




Local Government and Housing in
Rural Communities: Tradition,
innovation and community

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The exception to the rule.....

- Our research reveals that most rural local governments do not have a proactive housing strategy
- They see this as a state and private sector responsibility
- Their role is to make sure that housing developments comply with statutory planning requirements, and nothing else
- Yet there are examples where councils are actively involved in housing provision
- A function of tradition, innovation and community values

Gwydir Shire: A smorgasbord of housing activity



SIX COUNCIL OWNED
HOUSES RENTED OUT



COUNCIL GUARANTOR
FOR MORTGAGES
THROUGH REG AUST
BANK



INFILL STRATEGY.
ENCOURAGES GRANNY
FLATS



OWNS AND RUNS AGED
CARE FACILITY ('NAROO'
36 BEDS. SUPPORTS
NFPO 'TOURIANDI' 28
BEDS)



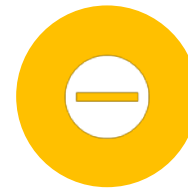
COLLECTS RENTS ON
STATE OWNED PUBLIC
HOUSING (WARIALDA,
INITIATIVE OF AMAL
YALLAROI SHIRE) AND
USES THIS REVENUE TO
MAINTAIN THESE
PROPERTIES



SUPPORTS COMMUNITY
INITIATIVES (RADIANCE
CLUB, NOW
INTERGENERATIONAL)
BY MAINTAINING
(PLUNKETT ST) UNITS
ACQUIRED THROUGH
FUND RAISING FOR WAR
WIDOWS



ADVISES CITIZENS ON
HOUSING OPTIONS



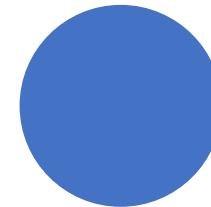
YET NO STATED POLICY!

'The Bingara Radiance Club was formed by Miss Helen Kingsley on the 14th May 1938 during WWII.

From what we understand the object of the club was to initially knit socks and cook fruit cakes to send to the men serving overseas. Later, from notes we were able to find, the Club raised funds from Housie Competitions, Catering at the show and later through a shop selling clothing. The funds were accumulated and when the opportunity was there the Radiance Club, with the help of a loan from Mrs Vera King, were able to purchase what was once a guesthouse. This present building still exists and has since been converted to seven self contained flats who need accommodation at a cost then can afford.'

(BRC Inc owns and rents two cottages, seven flats and a house to individuals and families on a per needs basis)

Tradition: The Bingara Radiance Club Inc.



Innovation: Stepping into the void



Works with State Government to ensure public housing stock maintained and made available



Cooperates with NFPO in the provision of aged care facilities

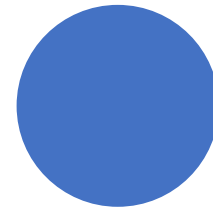
Community:
Providing
services in the
absence of
local provision

Council employees involved
in emergency call out and
maintenance

The Bingara Radiance Club is
an intergenerational
institution managed by
women

- Their response was typically ‘according to the State Government’s planning a regulatory requirements’
- Would a closer inspection reveal similar action as we observed in Gwydir Shire?
- Local governments often do things above and beyond the legal requirements
- They are a combination of local initiative and goodwill recognising immediate needs
- These actions are not always captured in corporate documentation

When we asked
neighbouring councils



The 'exception to the rule' shows us

That local governments can show leadership when it comes to the provision of fit-for-purpose local housing

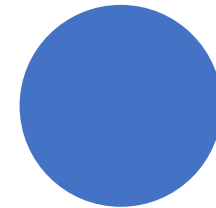
Tradition is an important factor: Have we done this before? Will our community support us? How good is organisational memory?

Innovation is recognising and responding to local needs. It does not have to be unique to local government but novel to each council

Community will determine the needs and priorities. Council plays a leadership role in bringing attention to housing needs across the community

- First, agree to making such a commitment
- Second, undertake the research required to understand housing needs across your community, now and into the future
- Third, look at this data/information periodically
- Fourth, develop priorities to address the most critical needs
- Fifth, inform and work with state and the Federal governments such that they are aware of the housing situation across your community and that the Council is taking a leadership role.
- An example

Developing your Council's Housing Policy and Strategy



HOUSING BENCHMARK

SUNSHINE COAST 2017

INDICATORS
Data as of June 2016

Population and age group



Total
303,389



18%
Population
under 15 years
(53,382)



62%
15 - 65
years
(181,091)



20%
Over 65
years
(59,902)

Dwelling Type



Total
129,978



68%
Separate
house
(90,753)



17.4%
1- 2 storeys*
(22,560)



9.7%
3 and above
storeys
(12,560)

Residential Densities (dwellings/hectare)



Lowest density
0.1
Maroochy
and Caloundra
Hinterland



Highest density
12.5
Mooloolaba
/ Alexandra
Headland

Vacancy rate (rental properties)



1.5%
Average proportion
of rental properties
available

*excluding separate houses

Household type

Total



29.5%

Couples
without children
(34,330)



27%

Couples
with children
(31,419)



21.9%

Lone
persons
(25,480)



10.3%

One parent
families
(11,972)



3.8%

Group
households
(4,464)

116,408
Households

Number of bedrooms



21%

2 or less bedrooms



37%

3 bedrooms



35%

4 or more bedrooms

Housing tenure



32.2%

Owned outright
(37,462)



31%

Owned with a mortgage
(36,124)



28.1%

Renting (total)
(32,687)



2.3%

Renting (social housing)
(2,647)

Dwelling purchase costs



Houses

\$520,000

(median)



Units

\$365,000

(median)

Dwellings Occupied



89.3%

Occupancy rate

Social housing



2%

Proportion of all housing
(2,424)



68%

Two or less bedrooms
(1,646)



32%

Three or more bedrooms
(778)

Income



\$1,267

Median weekly household income

Housing stress



13%

Owners with a mortgage



35%

Renters

Aged housing

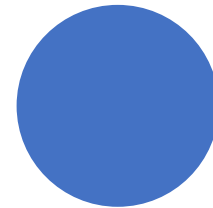


83 places /1,000 people over 70 yrs+

Australian target
86 places / 1,000 people

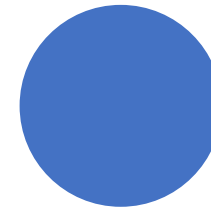
- Each council will have unique needs, however
- There will be common themes
- Which councils across Australia do you benchmark with?
- What can we learn from councils with similar demographics, economies to ours?

Similarities and differences



- LG Acts do not preclude local governments from taking initiative in relation to the various possibilities around local housing
- In fact, the comprehensive changes to all Australian Local Government Acts through the 90s enabled LGs to provide services relevant to their communities when such services were absent
- Leadership recognises local housing needs, works to understand them more deeply and applies initiative to address these needs
- Gwydir is one such council: the exception to the rule
- Sunshine Coast Council shows the way with its Environment and Liveability Strategy, with housing needs underpinned by its housing benchmark study

Legislation and Leadership



For further information

- Local Government and Housing in Australia for the 21stC web site <https://localgovernmentandhousing.com/>
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