



Keep Noosa Home

Noosa Shire is in the midst of a housing crisis which is having a detrimental impact on the provision of services, local businesses and the resilience of our community. Lack of accommodation, coupled with increasing travel costs has made it extremely difficult for local workers and long-term residents to secure affordable accommodation.

Local businesses and essential services are struggling to attract and retain staff. This has an impact on the levels of services available and desirability of Noosa as a place to live and visit.

Many people are starting to ask how they can be part of the solution and help improve local housing choice. While Noosa Council is working with housing providers and State Government on some longer-term strategies, this guide outlines a few ideas you might contemplate right now to help Keep Noosa Home and ensure we remain a healthy, inclusive community.

Consider taking in a lodger or boarder

Many residents of Noosa Shire live alone or are in a household of just two people. With over $\frac{3}{4}$ of our homes having three or more bedrooms, there's a lot of potential capacity within our existing homes, without the need for further development.

For generations, taking in a lodger or boarder was common practice and is still an effective way to provide accommodation, share housing costs and potentially make new friends.

There are various ways you can advertise an

available room for rent online, local notice boards or the newspaper. However, if you find it a bit daunting there are organisations that can assist in helping you find a suitable lodger / boarder.

Your local church, community organisations, business chambers, Tourism Noosa can probably all identify or even recommend local workers or retirees in need of rental accommodation.

You might have questions about how receiving rent would affect your pension or whether you'll have to pay tax on the income. These are very reasonable questions to discuss with your tax accountant or with Centrelink.

The treatment of income for social security purposes depends for instance on the boarding situation, whether you are also providing your lodger with meals, whether you own your home outright or have mortgage payments etc. This is spelt out in the Federal Government's Social Security Guide to Income from boarder and lodgers available at <https://guides.dss.gov.au/social-security-guide/4/3/8/40>

Sometimes lodgers will pay household bills, help with repairs and maintenance, provide transport, buy groceries or run errands, etc. in exchange for accommodation.

The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 does not apply to residential tenancy agreements for boarders or lodgers. However, you can still ask a lodger / boarder to pay a bond, and where taken, the bond must be lodged with the RTA.

Note that letting out more than 5 rooms would be considered a commercial venture and shouldn't be embarked on without professional planning and financial advice.

Offer Homestay accommodation to students

Local educational establishments are frequently looking for homestay accommodation for students who are in Noosa for a temporary period. Usually this includes providing breakfast and evening meals for the students, and occasionally transport, depending on their age.

Further information is available directly from the educational establishments.

Rent out your granny flat or studio

You might prefer not to share your own living space with somebody but have an approved self-contained flat or studio, either attached to the house or somewhere else on the site.

In town planning terms this would be considered a "secondary dwelling" and Council has the following factsheet specifically on the rules around these, and what sets them apart from a duplex. www.noosa.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/2367/fact-sheet-3-secondary-dwellings

It's not essential, but generally recommended that you and your tenant(s) enter into a residential



tenancy agreement, so both parties are protected by the Act.

Building and plumbing approvals would be necessary for a new secondary dwelling or studio, and it would incur infrastructure charges.

Accommodate a tiny home on your property

You may not have a habitable space to let out but a property large enough to safely accommodate somebody else's tiny house.

Council has the following factsheet specifically on the rules around tiny houses; when they are buildings and when they are considered caravans. www.noosa.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/4134/fact-sheet-26-tiny-homes

Somebody else's relocatable, manufactured dwelling or tiny house on wheels might offer a perfect arrangement for you if you have limited capital of your own to invest upfront.

Please note however there are rules around letting somebody "camp" in your yard (in a tent, RV or in their car). Essentially these rules are around sanitation and hygiene. As much as we want to provide a safe space, guests must have access to drinking water and bathroom facilities

and somewhere to appropriately dispose of their waste. You can't for example hook a guest up to your house power and garden hose and allow their greywater to run into the garden.

Offer a property to the permanent rental market

Many Noosa ratepayers have a holiday home or unit that is frequently vacant or let only to short term guests. These properties would make a much-appreciated home to a local family or individuals.

Not only do you become part of the solution, but there are also various savings including: reduced Council rates, less maintenance and upkeep, less management and advertising costs, reduced insurance, no cleaning and linen costs, guaranteed yearly income and your tenants pay the utility bills.

Given the tight rental market, you may also consider tenants who find it particularly hard to compete in the private market, such as young workers, people with a disability, students or pensioners.

There are opportunities to headlease at market value to Community Housing Providers, who carry the responsibility of the tenancy but through

government subsidises can offer more affordable tenancies.

The State Government has a program of head-leasing properties then accommodating residents that meet social housing eligibility.

www.chde.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/housing-investment/help-to-home

Consider letting out a house as rooming accommodation

Rooming accommodation is a form of rental tenancy where each resident only occupies part of the home as agreed, rather than the whole premises.

Rooming accommodation differs from a share house in that there are separate rental agreements for each tenant, not one combined agreement over the whole property. The tenants typically have no prior connection and may join the household at different stages.

Outside of their private room (sometimes with their own ensuite) the tenants share other rooms such as the kitchen, laundry, lounge room or outdoor living.

Small-scale rooming accommodation uses (no more than 5 bedrooms) do not require planning approval in the Low Density



Residential Zone. However, a building approval will be required to change the use of a dwelling to a boarding house.

Owners/operators need to ensure their rooming accommodation complies with building code requirements and plumbing legislation so accommodation for tenants is safe. For example, if an existing dwelling house is converted to rooming accommodation, additional fire safety requirements under the building code will apply.

There will need to be one on-site car parking space per 2 bedrooms and one extra if an odd number (e.g. 5 bedrooms would necessitate 3 car parking spaces).

Infrastructure charges will apply to rooming accommodation as per the Infrastructure Charges Resolution.

Useful resources

www.Flatmates.com.au is a listing site for those looking for shared homes or those looking for a flatmate, and you can advertise rooms to rent.

Facebook community notice boards and on-line classified sites such as “Gumtree” are useful sites to advertise for tenants or find locals looking for accommodation.

<https://bettertogetherhousing.com.au/> is a shared housing community facilitating shared living for women over 55.

A list of all Registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) is available through www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/service-industries-professionals/housing-accommodation/community/registration

The register includes many CHPs of varying size operating throughout Queensland, including our region. Coast2Bay Housing Group is the only Tier 1 CHP specifically based on the Sunshine Coast. www.coast2bay.com.au

