

Housing shortages

Shire 'toolkit' to address land development options

THE Collie Shire is preparing a multifaceted "toolkit" for residential landowners as it continues to tackle unprecedented housing shortages.

Approved new home-builds have stagnated amid soaring demand in recent years, and further housing strain looms as Collie continues to navigate the Just Transition process.

Shire statistics show approved new dwellings have hovered at around 20 a year over the last five years.

Ten new dwellings were given the go ahead in 2019, 25 in 2020, 21 in 2021, 21 in 2022 and 22 in 2023.

The market has struggled to keep pace with demand, with steep price increases no deterrent for eager buyers, and rental properties few and far between.

The situation is not expected to ease in the foreseeable future, and Collie will need to accommodate an anticipated influx of workers associated with new Just Transition industries.

Shire chief executive officer Stuart Devenish said the shire's toolkit will provide landowners information on how to develop and redevelop existing residential land holdings.

"The local housing market is confronted by constrained land and accommodation supply alongside increasing demand," Mr Devenish said.

"The toolkit will address issues ranging from housing design through to financial and legal arrangements for property owners."

The initiative will be focused on renewing ageing housing, and encouraging development of high-amenity, low-maintenance dwellings, Mr Devenish added.

Laneway infill housing is viewed as

one such means of facilitating affordable development, potentially fast-tracking new housing to market.

"We are aware that both rental accommodation and properties for sale are scarce in Collie at the moment, and have been for some time, so without an increase in new builds the situation most probably won't change," shire president

Ian Miffing said. "Ideally it would be good if new housing estates could be developed.

"But this will always depend upon demand and the commercial will of developers to invest."

Cr Miffing said council will continue to develop planning strategies aimed at making Collie "housing ready", but it is

ultimately up to private enterprise to make investment decisions.

"Council officers do interact with relevant State Government departments, and have had discussions with prospective industry developers regarding the housing issue, so there is always a two-way flow of information," Cr Miffing said.



Dragon show

Amahlia Singleton got up close with a Chinese dragon during Labour Day festivities in Central Park on Sunday.

For more photos see pages 10 and 11.

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