

## **W063 - Affordable Housing**

### **Construction of an 'Affordable' House**

Coordinator Ian Eilenberg judges the Regional Think Tank Meeting of W063 on Affordable Housing in Wellington on 10th December 1999 to have been a great success not least in the opportunity it provided to discuss various aspects of the organisation and future.

Ian reports further:

#### **Definition**

The item that took up most attention was to decide on a definition of what is 'Affordable Housing' - no resolution was reached but it was agreed that it really had no ONE definition but depended on a large range of issues.

These issues included: the country, the ethnicology of the people for whom the houses were aimed, cultural expectations, the economic situation and so forth.

It was also generally agreed that the term 'affordable' was too narrow. The better choice was considered to be 'affordable and sustainable' housing.

In this instance, with respect to the above, lower costs in any given situation and the use of relevant renewable resources in a sensible manner, were also considered very important.

Other discussions were on whether 'low rental' housing also fell within the definition.

The third factor that was thought to be necessary in the definition was that of 'desirable' in the context of the above parameters.

The discussion ended with an agreement that the whole issue requires a lot more discussion before the final definition - if it ever can - be finalised.

As well as the physical considerations there was other considerations - these included the political structure, the role of the United Nations, the individual countries and the States and local government roles.

#### **Communications**

It was agreed that the communications should be on two levels.

#### **E-Mail**

The first is to make the maximum use of the Onelist email system to generate two-way discussion - not just a static system.

The aim should be to make the email system dynamic and instantaneous.

#### **The Electronic Journal**

It was considered by those present that the electronic journal should have two definite sections. One to

publish fully refereed papers and to ensure that this process is as strenuous as for any other such journal.

The second section is to publish abstracts of other papers and also reports on various research work being done or other information on the topic that might be of interest to other people.

## **Demonstration House**

The Coordinator has given a preliminary notification of an extremely interesting development to come out of the Meeting and that is that John Gray and colleagues at the Victoria University of Wellington are undertaking a programme of constructing an 'affordable' house, which if all goes well will be unveiled at the CIB Congress in 2001.

In fact the method of construction will be such that the house can be erected and dismantled so that it can be transported to various locations in New Zealand.

Ian goes on:

'As this is a real project, it was suggested that John, or one of his team, put out a regular bulletin on the Onelist telling us his progress, his problems and his solutions to various problems that arise along the way.

The idea will be for YOU to reply to the - we hope - weekly emails - with suggestions and ideas for solving any problems they find and also perhaps to give some advice from work in your area.

I will supply more details shortly but I also envisage that other groups around the world might think - or be doing - similar work, that we can handle the same way.

I hope that this list can become INTERACTIVE and become a real, virtual (is that possible) forum for our members.'

Ian will welcome ideas on this and we shall report on the progress of the project as information is received.

