

**NSW Federation of  
Housing Associations Inc**

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**‘LEAPS and BOUNDS’**

***A HISTORY***

**The Establishment of the  
NSW Federation of Housing  
Associations**

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# Acknowledgments

This work began life as an academic project to meet the requirements for the Masters of Housing Studies at the University of NSW. Joan Ferguson is responsible for putting the idea of a history of the Federation into my head as a suitable project, and I would like to thank her for her support and invaluable insights. I would also like to thank my academic supervisor, Dr Janice Caulfield, for comment on early drafts, and Eleri Morgan-Thomas, my work-based supervisor, for feedback, suggestions and background information on the social housing policy landscape in Australia. Finally, I must thank all the people who found time to be interviewed and who helped me get my facts straight.

Elizabeth Matka

June 1999

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Elizabeth Matka

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# 'LEAPS AND BOUNDS'

## **The Establishment of The NSW Federation of Housing Associations**

### **A History**

#### **Introduction**

The term 'community housing' covers a range of non-government, non-profit housing initiatives and programs for people on low to moderate incomes. It is generally taken to include government funded programs such as co-operatives, housing associations, medium term and supported housing programs, as well projects developed by local councils, churches and charitable organisations, with or without government funding. In NSW, government funded community housing is administered by the Office of Community Housing (OCH).

The NSW Federation of Housing Associations (FHA), established in 1993, is the peak federating and resourcing body for community housing associations in NSW. Its member organisations manage the majority of the dwellings funded through OCH.

In 1999 the FHA reviewed its strategic directions and established a new strategic plan to succeed the initial plan drawn up in 1994. As background to this review it was considered important to document the FHA's origins and place them in the wider context of housing policy in NSW and Australia.

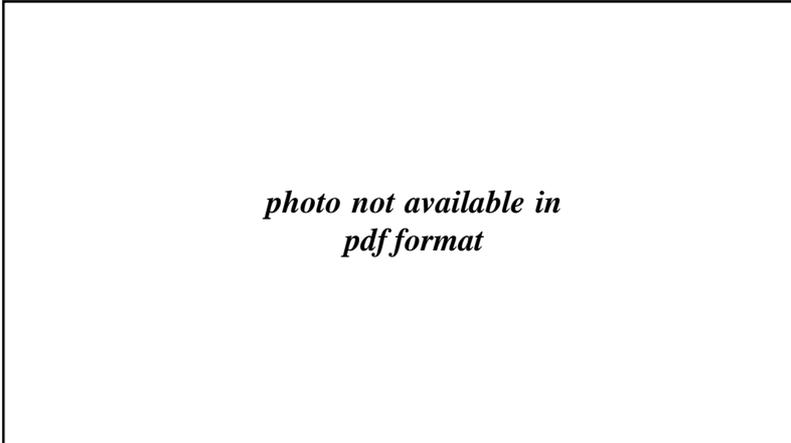
This history is the result. It has two aims. The first of these is to provide an historical context for analysing and prioritising the issues that the FHA needs to tackle from 1999 onwards. Secondly, through chronicling that history, the work serves to remind the organisation and its members of the various policy agendas at work in the social housing arena, and the changing role that community housing has played within them.

The account is structured into three parts. Part One examines the roots of community housing in 1970s housing activism and the origins of government funded programs in NSW, focussing on the Community Tenancy Scheme where the impetus for the FHA originated. Part Two outlines the upheavals in public and community housing in the early 1990s that brought the FHA into being, while Part Three focuses on the organisation's establishment and the development of the guiding principles which came to underpin its work.

Throughout the work, the term 'social housing' will be used to refer collectively to the range of non-profit government and community housing initiatives.

# PART 1

## B a c k g r o u n d



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### **Cutting the cake to celebrate Liverpool Community Housing's 10th anniversary in 1993**

From left to right: Jenny Woodhouse, first housing manager at Liverpool, the Hon. Frank Walker, in 1993 NSW Housing Minister who originally oversaw the establishment of CTS, and Liverpool's first two tenants, Cheryl Mann and Heather Sutherland, both of whom are still tenants in 1999. (Photo courtesy of LesleyWyatt)

# Social Housing in Australia

## The Commonwealth State Housing Agreement

Social housing has never been particularly widespread in Australia in comparison with Britain or other parts of Western Europe. Australia, with its apparently limitless land supplies, saw high levels of home ownership from early on, and an expectation has developed that most people should be able to own their own dwelling.<sup>1</sup> However, the successive impacts of returned soldiers after World War I, the Depression and the influx of immigrants after World War II made a dent in such expectations and it became necessary for governments to take a hand in housing provision. The NSW Housing Commission was established in 1941, and similar bodies arose in other states around the same period: in South Australia in 1936, Victoria in 1938 and Queensland in 1945 (Williams, 1984).

The divisions of power between the Commonwealth and the states complicate the provision of social housing in Australia. Essentially, the Commonwealth's role is to fund the states to provide social services, leaving the states with a relatively free hand in how that is to be achieved. In familiar 'chicken and egg' fashion, however, the states have often had to establish a service before the Commonwealth has seen fit to fund it. With a number of states already developing public housing, the first Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) was signed in 1945 (under a Labor Government) for a ten year period, and was aimed at supporting the states in providing much needed rental housing. However, when the CSHA was due for re-negotiation in 1956, the Coalition Government under Menzies stressed ownership over rental. Alongside the funding for rental properties, the new CSHA provided money for housing loans through building and co-operative societies (Lloyd, 1982).

Successive CSHAs have seen variations on the themes of public rental provision and support for home ownership ever since. The states have considerable freedom in how the money is spent, and the result has been a varying emphasis on subsidy for home ownership versus social housing provision across states and over time, depending on prevailing political philosophies.

## Housing Activism

In the 1970s, community opinion began to be heard on a range of social issues. In an era of activism, exemplified by the protests against the Vietnam War, communities began to discover and develop a political voice. In the larger cities the housing issue came to the fore as redevelopment of inner city suburbs threatened well-established neighbourhoods. In Sydney, for example the building Green Bans of the early '70s in places such as The Rocks and Woolloomooloo highlighted the emergence of such a community voice (Stilwell, 1993). Similar community action also occurred elsewhere, such as in the inner Adelaide industrial suburb of Bowden-Brompton (Fraser, 1998).

The housing policy lobby group National Shelter had its roots in inner Sydney where local groups were protesting such changes. Activists from NSW linked up with those from Victoria, who had public and emergency housing concerns. 'Shelter' groups were established in a number of states and National Shelter was formed in 1974 (Morgan-Thomas, 1994). With their roots in resident and tenant action groups, the state and national Shelter organisations retained a strong tenant focus. They became watchdogs for Commonwealth and state government housing policies, with particular concern for the operation of public housing and the impact of the private rental market on poorer tenants.

In NSW the spirit of housing activism was most tangible in the self-help co-operatives which developed out of the squatters' movement, and which found allies among feminists and other social activists. One of the earliest Women's Refuges in Sydney, Elsie, began as an unfunded, feminist run co-operative in a squat on a church owned housing project (Nyland, 1997).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Australia had much higher rates of home ownership than the UK (Beer, 1993). The 1911 census showed that half of all Australian dwellings were owner occupied (Jackson, 1970; Beer, 1993), a rate only matched in Britain in the latter half of the twentieth century (Williams, 1992), although ownership was largely the preserve of the middle classes.

<sup>2</sup> According to Nyland (1997) there is some debate about whether Elsie was in fact the first refuge, but she notes it was the first explicitly feminist enterprise of that kind and that the act of squatting brought the first publicity to the issue.

# Government Funded Community Housing in NSW

## **From Activism to Established Programs**

By the early 1980s the spirit of community activism had infiltrated the state bureaucracy, and government funding began to be directed to supporting and building upon the grass roots initiatives. These moves were exemplified by the Women's Housing Program and the Community Tenancy Scheme (Nyland, 1997). In 1984 the Commonwealth (Labor) Government, once again responding to the states' lead, introduced the Local Government and Community Housing Program (LGACHP), a tied program under the CSHA, aimed at providing local governments and community groups with funding for long-term rental housing projects. The program's objectives included responding to housing needs that had been neglected in the past, and attracting local government and other resources into low income housing (NSW Ombudsman, 1993).

With the introduction of the LGACHP, funding became available to support the co-op housing movement. LGACHP funds were obtained to set up an agency to resource people wanting to develop their own co-ops. After several years in development, the organisation was formally incorporated as the Association to Resource Co-operative Housing (ARCH) in 1989. Shelter NSW, which had been heavily involved in promoting the co-op model from the beginning (Nyland, 1997), played an important role in auspicing ARCH.

The need for a more comprehensive system of half-way housing for women had been pursued for some time by the women's refuge movement and those working in existing half-way housing projects such as the Women's Housing Company (subsequently also funded as a specialist provider under the Community Tenancy Scheme). By 1985 an interdepartmental task force on women's homelessness had resulted in the establishment of the Women's Housing Program, a state-wide system of medium term housing projects (Nyland, 1997).

## **The Community Tenancy Scheme**

In contrast to the 'bottom up' development of co-ops and women's housing, the Community Tenancy Scheme (CTS) was initiated from within the State Government bureaucracy, although its architects were directly inspired by the activism of those movements. When funds became available under the Commonwealth Government's Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme (MRRS) in 1982, the Community Development Bureau of the Department of Youth and Community Services (YACS) took the opportunity to initiate a community based rental scheme (Nyland, 1997, 1998).

Even though a leasehold program was not the intention, the MRRS guidelines were broad enough to allow it, and MRRS money was used to lease properties from private landlords for rental to low-income tenants at a subsidised rent (20% of income). The NSW State Government contributed on a dollar for dollar basis and in its first three years the CTS received \$15.01 million (Milligan et al, 1985). MRRS money also funded the Mortgage Relief Scheme and the Bond and Relocation Assistance Scheme (later the Rent Assistance Scheme).

In October 1982 the CTS program was approved by the Minister. The objectives of CTS were:

- I. To provide secure, affordable housing to low income single people and family units;
- II. To manage housing stock at the local level through community based organisations or local government;
- III. To involve tenants in the management of individual schemes and CTS as a whole;
- IV. To lease or purchase housing stock which has traditionally been available to low income groups, but which is now declining, such as boarding houses;
- V. To increase the supply of housing stock through construction, upgrading of sub-standard dwellings or conversion of commercial / industrial buildings to residential use;
- VI. To establish community housing organisations with the potential to operate long term housing programs.

(Milligan et al, 1985)

The CTS Program Team created schemes across NSW by working with local government, charitable organisations and other existing groups, and in some cases establishing schemes from scratch. A concerted effort was made to spread the available money around NSW based on the relative housing need across regions, and some 60 CTS organisations were established across the state. A basic CTS was funded for 35 households and one full-time worker (calculated on the basis of one hour's management per property per week). In smaller towns there were some three-day per week workers managing 21 households. In 1985, the largest CTS, the Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Association, had 107 funded households.

The focus of the CTS was on allocating housing on the basis of need, rather than on the wait-turn basis traditionally employed by the Housing Commission. The primary target groups tended to be those that had previously been excluded from or had limited access to public housing, such as singles, those from non-English speaking backgrounds, the chronically homeless and the previously institutionalised (Milligan et al, 1985).

The CTS program was managed on a model that has become familiar in community based social services, that of an advisory committee with community representation and professional expertise to counsel the Minister on policy and funding, linked with an administrative unit positioned in the appropriate bureaucracy. The CTS Ministerial Advisory Committee was established in early 1983, with Sandy Halley, the Program Manager of the Community Development Bureau as Chair and 11 other members with various government, community and academic links. By early 1984 the Advisory Committee had 14 members, including 10 regional representatives from CTS organisations.

Despite the reliance on leasehold property, it was intended that CTS provide long-term housing and there was a push to obtain more 'capital' properties (that is, owned by the program). In September 1983, MRRS guidelines were revised, with Commonwealth consent, to allow up to 30% of the total NSW MRRS funding to be used for this purpose. In 1984 the CTS also obtained Rental Bond Board money of \$1 million for capital property development.

In 1983 Frank Walker had become the Minister for both YACS and Housing. Walker, who already held the portfolio of Aboriginal Affairs, felt very strongly that housing, social services and Aboriginal issues should be managed in an integrated way and so had persuaded Premier Wran to give him the housing and social services portfolios (Nyland, 1997). With responsibility for the three portfolios, Walker was easily able to transfer the CTS program from YACS to the Housing Commission. The move to the Housing Commission occurred in 1984 with the CTS program becoming part of the Community Programs Unit.

### **Community Housing and the Department of Housing**

The organisation that CTS joined was not a highly welcoming place. According to John Mant the Housing Commission in the early 1980s had changed little in outlook and operations since 1945. In his 1992 inquiry into its operation, he described it as 'an archetypal state government public works organisation', preoccupied with its capital works program and with bolstering the building industry. The arrival of the community housing staff, with a different outlook and a different set of priorities, was something of a shock to the system. The community programs people were known as the 'Sandshoe Brigade' by the rest of the Commission - they didn't wear suits or toe the old corporate line, and were looked on askance by more traditional staff members.

In 1986, the Housing Commission was completely restructured and became the Department of Housing (DOH), with a number of formerly separate activities combined under the Department's control. The change was largely owed to the determination of Housing Minister Walker to reform what he saw as an outdated institution (Nyland, 1997).

While considerable reform of the structure and functions of the DOH occurred, Mant argued in his report that a core of attitudes and methods were retained in the new organisation which reflected an entrenched, paternalistic approach to housing the 'worthy'. During that period, Mant conducted staff workshops and remembers what he describes as a 'huge cultural clash' of politics and ideologies between the 'old guard' tenancy managers and the Sandshoe Brigade:

*'I can remember this youngish woman... white-faced... shouting at these activists... "you've stolen the houses of our tenants", meaning those who were on the waiting list who were good, worthy, appropriate people for putting in public housing, would look after [the houses], and so on and so on, had been waiting on the list for five years, were grateful.... In came this mob who took these houses and put in these unruly people who we'd never housed before, who weren't waiting their turn, were "undeserving" - were not the "deserving poor".'*

While it is difficult to attribute motives with confidence in such a complex situation, Mant's observation testifies to the strong feelings of the time. There was, it seems, a lack of comprehension of the aims of the community housing programs on the part of many in the DOH, and a widespread distrust of the kinds of change that were emerging. A decade or so on, the needs based approach to allocations used in the CTS is recognised right across the social housing sector as an essential strategy in targeting dwindling resources most effectively.

### **Backlash**

In 1988, the election of a Coalition Government in NSW saw significant changes in the DOH. Key people left the Department or were removed. Joe Schipp was appointed Housing Minister,

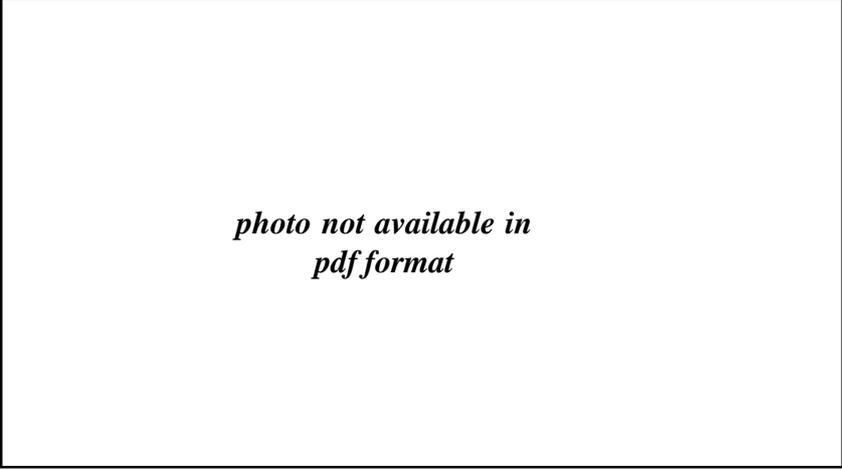
while Dick Flint became the Director of the DOH. Flint, a long-serving member of the Housing Commission 'old guard', seemingly had little sympathy for the aims of the community housing programs. Under the new regime, the Community Programs Unit, which had numbered 50 workers in the mid '80s, diminished in size until by 1990 it had a staff of 13 (NSW Ombudsman, 1993). Late in 1988, the State Government defunded Shelter NSW, as well as all 21 Tenants' Advice and Referral Services, and stripped the Tenants' Union (which survived with a single worker on funding through the Legal Aid Commission), arguing that these services were duplicating DOH functions (Sydney Morning Herald, 1993).

At the end of 1988 the CTS and the Women's Housing Program were also anticipating the axe (Sydney Morning Herald, 1988). Protests began, including a picket outside the Minister's office by housing workers for three months. Brian Murnane, who was the worker at Macarthur CTS at Campbelltown, remembers what it was like:

*'...we got it down to a fine art.... Each scheme was rostered to provide workers or volunteers to go in one day a week, and we used to just turn up - all the gear was there...and every time someone came to the window at the Minister's office you were able to give them a wave...right there in Park St at the American Express building...and for all that time we were there the Minister wasn't able to use the front entrance because he'd be accosted by someone...'*

The impact of the picket itself is hard to gauge. Around that time an internal review resulted in the removal of the Women's Housing Program from the DOH to the Department of Community Services (DOCS) where, it was felt, the Program had a better chance of survival alongside the crisis accommodation programs. Despite the alarms, the CTS did not disappear either, although its position was certainly precarious. Vivienne Milligan, who helped establish the program argues that a crucial factor was the distribution of CTS organisations right across the State. In threatening to dismantle the program, the government provoked strong lobbying by a number of Coalition MPs representing country towns that were unwilling to lose their local schemes. As the realisation dawned on government that ending the program might not be the best move, the Minister was visited by a delegation of workers. As Murnane remembers it, a 'peace deal' was negotiated whereby the workers would manage more properties without any increase in funding.

The modifications to the program that resulted from the upheavals were considerable. Single worker schemes were increased from the original 35 properties to 58, rents increased from 20% to 25% of income, and the program was turned from a long-term alternative to public housing into an interim housing program for people on the DOH waiting list (Sydney Morning Herald, 1989). While the changes were perceived as drastic by those in the sector, Milligan notes that from the government's point of view, the CTS compared poorly with the DOH in terms of cost efficiency. The increase in properties managed helped the CTS to demonstrate cost effectiveness. Milligan suggests that the increase in properties managed was offset to some degree by the fact that by now the schemes were well established leaving the workers more time to devote to tenancy management.

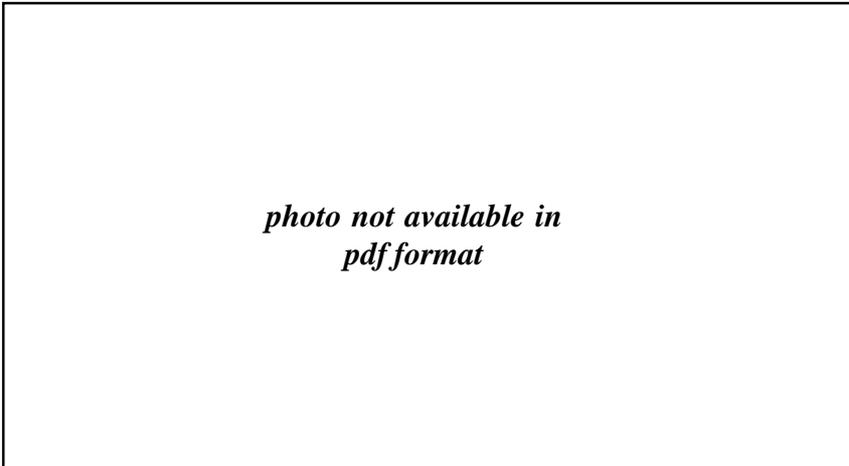


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Sonya Sodbinow, a tenant/director of Hume Community Housing Association, and her young children in 1987/88. The family were in Belmore Park at the start of a rally and marched to Parliament House to “save CTS”. (Photo courtesy of Lesley Wyatt)

# PART 2

## Housing Reform in the 1990s



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**A CTS “Think Tank” at the Log Cabin Hotel, Penrith in about 1992.  
According to Lesley Wyatt “we had just consulted our way through to an  
understanding that CTS was just a program and the organisaions were to be  
called Housing Associations, and as such could open themselves up to manage  
any not for profit.”**

From left to right: Anne McPherson from Hawkesbury CH,  
Margaret Gleeson of Bankstown CH, Joan Ferguson from Bankstown CH,  
Lesley Wyatt from Liverpool Rental Housing  
& Anton Cash from Coffs Harbour.

# The Fight for CTS

## CTS Begins to Mobilise

Since the scaling down of the CTS Program Team in the DOH and the radical changes to the program, those involved in the CTS schemes had been virtually unresourced and untrained, and were certainly overworked. Being community based organisations with a strong tenant focus, there was significant reliance on volunteer committee members and tenants, but little time or resources to ensure training for either. Funding was renewed annually, so there was no security for the schemes. By the turn of the decade CTS morale was at rock bottom and many felt they must fight or go under.

Through regional network meetings and the unfunded 'Projects Association of CTS' (PACTS) various links had been established between CTS groups across the sector. The spirit of resistance had already shown itself in the picketing of the Minister's office, and by the early 1990s a nucleus of activism began to emerge, particularly in Western and South Western Sydney, although Mimi O'Reilly from Bathurst was also a key player. These people, including O'Reilly, Lesley Wyatt from Liverpool CTS, Judith Beveridge from Fairfield CTS, Anne McPherson from Hawkesbury CTS and Joan Ferguson from Western Suburbs CTS, began to look for ways to gain support for the sector. They conceived the idea of a peak organisation which would lobby on the sector's behalf and provide it with the resourcing and training it so desperately needed.

One of the reasons that a new organisation was deemed necessary was a perception that PACTS had done all it could. Very few workers attended PACTS meetings regularly - indeed many rural workers never attended at all and, as Wyatt remembers it, the mood of meetings was often despondent, pre-occupied with the latest bureaucratic 'assault'. A second factor was that PACTS only represented CTS, while the organisation envisioned by the CTS activists was broader based, encompassing a range of community housing providers.

In 1991, funding was obtained from the Western Sydney Housing Information and Resource Network (WESTHIRN) and the Uniting Church to conduct consultations in the sector on the development of a new peak. Ferguson wrote a discussion paper 'On the Need for a National Peak Body to Represent and Resource Non-Government, Non Profit-Making Housing Providers', while Wyatt and Beveridge developed workshop material to help communicate the ideas.

Having formed a steering committee, the group took their workshops to CTS organisations around the state from late 1991 to mid 1992. They called themselves the 'Australian Federation of Housing Associations' (AFHA) because they wanted to stress the inclusive nature of the role they were seeking to fill. Informal contact had been made with similar community housing groups in some other states, and it was apparent that the need for such an organisation was not confined to NSW. The difficulty was that the NSW government was not at all responsive. When the steering committee heard that there was Commonwealth money available for community organisations that were operating nationally (under the Community Organisations Support Program - COSP), they made a bid for development funding.

Despite a sympathetic response from the Canberra bureaucrats, the fact remained that the proposed organisation did not seem to fit the COSP funding criteria, and in the first half of 1992 the AFHA was informed that their bid had been unsuccessful. Nevertheless the bid was, perhaps, a factor in alerting the Commonwealth Government to the issue. Brian Howe, the Commonwealth Housing Minister, was sympathetic to new models of social housing, and it was becoming apparent that, if community housing was to develop successfully, support agencies of the kind the AFHA were proposing were going to be necessary. The Commonwealth's ultimate response to this emerging need will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Another hurdle for the CTS activists at this time was a misunderstanding with the existing social housing policy lobby in NSW about the aims of the new organisation. Adam Farrar at that time employed by NCOSS and a member of the board of Shelter NSW, recalls that it seemed as though the CTS workers were trying to establish a housing policy lobby when one already existed:

*'...certainly the perception from Shelter at the time was that this was a seriously ill-conceived idea - that what was being proposed didn't understand the role of bodies like Shelter. It was basically saying "we want some kind of housing peak", and Shelter's first reaction was to say, "That's lovely - we've actually got one, why don't you join us?".'*

Ferguson feels this was a misconception, arguing that Shelter's role was to represent those in housing need, whereas what the CTS organisations were after was a complementary body to represent non-government housing *providers*, and to give them the resourcing they so desperately needed:

*'I had very clear ideas of separate roles.... I did very much see Shelter as being a consumer organisation and a housing policy lobby group...and I think it's very odd that...Shelter could ever think to represent landlords. It's not just that it's a tenants' advocacy organisation, it's a social housing policy advocacy organisation.'*

Shelter NSW, with its roots in community housing activism and its history of support for co-ops, did not see the distinction in quite the same way, although Farrar acknowledges that by 1992, Shelter's work (at that stage unfunded and therefore much curtailed) had become largely focussed on tenant advocacy. Perhaps the key to understanding the confusion is that the need for community housing *provider* support (as opposed to support for co-ops which were made up of tenants) was not well understood at that stage. The DOH had always provided the lion's share of social housing, and 'advocacy' of this kind had not emerged as an issue within the DOH structure. With the advent of community housing, things changed. The CTS activists had seen the need for 'advocacy' for CTS organisations as *providers* in the shadow of the DOH, while Shelter still understood 'advocacy' in a more traditional sense in relation to tenants.

By the middle of 1992, however, with increasing communication between the groups, the gap in understanding began to be bridged. From this time on the new peak body, now named the NSW Federation of Housing Associations (FHA), began to emerge as a definable entity, albeit unincorporated and unfunded.

## DOH Reviews the CTS

In the meantime, however, the position of the CTS in the DOH was still uncertain. In 1991, the DOH had commenced a management audit review of the program. The review was conducted by the Divisional Manager of Operations, the Division which covered the Community Programs Unit. The review proposed that the DOH should assume control of the capital properties managed by the CTS organisations (some 500 dwellings), leaving them to run only head-leased properties with short-term tenancies for people on the DOH waiting list. It supported this by arguing that the Mortgage and Rent Assistance Program (MRAP - the successor to the MRRS), that was used to finance CTS, was only intended to fund short-term or interim accommodation.<sup>1</sup>

The review was completed in March 1992 but was not made public. Liverpool CTS managed to secure a copy through the NSW Freedom of Information Act on June 30, and the FHA hastily mobilised. Realising that an important housing program was under threat, Shelter NSW helped the FHA to employ a consultant, Vincent Berkhout, to produce a response. Berkhout was contacted and given a copy of the review on July 17. He was formally contracted on July 24 and asked to produce his response by July 31, in time for a meeting of the FHA and Shelter NSW with the Housing Minister on August 4.<sup>2</sup>

While acknowledging the need for a review of problems within the CTS, a number of which had been brought to the DOH's attention *by the CTS groups themselves*, Berkhout's response criticised the DOH review on a number of grounds:

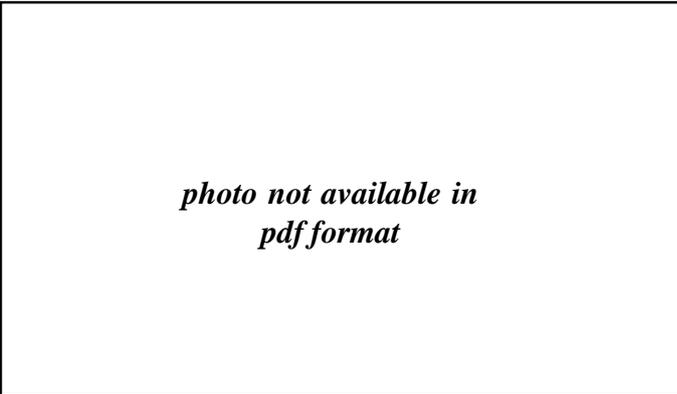
- A lack of clear guidelines in the CSHA had allowed 'philosophical differences to dictate the availability of funds' (p. 5). While the MRAP guidelines did not specifically identify such a use, 'there [were] no obstacles to the use of MRAP funds for a community-managed housing program such as the CTS'.
- The review took the results from the audits of a few organisations known to have financial or management problems and gave the (false) impression that the problems identified were endemic to the program as a whole.
- There was a substantial over-estimate of the cost of the CTS to the DOH. The figure of some \$22 million calculated as the DOH's cost for running the program in 1991/92 had included Commonwealth Government funding through MRAP and also counted the rent paid to CTS groups by tenants as a 'subsidy' provided by the DOH. The actual cost to the DOH, said Berkhout, was less than \$10 million.
- There was a failure to take into account the cost of a leasehold program in times when the market was tight and leasehold accommodation was difficult to obtain, and also a mistaken assumption that leasehold tenancies would necessarily be short-term and capital tenancies long-term.

(Berkhout Planning & Development, 1992)

Within the CTS organisations, there was a definite perception that the review was aimed at closing CTS down. Ferguson believes that the FHA's actions in commissioning a reasoned and independent assessment and taking it to the Minister was crucial in saving the situation *at that stage*, but stresses that the report was only one of a series of 'fortuitous' events and factors that were contributing to change within the DOH at the time.

<sup>1</sup> Copies of the actual review are now hard to come by but the response commissioned by the FHA (Berkhout Planning & Development, 1992), provides a summary of the review's findings.

<sup>2</sup> By August 1992, Schipp had been replaced by Robert Webster as Housing Minister.



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The Hon. Robert Webster, Minister for Housing,  
launching the Federation's Code of Practice as Mimi O'Reilly,  
first President of the Federation looks on.

# From 'Public' Housing to 'Social' Housing

In early 1992, change was afoot on a much broader front than simply the CTS program. New ideas began to gain the ascendancy at both State and Commonwealth level. The impact on the battling CTS organisations and the rest of the community housing sector in NSW was to be quite profound.

## **Commonwealth Housing Policy**

In 1990 the Commonwealth Labor Government under the auspices of Howe, the Minister for Health, Housing and Community Services, had established the National Housing Strategy (NHS) to report on the issues and strategies needed to tackle the nation's housing needs. Howe had a particular interest in housing and urban development, and was also concerned at that time about the ability of state housing authorities to adapt themselves to meet changing circumstances. Throughout 1991-92, the NHS gathered information, employed consultants and issued reports culminating in an 'Agenda for Action' (NHS, 1992).

During this period, the social housing lobby was hotly debating the role of community housing and there was much criticism from public housing advocates, who saw community based housing associations as an opening wedge for privatisation. Eleri Morgan-Thomas, former Chair of National Shelter (1992 to 1996), vividly remembers the tensions generated by the debate at National Shelter meetings.

Despite such reservations, the expansion of community housing was gaining support. While the NHS was being drafted, the Community Housing Program (CHP) was being developed to supersede the LGACHP and the final report of the NHS announced the new program as part of the strategy to provide more varied and better social housing (NHS, 1992). The architects of the CHP recognised the need for infrastructure for community housing programs and, when the program commenced at the beginning of 1993, it required that 10% of CHP funding be spent on fostering appropriate infrastructure, such as peak representative bodies for the community housing sector.

## **Upheavals in the NSW Department of Housing**

On the 20th June, 1991, the NSW Ombudsman launched an investigation into the DOH's handling of the LGACHP. Certain problems experienced by organisations receiving LGACHP funding had been taken up and pursued vigorously by ARCH, and in October 1990 the Ombudsman's office received its first complaint on the matter from Darlinghurst Area Rental Tenancy Co-operative. Subsequently, the Ombudsman received written complaints from eight other organisations, including a number of co-operatives and Aboriginal housing corporations, as well as from North Sydney Council. The complaints listed problems such as stalling, lack of communication from DOH and apparent obstruction of projects.

The Ombudsman's report was released in February 1993. The summary of conclusions stated :

*'The investigation reveals that the NSW Department of Housing did not establish the procedures required to efficiently manage community based housing initiatives. Instead a mystifying bureaucratic maze has obstructed the approval and funding, in some cases for years.'* (NSW Ombudsman, 1993, p. 1).

The Ombudsman was also highly critical of the actions of Flint, as Director of the DOH, and of the Divisional Manager of Operations (who had conducted the review of the CTS). Formal findings against Flint were not made, but the Ombudsman stated that he believed that Flint's conduct in relation to the LGACHP was 'completely reprehensible'.

In 1992 a second finger was pointed at the DOH when the Royal Commission into Productivity in the Building Industry, under Roger Gyles, found cause for concern in the DOH's handling of building projects. Commissioner Gyles recommended that an inquiry be conducted into the DOH. At the same time HomeFund, the subsidised mortgage scheme for first home buyers managed by the DOH, was also coming under scrutiny.

The findings of the Royal Commission, the continuing Ombudsman's Inquiry and the growing concerns over HomeFund began to cause serious upheaval. In mid 1992 two separate inquiries were launched, one into HomeFund and one into the operation of the DOH itself. In June 1992, Schipp was replaced in the Housing portfolio by Robert Webster. Flint also left his position (and the NSW Public Service) in that year.

The Inquiry into the DOH was announced in July 1992, and Commissioner Mant's report was released in November of the same year. Mant was critical of the DOH's performance and recommended a radical restructure in order to change the DOH 'from a centralised public works operation to a decentralised asset management and tenancy service operation' (Mant, 1992). He proposed that the non-tenancy functions gathered under the DOH umbrella in 1986 be separated out and independently managed with clearly defined individual objectives.<sup>1</sup>

### **Mant's Vision for Social Housing in NSW**

Two important strands of Mant's proposed reforms were the establishment of a separate policy body, the Housing Ministry, overseeing all housing related functions, and the development of community housing as an alternative provider system, with separate infrastructure and administration, operating in competition with the DOH. In relation to the Ministry, Mant stated that:

*'The State has always suffered from housing, building industry and, to some extent, urban policy advice being distorted to satisfy the narrow concerns of the operational agencies. It would be worthwhile attempting to establish a source of reasonably independent advice.'* (Mant, 1992, p. 68)

The emphasis on community housing came out of Mant's perception of a need to 'encourage the growth of alternate housing delivery operations' (p. 68). When interviewed, Mant explained it like this:

*‘Well, from my point of view there were two things. One was [that] we needed to have, at the centre of government...someone responsible for shelter outcomes - but not responsible for...being the person who provides the solutions.... And that we needed a number of different types of solutions because there are a number of different types of people and households. So that was the first thing. The second thing is...I strongly believe that people should have much more control over their lives, and what I hated about the massive, massive bureaucracies that run the housing commissions is that not only ideologically but necessarily...you can’t have control, you can’t delegate responsibility...it’s too big an organisation for you to be either effectively... ‘patronising’ or loco parentis, or to allow experiment...’.*

However, it seems clear that it is not the community housing model *per se* that has Mant’s approval, but certain aspects of its functioning. His main targets were the scale of the housing bureaucracy and the degree to which it was able to meet tenant needs. If he’d been able to, he says, he would have broken the DOH into a set of autonomous regional organisations managing a set of local teams which would have been ‘effectively CTSS’. By pushing community housing, his aim was to provide the DOH with a competing example by which the policy makers could assess its performance.

Mant is also clear, however, that it was not the currently favoured competition policy (Hilmer, 1993) *per se* which led him to propose what others have termed a ‘purchaser - provider split’ for housing. Mant prefers to think of the split as one of ‘ends and means’ (the policy makers define the *ends* while the providers generate various *means* to achieve them), and has always been in favour of such a split, he says, not so much for efficiency but for effectiveness reasons. He has an abiding concern with the way in which government agencies, which are set up to provide particular kinds of services, go on providing those services when it is no longer appropriate - particularly if the only policy advice the government receives is coming from within those agencies. The problem Mant saw with the DOH was that it was an outmoded, large-scale housing production agency and no-one in it saw any need for change. Although aware that it is a difficult thing to create, Mant felt that what was needed was a source of strategic policy advice on housing that was independent of housing providers.

### **The Administration of Social Housing in NSW after Mant**

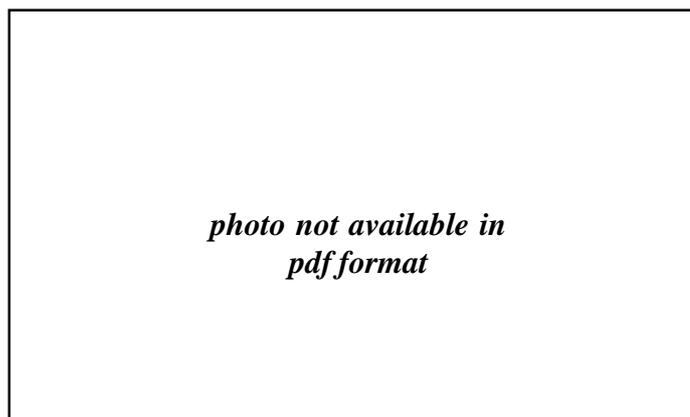
Mant’s recommendations were adopted wholeheartedly by Webster, the new Housing Minister, and by Gabrielle Kibble, who was installed as acting department head to initiate the necessary changes. Jennifer Westacott, who had joined the Department in 1986 in the Women’s Housing Unit, headed the Implementation Group and drafted the section of the implementation report on the development of community housing, with input from Gavin McCairns, who had arrived in late 1992 as the manager of the Community Programs Unit. McCairns had worked in social housing in Britain and Europe, as well as for the National Housing Strategy in Canberra, and so had plenty of experience of multi-provider social housing systems to draw upon.

Immediately upon his arrival in the DOH, McCairns was faced with the Ombudsman’s Inquiry, the Mant Report and the fact that the Commonwealth was taking back almost \$25 million from community programs (which had been left unspent under the previous Department Head). The revitalised Community Programs Unit tackled the problems head-on. Mark Nutting (subsequently the manager of policy in OCH) was asked to coordinate the Department’s response to the Ombudsman’s Inquiry. The prompt and comprehensive response by the DOH to the issues raised by the Inquiry was commended by the Ombudsman. Meanwhile,

McCairns was grappling with the twin issues of how to bring program performance levels up to scratch and how to support, foster and resource the sector in line with Mant's vision.

By 1994 the Ministry of Housing, Planning and Urban Affairs, had been established under Kibble's directorship. Milligan became head of the Office of Housing Policy (OHP), the policy agency foreshadowed by Mant. Late in 1993, Andrew Larkin, originally from the UK, who had been working on housing in South Australia, had arrived at the OHP. The Community Housing Unit was under his control, and McCairns and Carol Mills (subsequently Director of OCH) were principal policy officers under him.

The Unit's work focussed on developing community housing in line with the Commonwealth's CHP objectives. The first NSW Community Housing Strategic Plan was released late in 1993 and was praised by Brian Howe as 'a model for other states and programs' (OHP, 1994b). Among other things, the Plan emphasised needs-based planning, consumer choice between housing providers, sectoral independence from government, and the potential for growth through CHP funding (DOH, 1993b). To meet the CHP funding guidelines, a new Community Housing State Advisory Committee (CHSAC) had been established in 1993, with Farrar as Chair, and O'Reilly as the FHA's approved representative. The CHSAC's role was to approve projects under the Commonwealth guidelines.



The Federation's first AGM - Standing from left to right James Heywood (ESRHA), Joan Ferguson (Federation) and Larry Daniela (Wollongang Co-op),

Sitting left to right: Debbie Evans (staff), Gavin McCairns (Community Programs Unit), Adam Farrar Chair of the CHASAC and Eloise Murphy CEO of City West Housing

Work got underway to establish an independent agency to administer community housing. The Ministry employed a consultant, Brian Elton, to study and make recommendations on the appropriate infrastructure for such a body and on scenarios for developing the sector. His report was published in June 1994. In it Elton canvassed the possibility of creating a statutory authority to oversee community housing. He did not recommend this option, however, as he feared it would prove difficult and time consuming to develop and pass even 'uncontroversial' legislation. Elton settled for recommending that the agency be a public company limited by guarantee with a board of directors selected on the basis of expertise in housing (Brian Elton

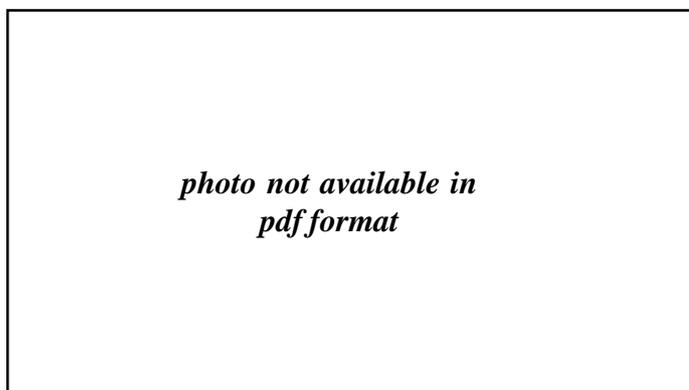
and Associates, 1994). As an interim measure, work began on establishing an administrative unit under OHP. The unit was finally established in 1996 as the OCH.<sup>2</sup>

Government funded community housing, as conceived at this stage, could be roughly divided into three core models (DOH 1993b):

- housing associations - providing generalist housing and substantially funded through the CTS, but also managing properties funded through the CHP, the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) and joint ventures;
- tenant run co-operatives - usually aimed at specific needs groups and funded through the CHP, and the LGACHP before that;
- joint ventures - projects developed between housing associations, co-ops, the DOH, local government, churches and charities.

The growth of the sector focussed on strategies for developing housing associations and co-operatives (OHP, 1994a), and sought to increase the opportunities for these organisations to enter into joint-venture type partnerships and attract funds and resources from outside government.

By mid 1994, the community housing sector in NSW encompassed nearly 4,300 properties. This figure was made up of 110 (2.6%) from housing co-ops, 500 (11.7%) from the CHP, 3,032 (70.6%) from the CTS and 650 other properties (15.1%) mostly from CAP (OHP, 1994a). With the lion's share of the properties, the CTS based housing associations became the focus for the new growth strategy. In line with Mant's aim of using community housing as an alternative to the DOH, housing associations were once again to be providers of long-term housing, rather than interim accommodation as they had become under Schipp.



Brian Howe, Mimi O'Reilly and Deborah Georgiou (Federation), chatting at the Federation's 1995 Annual General Meeting.

Larkin and McCairns, working closely with the sector, began to develop a vision for the growth of community housing, and of CTS in particular, no doubt drawing on their experience in the UK, Europe and other parts of Australia. The housing associations strategy was articulated in a discussion paper circulated to the sector by the OHP in June 1994 (OHP, 1994a).

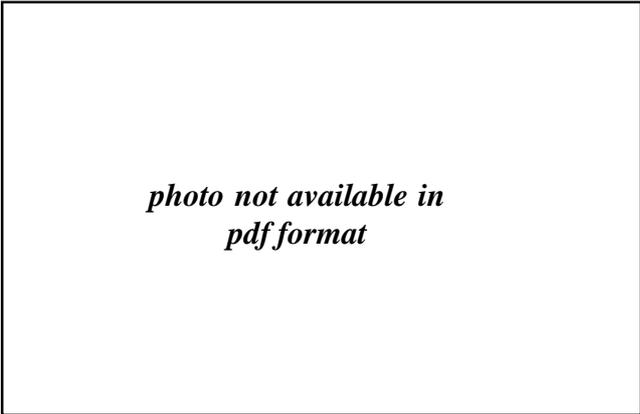
The plans for the growth of community housing were further developed and refined in a second Strategic Plan released at the end of 1994 (OHP, 1994b). In 1995 the new Labor Government endorsed the growth of community housing in NSW, and at the end of the year the Labor Housing Minister, Craig Knowles, released a Housing Policy Green Paper stating the NSW Government's commitment to tackling housing issues (Knowles, 1995). With the change of

government, the functions of the Ministry, including the administration of community housing were taken over by the new Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP).<sup>3</sup> Gabrielle Kibble became the Director General of the new department. In 1996 the OHP released a third Community Housing Strategy which projected a growth in community housing managed stock from 5,271 properties in mid 1995 to 13,326 by June 1999, with over half being managed by housing associations. The 1996 Strategy included 'access to additional funding, beyond government sources' as one of the major benefits of community managed housing, and noted that the use of volunteers to assist with management and administration helped to reduce community housing costs.

<sup>1</sup> These functions included Landcom (the government agency established to supply residential land at moderate price to new home buyers), the home finance function and the building and acquisition of new dwelling stock for the DOH.

<sup>2</sup> In 1998 the autonomy of the OCH was enhanced. The OCH manager's position was upgraded to that of director, reporting to the Director General of DUAP rather than through the OHP (which by then had become the Housing and Urban Development Branch of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning). The Community Housing Advisory Board (CHAB) was established to advise on strategic policy and succeeded CHSAC, although under the new arrangements its role did not include project approval. In 1999, the strategic policy functions and the OCH were placed back under the umbrella of the DOH.

<sup>3</sup> The new department evolved from the old Department of Planning.

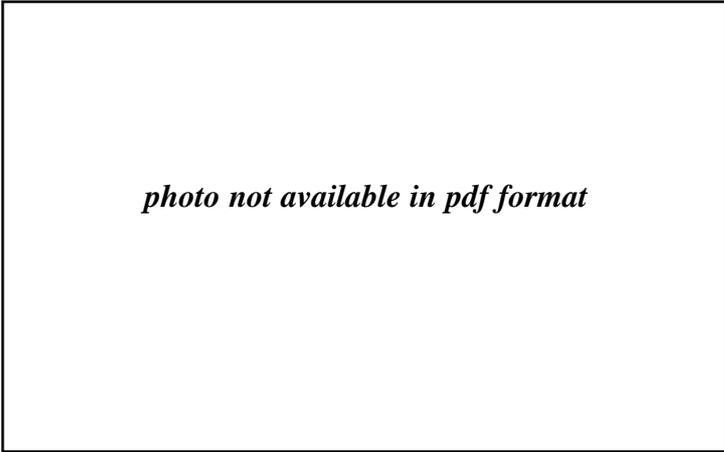


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Mimi O'Reilly, President of the Federation, Joan Ferguson,  
Director of the Federation and Craig Knowles, Minister of Housing.

# PART 3

## The Vision Becomes Reality



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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health, Housing and Community Services,  
the Hon. Brian Howe at the Federation's first statewide Community  
Housing Conference in Kurrajong in 1993.

# Establishing the FHA

*'The Federation is a new organisation, an initiative of the sector and is not yet funded to undertake any role in the sector. The organisation must establish itself quickly, ensuring all its members and potential members have the opportunity to participate in its activities.'* (FHA, 1994, p. xi)

## Getting Going

By early 1993, the factors that were shaping the 'new' community housing had begun to come into alignment. Kibble had been appointed to turn the DOH around and implement Mant's recommendations, including an enhanced role for community housing (DOH, 1993c); the CHP money was coming through from the Commonwealth; and the people working to form the FHA were ready and waiting, with aims and objectives in place, looking for funding.

At this stage it was relatively simple to bring things together in the FHA's favour. In the latter half of 1993, the FHA, having incorporated on July 29, received development funding from the DOH (via the CHP) to establish itself as a resourcing and federating body for housing associations, and to run a conference on the future of community housing. That happened in November 1993 at Kurrajong, near Richmond. Also in November, Ferguson was employed under the development funding to produce the FHA's first strategic plan.

In the 1994/95 financial year the FHA's funding was reconfirmed, and from then on the organisation rapidly took shape. The first Annual General Meeting was held at the end of 1994. The first State Council was elected, with O'Reilly as President. Ferguson had been working as Development Director since November 1993, with part-time administrative assistance, and now became Executive Director. In June 1994, Deborah Georgiou, who had formerly worked at ARCH and had been on the Shelter NSW Board (and had also previously worked on housing estate regeneration with McCairns in England) began work at the Federation. Wendy Rockwell (also from ARCH) and Greg Green arrived soon after. Rockwell became the organisation's administrator, and Green was responsible for keeping up the links with the sector - attending the housing associations' regional network meetings and keeping abreast of OHP's Housing Assistance Planning process.<sup>1</sup>

## Founding Principles

From the beginning, the FHA had certain motivating principles. The first of these was that the organisation's State Council, its governing body, was not to be made up of regional representatives, but should instead be *collectively* chosen to represent the *whole* of the sector. This conviction developed out of the belief that the only way forward was to unify the sector - metropolitan organisations with rural and large with small, and every effort was made to draw in schemes from all across the state. The voice of the FHA was to be embodied in its State Council made up of members, not in the Executive Director. To this end, it was O'Reilly, as the first President, who was nominated for the CHSAC, and who became the public face of the organisation.

However, a second and equally fundamental principle emerged, which was that the FHA was not simply a 'union' for members, but an organisation committed to developing the sector to best fulfil its purpose. In the words of Georgiou:

*'We had big debates in the organisation about who and what we were there for, and they... culminated in setting a really, really strong principle and ethos ... that we were about better services for clients, and that we would resource and support those organisations that would deliver those services [effectively]... but that we were not going to be driven by the needs of organisations rather than the needs of their clients...'*

This ethos became the guiding principle behind the FHA, defining its priorities and business plan.

There were three critical areas of work that occupied the FHA from the start. These were maximising input from members, training housing workers and developing best practice.

One of the driving forces behind the CTS activists' push for a peak, after the distrust and discord of the Schipp/Flint days, was the need to know what was going on and to have their voice heard. The first thing, therefore was to reassure the sector that the FHA was not just another government tool and to involve everyone in the policy development process. Georgiou recalls:

*'We worked really hard at providing every opportunity for input, feedback and consultation.... I can remember spending so much time just on the fax machine getting everything that came to us out to other people, because we were conscious [that]...they felt we were putting a layer between them and government.'*

The awareness of the necessity to consult and be inclusive was matched by an awareness of needing to draw on all the available talent. In Georgiou's words:

*'Well, we were not going to just say that State Council was...the policy setting body; we were going to use focus groups, special interest groups; we were going to go out to the sector and invite people to be involved in the development of particular policies, and look for expertise, and...we were going to go outside the sector as well and ask people with particular skills to support us in the development of particular things. So it was trying to...go to a skills-based approach - to get the best people working on the best things.'*

The second task was to develop the training in housing, tenancy and organisational management that the sector so desperately needed. The Housing Associations Training Program in NSW (HATPIN) was developed in outline by the FHA (with input from the Community Housing Unit), and fleshed out by consultants into a comprehensive set of training modules covering everything from proper procedures for handling tenant complaints to financial management and accountability. The FHA was funded to coordinate delivery of the training.

The third strand of the FHA's work involved resourcing the sector to enable it to develop high standards of practice. Regulation of the sector was acknowledged to be essential but, after the heavy handed treatment meted out in the past from the DOH, the housing associations were wary of external control. The FHA believed it was crucial for the sector to show its willingness to be accountable, and so developed a Code of Practice for Housing Associations. The Code was to be adopted voluntarily by associations once they had complied with certain requirements such as developing written policies and procedures on organisational management, housing management, and the rights of tenants and applicants to just and

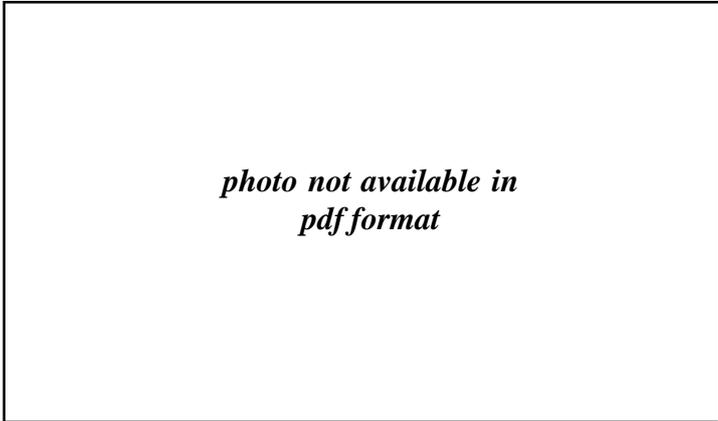
equitable treatment. The Code of Practice kit developed by the FHA included support material with examples of appropriate policies and advice on various aspects of successfully managing a community based organisation (FHA, 1995a). By adopting the Code, housing associations also agreed to submit to review by the Code of Practice Advisory Committee, a body made up of housing providers, tenants and independent experts in conflict resolution should they breach the Code.

### **'Building Our Future' - the Strategic Plan 1994 – 1996**

The FHA's philosophy and plan of action were articulated in the strategic plan, 'Building Our Future', published in March 1994 (FHA, 1994). The Plan included a 'situation analysis' to set the scene for the FHA's future work. Two paragraphs, in particular, serve to illustrate the organisational role and ethos the FHA was seeking to define:

*'At this stage of our development, general agreement on our role needs to be reached. A role which promotes consumer choice and service, which takes on board the housing needs of people currently marginalised and which recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the housing association sector must be developed.'* (p. viii)

*'Housing associations are ideally placed to work with and bring together the various players in the broader social housing sector. By developing partnerships and co-operative working relationships with other players, we can develop a cohesive response to consumer and community needs, which builds on sector strengths and minimises duplication.'* (p. ix)



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Front row left to right: Sue Aujard (staff), Pat Martin (State Council), Mimi O'Reilly (President)

(State Council and staff in 1995.) Back row from left to right:

Deborah Georgiou (staff), Jenn Crowe (State Council), Greg Green (staff), Maureen Milburn (State Council), Joan Ferguson (Director), Larry Daniella (State Council).

The Plan articulated a set of key principles for the organisation, defined a set of outcomes

and established three main strategic goals to be achieved over its three year life. The outcomes stressed growth and greater consumer choice, a cohesive and professional sector, and enhanced viability for housing associations. The goals concentrated on:

- A** establishing a credible public profile;
- B** supporting housing associations in providing high quality services; and
- C** ensuring the organisation would work for the sector.

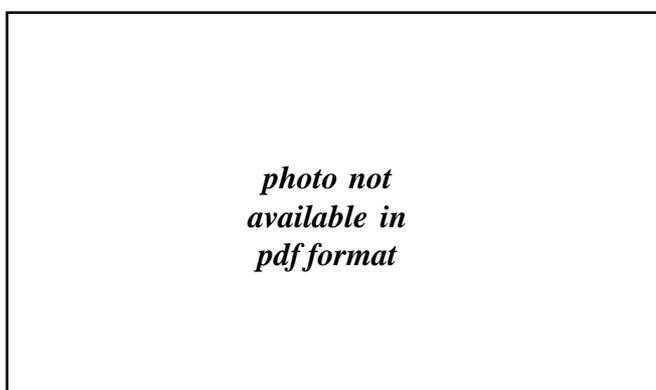
The goals were elaborated in 18 objectives and a set of 62 concrete strategies defining how the objectives were to be met. The 'Key Principles', 'Future Directions' and 'Goals and Objectives' sections of the strategic plan are reproduced in full in the Appendix to this report.

### **Looking Back, Looking Forward**

The FHA grew out of an extraordinary confluence of events and ideas that saw a shift from the old 'one size fits all' centrally based provision of social housing to a new 'multi-provider' framework aimed at delivering a variety of housing management solutions to meet the varied needs of the population. The new system, born of the desire to empower tenants and communities to act on their own behalf, found favour in an era of funding cut-backs and competition among providers because it offered the potential to access alternative funding sources and help government stand back from direct service delivery.

In this period of complex, conflicting and evolving demands, the FHA has been an important source of support and representation for its members, and an advocate on behalf of those in housing need. The first five years of its existence have seen it become a key player in the sector's development and a respected voice in the policy debate. The challenge now is to maintain the energy and commitment, and to continue to build on the achievements and learn from the mistakes in order to help the community housing sector, and the social housing system as a whole, to meet the ever increasing need for housing support.

<sup>1</sup> The Housing Assistance Plan is the means by which government funding is allocated for all housing programs across the State. A State plan assesses need across all regions and allocates accordingly. It is then up to a forum of providers in each region to distribute funding between providers and areas based on local needs.



Sandra Keppo and Sheryl De Vries (SWISH) at a Housing rally in 1996 waving the flags for community housing.

# APPENDIX

## Selected Extracts from the FHA's Strategic Plan, 1994

### Key Principles

The NSW Federation of Housing Associations:

- Is concerned with non government, not for profit housing provider organisations;
- Is a state wide organisation which is relevant for, and effective in, the non-metropolitan and metropolitan areas;
- Works for the entire housing association sector, but is driven by the priorities of member organisations;
- Recognises and works co-operatively with government and non government agencies;
- Promotes the development of housing management practices which focus on positive outcomes for consumers;
- Through its members, seeks to improve access to affordable, appropriate, safe and secure housing, which is free from discrimination and is flexible to meet changing lifetime circumstances; and
- As an organisation, has a dynamic, proactive, innovative, creative and entrepreneurial culture.

## Future Directions

By December 1996, the NSW Federation of Housing Associations will:

- Be an independent, credible organisation with the public profile to support its activities; and
- Be a key part of community housing infrastructure, playing a leading role in building and supporting a vibrant, confident and professional housing association sector in NSW.

The outcomes we are working towards for the housing association sector are:

- An expanded housing association sector, which provides increased choices for consumers;
- A more independent housing association sector, which remains accountable;
- A more cohesive community housing sector;
- Financially viable housing associations;
- Professional management standards, which improve the quality of housing services delivered through the housing associations sector;
- Housing services responsive to the needs of consumers; and
- An improved planning process for the social housing sector.

# Goals and Objectives

The **GOALS** are to:

- A** Build the public profile and credibility of the housing association sector in NSW;
- B** Support the housing association sector in the delivery of high quality housing services to consumers; and
- C** Create an organisation that works for the housing association sector in NSW.

The **OBJECTIVES** are to:

- A1** Assist the housing association sector to develop a clear idea of its own identity and present that identity successfully as a public image;
- A2** Assist the housing association sector to establish co-operative working relationships with other players in the social housing sector;
- A3** Establish minimum professional standards for the housing association sector;
- A4** Assist the housing association sector to be properly accountable to the taxpayer, local communities and customers;
- A5** Ensure that the housing association sector is actively involved in shaping social housing policy and programs at the regional, state and national levels;
- B1** Ensure that the housing association sector has access to relevant information;
- B2** Facilitate the development of housing associations;
- B3** Provide management support to housing associations;
- B4** Assist housing associations to develop innovative and appropriate housing solutions;
- B5** Assist housing associations to access appropriate education and training options;
- B6** Assist housing associations to utilise technology as an effective management and communication tool;
- B7** Assist housing associations to develop a consumer service approach to housing management;
- C1** Ensure that member organisations have equity of opportunity to access services

and participate in the activities and management of the Federation;

**C2** Ensure that the Federation is managed effectively and efficiently;

**C3** Develop a secure and increasingly independent financial base;

**C4** Ensure that the Federation's services enhance the quality of housing provision in the sector;

**C5** Ensure that the Federation is accountable to the taxpayer, members and the broader community housing sector; and

**C6** Maintain a productive working relationship with the Office of Housing Policy.

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- \_\_\_ 1993, *Homeless and Helpless*, by John Stapleton, May 3, p. 8.
- Williams, P. 1984, 'The politics of property: home ownership in Australia', in *Australian Urban Politics: critical perspectives*, eds J. Halligan and C. Paris, Longman & Cheshire, Melbourne.
- Williams, P. 1992, 'Housing,' in Paul Cloke, ed, *Policy and Change in Thatcher's Britain*, Pergamon Press, Oxford.

# Other Sources

## 1. Interviews

*Interviews were conducted with a number of people involved in the development of community housing in NSW and with the development of the FHA in September, October and November, 1998:*

Farrar, Adam - Executive Director of National Community Housing Forum, Chair of the NSW Community Housing Advisory Board.

Ferguson, Joan - Area Manager, Ryde, DOH, and former Executive Director of the FHA (until Sept. 1998).

Georgiou, Deborah - Neighbourhood Improvement Program, DOH, and former Housing Services Manager at the FHA (until June, 1997).

McCairns, Gavin - Regional Director, Northern Region, DOH, and former manager of the Community Housing Unit of the DOH.

Mant, John - solicitor and Commissioner for the Inquiry into the DOH.

Milligan, Vivienne - Former Director of OHP and the Housing and Metropolitan Division, DUAP (until the end of 1998).

Mills, Carol - Director of OCH.

Murnane, Brian - Coordinator of Argyle Community Housing at Campbelltown (formerly Macarthur CTS).

Nutting, Mark - Manager of Policy, Planning and Evaluation, OCH.

O'Reilly, Mimi – Manager of the Bathurst branch of Central Tablelands Housing Association (formerly Bathurst CTS).

Rockwell, Wendy - FHA Administrator and former resource worker at ARCH.

Shellshear, Karine – Director of ARCH.

Westacott, Jennifer - Deputy Director General of DOH.

Wyatt, Lesley - Coordinator of HUME Community Housing (formerly Liverpool Rental Housing Association and Fairfield CTS).

## 2. FHA Files

Evidence on dates, people and places has also been obtained from FHA files. For those wishing to confirm particular details, the main files used were:

ADMINISTRATION/ORGANISATION/HISTORY/WESTHIRN CONTRACT - contains letters between WESTHIRN and Joan Ferguson on the funding for the development work (including dates of consultations with CTS groups in November 1991 and June 1992), and a discussion paper on the

AFHA.

ADMINISTRATION/FEDERATION DEVELOPMENT/DISCUSSION PAPER - contains several apparently incomplete drafts of the paper entitled *On the Need for a National Peak Body to Represent and Resource Non-Government, Non Profit-Making Housing Providers* by Joan Ferguson. It is assumed that the discussion paper was being drafted in 1991 as reference is made to consultations to take place with the sector after it is completed. These consultations began in November 1991 (see previous file).

ADMINISTRATION/HISTORY/FIRST DEVELOPMENT PROJECT - contains the final report against the funding received from WESTHIRN and the Uniting Church.

PROGRAMS/CHP/ADVISORY STRUCTURE (SAC) - contains copies of the guidelines for CHP program and the structure of the Advisory Committee, as well as letters to the FHA regarding Mimi O'Reilly's nomination and appointment to the committee.

# Glossary of Abbreviations

## Programs

- CAP Crisis Accommodation Program - services are provided by the Department of Community Services, while residential properties are administered through OCH.
- CHP Community Housing Program - a tied program under the CSHA introduced in 1993 - untied in 1997.
- CTS Community Tenancy Scheme - introduced in 1982 using MRRS funding.
- LGACHP Local Government and Community Housing Program - introduced in 1984, the first source of Federal funds under the CSHA for community housing.
- MRAP Mortgage and Rent Assistance Program - successor to MRRS.
- MRRS Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme - initiated by the Federal Government in 1982 - used in NSW to help finance the CTS.

## Organisations

- AFHA Australia Federation of Housing Associations - short-lived body established by CTS workers in 1991.
- ARCH Association to Resource Co-operative Housing.
- CHAB Community Housing Advisory Board - the current advisory body for community housing in NSW.
- CHSAC Community Housing State Advisory Committee - advisory committee established as part of the CHP funding requirements – superseded by the CHAB.
- DOH Department of Housing.
- DUAP Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.
- FHA NSW Federation of Housing Associations.
- NCOSS NSW Council of Social Service.
- OCH Office of Community Housing - agency within DUAP that administers community housing in NSW.
- OHP Office of Housing Policy - policy advice unit established in the Ministry of Housing, Planning and Urban Affairs, as a result of Mant's reforms, to provide independent advice to the Minister. Now the Housing Office in the Housing and Metropolitan Division of DUAP.
- PACTS Projects Association of CTS - former representative association for CTS workers.

YACS Department of Youth and Community Services - the name of the community services department under the Wran and Unsworth Governments, it became Family and Community Services (FACS) under Greiner and is now the Department of Community Services (DOCS).

## **Other**

CSHA Commonwealth State Housing Agreement - funding agreement between Commonwealth and State and Territory governments for housing - periodically renewed.

HATPIN Housing Associations Training Program in NSW - training package for community housing workers developed by the FHA.

NHS National Housing Strategy - a 2-year program, initiated by the Commonwealth Government in 1991, of research and policy papers culminating in a strategy document.

# R E P O R T

**NSW Federation of Housing Associations Inc**

**Level 3, 17 Randle Street, SURRY HILLS NSW 2010**

**Tel: (02) 9281 7144**

**Fax: (02) 9281 7603**

**<http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/nswfha>**