

# Maximising choice in where to live

## *An English perspective*

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# Purpose of this presentation

- To discuss ...
  - The background to the introduction of choice in an English context
  - How Choice Based Lettings work



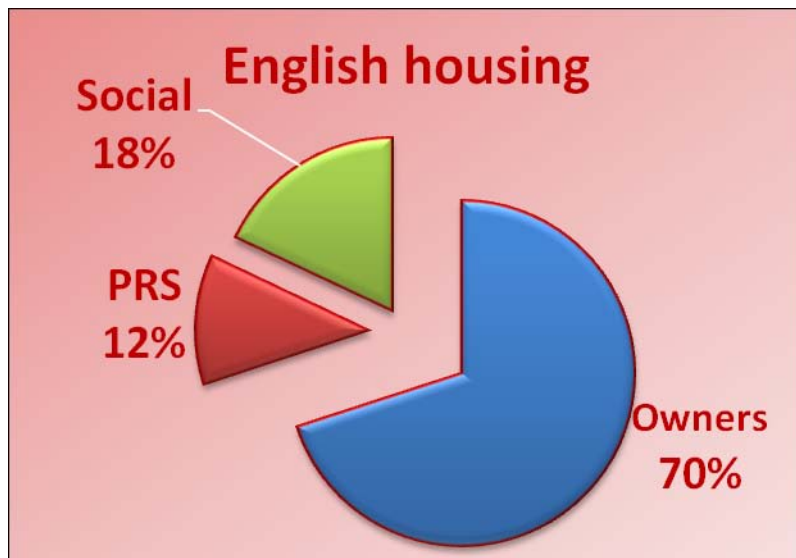
- To examine some key differences between Australia and England
  - Cultural?
  - Jurisdictional



# Housing Tenure



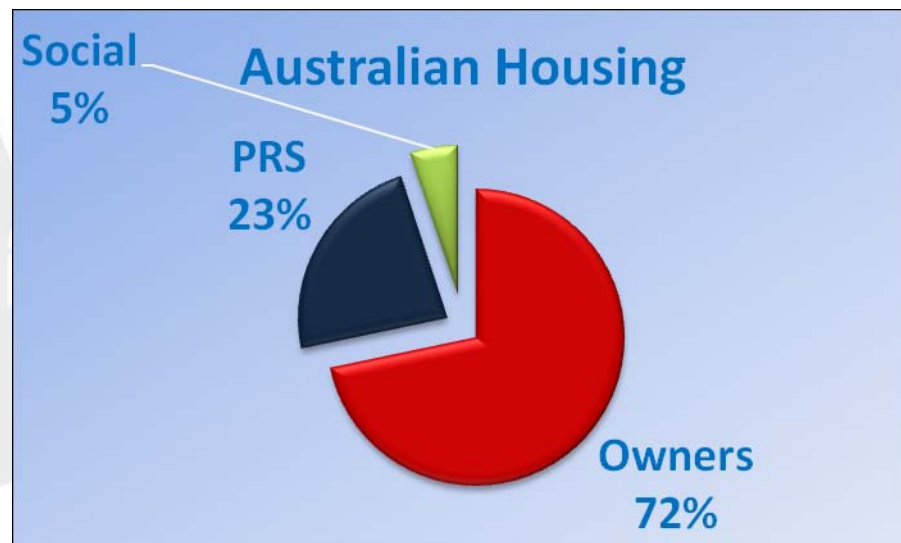
BROADLAND HOUSING



- Still significant social sector
- Largely amateur private rented sector
- Ownership – tenure of choice



- Home ownership dream
- Significant PRS
- Residual social sector
  - 80% public
  - 20% social



Meridian East Real People, Real Potential, Real Progress



business for neighbourhoods



- The impact of two world wars
  - Homes for heroes
  - The national health service

- Almost political consensus about housing need
- Just about public acceptance of social housing
  - “Nimby and Note”





# Principles behind customer choice



- Customer centred not landlord focussed
  - Active not passive recipient
- Active provision of information to the customer



- Support for vulnerable people
- Clear selection criteria
- Easy to use and open communication
- Viable for the landlord



# Key values behind choice

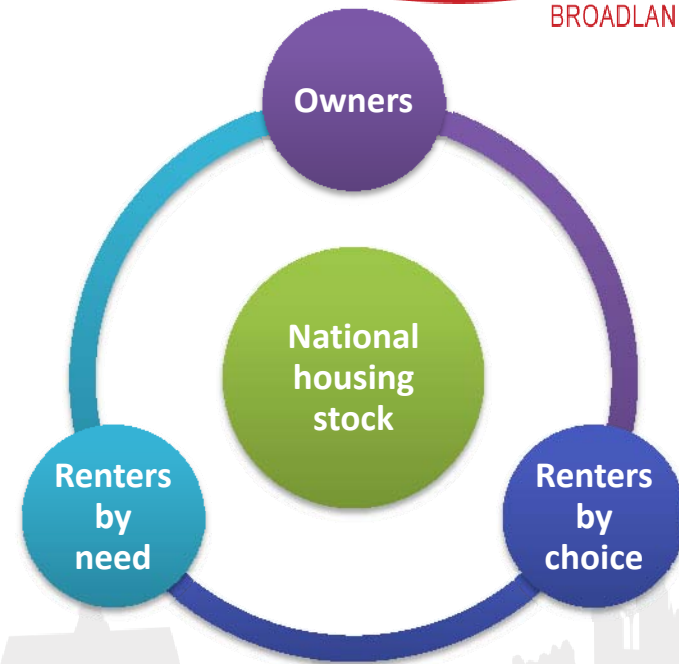
- Fairness
- Transparency
- Respectful
- Businesslike and professional



# Key jurisdictional differences



- 70% - 15% - 15% rule
- Undersupply risks ghettos of the poor and vulnerable



- A variable rent model
  - Business planning challenges
    - Private finance
    - Budgeting





# Ambitions for tenant involvement

- Good business sense!
  - Active participation and influence
  - The **MOST IMPORTANT** customer is the tenant not the government



- Regulatory requirements
  - The Tenant Services Authority
- Legislative requirements
  - CBL by April 2010



# So Choice Based Lettings?

- A CBL scheme is where a housing authority has adopted allocation policies and procedures which incorporate advertising*



What are  
Choice  
Based  
Lettings ?



- A system that allows applicants to apply for vacancies following advertising
- CBL was permitted by the Homelessness Act 2002



# How it works...

- Applicants register and are assessed
  - Gold, Silver, Bronze, low need
- Landlords advertise all their voids
- People “bid” using multi media
- The banding of all successful applicants is advertised too



# Benefits of the system



- **Choice** for customers
  - Location
  - Property type
- **Efficiency**
  - Reduced void times
  - Administrative processes

- End of low demand properties
- Building more sustainable communities based on people **WANTING** to live somewhere





# Potential adaptation

- Need to recognise the need for viability
- Potential banding based on income and need



- Properties ring fenced for different bands





# Domain wide solutions



BROADLAND HOUSING

- Need for a common one stop “waiting list”
  - Easy for the customer to access
  - Open and transparent



- Reducing the angst between public housing landlords and community associations
  - Poor perceptions



# Conclusions



- Increasing the tenants voice in their housing
  - Active not passive involvement
- Value based housing services

- Choice based lettings are “do-able” but recognise the local differences
  - Challenge the blockers?

