



Spreading the Word

AHI reaches out to regions through MemberLink

As reported in the previous issue of Housing People, a recent survey of the Institute's NSW membership sent a strong message about the need for the AHI to extend its activities and services to regional areas.

The Institute will now attempt to rectify this situation through MemberLink – groups of regional members willing and able to make things happen in their local area.

First cab off the rank will be the NSW north coast. Stephanie Ring, Regional Manager in the Community Housing Division of Housing NSW (based in Coffs Harbour), will be closely involved with establishing MemberLink in the north of the state.



“There is a feeling that there aren't enough events in the regions compared to metropolitan areas,” Stephanie

says, “and that's not bringing new members in.” “So we're setting up a little working group to look at what types of activities we might want in various locations.”

And there is much to talk about. Stephanie points to the large transfer of stock to the community housing sector and the common access strategy as examples of major initiatives which could be elaborated and discussed in “a more informal setting.” “I think people are looking for some sort of a forum and opportunities for more open discussion about what all these changes mean,” she adds.

The tyranny of distance and a critical audience mass are obviously significant obstacles to organising high profile speakers and events in rural and remote areas. ‘Piggybacking’ on other major events and involving people from related human services are possible solutions to these challenges.

Bringing in other services could itself support efforts at service delivery

integration, with the overarching goal of supporting tenants beyond housing provision to broaden the opportunities and possibilities available to them.

The aims of a MemberLink regional group are straightforward:

1. Provide the Professional Development Coordinator with advice about the type of local events people want and the topics that suit in each location
2. Recruit new members
3. Encourage people working in housing-related areas to attend events
4. Act as hosts for small events as requested by the Professional Development Coordinator

If you are interested in extending the Institute's activities to your local area, the AHI is now looking for regional MemberLink Convenors. Please email Donella Roberts (Learning & Development Coordinator) donella.roberts@housinginstitute.org to discuss the possibilities.

Membership drive underway

The Institute's membership recruitment drive is now well underway and off to what is perhaps an unsurprisingly slow start. To date a total of twelve existing members have brought seventeen new recruits to the fold.

There are two months left to recruit a new member and automatically enter the draw to win the grand prize – **\$1500 to spend at Flight Centre on the travel escape of your choice!**

For more information on the campaign, details, terms and conditions of the competition, visit our website at <http://www.housinginstitute.org/mbrship/recruitment.php>



Institute boldly goes international

The inaugural meeting of the International Committee of the Australasian Housing Institute was held on 21 September 2009. This conference was chaired by the Institute's President Shane Edmonds and joined by Paul Diggory of the UK Chartered Institute of Housing. Shane described the role of the Internal Committee as one encompassing three strategic principles:

- participation in the global housing community
- building on established linkages, and
- positioning ourselves to influence, and be influenced by, other jurisdictions.

The philosophy of the committee is to develop connections and relationships with international colleagues, professional associations and organisations.

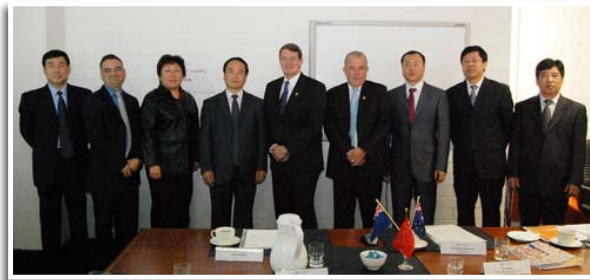
Defining a strategy to capture information and to define a working framework for the committee was greatly assisted by the overview provided by Paul Diggory and input from new members who participated in the teleconference. Broadly, this strategy will enable the committee to

work closely together as a group whilst encompassing the knowledge and ideas of those members who nominated for membership.

It is hoped to develop memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with organisations and associations in a number of regions and individual countries. In this regard it was interesting to listen to Paul Diggory talk about those European countries and the challenges to establishing relationships.

With the provision of public housing becoming such a prominent and enduring feature of the political and economic landscape in Australia, it is timely that the committee access and share ideas and information with our wider member audience to increase capacities for professional development. This is a dynamic time of program and asset restructuring that is redefining the boundaries of public housing in Australia.

The International Committee will be given the task of communicating information and embracing a



Visitors from the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform met with Housing WA staff and AHI representatives in July this year: from left, Wang Weiran, Marque Raymond, Wang Qing, Song Yu, Shane Edmonds, Terry Daly, Li Xiaotao, Sheng Licheng and Zhou Dong

wider audience in a strategy to bring journal and news articles, presentations, web-based articles and other information to members in Australia and New Zealand. The first group meeting will coincide with the National Housing Conference in Melbourne on 24th November. Howard Farrand, President, Australian Chartered Institute of Housing, will be attending this meeting.

The committee welcomes contributions by all AHI members and your feedback will influence our on-going work.

Peter Willans MAHI

Masters of their craft

AHI to host CEO's Masterclass at national conference



The Australasian Housing Institute and PowerHousing Australia are proud to present a very special event to coincide the upcoming National Housing Conference in Melbourne.

Community Housing CEOs in conversation with:

- Kate Davies, Chief Executive Notting Hill Housing
- Howard Farrand, Chief Executive, West Mercia Housing Association and President of the Chartered Institute of Housing, and
- Michael Newey, Chief Executive, Broadlands Housing Association.

This highly interactive symposium will involve short presentations by the speakers, and extensive opportunities for conversations between speakers and participants as a single group and in smaller groups. The content of the symposium will be largely directed by participants. We have asked the speakers to think about the following issues as a guide:

- Putting tenants and other customers at the centre of our practice, while at the same time growing the business
- Building the organisation's development capacity

- Contributing to social inclusion: jobs, education, home ownership...
- Experience in the regeneration context
- Supported housing approaches
- Planning for an ageing population

Date: 9.30am, Tuesday 24th November 2009

Venue: Boardroom, Level 1, 333 Queen Street, Melbourne

Sponsor: Office of Housing Victoria

To register online visit <http://www.housinginstitute.org/events/register/register.php>, or call 02 6494 7566.



Hand up from Next Steps recognised with awards

St John's Youth Services in Adelaide has been recognised for striving to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged young people in our community through the provision of emergency accommodation, child support services and the Next Step program by the UNESCO Clubs – Adelaide Chapter.

At a special award ceremony the President, Mrs Helen M. Rice, gave a citation outlining the achievements and work of St John's Youth Services. Chairperson Marc Steen, and CEO and former AHI Director Wendy Malycha, accepted the award presented by His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, Governor of South Australia.

A second award, the Anglicare Australia Award for Excellence and Innovation 2009, was presented by Sir Paul Reeves, former Governor-General of New Zealand, at a ceremony held in Auckland.

"We are thrilled that our new program Next Step has received recognition in this way, but the recognition that really matters is that of young people like Jake and his house mate, whose lives have been turned around through Next Step," Wendy said.

The Next Step program receives no government funding and was established through the support of the Moriarta Trust, Coopers Foundation and St Peter's College. The continuation of this innovative service, which supports young people to break free of homelessness and establish stable lives in the real world, is dependent on the continuing support of the community. If you would like to support the program go to www.stjohnsyouthservices.org.au click on 'Supporters' – then 'How to donate'.

Governor Kevin Scarce with Wendy Malycha and Marc Steen.



"After being evicted from my shared accommodation two months earlier than agreed, I found myself homeless and living on the streets. I was lost and alone, my family had neglected me and my friends didn't understand my situation; it's easy to judge and stereotype the homeless when it's never happened to you yourself or those around you.

People don't realise what they have until they lose everything. After being sent to St John's Youth Service, Burdekin Place, I was almost without hope of ever getting my life back on track, but the staff there supported me with everything I needed to pick myself up off the floor.

I stayed at Burdekin for over three weeks; in that time I made new friends and dealt with the loss of a house member, but out of it I gained a close friend who I now live with. Thanks to the Next Step program me and my house mate get weekly support from our excellent and down to earth case worker, who watches over us and helps us out with job searches, budget planning, shopping – but more than that he make us feel independent and gives us the confidence to achieve more with our lives.

Now me and my housemate are happy, I'm working as a part-time cable fitter and my housemate is following his career in nursing. If it wasn't for Next Step we'd be in and out of Burdekin and backpackers because of our constant financial trouble, but that's no more – and like I said we're happy now."

'Jake'

New website features

A couple of new features have recently been added to our website to provide a greater level of service to our members and beyond:

- You can now download and read a select number of articles from the latest edition of our *HousingWORKS* journal directly from the website. Anyone who hasn't yet savoured the taste of *HousingWORKS* should visit <http://www.housinginstitute.org/pubs/housingworks.php>
- The first job vacancies have begun to appear on our **Jobs page**. If you have a housing position you'd like to advertise on a website dedicated to housing professionals please call 02 6494 7566 to arrange ad placement. See: <http://www.housinginstitute.org/news/jobs.php>





Photo exhibition opens in Queensland

The Institute's travelling photographic road show has arrived in Queensland's Parliament House. Kindly launched by the Minister for Housing, the Hon Karen Struthers MP, fifty portraits of the AHI's members are on show in the Annex Foyer as part of *Facing up to the challenge: Images of social housing people*.

As she invited the minister to open the exhibition, AHI CEO Joan Ferguson said the exhibition reveals the faces of those at the forefront of delivering the social housing component of the national economic stimulus plan.

"We wanted to debunk the myth of 'faceless bureaucrats'," Joan said. "These portraits capture the passion and individuality of volunteers, housing workers, public servants, academics and community builders. We are proud of the hard work and dedication of our members. At a time when affordable housing has hit the peak of the national agenda, our aim was to create a lasting visual image of social housing professionals."

The exhibition is open between 9am and 5pm until 19 October.



"I have a strong commitment to the outcomes for people that social housing is able to achieve and believe that social housing really makes a difference to people's lives. To understand this, you only need to look at your own life and those of people you are close to and think about how important having a home to centre your life around is. I hope to continue my contribution to the field through a voluntary contribution to the Australasian Housing Institute."

Karen Wing KW Consulting Group

For the diary

Australasian **Housing** Institute

Event	Location	Date
Working with clients who have drug and/or alcohol dependency	Launceston	15 October
Facing up to the Challenge: Images of social housing people (photographic exhibition)	Brisbane	7-19 October
Breakfast with Rhonda Phillips – Service Integration	Adelaide	21 October
Breakfast with Rhonda Phillips – Service Integration	Perth	22 October
A celebration of the housing careers of Col James and Mick Mundine	Sydney	23 October
Professional Excellence in Housing Awards 2009 – SA	Adelaide	19 November
CEO's Masterclass	Melbourne	24 Nov
CEO's Masterclass	Sydney	30 November
"Housing People, Housing Communities" Conference	Auckland	03 December
Professional Excellence in Housing Awards 2009 – New Zealand	Auckland	03 December

To register online visit the [Events and Seminars page](#) of the AHI website