

QDN

QUEENSLANDERS WITH DISABILITY NETWORK
NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

Working together for better housing and sustainable communities

**Department of Housing and Public Works
Discussion Paper**

Easy English Overview

March 2016

How to Use this Document

This information is written in an easy to read way.

QDN has prepared this document.



We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Some words are written in green and are **bold**.
We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words starting on page 18.

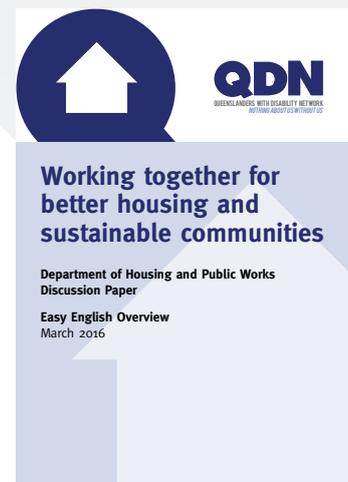
This Easy Read document is an overview of another document.

It covers the main points but not all the detail.

You can find the other document **Department of Housing and Public Works discussion paper** on <https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/gi/consultation/2978/view.html>

Ring 137 468

You can ask for help to read this document.
A friend, family member or support person may be able to assist.



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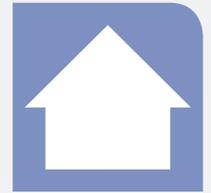
What this document is about?

The Queensland Government wants to improve housing for people in Queensland. They are making a plan for the next ten years. They say “It’s time to take action!”



They are asking all Queenslanders a key question.

What will make the housing system better?



This document gives you information so you know what is happening and can have your say.

The information and ideas in it build upon feedback given by participants at the 26 regional workshops held by the Department in 2014-15. These workshops were on housing and homelessness.

Have your say – it’s important. You can:



Attend a Queensland Government, industry or community group engagement session (workshop).

<http://www.qld.gov.au/housing/public-community-housing/housing-strategy-community-consultation-sessions/>



Call 13QGOV (137468)



Answer the online questions by 30 June.

<https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/gi/consultation/2978/survey/2925/view.html>



Write down and send in your issues and ideas by email at Housingstrategy@hpw.qld.gov.au or post to:

Housing Strategy Team, GPO 690, Brisbane QLD 4001



Introduction

Housing is important

The Queensland Government believes that housing is very important.

They believe:

- Every Queenslander has a right to choose a place they call home.
- When people live in a stable, secure and safe place it is easier to access:
 - Jobs,
 - Education,
 - Health,
 - Help they need,
 - Transport,
 - Friends and family,
 - Be part of the whole community.



Housing in Queensland now

The government knows there are some issues.

- Stable, safe and secure housing is difficult to find.
- Many people cannot afford to buy a house.
- Rents are expensive in many parts of the State.
- This makes life hard for some people including people with disability. It can be very hard if you are also a single parent household, a young person, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, a person from a culturally and linguistically diverse background or an older person.
- More people need **social housing** and extra help to live in their own home.
- It hurts people and communities when people cannot find a safe place to live.
- Some people are homeless or live in unsuitable places.



The types of places people need have also changed because:

- The size of families is smaller.
- The population is getting older.
- People are living in different places.
- More people live by themselves.
- Households and families are different to 30 years ago.
- People need different types of places to live in.
- The housing available has not kept up with these changes.



Role of Government

For 100 years the Queensland Government has helped people with housing.

Today the Queensland Government provides:

- Housing and assistance for people who need extra help. This is called **social housing**.
- Funds to **community housing providers** and **homelessness services** to assist people who need extra help.
- Assistance to help people access the private rental market.
- Guidance across the housing market by their policies, laws, taxes, urban planning etc.

Actions taken by Queensland Government

The Queensland Government has made some changes lately to make things better:

- Consistent law on residential tenancy databases.
- Review of tenancy law.
- Asking people for their ideas.
- Re-establishing the Tenant Advice and Advocacy service.
- Introducing a Fairness Charter and Principles for social housing.



Future Aim

Queensland Government wants to:

- Meet peoples' housing needs for future generations and put people at the centre.
- Make it easier to get help before problems get big.
- Make it easier for people to know where to get help for housing.
- Encourage government, non-government, community, services, industry to all work together better.
- Try new ways to:
 - end homelessness,
 - have stable housing,
 - assist people with many different needs to remain housed.

Areas for Feedback

They want many people's feedback on three key areas:



THEME 1. Sustainable communities



THEME 2. Housing Affordability



THEME 3. Responsive Housing System

Let's find out ...

- What each area means.
- What the Queensland Government believes is important and what they have been doing.
- Ask your feedback to some questions.

Remember you can give feedback (details are on page 5)

- On line
- At workshops
- In writing



Theme 1. Sustainable communities

GOAL:

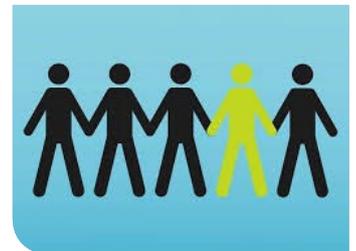
Build housing and communities for people's economic and social well-being that can last for future generations.

- Sustainable means keeping communities together now and working in the future
- Our health, our friendships, our family, our belonging in our community, environment and work are all affected by housing.
- People need to live in places where:
 - they can meet and connect with others,
 - the environment is pleasant,
 - they can get to work and services easily.



What the Queensland Government believes

- Housing is very important. It affects many other services the government provides.
- Peoples' needs must be at the centre.
- People and communities need different housing choices.
- Low cost options to rent and purchase are needed for some groups e.g. people with disability who need extra support and help.
- Training, education and employment opportunities need to be part of new housing developments and services.
- The design, location, availability and management of affordable housing options must be improved.
- Benefits exist when housing developments and services work well together.



Do you agree with what the Queensland Government believes?

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will impact housing

- The NDIS aims to give people with a disability more choice where they want to live and with whom.
- More people with disability will ask for affordable, accessible and appropriate housing.
- People with disability want to live in and be part of the community.
- A big unmet need for housing exists nationally.
- Different and more housing options are needed for people with disability.
- People with disability want to be better linked into communities, neighbourhoods and connect with transport and other services.

Your Feedback

The government knows that things need to change and are looking for ideas and feedback.

They are asking many different people and organisations many questions.

These are some of the important ones about sustainability.



THEME ONE: SUSTAINABILITY

Questions for feedback:

1. How do we put people's needs at the centre of housing?
2. How can the Department and other support organisations (social housing, disability and community organisations) work together better?
3. What are the main housing issues affecting you and your community?
4. How can the non-government sectors (private and community) work better together?
5. Are the laws about housing fair or do they need to change? If so, what changes are needed for people to get better access?
6. Do things need to happen differently in rural, regional and remote areas? If so, what things?



Theme 2. Housing Affordability

GOAL:

To improve people's access to housing in both rental and home ownership.

This involves:

- More housing choices across Queensland. Demand is getting bigger because:
 - › more people are older,
 - › cost of living is high, and
 - › people live together in different ways.
- Everyone working together:
 - › Commonwealth, State and Local government,
 - › Community,
 - › Development industry who build new houses and units, and
 - › People who provide services that help.
- Improving the on going costs of living in a place.
- Improving **amenity** of where people live – how it looks, its size and location.
- Increasing the number of places available that people can afford.
- Helping people to learn how to take up housing opportunities and to find out where to go.



This can happen by:

- Building and designing places that are:
 - › Nice to live in,
 - › Suit our climate,
 - › Close to transport, and
 - › Friendly to the environment and cost less to maintain e.g. shading, water tanks, building materials, solar.
- Finding new ways of financing housing.



- Improving rental housing:
 - › Cheap loans to help people pay their bond.
 - › Rent Connect, a program that helps people find and stay in rental accommodation.
 - › **National Rental Affordability Scheme.**
- Helping people to own a home:
 - › First home buyer grants and rent-to-buy schemes.
 - › Helping specific communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to own or lease their community land.
- Creating a more affordable rental sector:
 - › Encouraging developers to work with not-for-profit groups and the government to build more places for people on low incomes.
 - › Using new, better building products that are cheaper.
 - › Planning better.
- Changing the types of houses the government owns so people get the house they need.

Your Feedback

The government wants your ideas and feedback about affordability.



THEME TWO: AFFORDABILITY

Questions for feedback:

7. How can we improve peoples' access to affordable, long term, private and public housing?
8. Do you have ideas on reducing the ongoing cost to run a house to improve the livability of housing? For example new housing design and / or materials like solar panels and water tanks.
9. How can government and community make private rental housing more affordable in your community? What are the benefits to renters, owners and government?
10. What ways can the Department work with other organisations (social housing, disability and human services organisations) to provide more social housing?
11. What is the role of community housing providers in planning and delivering people centred services in the local community?
12. What is the role of local government in housing affordability and how can the state government better support this?



Theme 3. Responsive Housing System

GOAL:

A single, accessible and integrated homelessness and housing assistance system.

The Queensland Government wants to make it easier to help those who have the most difficulty finding and keeping a home. These are:

- People who are **homeless**.
- People who could easily become homeless.
- People who need extra help to live in their home



They do this directly with the help of **community housing providers** or with **specialist homeless services**.

They want to help people be more independent and not need so much help from government.



Now two separate programs

1. **Social housing services and assistance** providing capital, buildings, and property and tenancy management.
2. **Specialist homelessness services**, helping people find and keep housing and get more community support.



The Government wants these two programs to work together better at a local level.

The Government also wants to look at ways to help people who are homeless.

Responding to peoples' needs.

Government wants to look at better ways to assist people by:

- Encouraging new ideas and ways of working.
- **Person centred approaches** – one approach doesn't work for everyone all the time.
- Look at local responses.

- Knowing many things can affect peoples' lives and make it difficult to have a home. For example:
 - Domestic and family violence,
 - Mental health issues,
 - Drug and alcohol issues,
 - Child protection.

So we need to work with other **human services** to:

- Have more choices for people who need a lot of help.
- Help people early and prevent things from getting worse.
- Build safer and connected local communities.
- Make things fairer for people who are discriminated against or disadvantaged.

Housing First Approaches to end Homelessness

This involves placing homeless people from the street or emergency shelters into permanent housing with a lot support if this is what they want.

Some examples are:

- Brisbane Common Ground at South Brisbane.
- Street to Home services.
- Youth Foyer which involves education, training and work with stable housing



What else is the government doing now?

Integrated response

Government and community services working better together, putting peoples' needs at the centre.

Under 1 Roof

- Thirteen services working together in Inner Brisbane.
- Helping homeless people find and keep a place to live.

Homestay Support

- Helping people stay in their homes by:
 - emotional support,
 - budgeting,
 - dealing with landlords,
 - help to complete forms,
 - talking to government agencies.



Private rental products

- Rent Connect.
- **National Rental Affordability Scheme.**
- Bond loans.
- Rental grants.
- Home Assist and Secure.

Queensland State Tenants Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS)

- Tenancy information advice and assistance.

Street to Home

Your Feedback

The government wants your ideas and feedback about homelessness.



THEME THREE: Responsive Housing System

Questions for feedback:

13. How can government, the private and community sectors work together to assist people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless?
14. How can the government and the private and community sectors work better together to provide one overall person centered housing assistance service?
15. How can government, private and community organisations get the best value for money for housing outcomes in local communities across Queensland?
16. What new ways can government use to get more funding for housing from the private sector?

Thank You.

Remember To Have Your Say (details are on page 5)

- Workshops
- Online
- In writing



Words explained

Housing Affordability This covers people on low to moderate incomes so people can also buy the things they need e.g. food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. Housing is affordable if it costs less than 30% of the money you receive.

Amenity This involves how pleasant a place is to live in. e.g. noise, environment, trees, surroundings, looks, temperature.

Community housing providers These are registered organisations and local governments funded by the Department.

Homeless This includes people who “sleep rough”, stay in unsuitable places, live in short term or emergency accommodation, don’t have any security of tenure and have to stay with friends, family or in boarding house etc

Human services These are the different services that help people and their communities with things like health, employment, housing, community care.

National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) This is the Commonwealth and states and territories scheme which invested in affordable rental housing.

Person-centred approaches This means people are the most important thing. It involves finding out what people need, what they hope for in the future, their preferences and values and what is available to assist them.

Social Housing Includes public housing, community housing, state funded affordable housing. It is often used by people on low incomes or who need extra support to find and keep safe housing.

Specialist Homeless Services These are organisations who are funded to help people who are homeless or may become homeless.

Sustainable Housing This keeps communities together and working in the future.