

HOMESWEST HOUSING, KALGOORLIE, ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

**675. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Housing and Works:**

I refer to antisocial behaviour in the precincts surrounding empty Homeswest housing in Kalgoorlie.

- (1) Has the minister received complaints from Susan Vidot of 26 Phoenix Place, Adeline, Kalgoorlie about antisocial behaviour in the adjoining Homeswest properties?
- (2) When will the minister's office respond to the complaints?
- (3) In relation to Homeswest properties 22, 28 and 30 Phoenix Place, Adeline, Kalgoorlie, when does the department hope to have each of these properties returned to the tenancy market?
- (4) How long have 28 and 30 Phoenix Place, Adeline, Kalgoorlie been boarded up and for what reasons were these actions taken?
- (5) Does the minister concur that leaving properties uninhabited leads to anti-social behaviour?
- (6) If so, is the minister proposing to curtail this practice?

**Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:**

- (1) As at 11.00 am on 11 March 2003 a check of records indicated no written correspondence had been received from Ms Susan Vidot. Telephone contact has been made by Ms Vidot when comments were raised regarding properties in Phoenix Place, Adeline that belong to the Department of Housing and Works.

- (2) Telephone contact was made with Susan Vidot on Monday, 10 March 2003 and a response was provided to Susan Vidot at this time.

- (3) Refurbishment at 22 Phoenix Place is currently under way. Failing unforeseen interruptions, the place is approximately two weeks away from being released to the marketplace for sale.

In approximately two weeks, contractors will commence refurbishment work at 28 Phoenix Place. This is expected to take around four weeks to complete.

A scope of works is currently being formulated for 30 Phoenix Place, which previously suffered fire damage. Following repair work, the property will be marketed for sale. It is anticipated that the length of time will be eight weeks.

- (4) Since 11 December 2002, 28 Phoenix Place has been boarded up. Since 8 November 2002, 30 Phoenix Place has been boarded up. Boarding up has been carried out in an effort to prevent vandalism.

- (5) I accept that vacant properties attract unwanted elements and, therefore, may result in an increase in anti-social behaviour. This was one of the key factors in the establishment of the department's new living program, which has recently been reinvigorated as a result my own insistence following representations from local member, John Bowler.

Historically, areas of high public housing presence, such as Adeline, Lockridge and Kwinana, have experienced problems with high vacancy levels, lack of privacy, high crime and vandalism rates, poor property values, restricted capital growth and low demand. Through the new living program, the Government is reducing public housing presence and concentration in areas through the refurbishment and sale of public housing properties increasing home ownership, enhancing community infrastructure and improving the appearance of the streetscapes and parks.

As the member is hopefully aware, the new living program has been and is continuing to prove very successful in creating sustainable revitalised communities. Other new living projects have experienced reduced crime rates and increased property values, and are now very desirable to public housing tenants and private purchasers.

As part of the refurbishment process, the department will tender refurbishment contracts over several properties to achieve economies of scale. To achieve this it is necessary for the department to wait for several properties to become vacant prior to the letting of the contract. However, I accept that the department must ensure that the length of time a property remains vacant must be kept to a minimum.

- (6) The department is making every endeavour to improve the standard of living for residents in Adeline and will be continuing the Government's commitment of providing a long-term revitalisation strategy for the suburb.

In brief, this project in the area now known as Golden Grove should be one in which all local members take some pride and pleasure. It is a deliberate strategy that comes at a considerable expense to the Department of Housing and Works. Despite the department being under financial pressures as a result of the federal Government's policies to limit funding, there has been a significant lift in the amenity in that area. The department has my strong support. The dedicated effort of its officers has seen that area move systematically.

Last Wednesday, John Bowler and I had the opportunity to launch the Golden Grove program, which will see street after street converted into a desirable neighbourhood and a location for all people in that proximity to enjoy.

Hon Peter Foss: Who had that idea?

Hon TOM STEPHENS: Unfortunately, members opposite had the idea but they did nothing about it. They knew what had to be done in that particular area while they were in government but they did nothing about it.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! We have got to the stage of interjection upon interjection.