



MEMBER ALERT

Seniors Housing Strategy: Discussion Paper

The Western Australian Government is developing a Seniors Housing Strategy that is intended to provide a framework for the collaborative action across all sectors to enable older Western Australians on low to moderate incomes to access and sustain available, affordable and appropriate housing, post-retirement, so they can age well in their community.

The discussion paper outlines the changing demographic in Perth and the challenges facing seniors in finding housing. The paper is intended to generate discussion and seeks feedback around five key themes through which a strategy will be developed.

Theme 1: Downsizing

Considers the barriers to downsizing. These are presented as being the lack of financial benefit or issues with finance and the lack of suitable options available within existing communities. Ideas presented to assist in this area include a downsizer's grant, mandatory seniors housing included in new large scale developments, bridging finance support and alternative ownership models.

Theme 2: Better Design

Considers the current lack of appropriate housing options for seniors in their existing communities. It explains the concept and flexibility offered by Universal Design. Ideas to support greater implementation of universal design include greater uptake by government agencies building homes, education and promotion, and providing search capabilities for liveable designs on real estate websites.

Theme 3: Affordability

Addresses the lack of stable, affordable housing options outside of social housing for those seniors that cannot afford their own home. Ideas to address this issue include low interest or shared equity loans; alternative long tenure rent arrangements, home share arrangements and incentives for landlords to rent to seniors.

Theme 4: Regional Communities

Considers the trend of seniors aging in or moving to regional centres and the demand on appropriate housing in those areas. The lack of diversity in regional areas is the key concern, with additional concerns around affordability and access to services. Ideas to address this concern include investing in aboriginal housing, improving the availability of ancillary dwellings for seniors in regional areas and creating a co-ordinated approach between regional services, amenities and housing for seniors.

Theme 5: Understanding Options

Addresses the lack of individual advice for seniors in choosing their housing and the delayed approach to addressing housing options. Ideas have been presented to assist in this area by increasing the awareness of pre-seniors about preparing for retirement and creating new avenues of support.

HIA will be providing a submission on the discussion paper and is looking for feedback from members. The discussion paper can be found by following this [link](#). Please provide information or feedback to wa_planning@hia.com.au.

Link:

<http://www.housing.wa.gov.au/aboutus/affordablehousingstrategy/Pages/Seniors-Housing-Strategy.aspx>