

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

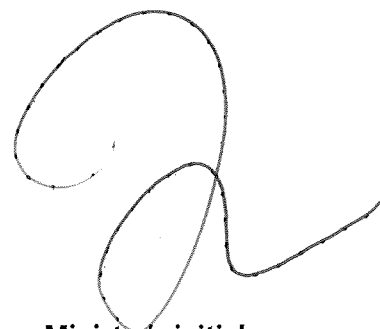
C2. Further to the response provided to The Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC as part of Questions Prior to Budget Estimates (Question Pettitt 2) in relation to spot purchasing of properties which noted in the 2021-22 financial year (as at 31 May 2022) that 233 properties had been settled and a further 53 were under contract:

How many of these spot purchased properties are now tenanted, and how many are currently vacant?

Answer

As of 30 June 2022, a total of 282 acquisitions reached settlement with an additional seven acquisitions contracted in the 2021-22 financial year. Settlements for these seven contracted acquisitions have been delayed until July 2022, at the request of the seller.

Of the settled Spot Purchase acquisitions, a total of 123 properties have been occupied by 395 people from the public housing waiting list, and 159 properties are currently undergoing pre-occupation maintenance and refurbishment work. A small number of properties are phasing out of current private leasing arrangements before this maintenance occurs.



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C3.

- a) What is the total amount of funding applied for in this grant round (2021-22) for the local government partnership fund for homelessness?
- b) How many of the 11 applicants were successful?
- c) What is the amount of funding that was allocated to those applicants?
- d) When will the local government partnership fund successful applicants be announced?

Answer

(a-d)

Eleven Local Governments and partner organisations applied for the Local Government Partnership Fund totalling \$1.3 million worth in applications. Two local governments were successful receiving a total of almost \$280,000 which were announced on the 29th of June.

The State Government's focus is on the Housing First approach, ensuring that rough sleepers are provided with suitable accommodation matched with appropriate support services to help sustain their tenancies. Both successful grant applicants provided outreach services in line with the Housing First approach. The Local Government Partnership Fund will be reviewed in the future.


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C17. How many extra crisis beds have been delivered since the announcement of the very large spend on housing and homelessness in the last budget and in this one? How many of these extra crisis beds are in the metropolitan?

Answer

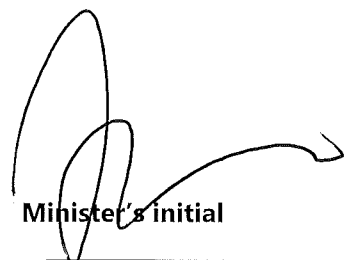
The State Government's focus is on the Housing First approach, providing rough sleepers with accommodation and appropriate support services to ensure they sustain their tenancies.

Since 1 July 2021, three additional homelessness accommodation services have been delivered in the Perth metropolitan area. This represents an additional capacity to accommodate up to 102 individuals. This includes the addition of new low-barrier evidence-based homelessness services, offering culturally supportive accommodation for some of the most chronic rough sleepers.

As part of homelessness service agreements, brokerage is provided to service providers that can be used to appropriately help individuals, including the provision of crisis accommodation where needed.

Additionally, the State Government has committed to a number of initiatives that will increase capacity and diversify accommodation and housing options across the state:

- \$73.5 million for the development of two Common Ground facilities in East Perth and Mandurah, delivering up to 162 new purpose-built, supportive housing units for adults who have experienced chronic homelessness or are low income earners. These projects are expected to be completed in 2024.
- \$65 million to develop three new Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation facilities in Perth, Geraldton and Kununurra. Each facility is being designed to accommodate up to 100 guests at a time.
- In addition, the capacity at two women's refuges in metropolitan Perth was expanded to provide an additional 12 units to accommodate women escaping for family and domestic violence, with or without children.



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C19. Can I get the achievements of SHERP, and does that program have an end date?

Answer

On 7 June 2020, the State Government announced the \$319 million Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP) is focussed on delivering critical maintenance and refurbishments for properties across Western Australia

The SHERP achievements as at 31 May 2022:

- \$38.9 million in grants have been approved for nine community housing organisations and local governments to deliver 173 new social housing dwellings.
- \$57.5 million in grants approved for 47 community housing organisations to refurbish more than 800 existing social housing dwellings.
- \$8.18 million in grants have been approved for three organisations to deliver maintenance projects across four remote Aboriginal communities.
- 44 grants worth \$800,000 to the community housing sector for regional maintenance.
- 58 new public housing dwellings at various stages of contract, construction and completion.
- Refurbishments on 906 public housing dwellings, 413 of which are complete.
- Maintenance on 4,654 regional public housing dwellings, of which, 4289 are complete.

Through the SHERP program, \$111.4 million has been expended on financial year 2021/22 to 31 May with a further \$112.5 million budgeted for financial year 2022/23.

The SHERP program is currently budgeted to complete by 30 June 2024.



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C20. I refer to page 334. Regarding the machinery-of-government changes of commercial land development functions as they were transferred to Development WA.

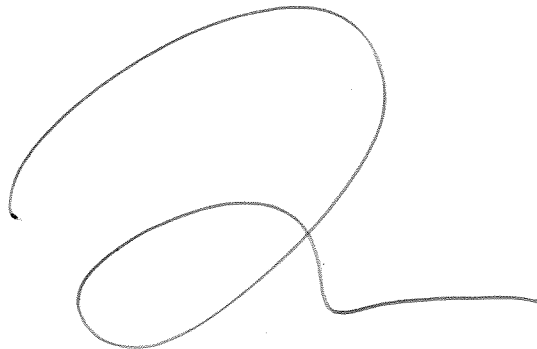
Since the machinery-of-government reforms have been implemented, how many hectares of englobo land formerly held by the Housing Authority have been transferred to Development WA?

Answer

C20.

As of 30 June 2022, of the 1,812 hectares of land transferred or in the process of being transferred to Development WA, a total of 1,717 hectares is considered to be englobo land.

Since the Machinery of Government changes, DevelopmentWA has been tasked with the land development and commercial aspects of housing delivery while the Department of Communities retains social housing and non-commercial functions in housing.

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C21. Please provide the number, by year, of shared equity dwellings that have been able to be released into the marketplace?

Answer

In partnership with the state-owned lender Keystart, the Department of Communities offers shared equity loans, with the state offering to take a stake of up to 30 per cent in newly-built homes and off-the-plan properties. The Opening Doors program remains open for the promotion of new quality, affordable homes across the State. Homes are listed on the Opening Doors website as soon as they become available for sale.

Due to market conditions and extensive building bonus grants from both State and Federal governments to incentivise new builds and following the record \$875 million housing investment in the 2021/22 State Budget, the State Government's main focus has shifted to the delivery of social housing.

The Department of Communities has released 455 Shared Equity loans through the Opening Doors Program in the last six financial years to 30 April 2022.

Financial Year	Shared Ownership Loans under the Opening Doors program
2017-18	213
2018-19	110
2019-20	67
2020-21	36
2021-22 (as at 30 April 2022)	29
Total	455


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C24. Does the Government have any development plans for Davis Park? Why is the Government acquiring more land if you are already not building on the land that is currently owned and vacant?

Answer

The Davis Park Structure Plan supports greater density over Davis Park with a focus on four sub-precincts, defined as Mixed Use; Innovation; Transition and Lefroy Precincts. The total yield is estimated to be between 550-850 units.

The Department of Communities is currently working with DevelopmentWA on the future timing, staging and redevelopment plans for the Davis Park precinct including the adjacent TAFE site.

The Western Australian housing market continues to experience significant pressure and the Government is currently focussed on ensuring an adequate supply of social housing availability. Significant medium density developments are longer term prospects given current market conditions.

Land acquisition is required across the state to replenish Communities' land bank, especially in locations where there is high demand. Land acquisition is critical to building Communities' future social housing pipeline.


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C30. On page 528, there is an explanation of significant movements. Item 3 talks about the public housing waitlist and it mentions a recent increase to income limits that will add numbers to the waitlist, and ask:

Has any modelling been done on how many people currently on the waitlist would become ineligible?

Can I ask for Public Housing Waitlist numbers to the end of May, or even June to date if that is possible?

Answer

The increase in the income eligibility limit for social housing in March 2022 ensured that people whose sole income source was a statutory payment would continue to remain eligible for housing assistance

No people on the public housing waitlist became ineligible as a result of this policy. The purpose of increasing the income eligibility limit was to ensure that people would remain eligible for social housing.

As at 31 May 2022, there were 18,936 applications on the public housing waiting.


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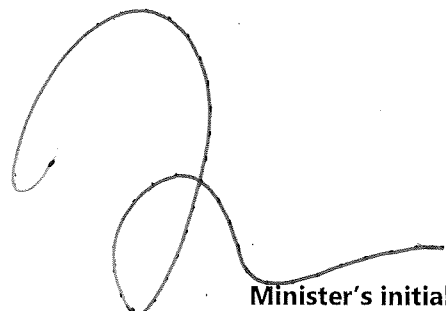
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C32. Page 519, how many people had been housed through the North West Aboriginal housing fund?

Answer

As at 30 June 2022, 107 Aboriginal families have been housed through North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund initiatives. Of which, four have subsequently progressed to home ownership.



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