social Service Inc (ACTCOSS) and ACT Shelter** - *The wealth of home: a call for action on affordable housing in the ACT* - Canberra.

ACTCOSS & ACT Shelter, 2006.

**Queensland. Department of Local Govt., Planning, Sport and Recreation. Office of Urban Management** - *Mt Lindesay/North Beaudesert Study Area: draft study report* - Brisbane. Qld Govt, 2006.

## **Library and Information Services**

**- available to Queensland Shelter members, students and to the public**

The Queensland Shelter library offers information with a focus on housing issues. Key words: affordable housing, low income housing needs, supported accommodation, public housing, homelessness, rental housing, government/ social policy, community development, community organisations, planning and development and other social issues in general.

The library is open to Queensland Shelter members, staff, students and interested members of the public during office hours.

Loans are available to Members Only.

The library is available for use by non-members, by prior arrangement.

Non-members are not permitted to borrow items from the library however photocopying is available in accordance with Copyright Regulations and Library Policy.

To find out if we can assist you with your information needs please phone Queensland Shelter on (07) 3393 2433

## **Contributions Invited**

Queensland Shelter Quarterly invite contributions, expressions of interest and suggestions for the September edition of the journal. We welcome articles of 600 to 1300 words.

### **Submission details:**

Confirm contributions Friday 2 February 2007. The deadline for contributions is Wednesday 15 February 2007.

If you have any questions contact, QShelter Publications at [info@qshelter.asn.au](mailto:info@qshelter.asn.au) or phone 07 3393 2433



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**Special Interest:** Indigenous / ASHRAM / Women's Housing Network

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