



# Housing PEOPLE

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## Breakfast Forum with Shane Hamilton

Shane Hamilton, Executive Director of Aboriginal Housing & Infrastructure, WA Department of Housing and Works was the guest speaker at the Breakfast Forum held in Perth on June 18.



Titled "Challenges in Social Housing in WA", Shane focussed on the challenges for Aboriginal Housing in WA, which he described as "enormous, but not insurmountable".

To help meet these challenges, Aboriginal Housing is about to embark on a research project in conjunction with RMIT which will focus on

the development of a Design Framework, and the Territory Housing design assessment tool. These two projects are placing an extended view of sustainable housing at the centre of the procurement, design, construction and management of remote Indigenous housing. Specific outcomes of the research include guidelines for training Indigenous community members in housing construction, management and maintenance, and evaluation of designs and construction technologies for prefabricated housing which are flexible in design, capable of extension and easy to maintain.

Shane said "We believe this research project will better inform many of our processes and systems to make Aboriginal Housing in WA more sustainable and better positioned to deliver quality housing outcomes for Aboriginal people".

## Meet New Member...

**Jennifer Clark**, the General Manager Community and Public Housing in the Queensland Department of Housing, has responsibility for planning, policy and program delivery for Social Housing Programs in QLD. These programs include public housing managed directly by the department, and a range of community managed programs delivered through community housing providers across the State. The department's overall strategy is to create 'One Social Housing System' through the coordination and integration of public and community managed programs.

Jennifer has held a number of senior positions within the department, and prior to moving to sunny QLD, she worked in the NSW public sector. She completed the QLD Public Sector SES Mobility Program for 2003 with a secondment to the Department of the Premier

and Cabinet, followed by another secondment to the Department of Communities to lead the Blueprint for the Bush project in 2005/6, a joint project between the QLD Government and Agforce.

She is a passionate advocate for the importance of secure and affordable housing for those not well served in the private housing market in Australia, and for the potential for housing assistance programs & providers to work more effectively together and respond better to clients in need.

Her colleagues report that Jennifer (an excellent cook) has a great motivational strategy - she often provides scones, mini muffins and pikelets for everyone to share!



## Christchurch City Council's Housing team

From Kevin Bennett

Christchurch City Council is the largest Local Government social housing provider in New Zealand, with a portfolio of 2649 units located in 117 complexes spread throughout the city and Banks Peninsula. Our first units were built in 1939 and those units continue to be in use today.

Our portfolio comprises mainly bedsit, studio and one bedroom units with a small number of 2 and 3 bedroom units.

The main thrust when the Council began the service was housing for pensioners, but over relatively recent times the focus has broadened, mainly precipitated by the deinstitutionalisation of the mental health service. The bulk of our tenants continue to be older people, but there is a significant number of younger people from the lower socio-economic group who also require affordable rental housing.

Last year the Council adopted a Social Housing Strategy which provides a vision for the future. This strategy recognises partnerships as options to be explored for future development and also provides a commitment to the Council continuing to be a provider of social

housing. It is recognised that there is a need for our service to expand and diversify in order to assist in meeting the needs of the community.

Last year we constructed, in partnership with Housing New Zealand Corporation, a new 20 unit complex designated for older people. These units are mainly 1.5 bedrooms; the smaller room is designed to accommodate a caregiver, grandchild etc for short stays. This concept is proving to be very successful and we are currently considering further new developments designed to meet the needs of the community and located in close proximity to services.

In addition to concentrating on normal tenancy and tenant wellbeing services, we also provide an activities service for our tenants. The activities provided are intended to promote tenant wellness and include things such as walks, mastermind competitions, indoor /outdoor bowls tournaments, ten-pin bowling, movies, day bus trips etc. Also, this year for the first time we are holding a Photography and Art competition.

Our service is funded solely from rents, it is not subsidized by ratepayers. We do look for opportunities to access funding from other sources outside the Council for new capital developments.



## Branch Committee News

**New Zealand from Roger Jameson** We have a programme of events with two already arranged, and several others in the pipeline. The key constraint in getting things done is, of course, the time factor. Our Branch Committee is active and we have a good blend of people who are committed to doing things.

Events organised include a "Talk and Tour" of Talbot Park Community Renewal Project in Auckland on Thursday 3 July, and a one day forum in Waitakere on Affordable Rental Housing (Tuesday 22nd).

Other proposed events include:

- Housing affordability workshop – Northland,
- Wellington regional community housing forum,
- Christchurch City Council session,
- Site visit to new IHC high and complex needs facility, Ashby Pl, Albany, Auckland,
- Wellington meet-the-politicians session,
- Wellington City Council housing upgrade project,
- Joint Session with Lifetime Design Foundation,
- Asset Management Conference - Wellington,
- Function for Swinburne Uni graduation.

## 100,000 Ways Home - a response to the Green Paper.

After attending a public consultation forum in Sydney, Unis Goh jotted down a few points as a contribution to the submission AHI is preparing on behalf of its members. Her thoughts are below.

*I felt it was important to focus on an issue not addressed in the document Which Way Home? A new approach to homelessness; the skilling and professional development of workers. We need to capture the potential wealth of cross-sectoral career pathways for workers in mainstream and related specialist areas, to prevent and stamp out recycling of people into homelessness.*

*We are asked to comment on the Goals, Targets and Principles set in the Green Paper. I think that what is missing is a national mission statement that enthuses and gives hope to homeless victims, as well as service professionals, not to be discouraged when the going is tough. Hence, I suggested a statement "100,000 ways home".*

- *Developing a response that is not limited to a 10 year time frame as suggested.*
- *Setting differential targets for different user groups e.g the number of homeless children under 12 years should be reduced to zero, and the target for indigenous people needs to be set at a more challenging level than other*

*special groups, as they are over-represented amongst homeless people now.*

*I think a cultural shift of our mindset is critical to ensure the success of a "new approach". Suggestions include:*

- *Shifting the professional turf wars within the human services sector to a culture of collaboration across the professional divide.*
- *Workers forming professional networks, where they have an independent voice for policy debate and sharing social housing best practices across the nation.*
- *Walking the talk so that principles of democracy are extended to users of services - a civil society must do this.*
- *Promoting a culture of continuous improvement through a cycle of feedback from all stakeholders.*

*Finally, when resources are tight, pooling resources and talents of workers (paid and unpaid) is needed more than ever. Allocating such precious resources on the basis of performance outcome is a must for the intent of this Green Paper, and eventually the White Paper detailing a national policy, to be sustainable in the long term.*

*I also feel that we should strongly support the innovative models cited in the case studies in the Green Paper, and that they be replicated as widely as possible, without being limited to any one option.*

## AHI engages in course recognition process with Swinburne

On the 4 & 5 June a panel of social housing professionals and academics met with the team from Swinburne to assess their housing qualifications. Both the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Housing Management and Policy were assessed for recognition against the AHI expectations for professional education and practice for social housing workers in Australia and New Zealand. This was the first course recognition process undertaken by the Institute as part of the strategy to support the ongoing professional development of our growing sector. The panel consisted of: Brendan Moran (Director, Housing SA North), Tony Chalkley (Deakin & RMIT Universities), Mike Berry (RMIT), Jan Berriman (Chief Executive Officer, Melbourne Affordable Housing), Angela Percy (Policy Analyst, Housing Tasmania), Therese Quinlivan (Director, Community Housing Aotearoa) Joan Ferguson (Chief Executive, AHI and Panel Chair).

The Institute has developed criteria for the professional recognition of relevant undergraduate or postgraduate courses against our expectations of professional practice in the social housing workforce. Course recognition is a robust process and it is expected that courses contain relevant academic knowledge and skills as well as the practical application of personal and professional practice skills. Swinburne course documentation was assessed prior to the visit to the campus to review resources and undertake interviews with key university personnel.

There are three elements that were assessed in a housing course to be recognised by the Institute:

1. Knowledge: Knowledge expectations form the basis of qualifications. They include core knowledge, housing themes, and additional content approved by Universities.
2. Skills: Skills expectations refer to the personal and professional practice skills which a graduate of the course will be able to demonstrate.
3. Learning: Learning expectations refer to the academic skills which graduates of the course will have demonstrated.

All universities seeking accreditation by the Institute are encouraged to design courses around learning themes associated with housing. Variety and flexibility is encouraged to create innovative units and distinctive courses with the level, structure and title of the qualification determined by the University.

By embarking on a process of recognition, the Institute aims to ensure quality social housing education delivery where learners acquiring qualifications that are meaningful and valid, with the ultimate goal of improving the service provision to social housing clients. Over time professional recognition of courses will also set a benchmark for assessing the suitability for professional membership to the Institute.

A report based on the findings from the visit to Swinburne is currently being finalised for presentation to the assessment panel and the Institute Practice and Education Committee, before a final decision regarding course recognition.

Contact Tracey Acton, Professional Development Coordinator for more information on 0412 538 140.

## Diary dates - Upcoming Events

### AHI Events

Event	Location	Date
Mental Health First Aid (in house)	Liverpool, NSW	2 - 3 July
Talbot House Tour	Auckland NZ	3 Jul
Mental Health First Aid	Melbourne	14 - 15 July
Mental Health First Aid	Adelaide	21 - 22 Jul
Rental Affordability Forum	Waitakere, NZ	22 July
Working with complex and demanding clients	Canberra	29 July
Working with clients with drug/alcohol dependency	Canberra	30 July

For more information about the above events, contact Tracey Acton on 02 6494 7566, email [admin@housinginstitute.org](mailto:admin@housinginstitute.org) or visit the AHI website at [www.housinginstitute.org](http://www.housinginstitute.org)

## Making the most of your NBSA membership...



In the May 2008 edition of *Housing People*, Kerry Nicholls wrote an article about the benefits of being a member of the AHI.

At the end of the long and impressive list was a reference to gaining membership benefits from the National Building and Surveying Alliance, or NBSA.

What exactly is NBSA, and why is it important to AHI members?

As to the first question, NBSA is a co-operative that was formed in late 1999 for the purpose of providing individual members of the Institutes who formed the co-op with the best possible services and benefits across a range of industries. Additionally, the NBSA acts as a vehicle for joint activities and mutual co-operation between Institutes.

So why is NBSA important? Simple. Money.

All AHI members are entitled to discounts when purchasing products or services from the organisations listed at right.

You'll find special reservation or contact numbers for these organisations at NBSA's website at [www.nbsaonline.com](http://www.nbsaonline.com) (make sure you have your NBSA discount number handy before you ring or book online - this published in your NBSA Benefits for Members brochure). Simply quote the appropriate scheme numbers, or identify yourself as a member of the NBSA, and reap the rewards!

For more information, contact Kerry Nicholls on 02 64947 566 or email [admin@housinginstitute.org](mailto:admin@housinginstitute.org), or email NBSA from their website at

[www.nbsaonline.com](http://www.nbsaonline.com)

#### **Accommodation**

- Accor Group
- Choice Hotels Australasia
- Constellation Hotels Group
- The Lido Group

#### **Bank loans**

- AMP Bank Discounted home loans

#### **Credit cards**

- Fee free gold AMEX card

#### **Travel**

- Qantas Club

#### **Insurance**

- Australian Consulting Surveyors Insurance Society
- Crown Insurance Service
- ING Life e-Plan
- ING Income Protection Plan
- Manchester Unity Health Insurance
- Planned Professional Risk Services

#### **Vehicle Hire**

- AVIS Car Rentals
- Hertz Car Rentals

#### **Vehicle Leasing and Purchase**

- Private Fleet Car Leasing
- Australasian Vehicle Buying Services

#### **Fuel**

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- NBSA Wine Club

#### **Other Services**

- Away From Home Office
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