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Be FloodWise®

Information for flood affected residents



Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme

FACT SHEET

About the scheme

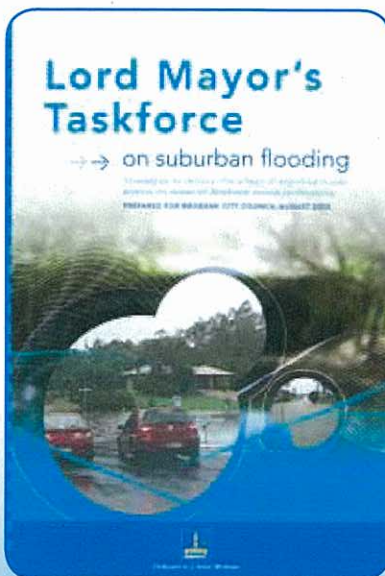
What is the Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme and why is Brisbane City Council running it?

The Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme is a priority action of the Lord Mayor's Taskforce on Suburban Flooding. The purpose of the taskforce is to look at all possible ways to reduce the effects of flooding on areas of the city.

The first Key action of the taskforce report is to acquire, through voluntary purchase, homes affected by a two-year average recurrence interval (ARI) flood event (ie a flood that occurs, on a long term average, every two years or has a 1 in 2 chance of occurring each year).

The scheme will continue over a number of years and offer an opportunity for those affected to remove their families from flood risks, while also contributing to the restoration of natural waterways.

The Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme is another way Council is achieving our vision for the city's future.



How does the scheme work?

Council is keen to ensure that those residents most affected by flooding are given the first opportunity to take part in the scheme. Records indicate that there are numerous homes throughout the city that are affected by flooding on average, once every two years. Council has specific criteria to prioritise these properties for purchase. The order of priority is regularly reassessed based on updated information to ensure that it is as accurate as possible.

Each financial year, for as long as the scheme continues, Council allocates funding for offers to the highest priority eligible home owners. These are properties that meet all eligibility criteria and flood most frequently.

There will be no forced resumption of properties under the Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme. It is entirely the choice of the property owner whether or not to sell to Council when an offer is made.

Who is eligible and what are the selection criteria?

There are four eligibility criteria, which must all be met to qualify for an offer.

1. The property must be flooded during a two year ARI flood event.
2. The property must be in a residential zone.
3. Flood waters must inundate the residential dwelling on the property.
4. There is no other viable infrastructure solution (such as pipes) available to remove the flooding problem.

How are properties prioritised for purchase?

Properties that meet the criteria are prioritised according to depth of flooding. This means that a property that experiences flooding over the habitable (living area) floor will be prioritised higher

than a property that experiences flooding over utility areas (laundry, garage etc).

How do I find out if my property is flood-affected?

You can find out more information for any property by obtaining a FloodWise Property Report from Council's website at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodwise or by telephone through Council's Contact Centre on 3403 8888. The report provides general information on flood levels and types of flooding for your property. It also provides ground level and other information to assist interpretation of flooding impacts on buildings on the site.

Council has mapped the flood information by suburb and these Flood Flag Maps are available from Council's website at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodmap.

How will I know if my property is eligible?

Each financial year all properties that meet the criteria for purchase, whether identified by council or offered by the owner, are prioritised for purchase based on the seriousness of anticipated flooding. This priority may change through the financial year depending on the number of Council offers accepted or declined.

If your property is one of those selected for an approach, you will be sent a letter outlining the scheme, your rights and obligations and the processes for you to express interest, for valuation and for sale.

If my property is eligible, what does that mean for my neighbour or adjacent properties?

Council will consider purchasing adjacent homes if those homes are eligible and the property owners agree to sell. Even two homes side-by-side may not experience the same frequency or depth of flooding.



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Offer process

What do I do if I receive an offer from Council?

If you are contacted by Council, it will be via a phone call, follow up letter with information about the process and a reply paid form to register your expression of interest. The expression of interest is just an indication to Council that you are prepared to participate in the scheme, and would like to proceed to the valuation process.

You can withdraw from the scheme at any time up to contract negotiation. The expression of interest does not commit you to sell your property to Council.

If you are **interested** in progressing discussions with Council, complete the post card sized form, which asks you to provide your preferred contact details and times. Council understands there may be timing considerations in the sale of your home. Please indicate this in your reply.

If you are **not interested**, complete the reply paid form and return it to Council. Upon confirmation of your response, Council will make no further contact with you.

What happens once I express my interest in participating in the scheme?

Once Council receives your expression of interest, our customer relationship manager will contact you to arrange a time for a valuation and site inspection. You will receive confirmation of times for the valuation and inspection time by letter. After these have been completed, you will receive the valuation and if you are happy to proceed, contract negotiations begin.

How is the valuation calculated?

Council will obtain a valuation from an independent valuer, for all properties considered for purchased through the Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme. Both Council and the property owner must agree on a price before the home can be purchased. You are also entitled to a Council funded independent valuation.

Who pays all of the costs associated with the contract and sale?

As is usually the case in a property sale, all costs associated with the sale of the property (except valuations) need to be met by the home owner. This includes stamp duty, transfer fees, conveyancing/legal fees etc.

Will the fact that I have been approached by Council affect the value of my property?

Offers to home owners are treated as highly confidential by Council. There is no published information on specific property addresses or priority homes for purchase. Valuations are also treated confidentially by independent valuers and Council. To protect your anonymity, Council advises that you should also treat this matter confidentially.

After the sale

What happens to my property if I sell it to Council?

Properties acquired under the Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme will be assigned an appropriate non-residential use which has a range of environmental and social benefits. The land may be used for conservation, drainage easements or parklands.

What if I have a flood problem but don't get an offer?

Can I offer my property to Council if I think it might be eligible?

Residents worst affected by flooding will be offered the opportunity to sell first. If you think your home meets the criteria you can contact Council directly to express your interest in offering your home for purchase. This expression of interest must be in writing, signed by the property owner and addressed to the Manager Water Resources Branch, Brisbane City Council, GPO Box 1434, Brisbane Q, 4001.

If your property is deemed eligible, Council may consider the option of purchasing your property. However, because funding is allocated yearly, your property may not be purchased immediately but may be considered in future budget cycles.

If I do not want to move, will Council fix the flooding problem at my home?

One of the primary criterion of the scheme is that there is no cost-effective infrastructure solution that would reduce the flooding frequency of the property. If you have been contacted under the scheme, Council has already assessed possible engineering solutions for your property. Council will consider any feasible infrastructure solution however, at present we do not have a program to pay for houses to be raised.

What is Council doing to manage Brisbane's flood problem?

Council has a substantial flood management program to reduce the impact of flooding on the city. This program includes maintenance and upgrade of the city's stormwater drainage network, regular clearing and management of waterways and flood mitigation schemes. While Council is doing all it can to reduce the impact of flooding, it is important to note that in some areas of the city it can never be completely eliminated.

More information

Who can I contact for more information?

For further information on the Voluntary Home Purchase Scheme visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodwise or contact Council on (07) 3403 888.

Council has developed a range of Be FloodWise® materials that outline *Four steps to Be FloodWise®*. They provide information to help you better understand your flood risk, prepare your property for a flood, and actions to help you respond and recover from a flood.

To get a copy of *Be FloodWise®* – *A guide for residents* or any of the other Be FloodWise® publications, visit the Be FloodWise® web page at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodwise or phone (07) 3403 8888.

