

DUKES COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT - 2013

The Dukes County Regional Housing Authority is publically chartered and locally funded to assist the towns of Dukes County to increase community housing opportunities. The Housing Authority collaborates with town committees, island organizations, local businesses and concerned individuals to provide year-round rentals and rental assistance, homebuyer training and lottery support, waitlist management, monitoring assistance and advocacy and planning for new housing options and support.

The Housing Authority's current management of 71 units of rental housing on 12 properties in 5 towns is increasing with the addition of a 6 unit rental property purchased by the Trust in Vineyard Haven and 3 new units under construction at the Sepiessa Point property in West Tisbury. Additional rental properties are in active development in Tisbury, West Tisbury and Edgartown. The Housing Authority continues administration of West Tisbury's 44 Accessory Apartments; maintains a Rental Housing Waitlist numbering 245 applicants; and partners with other organizations that offer assistance with rent, utilities and apartment rehabilitation to Island renters and their landlords.

The Towns continue to utilize the Housing Authority to administer Rental Assistance funded through the Community Preservation Act and used by 80 working households island-wide who can pay at least half of a fair market rental. This assistance helps address the needs of households making less than half of the county's median income which leaves significant unmet island need at very low and fixed incomes. Any future funding is subject to each town's annual decision making process and the Housing Authority provides the usage, need and cost data necessary for thorough town deliberation of this important source of support.

2013 saw the completion of a comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment shepherded by the Martha's Vineyard Commission, town and Housing Authority representatives that drew particular attention to the need for rentals and supports for residents with lower incomes, seniors, persons with disabilities and the homeless. This important effort dovetailed with the Healthy Aging initiative by the MV Donors Collaborative which is underscoring the growing number of island seniors and their needs including a reasonably housed workforce able to attend to our elders over the coming decades.

The Housing Authority's support of affordable homeownership in 2013 included assistance with the Island Housing Trust's lottery of homes at Wentworth Way for the Town of Tisbury and at 619 Edgartown Road for the town of West Tisbury, including assistance with lottery criteria, marketing, participant certification and Homebuyer Education. We also served as affordability monitor on 4 property refinances, 2 re-sales and 3 special permitted ownership opportunities; facilitated 20 referrals through Edgartown's Demolition Delay by-law; and maintained the Island Affordable Homebuyer Clearinghouse numbering 306 households to publicize homebuyer opportunities and the Martha's Vineyard Subsidized Housing Inventory to assist in assuring future protection of existing affordability restrictions.

The Housing Authority manages the Vineyard Housing Office on State Road in Vineyard Haven as a clearinghouse for rental and homeownership opportunities and a focus for islanders working together on housing issues. The VHO currently is home to the Housing Authority, the Island Housing Trust and Habitat for Humanity of Martha's Vineyard, all of which have focused efforts with local and state representatives on leveraging the significant island investment in community housing to attract greater use of state and federal resources to the provision of the opportunities and supports needed to preserve community life on Martha's Vineyard.

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