

Shelter supports the

## Affordable Housing Crisis Coalition

On the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005 the Affordable Housing Crisis Coalition was formed out of concerns for the ongoing crisis in affordable housing and the scale of the problem in Tasmania. This was against a backdrop of Tasmania having had a nation leading Affordable Housing Strategy (2004-8) with Stage 1 (2004-6) having funding attached for a wide range of initiatives. Despite housing affordability declining dramatically the community sector has faced a lack of commitment or any announcement from the State Government regarding the much needed funding for Stage 2 (2006-8) of the Affordable Housing Strategy.

Shelter is a member of the Coalition; along with Anglicare, Colony 47, Centacare, Salvation Army, TasCOSS, Housing Industry Association, Unions Tasmania, HACSU and the Hobart and Launceston City Mission. The Coalition continues to grow in membership and support due to the wide spread concern amongst a range of organisations about the lack of access to affordable and secure housing for low to moderate income Tasmanians. The Coalition is calling on the Government to invest in a range of strategies to address the housing crisis and to make sustained investment to resolve the problem.

### The Strategies include:

- Building and purchasing more public housing. This would require 1200 new public houses over the next four years just to maintain public housing at 6% of the housing system.
- Eradicating Housing Tasmania's \$250 million debt to the Commonwealth Government.
- Expanding Strategies to help low-income earners who rent or buy properties
- Supporting the Community Housing Organisation.

While the Coalition welcomed the recent announcement of the Community Housing Organisation and release of land, neither of these initiatives matches the breadth of initiatives expected for Stage 2 of the AHS.

Shelter also supports the new Affordable Housing Organisation and the potential it has for leveraging additional investment into the affordable housing market. This AHO will also take some time to gather the scale of increased housing supply that is needed now. By replacing the Affordable Housing Strategy with an Affordable Housing Organisation the emphasis is taken off the wider vision that underpinned the Affordable Housing Strategy and the wide range of initiatives that it encompassed.

There still remains the problem of the viability of the public housing system in Tasmania with over \$250 million owed to the Commonwealth from unpaid housing loans accumulated since 1945. Housing Tasmania receives \$22 million from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) but has to repay \$17 million back immediately to service the debt. There is also uncertainty about what, if any, funds will come in from the Commonwealth post 2008 when the current CSHA ends.

The State Government does not acknowledge this debt as part of General Government nett debt. The Victorian Government has absorbed their housing debt. Without a viable public housing system there can not be a viable Affordable Housing System. Mr Lennon announced that the AHO is not the total solution required to the housing crisis. The Coalition will continue to lobby for wider strategies and looks forward to future announcements in 2006.

Shelter will keep you posted. For more information on the coalition see [www.shelertas.org.au](http://www.shelertas.org.au)

### Hot off the Press

#### New Affordable Housing Organisation (AHO)

On the 16th December the Premier Paul Lennon signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and six key community organisations to form a new Affordable Housing Organisation.

The State Government will contribute \$24 million to the AHO over the first 4 years as well as making \$35 million worth of public land available for community housing developments spread across the State in areas such as Glenorchy, New Norfolk, George Town, Newstead, East Devonport and Ulverstone. The first parcels of land will be released in February 2006.

The plan is expected to house up to 1,000 people in 700 homes to be built on crown land. The AHO will replace the Affordable Housing Strategy Stage 2.



## Recommended Web Reading

**New Quality Improvement Resource Directory for Housing Providers**— this directory aims to support community housing providers seeking to develop their organisation by alerting them to resources that can assist them in meeting the National Community Housing Standards. See [www.nchf.org.au/direcotry.html](http://www.nchf.org.au/direcotry.html)

Australian Bureau of Statistics publications are now free on line. This was announced on 12.12-2005 as an ABS Centenary tribute to the people of Australia. See [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Papers from the National Housing Conference held in Perth WA in October 2005 are now available on the web. See [www.nationalhousingconference.org.au/](http://www.nationalhousingconference.org.au/) for the programs. As papers are password protected contact Shelter to download and send a copy to you.

Just released the December 2005 CSHA National Data Reports 2004-05 on Public Rental Housing across Australia. [www.aihw.gov.au/publications/hou/cshandr04-05somih/cshandr04-05somih.pdf](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/hou/cshandr04-05somih/cshandr04-05somih.pdf)



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If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of a document, please contact Shelter on (03) 6224 5488 and we will gladly provide the document for you.

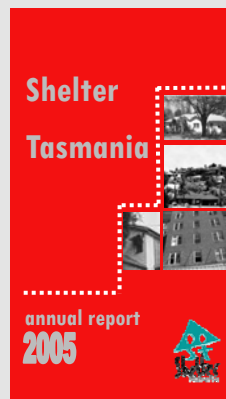
## Shelter Tas AGM and Annual Report

On the 24th November 2005 Shelter held it's Annual General Meeting at the Shelter Office. This year's guest speaker was Jason Cubit from STEPS Community Housing Solutions. Jason provided an overview of the vision of the STEPS community housing model, which included details on financing, land, construction, tenancy and property management and support services.

*The new Shelter Management Committee for 2006 was also elected, they are:*

- Gary Bennett **Chair** — Bethlehem House Men's Shelter
- Andy Witt **Vice Chair** — Centacare
- Suzanne Fisher **Secretary** — Hobart City Mission
- Judy Munday **Treasure** — Tas University Housing
- Kate Gould **Public Officer** — Red Shield Housing Assoc
- Jenny Bertram — Magnolia Place Launceston Women's Shelter
- Phil Hammond — Anglicare (North)
- Michelle Ryan — Launceston City Mission
- Sue Bailey — Colony 47      Leo Foley — Individual South
- Ria Brink — Karinya Young Womyn's Service
- Jeni Shegan (proxy Avril Lever) — Hobart Women's Shelter
- Michelle Domanska (proxy Centacare—North)

**Please feel free to contact any of the new Shelter Management Committee in your area with your housing or homeless related issues so they can bring your concerns or issues to Shelter's attention.**



A copy of the Shelter Annual Report for 2005 is now on the web site

[www.shelertas.org.au](http://www.shelertas.org.au)

## **Alert** Shelter to seek Members Input

The Statewide Shelter Management Committee met in Ross on the 15th December 2005 to plan for the future direction of Shelter Tas. As Shelter's membership has grown substantially in the last two years the committee looked at a range of new strategies that will both capture the diversity of the membership and what is required, and the various regional issues. One strategy approved was that early in the new year Shelter will send out a questionnaire to all members to gain their input into the strategic direction of Shelter over the next year. **We are aiming for a 100% response rate.**

*Merry Christmas  
and a Healthy &  
Safe Festive Season  
& New Year to all from  
Shelter Management  
Committee & Staff.*

