

A HOME FOR ALL

A FUTURE
FOR ALL OF US



A HOME FOR ALL ▲

It doesn't matter whether you're renting or buying, everybody deserves a decent and stable place to live.

Like healthcare and education, housing is a basic necessity. Nobody should be without a home. It doesn't matter whether you're renting or buying, everybody deserves a decent and stable place to live.

Before COVID-19 struck, thousands of Western Australians were homeless while hundreds of thousands of families were struggling with enormous rents that they could barely afford. Now, with the mess made by state and federal governments in responding to the rent crisis, many more Australians are facing homelessness and housing insecurity. While emergency housing is needed, we also need a plan for ending rent poverty on the other side.

Our social housing stocks have decreased under the McGowan Government. They have failed to deliver adequate affordable and accessible housing, leaving many West Australians without a secure place to call home.

The Greens will address the failures of successive governments to provide safe, secure and affordable housing for everyone, with a major investment in new and existing social housing. We will guarantee secure, affordable and energy-efficient housing for all Western Australians.

The Greens will overhaul laws to ensure renters rights, end homelessness by investing in the Housing First model, and create thousands of jobs in the process.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Build 15,000 new low-carbon homes** over 3 years to provide enough housing to meet the current waitlist creating 60,000 jobs in the construction and administration sectors
- ▲ **Invest in social and affordable housing** to meet the current waitlist and guarantee adequate housing supply for years to come
- ▲ **Undertake a state-wide retrofit of housing supply to improve efficiency** and climate-preparedness, including incentives for owner-occupiers and investors
- ▲ **Protect renters by abolishing 'no grounds' evictions, putting a cap on rent rises and setting minimum standards for rental properties**
- ▲ **Ban political donations from property developers**

MAJOR INVESTMENT IN NEW SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The WA Government has a responsibility to provide high quality housing for those who need it.

Almost 25,000 people are living in limbo², waiting almost two years on the social housing waitlist for a place to call home³.

Since coming to power, the WA Labor Government has decreased public housing stock by more than 1,100 dwellings. This has furthered WA's affordable housing crisis, bringing the shortfall to almost 60,000 homes. Without a concerted effort to provide more housing, the projected deficit will rise to 118,400 homes by 2036⁴.

While COVID-19 has exacerbated the housing crisis in Western Australia, the economic recovery from the pandemic is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in critical social infrastructure to rebuild our economy and guarantee a home for all.

The Greens will invest in an immediate build of 15,000 new low-carbon homes over 3 years to provide enough housing to meet the current waitlist. This will create 60,000 jobs in the construction and administration sectors.

The Greens will also ensure that 20% of all new housing developments are reserved for affordable housing and a further 10% for social housing, to ensure adequate housing supply into the future⁵.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Create 60,000 jobs⁶ by building 15,000 new low-carbon homes over 3 years**, to 7.5-star (NatHERS) energy rating and with rooftop solar systems⁷.
- ▲ **Mandate 20% affordable housing and 10% social housing⁸** in new developments⁹
- ▲ **Implement a genuine co-design approach to design and build culturally appropriate social housing for First Nations People** where required
- ▲ **Require liveable housing design principles to be implemented** in all new homes to ensure appropriate and accessible housing for all¹⁰



EFFICIENCY RETROFIT TO REDUCE HOUSEHOLD BILLS

Living in inefficient housing is expensive and can have a profound impact on people's health, yet about 80% of Western Australia's social housing stock does not meet the national energy efficiency standard¹¹. This means those on low incomes and experiencing hardship are spending disproportionately more of their incomes on energy bills.

Since WA Labor was elected in 2017 government fees and charges have skyrocketed with energy supply charges increasing by almost 20%. This has resulted in 60% of low-income families having to cut their use of heating or cooling, despite discomfort, in order to pay their power bills^{12 13}.

As social housing is twice as likely to be uninsulated, **the Greens will undertake a state-wide program to retrofit public housing stock in order to reduce power bills, cut emissions and create jobs**. The Greens will also create incentives to assist investors and owner-operators in ensuring all private housing stock meets mandatory energy efficiency standards.

Nationwide, residential buildings are responsible for 11% of our national carbon emissions and 29% of our electricity use¹⁵. And with less than 4% of rental properties with solar power or solar hot water systems, and the average energy rating for a pre-2005 home well below the national 6-star standard¹⁶, renters are paying far too much on energy. By providing incentives to encourage a state-wide retrofit of ageing and inefficient housing, renters (and owner-occupiers) will benefit from a 40% reduction in household energy bills per year, providing an annual saving of \$800 - \$1600¹⁷.

The Greens will legislate renewable energy targets to guarantee all low income households and renters have access to affordable, reliable and clean energy¹⁸.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Retrofit all social housing dwellings to the national energy efficiency standard**, significantly reducing power bills for low-income earners^{19 20}
- ▲ **Create financial incentives to encourage a state-wide retrofit of all housing**, reducing household emissions and energy costs
- ▲ **Guarantee low income households access to affordable, reliable energy²¹**



AN END TO HOMELESSNESS

The response to the COVID-19 crisis has shown us that governments have always been able to enact policies to ensure that no one lives in poverty and to fully fund the services we need to live a good life, they've just chosen not to.

Because housing plays such an important role in community wellbeing, our federal and state budget include funds to help Australians buy or rent their homes. These resources provide tax breaks, guarantee loans, and support other housing-related programs. Right now, very little of this money goes to people with lower incomes.

More than 9,000 Western Australians are homeless - including over 3,000 children. More than 1,000 people sleep rough in WA on any given night.

Every year WA's specialist homelessness services assist over 24,000 people, with thousands of requests for basic shelter and vital support unmet.

Under the WA Labor Government our public housing stocks have decreased, and public housing evictions are again rising. In 2020 there were almost 25,000 people waiting to access public housing.

Ending homelessness is far cheaper than managing homelessness. Research shows we can save \$16 million in health costs annually by providing stable public housing for people who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness²².

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Abolish the 'three strikes' eviction policy and end the eviction of children, and people with serious mental illness, from social housing**
- ▲ **Invest in individualised and person-driven services to keep vulnerable people in their homes** including through wrap-around supports and improved access to mental health services²³
- ▲ **Invest in accommodation options so that people leaving hospital, youth justice detention, out-of-home care or prison, have a home to go to**, and to prevent people being kept in prison or children being placed in out-of-home care because they do not have a home
- ▲ **Address the factors that cause homelessness** through actions to end poverty and greater supports for addressing family and domestic violence
- ▲ **End homelessness for First Nations People** through the implementation of a genuine co-design approach to housing design and build culturally appropriate social housing where it is required

RENTERS RIGHTS

Around 750,000 Western Australians are renters. For many, renting is not just a transitional phase to home ownership - it is increasingly a longer-term housing option and housing choice ²⁴⁻²⁶. Unfortunately, our out-of-date rental laws don't reflect the needs of modern renters.

The power imbalance in Western Australia's private rental market leaves tenants with little security. Currently, renters can be evicted from their homes 'without grounds', meaning the landlord does not have to give a reason and renters cannot challenge their eviction. The average lease term in WA is 12 months, meaning that renters can face possible eviction every year.

Rent can also be increased by any amount, and as often as the landlord wants. Many renters live in unsafe and substandard homes because of weak regulation around security and living standards.

The Greens will ensure tenants have a secure place to live by establishing minimum standards for all residential tenancy agreements ²⁷⁻²⁹.

The Greens will:

- ▲ **Improve rental security by banning no-grounds evictions**
- ▲ **Ensure stability and fairness of rent prices** by limiting the number of rent increases, ensuring fair mechanisms to determine rent increases and providing fair minimum notice
- ▲ **Introduce mandatory maintenance, security and efficiency standards³⁰** - including the disclosure of home energy and water efficiency - to ensure the home is safe and comfortable to live in, and cheaper to run
- ▲ **Allow renters to make their house a home by permitting minor modifications**, accessibility modifications, and banning 'no pets' clauses
- ▲ **Ensure better protections for boarders, lodgers, and other vulnerable groups** including students, people with disabilities and people who live in mental health residential group homes
- ▲ **Provide additional funding to support tenants' advocacy services.**

1. Housing first - People experiencing homelessness are better able to access support and achieve long term positive outcomes from the stability of a home.
2. Western Australia Legislative Council Question on Notice 3156, 8 October 2020 [https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/feca409d42b19b57482585fc002d009e/\\$FILE/C40+S1+20201008+p6547b-6548a.pdf](https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/feca409d42b19b57482585fc002d009e/$FILE/C40+S1+20201008+p6547b-6548a.pdf)
3. Western Australian Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5441, 17 October 2019 [https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/0c5ed8608d6306854825849a0020af44/\\$FILE/A40+S1+20191017+p7956d-7957a.pdf](https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/0c5ed8608d6306854825849a0020af44/$FILE/A40+S1+20191017+p7956d-7957a.pdf)
4. UNSW City Futures Research Centre (2018). Estimating need and costs of social and affordable housing delivery <<https://cityfutures.be.unsw.edu.au/research/projects/filling-the-gap/>>
5. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2020-2021 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/State-Budget-Submission-2020-2021.pdf>>
6. According to modelling detailed in The Clean State Job Report, a 3 year construction program of 15,000 low-carbon social housing homes built to a 7.5 NatHERS rating would create 58,800 total full-time equivalent jobs, while a further 1,160 jobs would be created in installing rooftop solar, totalling ~59,960FTE jobs in construction and installation.
7. Clean State Jobs Plan: 26 big ideas for 200,000 WA jobs <<https://www.cleanstate.org.au/jobs-plan>>
8. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2020-2021 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/State-Budget-Submission-2020-2021.pdf>>
9. ShelterWA Pre-budget submission 2020 - WA State Budget <<https://www.shelterwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pre-budget-submission-Shelter-WA-2020.pdf>>
10. Livable Housing Design Guidelines <http://livablehousingaustralia.org.au/library/help/Livable_Housing_Design_Guidelines_Web1.pdf>
11. Western Australian Legislative Council Question on Notice 2614, 23 November 2019 <[https://parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/f66e88e3b075253b482584c4001a3040/\\$FILE/C40+S1+20191128+p9567a-9567a.pdf](https://parliament.wa.gov.au/Hansard/hansard.nsf/0/f66e88e3b075253b482584c4001a3040/$FILE/C40+S1+20191128+p9567a-9567a.pdf)>
12. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2020-2021 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/State-Budget-Submission-2020-2021.pdf>>
13. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2019-2020 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-Budget-Submission-2019-2020.pdf>>
14. Clean State Jobs Plan: 26 big ideas for 200,000 WA jobs <<https://www.cleanstate.org.au/jobs-plan>>
15. "COAG 'Report for Achieving Low Energy Existing Homes' http://coagenergycouncil.gov.au/sites/prod.energycouncil/files/publications/documents/Trajectory%20Addendum%20-%20Report%20for%20Achieving%20Low%20Energy%20Existing%20Homes_1.pdf "
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20. ShelterWA Pre-budget submission 2020 - WA State Budget <<https://www.shelterwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pre-budget-submission-Shelter-WA-2020.pdf>>
21. Refer to The Greens (WA) Climate Change policy
22. ShelterWA Pre-budget submission 2020 - WA State Budget <<https://www.shelterwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pre-budget-submission-Shelter-WA-2020.pdf>>
23. Refer to The Greens (WA) Mental Health policy
24. ShelterWA Pre-budget submission 2020 - WA State Budget <<https://www.shelterwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pre-budget-submission-Shelter-WA-2020.pdf>>
25. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2019-2020 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-Budget-Submission-2019-2020.pdf>>
26. Make Renting Fair WA - The Tenancy Ten (accessed August 2020)
27. ShelterWA Pre-budget submission 2020 - WA State Budget <<https://www.shelterwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pre-budget-submission-Shelter-WA-2020.pdf>>
28. WACOSS State Budget Submission 2019-2020 <<https://wacoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-Budget-Submission-2019-2020.pdf>>
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