

Housing in Tasmania

Factsheet 1: Population, households and dwellings (1996 to 2006)

Housing and Community Research Unit

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This factsheet highlights key changes in the provision of dwellings in relation to Tasmania's changing population and household structure. The potential for a mismatch between demand in the housing market, exerted by households, in relation to the supply of dwellings is essential in understanding patterns of affordability.

Basic statistical data sourced from the Australian/ABS census series show that Tasmania's population has increased insignificantly (see Table 1 below) over the past decade but that smaller household sizes and greater household numbers are putting additional strains on the housing system.

Table 1: Population, dwelling and household growth in Tasmania

	1996	2006	Percentage change	Actual change
Population	459,659	476,481	3.65	16,822
Dwellings	122,840	127,204	3.55	4,364
Households	170,908	181,100	5.96	10,192

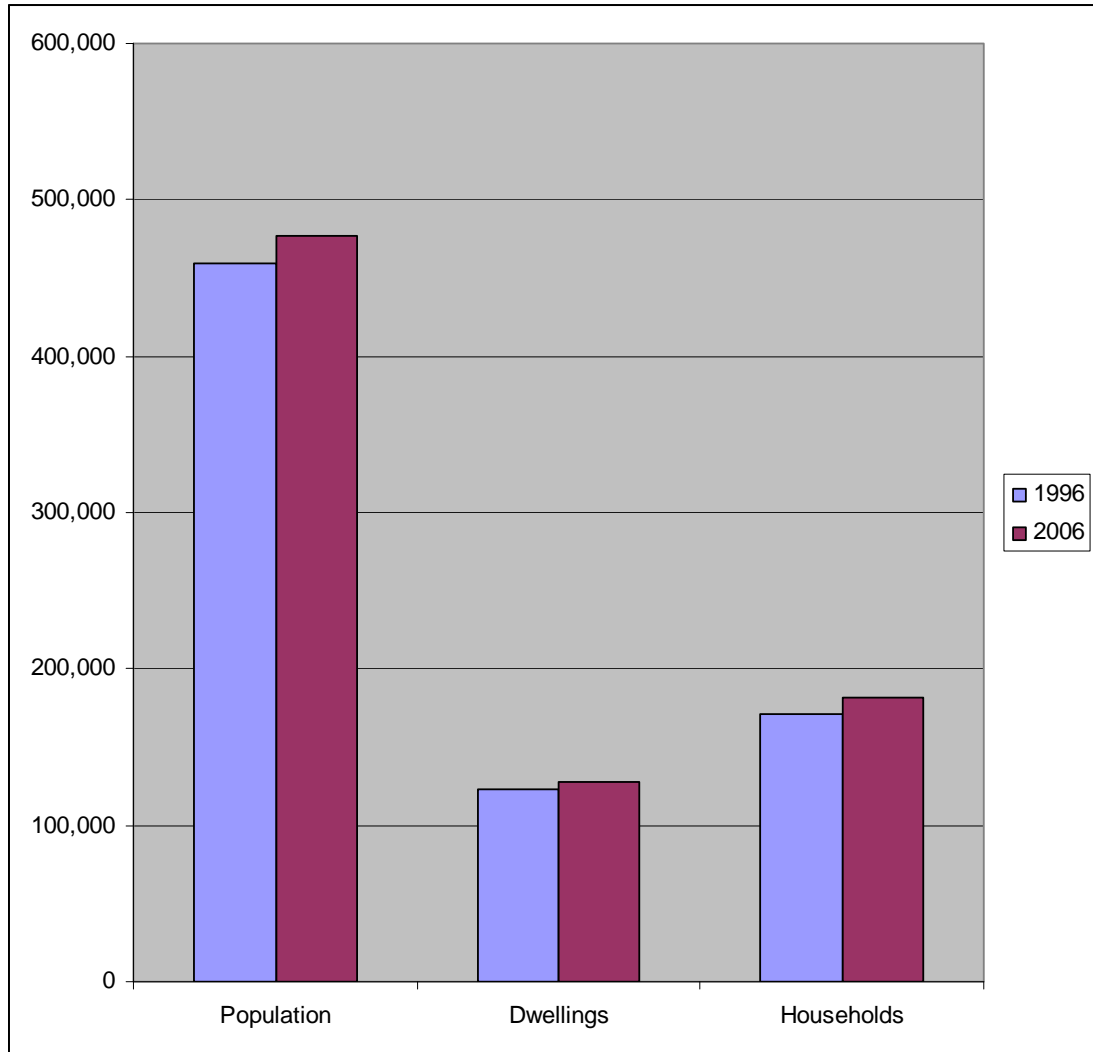
- There has been an **annual increase of around 1,000 households** per year who have required additional accommodation within the State.
- Over the same period we can see that the key challenge facing Tasmania in policy terms is less the issue of population increase and rather the **growth in the number of households** (as people live longer, leave home earlier, through household breakup and so on).
- We can see that there has been a nearly **6% increase** in the number of **households** in the state over the past decade, representing 10,192 additional households but with the number of accommodating dwellings failing to keep up; increasing by only 3.55% (4,364 dwellings).
- Even a simple analysis of this kind highlights a **basic deficit** between the number of new households and the number of dwellings in Tasmania, at today's figures, of around **5,800** dwellings. Additional housing development and the re-modelling or sub-division of existing stock over the past decade has only succeeded in creating a net annual increase of 436 dwellings. We have fallen short by around 600 dwellings per year to keep up with these changing patterns.

Issues for policy

1. These basic figures highlight that housing supply is not keeping up with the changes in Tasmania's household structure. Assuming that similar trends continue for Tasmania we will need not only to **catch-up with these existing deficits** but also to cater for additional households in future if these demographic patterns persist.
2. Providing a **multi-tenure** (homeownership, private rental and social housing) **investment plan** will be key to addressing these shortfalls and to prevent supply-side problems furthering existing positions of housing stress.
3. An emphasis on policy options to address shortages in the **private rental sector** where stress is most acute would be the most important first step in such a strategy.
4. A concerted and **state-wide strategic planning approach** to density targets, multi-tenure development plans and to prevent nimbyism is required. DHHS and the state planning body need to work together on a statewide housing strategy.

Annex: Figures presenting absolute and proportionate changes for Tasmania (1996 to 2006)

Figure 1: Absolute changes in population, dwellings and households (1996 to 2006) for Tasmania



Source: ABS censuses 1996 and 2006

Figure 2: Proportional changes in population, dwellings and households (1996 to 2006) for Tasmania

