



BETTER TOGETHER:

Q SHELTER SUBMISSION TO THE QUEENSLAND HOUSING SUMMIT

Q SHELTER
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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview and scope

Q Shelter is Queensland's peak organisation working to ensure every Queenslander has a home.

Together with other stakeholders, Q Shelter has encouraged and supported the emergence of the Queensland Housing Summit. This is an important step forward bringing together key leaders in Queensland who each have a role to play in a better future where home is the foundation for wellbeing and participation.

The scope of this submission seeks to address the following key questions:

- What can we do 'now' to increase housing supply in response to community needs?
- What can we do in the medium-long term to ensure enough housing supply to meet demand?
- What will best support successful implementation of key measures?
- How can the Summit be structured to achieve the best results?
- How can we embed the voices of people with lived experience to help shape a system that works and is continuously improving?

Q Shelter recognises the need for responses that support the health of the whole housing system ensuring enough supply to meet current and emerging needs. This requires measures that are universal in their focus, and specific to ensure there is enough social and affordable housing for people who are vulnerable.

This submission includes measures intended to achieve growth in supply while reducing the pipeline of people emerging into homelessness. As supply side challenges will be challenging in the immediate term, the scope of these recommendations includes proposed funding increases to the Specialist Homelessness System, and for a new support program focussed on sustaining housing outcomes to prevent homelessness and the risk of homelessness.

1.2 Methodology

This submission has been developed by building on Q Shelter's existing policy statements and by involving stakeholders in seeking answers to the key questions outlined above. The process that Q Shelter used included:

- Meeting with Q Shelter Housing Round Table inclusive of CHPs, housing experts and private and not-for-profit peak associations (16 participants)
- Online workshop with Q Shelter members and stakeholders (78 participants)
- Workshop with people with lived experience of housing need and homelessness (8 participants)
- Reviewing feedback from recent engagement with local, state, and federal representatives
- Analysis of written input to Q Shelter from stakeholders after the announcement of the Summit
- Additional interviews with key stakeholders.

1.3 Vision and outcomes

The Queensland Housing Summit needs to be action focussed and work for a vision that every Queenslanders has a home.

Q Shelter suggests the following key outcome areas are important:

- Queensland has a healthy housing system where supply meets demand
- Queensland has social and affordable housing to meet current and emerging needs
- Queensland's housing system is reformed to achieve effective and streamlined planning and development across all sectors
- Queensland has effective partnerships across all levels of Government, the private sector and not-for-profit sector to sustain a healthy housing system into the future
- Queensland can support vulnerable households to exit homelessness and sustain housing outcomes.

2 Proposed solutions

2.1 Immediate measures

This section proposes solutions that either:

- address the current crisis by identifying and better using properties that exist now
- take actions now that are important precedents to medium-long term actions for the future.

2.1.1 Machinery of Government

- 1 Establish a State Government lead agency within either the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Deputy Premier or Treasury. Ensure implementation of housing and homelessness measures across Government are accountable to this agency.
- 2 Support implementation by establishing an agency or authority called 'Homes Queensland' with the capacity and capability to fast-track growth projects.
- 3 Decentralise capacity to progress housing growth initiatives and realise opportunities in regional locations. This should include regionalised government leadership and teams to progress practical solutions combined with regional governance involving diverse leaders with a direct role to play.
- 4 Establish an evaluation framework to measure growth in supply and growth in the supply pipeline.

2.1.2 Housing supply

- 5 Establish an appropriately skilled operational unit to support the active identification, appraisal and acquisition/release of properties that already exist and could be used immediately or with some modifications.
- 6 Convene faith leaders to negotiate the release of properties available now, and to identify a future pipeline of land and buildings. This could be a mission-focussed strategy in which church leaders scale up and structure the identification and release of property as part of Queensland's Housing Summit.
- 7 Engage with student accommodation, mining and defence sectors about available housing supply which may be currently empty.
- 8 Intensify and focus an engagement campaign to encourage submissions about available land and buildings from the community, private sector and not-for-profit sector. This needs to go further than information provision and advertising to include meaningful direct engagement with key stakeholders.
- 9 Increase funding capacity to spot-purchase properties that are due for market release or are in the pipeline to ensure the diversion of these properties to households in higher levels of housing stress or homelessness. Include consideration of motels and larger existing homes that could be modified.
- 10 Improve the procurement and approval process so CHPs can spot purchase effectively under current market conditions.
- 11 Incentivise and regulate the return of short-term rental properties and empty properties to the long-term rental market.
- 12 Identify and zone land in key locations close to infrastructure for modular-home villages as a temporary measure while construction of new and long-term housing is achieved (similar to post-war housing strategies).

- 13 [Adopt Victoria's movable home program](#) as an additional public housing product.
- 14 Engage with modular and small home builders who can support fast-tracking modular home villages and secondary dwellings in the short-medium term.
- 15 Increase staffing capacity to identify latent capacity in current social and affordable housing and fast-track readiness for re-tenanting.
- 16 Fund an IT platform and support service to facilitate house sharing arrangements.
- 17 Streamline and accelerate allocations for social and affordable housing to reduce vacancy turn-around times.
- 18 Escalate negotiations with the Federal Government to immediately extend NRAS subsidies in Queensland justified by high inward migration.
- 19 Provide capital funding to subsidise the purchase of NRAS properties by community housing providers.

2.1.3 Housing industry capacity

- 20 Immediately finalise the Master Agreement and Growth Plan Template to ensure that Community Housing Providers (CHPs) are engaged in growth planning from now.
- 21 Refine the procurement process for Quick Starts and HIF to ensure that CHPs with optimal current capacity for growth projects are prioritised for approvals.
- 22 Engage modular and small home builders to identify and address industry opportunities and challenges.
- 23 Commence a workforce and supply chain strategy that addresses barriers and costs.

2.1.4 Support to sustain tenancies

The combination of inward migration, low vacancy rates and infrastructure programs in the pipeline requiring a workforce, will all continue to impact the sustainability and availability of existing tenancies. Rising mortgage costs will also impact households with high levels of mortgage debt and low-middle incomes. The latter may cause some households to fall out of home ownership.

There is currently an unprecedented level of demand for assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services and other support services providing wellbeing assistance (such as mental health services, family support services). Q Shelter's engagement with stakeholders including the Queensland Housing and Homelessness Peaks Partnerships identifies the critical importance of increasing the availability of intensive, ongoing support to households across all tenures to help them exit from homelessness and/or sustain their housing outcome. An immediate intensification of support services to sustain housing outcomes could improve continuity of care from homelessness to sustaining a tenancy. There is also a critical need to enhance the support system ahead of potential extreme weather events so that vulnerable households can be identified and assisted proactively.

- 24 Q Shelter proposes the development of an additional support program to increase capacity in SHS and to organisations providing up-stream support to vulnerable people.

The scope of this funding enhancement could include the following program elements:

- Active and assertive outreach
- Support to exit homelessness
- Support to sustain housing outcomes thus preventing future homelessness
- Support to sustain home ownership

- Support to improve housing circumstances for people on the housing register and to assist in the active management of the housing register
- Support to identify and proactively assist households whose housing is vulnerable because of extreme weather events
- Support to address a range of domains to improve wellbeing and housing sustainability such as mental health, substance misuse, hoarding and squalor, DFV, complex family needs, community connection, economic participation and resolution of legal issues including debt.
- Support in existing social and affordable housing environments to improve allocations processes, reduce conflict and to support social sustainability and harmony
- Flexible brokerage
- Access to specialised legal and financial advice
- Active and assertive linkages with all housing providers including private real estate agencies
- Integration with full suite of housing products offered by DCHDE.

The program specification needs to articulate elements that are focussed on sustainable housing outcomes for the duration of need. It will be underpinned by holistic and skilled assessments leading to housing and support plans.

A major goal of this program will be to prevent surging demand for crisis support by working with people to sustainably exit homelessness, and with people whose housing is at risk of failure. A major goal is to ensure that people with tenancies and housing sustain that housing reducing wellbeing costs to people and reducing demand on crisis services.

- 25 Accelerate improvements in coordination between DCHDE, Child Safety, Health and Corrections to prevent all exits from institutions to homelessness.
- 26 Introduce emergency tenancy law reforms that increase protection for tenants through limiting rent increases and preventing the end of tenancies without grounds.

2.1.5 Local Government capacity

- 27 Establish a specialised support unit to assist local governments to fast-track housing and homelessness action plans.
- 28 Identify key local government areas where additional housing estates could be located close to employment, transport, schools, health and support services ensuring that post-code poverty is prevented.
- 29 Prevent land release and zoning changes that may cause 'postcode poverty' or intensified social issues because infrastructure and support is lacking.
- 30 Provide specialist support to Local Governments and community members to support enhancement of secondary dwellings.

2.1.6 Disaster/emergency provisions

- 31 Invoke emergency arrangements to achieve deployment of people for a surge workforce to support housing growth and the provision of additional support to vulnerable households.

2.1.7 Workforce

- 32 Work with specialist peaks, Government, unions and employment agencies to lead a Workforce Growth Strategy for housing and homelessness services in Queensland.

2.1.8 Governance

- 33** Establish an ongoing governance structure to ensure the success and accountability of strategies and actions emerging from the Summit (an executive governance group)
- 34** Continue the Summit as an ongoing vehicle for partnerships and coordination across community sector, private sector and Government stakeholders.

2.1.9 Evaluation

- 35** Set targets for housing growth by LGA based on population projections inclusive of targets for social and affordable housing. Revise targets once all annual census data is available for housing stress and homelessness.
- 36** Measure outcomes and impact emerging from Summit and QHIGI

2.1.10 Involving people with lived experience of housing need and homelessness

- 37** Formalise structural support for people with lived experience of housing need and homelessness to ensure their input to system design and continuous improvements.

2.2 Medium-long term improvements

Q Shelter has articulated an annual policy statement that identifies a range of measures relating to housing growth and support services. This includes the following measures for the next Queensland State Budget:

1. Planning system reforms
2. Strategic land identification and release with robust planning to prevent post-code poverty
3. Increased funding for social and affordable housing through capital grants and an expanded HIF
4. Increased capacity and role of community housing providers through improved equity and revenue opportunities.
5. Funding for shared-equity housing solutions
6. Q Shelter has also proposed a suite of social inclusion measures for legacy planning for Brisbane 2032.

Q Shelter proposes additional key areas of work for longer term benefit:

7. Proactive planning to propose Queensland's needs and requirements in a new NHHA and to ensure Queensland can optimise the benefit from the Housing Affordability Future Fund
8. Establishment of a housing trust as a mechanism for capturing investment, sponsorship, and philanthropy is proposed. A trust can exist in perpetuity, providing long-term benefits for funding growth in the supply of social and affordable housing.
9. Forming a consortium of key agencies working on building community support for housing diversity including higher density development, social and affordable housing.
10. Make 10% of the current social housing stock available for long term lease and portfolio renewal by CHPs in Queensland - with a target uplift of double the underlying stock
11. Provide a template for LGA's to undertake an audit of all LGA land whereby CHP's may deliver new Social / Affordable Housing in a joined-up manner with LGA's, State and Federal Governments
12. Work with Federal Government to discontinue first homeowners grants programs
13. Fast track the build-to-rent (BTR) affordable housing asset class through CHP's (where all state investment is captured and retained in QLD)
14. Create pathways for peers to achieve employment in the housing and homelessness system.
15. Expand the role of community and neighbourhood centres to support community development aimed at improving the level of connection within social and affordable housing developments and with the broader community.
16. Involve people with lived experience in community education about solutions to housing need and homelessness.

Further information on Q Shelter's proposals to end homelessness and achieve a healthy housing system are contained in the following documents:

- Q Shelter [annual policy statement](#)
- [Go for Gold report](#) into a social inclusion legacy for Brisbane 2032.

2.3 Participation in the Summit

Q Shelter commends Government for quickly convening the Round Table as a precursor to the inaugural Queensland Housing Summit.

In addition to those who attended the recent Round Table, we propose some additions to participants of the Summit including:

- Financial institutions
- Disability sector
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Peak
- People with lived experience of housing need and homelessness including older women and young people
- Student accommodation sector
- Representation from a large industry employer currently facing workforce attraction and retention issues linked to housing availability and affordability
- Representation from the superannuation industry, with experience of affordable build-to-rent (BTR) models
- Representation from the built-form environment (architecture and design) with experience in social and affordable housing developments, infill projects and high-quality density environments.
- Community housing providers.

3. Next steps and contact

Q Shelter is committed to working closely with the Queensland State Government to achieve the vision that every Queenslander has a home. To this end, *we suggest establishing a small and focussed reference group to guide the delivery of the Summit and ongoing governance arrangements.*

Q Shelter can be contacted through the following members of the leadership team. Please note that all phone numbers go to mobile phones.

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[Q Shelter's policy statements and submissions can be found at this link.](#)

[Q Shelter's program of learning and engagement events can be found at this link.](#)

Attachment: About Q Shelter

Q Shelter's vision is that every Queenslander has a home.

For over 35 years Q Shelter has worked on solutions to housing need and homelessness in Queensland.

Q Shelter works to influence policy and investment and to support the capacity to deliver housing and homelessness solutions.

Q Shelter's members and stakeholders include Specialist Homelessness Services, Community Housing Providers, broader human services, local governments, academic institutions, and members of the wider community.

Visit Q Shelter's website here: <https://qshelter.asn.au/>

Visit the Deck Resource Hub here: <https://thedeck.org.au/>