



Far too many Victorians are living in housing stress, in insecure housing and on our streets. Successive governments have neglected our housing system, allowing our house prices to skyrocket and our public housing system fall into disrepair. The Greens have a plan to fix Victoria's housing crisis and ensure everyone has a safe, secure and affordable place to call home.

Access to housing is an essential human right. It is more than just a right to shelter – all of us should have an affordable, accessible and secure place to call home.

But for too long governments have treated housing as a commodity – something investors and property developers make billions of dollars a year buying and selling. When the profits of a few are put before the dignity of the many, our entire housing system suffers.

Today, Victoria's housing system is in crisis. Too many of us, whether we own, rent privately or live in public housing, are struggling to find secure, safe, and affordable housing.

While each broken part of our housing system needs to be repaired, to solve the crisis we need to address the system as a whole. The Greens have a plan to address all parts of the housing continuum, including the homelessness epidemic, renter's rights and housing affordability.

## OUR PLAN

The Greens will give Victoria's housing system its biggest investment in decades. To increase the supply of affordable housing and ensure everyone has a home, we will:

- **Build 40,000 new public housing dwellings over the next six years, and build a further 40,000 public, community and other affordable homes in the six years from 2025. An investment of an estimated \$30 billion.**
- **Stop the sell-off of public housing estates and utilise inner-city public land for additional public housing development.**
- **Support the community housing sector with an investment of \$200m in the next two years.**
- **Require a minimum of 30% public, community or affordable homes in all new large-scale housing developments.**
- **Introduce a \$100m pilot of the Housing First homelessness program in Melbourne.**



The Victorian Greens will also work with our federal colleagues to dismantle the rigged system that privileges investors and landlords over the rest of us. Negative Gearing and Capital Gains Tax discounts have driven house prices sky high, making it easier for wealthy people to buy more homes and harder for first home buyers. We are committed to reforming the unfair rules that have locked generations of Australians out of a place to call their own.

### OUR BROKEN HOUSING SYSTEM

Victoria's housing system is broken. Median house prices in Melbourne are currently about \$900,000 — a 300 per cent increase since 1995.<sup>i</sup> Developers continue to build apartment towers that cater to the upper end of the market, not to the many who are in need of affordable housing.

An entire generation has been locked out of the housing market, and are facing a future as permanent renters in an increasingly expensive and competitive market. In December 2017, only 2.4 per cent of rentals in Victoria were affordable for a single person on Newstart, and in Metropolitan Melbourne, this number shrank to 0.3 per cent of rentals.<sup>ii</sup>

Under such significant housing stress, many more of us depend on our public housing system to find a home. But successive governments have neglected our public housing system, and the amount of stock has remained static for the last 20 years. We now have the lowest proportion of public housing in the country, and the waiting list has ballooned to 82,000 people.<sup>iii</sup>

We are also seeing a steady increase in homelessness in Victoria. More than 24,000 Victorians are homeless on any given night.<sup>iv</sup> Homelessness is broader than those sleeping rough on the streets, and includes people living in rooming houses, in cars or tents, or in severely overcrowded dwellings.

The current state of our housing system is unacceptable, especially from a government that has billions in surplus and spends billions on new private roads. The Andrews Labor Government has proven itself unwilling to take any substantive action to fix Victoria's housing crisis. The Greens believe resolving this crisis should be a priority for the next government and will fight for an urgent intervention in our housing system.

### PUBLIC HOUSING BUILD

To increase the supply of public housing and meet the waiting list we will:

- **Build 40,000 new public housing dwellings over the next six years, from 1 January 2019**
- **Stop the sell-off of public housing estates and utilise inner-city public land for additional public housing development**

Building 40,000 new homes will provide enough housing to meet the current waiting list, with additional supply to meet future demand. These dwellings will publicly funded and remain in public ownership and management for the public good.

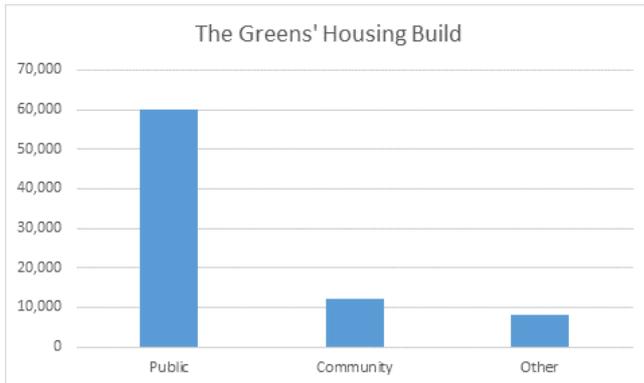
[Read our full public housing initiative here.](#)

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILD

The Greens know that one major project is not enough to solve Victoria's housing crisis. We need repeated, continued public investment in our housing system to stop Victoria sinking back into crisis.

That is why we have a plan to build another 40,000 affordable homes for Victoria over the following six years to 2031. These homes will be:

- 50% public housing
- 30% community housing
- 20% other forms of affordable housing.



Supplying affordable housing on this scale should ease the pressure across the entire housing continuum. It will ensure that people who need access to public housing will be housed immediately, preventing the waiting list from building up again. It will also address the unmet demand from people who are eligible for public or community housing but aren't recorded on formal housing waiting lists.

## MAKING DEVELOPERS TAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

To ensure developers are providing a fair share of affordable homes, the Greens will mandate inclusionary zoning in all new developments. Developers will need to include a minimum number of affordable homes in order to secure planning approval.

The minimum numbers are:

- I. In large housing complexes (100+ dwellings), 30% affordable housing
- II. In housing complexes with between 15-100 dwellings, 20% affordable housing
- III. For apartment and townhouse developments of 15 or less dwellings, either 15% affordable housing or the contribution of an affordable housing levy in lieu.

This affordable housing provision will be met through a mix of public, community and other affordable housing. Other affordable housing

includes models like deliberate development and community land trusts.

[Read our full planning initiative here.](#)

## COMMUNITY HOUSING

Victoria's community housing sector is an integral part of our housing system. At a time when the government has neglected our public housing system, the community housing sector has stepped up to try and ease the burden, providing about 20,000 units across Victoria.

The sector also plays a crucial role in providing high quality housing for people facing complex circumstances that make the public and private rental markets difficult or unsuitable, such as Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and women and children escaping family violence.

The limited pool of government funding available for housing has pitted the public and community sectors against one another. The Greens believe that both types of housing play an important role in our housing system, and should be funded appropriately. In particular, the Greens will support the community land trust model of creating more affordable housing.

We will **invest \$200m in our community housing sector**. This funding will allow the sector to continue expanding its stock and supply more affordable homes for Victorians over the next two years until the Social Housing Growth Fund is in a position to better support community housing.

## HOUSING FIRST FOR HOMELESSNESS

More than 24,800 Victorians suffer from homelessness. While the Government is aware of the size of the homelessness problem, it has focused its funding on specialist services that manage homelessness, rather than supplying enough homes to prevent homelessness altogether.



The Greens will fund a **\$100m pilot of Housing First model in Melbourne**. The model is based on the approach that it is easier for people to address the issues that lead to homelessness (such as unemployment, mental health or substance abuse issues) once they have secure housing. It provides immediate housing without any preconditions or prerequisites beyond a willingness to maintain a tenancy.

Once housed, tenants are supported with services to address the issues that led to homelessness and to improve their health and wellbeing, such as counselling, healthcare, financial advice and community networking. It is particularly targeted at the chronically homeless.

The Housing First model has been implemented in Canada, the UK, and New Zealand, and is a proven success. In Hamilton in New Zealand the program housed 509 households in its first four years. In Canada, over 80% of those who received Housing First remained housed after the first year.

We will pilot the program in inner Melbourne initially, with a view to rolling it out to the outer suburbs and regional Victoria once the program is established.

## INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

The Greens believe the government must intervene in the housing crisis. At the moment the rules set by government privilege investors and landlords over the rest of us. The rigged housing market is failing to provide affordable housing, and now it is time for the Government to intervene.

The simplest way for the State government to ensure people have access to safe, secure and affordable housing is to build more houses. We have done it in the past and we can do it again.

A \$30 billion investment over 12 years in building new homes, along with maintenance and

administration, is what is required for a fair and decent housing future for all Victorians.

Funding this investment in Victoria's future and addressing the housing crisis can be done from a mix of the budget surpluses, currently running in the billions, partly due to record revenue from property taxes; borrowings and federal contributions.

Now is a good time for the government to borrow funds to build infrastructure. Furthermore, the federal government also bears responsibility for ensuring Australians have a roof over their heads and federal funds would be sought as part of implementing the policy.

All rental proceeds from the new housing will be invested back into the system, for administration, maintenance and to fund the construction of more units over time. By investing in sustainable, quality materials for construction, we will significantly reduce maintenance costs.

Our plan to address Victoria's housing crisis will support tens of thousands of jobs across the manufacturing, construction, engineering and other sectors.

The benefits of a proper functioning housing system are in many ways immeasurable. They include better physical and mental health outcomes, the ability for more people to access education and jobs, and to be part of a community. Our whole society benefits when a government acts in the public good.

The Greens will have a fully costed election platform. Our policies will be submitted to the Parliamentary Budget Office for costing.

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<sup>i</sup> Allison Worrall, 'Melbourne median house price rises to \$903,859 over December quarter', Domain Group report, Feb 1 2018.

<https://www.domain.com.au/news/melbourne-median->



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[house-price-rises-to-903859-over-december-quarter-domain-group-report](#)>

ii Department of Health and Human Services. Rental Report December 2017, Victoria State Government.

iii Legal and Social Issues Committee, Legislative Council, Parliament of Victoria, Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program, June 2018.

iv Council to Homeless Persons, Homelessness in Victoria, 2018 <<http://chp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FINAL-Homelessness-in-Victoria.pdf>>