

2 November 2006

Dear Association Chairperson

Re: Housing Associations and new Housing SA arrangements

As you would be aware, earlier this year the Minister for Housing announced the establishment of Housing SA, which will provide service centres for all housing enquiries, including Community Housing, Public Housing and Aboriginal Housing. These service centres are the previous South Australian Housing Trust regional offices, throughout metropolitan and regional areas.

Applicants for Community Housing, including Housing Associations, will still be able to go direct to Associations and their referral agencies to apply. However, the Housing SA regional offices, and the Housing SA Telephone Customer Service Centre will also be taking enquiries from the public about Association housing. This is resulting in increased numbers of referrals to the Community Housing Council of SA (CHCSA) and Associations.

The Office for Community Housing (previously SACHA) and the CHCSA wish to develop a process with Associations and Housing SA, to ensure that Associations are informed and happy with the information and application process for their housing.

Associations agreed on an information and application process for the Community Housing Application System (CHAS), developed by Lynley Street in 2005 and early 2006. This will be implemented in mid-2007 following development of the IT component of the system. The Office for Community Housing and the CHCSA propose that we bring forward part of this system, to deal with enquiries from members of the public.

Please find the attached:

1. **Proposed system for members of the public** who enquire about Association housing through the Housing SA regional offices, or through its Telephone Customer Service Centre.
2. Current **information on Associations** that forms part of the Information Pack, which currently is given out to members of the public who enquire about Association housing.
3. The coloured **Reply Sheet**, which we ask Associations to fill in and send back to the Office for Community Housing as soon as possible.

What we ask Associations to do is:

1. Decide whether the proposed process is acceptable for your Association.
2. Decide whether you want details about your Association (including contact details) to be amended.
3. Fill out the Reply Sheet and return to the Office for Community Housing **by 8 December 2006**, in the enclosed reply paid envelope.

If you would prefer to talk with someone in the Office for Community Housing, please do not hesitate to contact Gemima Fusco or Teena Handyside with your enquiries or answers. You can email Gemima (Gemima.Fusco@dfc.sa.gov.au or phone 8207-0121) or Teena (Teena.Handyside@dfc.sa.gov.au or phone 8207-0134).

If we do not receive any reply from your Association, we will assume that you are happy with the proposed process through Housing SA, and happy with the information about your Association, including contact information.

The Office for Community Housing will be advising Housing SA Service Centre workers, and Telephone Customer Service Centre workers, about Community Housing, in the near future. This will be about Community Housing in general, and will include information on how workers are to respond to enquiries about Association Housing.

We apologise for the urgency in this matter, and look forward to receiving your replies as soon as possible. Thank you for your speedy co-operation.

Yours sincerely

JANE FLETCHER
MANAGER, POLICY
OFFICE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING

PROPOSED PROCESS

FOR PEOPLE ENQUIRING ABOUT ASSOCIATION HOUSING AT HOUSING SA FRONT COUNTERS AND TELEPHONE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRES

1. Information Pack on Community Housing is updated, including updated information from each Association (where necessary), and information on how to contact the Association (eg direct to the Association, or through a referral agency).
2. When members of the public enquire about Association housing at Housing SA offices, or the Telephone Customer Service Centre, they will be given an Information Pack and referred to the appropriate contact point for the appropriate Association. Housing SA workers will be made very aware that there is only limited housing available through Associations, and that referrals should be carefully considered in order not to overwhelm Associations with demand for housing.
 - It is strongly advised that Associations (particularly large Associations) develop relationships with their regional Housing SA office, if relationships do not already exist, to ensure that there is a solid understanding of your particular requirements during referral processes.
3. The CHCSA holds Public Information Sessions for people interested in Community Housing. For those people who decide Co-operative housing is not for them but are interested in Association housing, it is proposed that the CHCSA collects registrations of interest, which will be available to Associations if ever you need additional names to consider for particular vacancies that arise.

REPLY SHEET

Please return to Office for Community Housing in the enclosed envelope by 8 DECEMBER 2006.

NAME OF ASSOCIATION

Part A – please tick one option:

- Our Association approves the proposed process for people enquiring about Association housing at Housing SA front counters and the Telephone Customer Service Centre.

- Our Association does not approve the proposed process, for people enquiring about Association housing at Housing SA front counters and the Telephone Customer Service Centre.
(If you do not approve the proposed process, please attach a proposal for your particular group. Your Association can elect to not be included in the information pack – see below.)

Part B – please tick one option:

- Our Association is happy with the information which is currently on the Associations List.

- We want information about our Association to be amended (please attach the text you require, including any changes to contact details).

- We do not want any information about our Association to appear on the Information Sheet.