
PENSIONER HOUSING POLICY

Version 4 Adopted on 9 December 2015 by Council Resolution 1215/012

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines on eligibility for and management of pensioner housing.

2. REPEAL

This policy repeals all previous policies relating to pensioner housing.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all pensioner housing owned or managed by Council.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The administration of this policy is the responsibility of the Manager Economic and Community Development.

5. DEFINITIONS

Council means Carpentaria Shire Council.

6. POLICY

6.1 Eligible persons

6.1.1 The provision of pensioner housing will generally be limited to aged pensioners.

6.1.2 Council may by resolution approve other persons to occupy Council's pensioner housing on a short, medium or long term basis.

6.2 Criteria for eligibility

6.2.1 Persons must be on a full or part aged pension to be eligible for housing.

6.2.2 Other persons approved by Council to occupy pensioner housing must have an income the equivalent of no more than the full aged pension.

6.2.3 All eligible persons must be a current Shire resident continuously for at least the last five years.

- 6.2.4 Any person who owns their own home, in the Shire or elsewhere, is ineligible for pensioner housing.
- 6.2.5 Applicants for pensioner housing must in their application list all assets owned by them, together with the monetary value of the assets. Council will at its absolute discretion consider the value and type of assets when deciding eligibility.
- 6.2.6 All applicants must state their current living arrangements when applying for pensioner housing. Council will at its absolute discretion consider the suitability of current living arrangements when deciding eligibility.
- 6.2.7 All applicants must provide proof of identity to the satisfaction of Council when applying for pensioner housing.
- 6.2.8 All applicants must prove to Council's satisfaction that they have the ability to sustain a successful tenancy. Council will consider factors including but not limited to the ability to:
- (a) pay rent;
 - (b) look after property;
 - (c) live independently (with or without support);
 - (d) live harmoniously with their neighbours;
 - (e) live in the property on an ongoing basis.
- 6.2.9 Persons living in pensioner housing will generally not have dependants living with them. Council may use its discretion to approve living arrangements with dependants in advance and in writing.
- 6.2.10 Successful applicants may have their spouse, partner or carer reside with them in pensioner housing. All such persons must be listed in the application form for housing.
- 6.2.11 Notwithstanding the above clauses, Council retains the right to provide special dispensation in relation to eligibility criteria. Special dispensation may only be granted by resolution of Council.

6.3 Rent

- 6.3.1 Council aims to provide affordable housing for the aged at levels below market rent.
- 6.3.2 Council will adopt the fortnightly rental amount in its annual budget.
- 6.3.3 Rent will be reviewed by Council annually.
- 6.3.4 Rent will be payable fortnightly in advance.
- 6.3.5 No bond is payable by aged pensioners.

- 6.3.6 Other tenants granted dispensation by Council to occupy pensioner housing may be charged a bond equivalent to up to four weeks rent.

6.4 Allocation of housing and vacancies

- 6.4.1 Pensioner housing will be allocated by resolution of Council.
- 6.4.2 Council may delegate the power to a committee of Council to make recommendations on the allocation of housing to Council.
- 6.4.3 To avoid any doubt, housing is not considered vacant or available for allocation in circumstances where one joint tenant no longer resides in the property for whatever reason. The remaining joint tenant has the continued right to occupy the house.

6.5 Waiting List

- 6.5.1 Council will establish and maintain a waiting list of persons seeking pensioner housing.
- 6.5.2 Council will prioritise applicants on the waiting list according to the criteria contained in this Policy.
- 6.4.3 Council will consider all applicants on the waiting list when a vacancy arises. Council will also advertise any vacancy publicly through its website and/or public notices.
- 6.5.4 An applicant on the waiting list who refuses an offer of housing may be placed at the bottom of the list.
- 6.5.5 Applicants may apply for a specific town – Normanton or Karumba. An applicant will not be disadvantaged if they refuse the offer of a house at a town for which they have not applied.

6.6 General tenancy requirements

- 6.6.1 Tenants are permitted to have pets in pensioner housing with the prior written approval of Council.
- 6.6.2 Council may require a tenant to remove a pet from pensioner housing at Council's absolute discretion. Reasons for the requirement to remove a pet may include that the pet is causing a nuisance, is not being kept to acceptable standards, or is causing fear or damage to neighbouring tenants or their property.
- 6.6.3 The tenant is responsible for all charges for all utilities, including electricity, excess water, gas and telephone.
- 6.6.4 Council will undertake reasonable maintenance in yards on an annual basis.
- 6.6.5 Tenants may modify the premises or add fixtures, such as television antennas or satellite dishes or small garden sheds, at their own cost with the prior written approval of Council. All works must be completed in a professional and workmanlike manner to the satisfaction of Council.

- 6.6.6 All housing will generally be inspected by Council officers on a three monthly basis.
- 6.6.7 Any keys or locks damaged, lost, misplaced or stolen will be replaced by Council at the tenant's cost. The cost will be evidenced by a certificate signed by the Chief Executive Officer and is recoverable as a debt.
- 6.6.8 Tenants must comply with all relevant laws, including those related to water restrictions.
- 6.6.9 No smoking is permitted by any person inside pensioner housing. The tenant will be responsible for the costs of cleaning where smoking has occurred inside premises.
- 6.6.10 All applicants and prospective tenants are subject to reference checks prior to the allocation of pensioner housing.
- 6.6.11 Tenants must immediately notify Council in writing of any changes in circumstances that may affect their eligibility for pensioner housing.
- 6.6.12 Tenants must be in continuous occupation of pensioner housing unless Council approval is obtained for exceptional circumstances.

7. NEXT REVIEW

Two years from the date of adoption.

8. RESOLUTION

Adopted by Council on the 9 December 2015 by Council Resolution 1215/012.



Bob Owen
Chief Executive Officer

09/12/2015
Date