

Bega District News

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Affordable housing on way

A HOUSING revolution will be ready for local residents in the near future.

It is expected that before Christmas, 10 households will be moving into affordable rental homes at Bega Eco Neighbourhood Developers (BEND) off East Street in Bega.

The houses have been thoughtfully designed and will be energy and water efficient, cheap to run and north-facing looking over the Bega River flats.

The building program is staggered with four of the 10 not-for-profit rental houses nearing lock up and the others under construction.

Jenny Spinks, a formation member of BEND, said "tenants will have all the benefits of living at BEND".

"Not only energy efficient homes with composting toilets but also access to a neighbourhood house with laundry, a centralised grey water treatment system, agricultural land on the river flats, and access to the Bega River anabranch in the Bend conservation area," she said.

Tenants will be members of Bega Eco Sustainable Tenancies, the housing management group, and will be able to participate in management decisions about the housing, including tenant selection.

They'll also be invited to participate in decisions about the whole eco neighbourhood alongside the residents of the other 20 households at BEND.

There are still vacancies for people interested in renting at BEND.

"Application forms are available on line at www.bend.org.au or people can contact Heidi at 6494 5388," Ms Spinks said.



• Jenny Spinks (left) BEND member with prospective community housing tenants, Luke Sedatos, Heidi Brennan and Michael Warner.

"Tenancies are available in three income brackets with an even spread across all three.

"Very low and low income tenants will need to apply for a T number from the Department of Housing in order to be eligible and their rent will be 25 per cent of their income, 100 per cent of Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

"Moderate income tenants will be paying 75 per cent of the market rent," she said.

Community Housing Ltd (CHL) is building the houses at BEND and will be the long

term property and tenancy managers.

Successful in securing State and Federal funding for this project, managing director for CHL Steve Bevington said "we are very proud to be the partners for this project".

"These will be quality-built socially and environmentally sustainable affordable homes that offer a wonderful new living environment to the tenants," he said.

"These homes will be a long term resource for the Bega community that will add to the level of much-needed afford-

able housing stock in the area.

"We look forward to many more of these partnerships in the future."

One of the 10 homes will be owned by BEND Tenancies and finance for this comes from the 10 per cent equity the not-for-profit local developer, Bega Eco Neighbourhood Developers Inc, has committed to its partnership with CHL.

"We have raised \$185,000 of the 10 per cent equity and we have \$70,000 to go," Ms Spinks said.

"Tax deductible donations

can be made either on line at www.bend.org.au or by depositing into the National Australia Bank, BEND Housing Fund, BSB 082-439, Account No: 81-082-3199; or by sending a cheque to the BEND Housing Fund, PO Box 715, Bega 2550.

"Please provide your contact details if you require a receipt," she said.

Ms Spinks said she is excited to be reaching completion of the ecological and socially sustainable Bend eco neighbourhood project.

"It has only been possible

because of many hours of voluntary work, thousands of individually donated dollars, information and skills generously shared by many local professional people and other support from the Bega community and community organisations," she said.

"BEND is already attracting people to Bega and broadening the region's economic base.

"We are very proud to be able to provide a socially inclusive model of ecologically sustainable living - perhaps the only one of its kind in the world."

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