

Community Housing Programs and Council's Affordable Housing Project – 28th august 2006.

Welcome to the official opening of the Community Housing and Anglicare North Coast, Urara Street Yamba 7 unit project. I especially welcome Ms Maura Bowland, Executive Director of the Office of Community Housing, NSW and Mr Wayne Johnson, Executive Director of Anglicare North Coast.

I acknowledge the Yaegl people as the traditional custodians of these lands and bring you greetings from Clarence Valley Council.

Today's event has presented a good opportunity to learn more of the work of Office Community Housing and of Anglicare, in terms of their provision of community housing. Today is an important occasion as more community housing becomes available our people and a much needed community facility becomes a reality. Council congratulates Anglicare upon being chosen to manage these new units.

Council notes that Wayne Johnson of Anglicare is participating on Council's Social Planning Committee and that Estelle Graham the Anglicare Manager of Community Housing Programs also serves on the Council's Affordable Housing Steering Committee. Council values each of their contributions.

Clarence Valley Council has a clear focus on social enhancements for the Valley's citizens and currently is preparing new Clarence Valley Social Plan. Council is also very committed to a new affordable housing project of three year's duration.

Ms Naydene Beaver commenced as Council's Community Development Officer, Affordable Housing in November 2005. Her position has significant subsidy support from the Department of Community Services.

Naydene has been researching housing needs in the Clarence Valley and affordable housing across NSW. She also manages the Community Housing villas at Wooli for Council and the Department of Housing and is reviewing the management of the villas and overseeing the maintenance and upgrade of the units. A report to Council later this year will address future management of those villas.

Clarence Valley Council has established an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee which will guide the development of an affordable housing

strategy for the Clarence Valley. My hope is that the strategy will identify best practice models and options to expand the stock of affordable housing in our valley.

In my view some of the key overarching objectives of an affordable housing strategy will need to include:-

1. community wellbeing
2. providing appropriate housing,
3. promoting affordability
4. providing diversity and choice
5. contributing to sustainability and quality of life,
6. encouraging adaptable and accessible housing

Right across our Northern Rivers region there are constant calls for more affordable housing making it a major issue for our region. Clarence Valley Council looks forward to engaging much more in the future with the Office Community Housing and with Anglicare to work in partnership for affordable housing provision. Such a partnership has great potential to reap benefits for disadvantaged people in our valley.

Ian Tiley
Mayor
Clarence Valley Council
28th August 2006