

HOUSING PLAN FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Background

In March 2005 the *Housing Plan for South Australia* was released by the Minister for Housing. The Plan is focused on enabling the provision of more affordable housing in South Australia, and reducing the number of South Australians experiencing housing stress, as expressed in targets of South Australia's Strategic Plan. It is a plan to make affordable housing available to more people, provide quality housing for those in need in our community and renew and reinvigorate neighbourhoods.

Establishing partnerships with Local Governments is an essential element to progressing a number of important initiatives under the Housing Plan. Specific actions outlined in the Housing Plan that are of particular importance to Local Government are:

- Linking planning and development policies and processes to housing targets
- Developing initiatives to expand the supply of affordable housing in new developments
- Greater investment in urban regeneration and renewal
- Developing initiatives and programs to increase the availability of affordable housing in regional areas experiencing rapid growth
- Reforming the Supported Residential Facilities sector
- Further developing building standards that improve environmental sustainability

Actions

The Affordable Housing Innovations Unit has been established to facilitate the delivery of innovative, affordable housing solutions for South Australians on low to moderate incomes as outlined in the *Housing Plan for South Australia*. The AHIU is undertaking a number of initiatives to achieve the specific target under the Housing Plan to achieve 15% of housing in all new significant developments to be affordable housing, including 5% high need housing. The website of the Unit is www.housing.sa.gov.au/affordable.

An initiative that is of particular interest to the Local Government sector is the development of a Local Government Resource Kit for the adaptation and adoption of affordable housing policies within the planning system. It is intended that this kit will:

- Provide the necessary tools for councils to research and describe housing needs in their area
- Raise awareness about the relevance of affordable housing to councils and their role in influencing affordable housing outcomes
- Assist councils to adopt a more strategic approach to addressing local housing issues and developing council housing planning policies,

To achieve these objectives, it is expected that the completed kit will include:

- Background information on affordable housing
- An interactive web based data tool to assist councils to identify local housing needs
- An overview of planned changes to planning policy and mechanisms, and any impact these changes will have for Local Government
- Draft housing actions and strategies for possible inclusion in councils' Strategic Management Plans
- Draft affordable housing policies for inclusion in Development Plans
- Assistance on community consultation for affordable housing

A focus of the Local Government Resource Kit will be to enable councils to encourage new housing developments within their area and will provide model policies and strategies for councils to adapt and adopt as appropriate to their area. This initiative is being developed by the AHIU in conjunction with Planning SA, and the LGA.

The AHIU is working with six councils in developing aspects of the kit and in trialling new affordable housing initiatives. These include Charles Sturt, Marion, Onkaparinga, Tea Tree Gully, Salisbury and Adelaide City. A number of other councils, including regional councils, have also approached the Unit seeking assistance in developing affordable housing strategies. The potential for regionally based strategies across Council areas is also being considered.

It is expected that the Local Government Resource Kit will be finalised by the end of the year. Further information will be provided to the Minister's Local Government Forum at this point.