

# accord news

ISSUE 3- May 2010

## Leases double in April

There were 67 properties leased in April almost double the total number of Housing Accord properties to 137.

This increase in leasing was met with 44 new listings in the month on the Accord website, leaving a total of 331 remaining properties.

The average rental prices of the remaining unleased houses steadied in the month. Average prices went from \$439 at the end of February, to \$460 at the end of March and dipped to \$457 at the end of April.

Approximately 34 per cent of the vacant properties have rents of up to \$400 per week, 39 per cent are within the \$401-\$500 per week bracket, and the remaining 27 per cent are requesting more than \$500 per week.

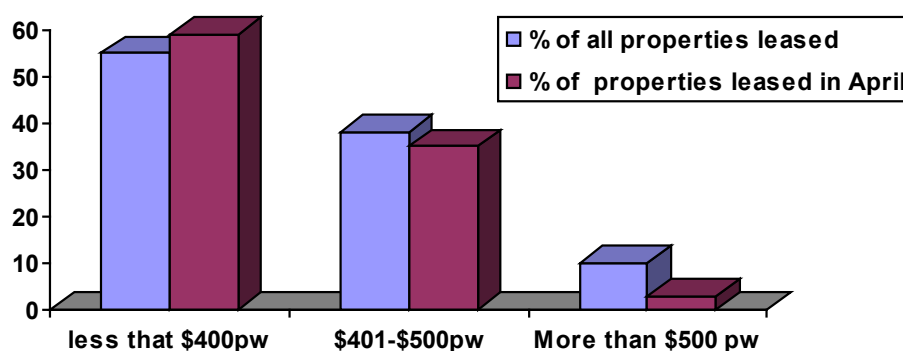
While most of the properties available are within the \$401-\$500 per week range, most that have been leased have been priced at less than \$400, and this trend continued in April.

This reinforced the feedback from the workforce that stated a preference for value for money.



That feedback from the workforce, coupled with the data from the Housing Accord website, backs up the comments from property managers. The evidence is that more interest is focussed on properties less than \$400, within locations that have cheaper rents or are better-quality homes at realistic prices.

There is noticeable slower movement or none at all in some areas on properties priced at more than \$500 per week. These properties are being leased when they are an executive-type accommodation or with exceptional views. In April these properties only accounted for 3 per cent of the total accommodation let.



### Our commitment to Housing Accord

All members of the Housing Accord have agreed to implement a strategy to meet the demands of accommodating the VDP workforce, while protecting the community interests of affordable housing in the municipality. This is achieved by:

- Ensuring long-term affordable rental accommodation for the resident Bass Coast community
- Rental payments not increasing by more than yearly CPI
- Sourcing accommodation for VDP workers from new residential and holiday accommodation
- Providing housing for the VDP workforce via a central coordination point
- Excluding options such as caravan parks, B&B and other tourism-type accommodation.
- Endeavouring to secure the best housing option for workers.

Aquasure and Theiss Degremont back this up through its policy that relevant allowances are only available to staff who have sourced Accord-listed accommodation.

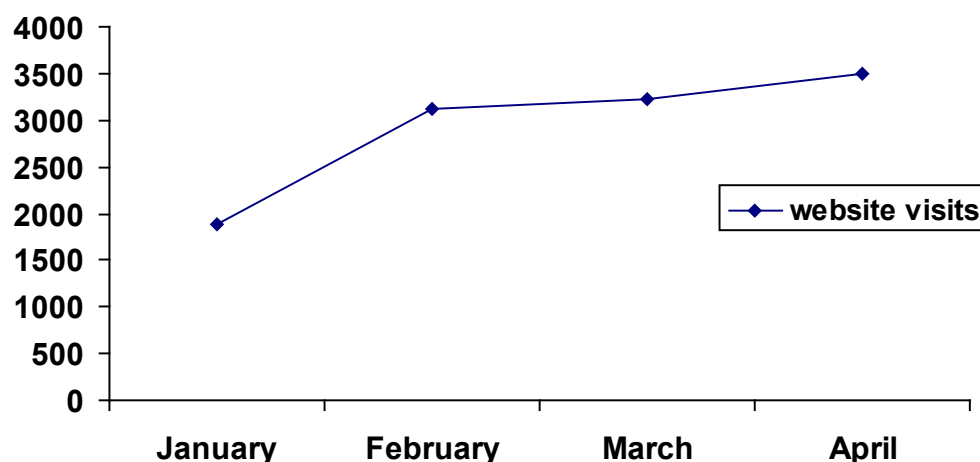
Members of the Housing Accord are encouraged to notify Bass Coast Shire Council of any problems relating to successfully meeting the objectives of the VDP Housing Accord.

## April Accord website listings up

In April saw increased traffic to the desalination housing Accord website. This website contains all the available rentals for the workforce.

There were 3500 visits to the website from around Australia, with most coming from Victoria. This steady increase in website traffic since the start of the year not only reflects growth in the size of workforce, but also in public knowledge of the Housing Accord, its purpose and operations.

Potential employees of the Victorian Desalination Project are being directed to the website by the company and their community liaison unit, trade unions, the shire council's website and local real estate agents.



The Bass Coast Visitor Centre, which is hosting the website and taking enquiries, described April as being busy.

Jeanette Little at the Visitor Centre said: "We have been busy with new Accord listings being sent through by the agents, as well as updating existing listings with new rate and description changes".

> Visit the housing accord website at [www.visitbasscoast.com/pages/vph](http://www.visitbasscoast.com/pages/vph)

### Want to register for the Accord?

If you haven't already registered to receive the Accord newsletter please fill in the following details and submit by fax 03 5671 2240 or post to PO Box 118, Wonthaggi, Vic 3995 or email [l.wilkinson@basscoast.vic.gov.au](mailto:l.wilkinson@basscoast.vic.gov.au). Thank you

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone/mobile:

## Assessing the impact on other Bass Coast housing

To assist the Bass Coast Shire Council in assessing the effectiveness of the Housing Accord and the impact of a workforce influx for the construction of the VDP, a three-phase study has been commissioned. Beverley Klinger and Associates has recently completed the first phase of the study which involved establishing a detailed picture of the current housing market in the municipality.

This report was delivered in December 2009 and it analysed information relating to rental housing, house and land prices, dwelling stock, and social housing prior to the commencement of VDP construction phase.

Stage two will occur midway during peak construction from October 2010 and March 2011 to monitor trends in those same areas.

Stage three will finish after construction ends in June 2012 and will look at the overall impact.

### Workforce projections

- January 2010: 200 on site
- March 2010: 500 on site
- November 2010 to July 2011: 1200 on site (peak)
- Numbers will taper off from July 2011 onwards

### Feedback ...

The 'Accord news' is a monthly e-bulletin. The deadline for the next edition is 3 June. Contributions by Accord members are welcome. Contact Luke Wilkinson on 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or [l.wilkinson@basscoast.vic.gov.au](mailto:l.wilkinson@basscoast.vic.gov.au)