

ENDING HOMELESSNESS BY 2030

The Greens' plan to end homelessness in Victoria by the end of the decade

About 25,000 Victorians are experiencing homelessness on any given night. Thousands more are living in financial stress and are only one paycheck away from losing their homes.

Homelessness is not inevitable – it's the result of policy failures by governments. The simplest and more effective way to end homelessness is to provide enough affordable, long-term housing for everyone. But in Victoria, Labor and Liberal governments have neglected public housing for decades, failed to tackle skyrocketing rents and house prices, and transferred thousands of public homes out of state management.

During the pandemic, Victoria effectively ended street homelessness, by pausing rent increases, introducing a moratorium on evictions, and providing hotel and motel accommodation for those in our community without a safe place to call home. This proved that ending homelessness is possible if there is the political will to do it. These are the kind of government interventions we can and should do again.

THE GREENS' PLAN:

- ▲ **End homelessness in Victoria by 2030**
- ▲ **Create 100,000 new public homes over the next 10 years to address the housing waiting list**
- ▲ **Ongoing provision of public and affordable housing through the Housing First model**
- ▲ **Long-term guaranteed funding for homelessness services**
- ▲ **Provide community-controlled and appropriate housing for First Nations people and families**
- ▲ **Ensure appropriate housing options for young people, women, the LGBTIQA+ community and people with disabilities**

PAYING FOR OUR PLAN

The Greens will make the big banks, property developers and the gambling industry pay their fair share of tax so we can invest in climate action, affordable housing and public services for all.

Our plans will also be paid for by spending smarter and making our state borrowings work for the community.

ENDING HOMELESSNESS BY 2030

We know that homelessness is not inevitable, and that it is the result of policy choices made by governments. But in Victoria, about 25,000 people are experiencing homelessness on any given night, with thousands more living in housing stress and at risk of losing their homes.

With a chronic shortage of affordable housing in Victoria, many homelessness services struggle to find appropriate, secure housing options for people seeking help. Crisis accommodation is at breaking point, with many providers regularly resorting to renting rooms in hotels, motels or caravan parks to meet demand for accommodation.

Our homelessness crisis disproportionately harms older women, survivors of domestic violence, First Nations and LGBTIQ+ people, refugees and migrants, and young people.

The simplest and most effective way to end homelessness is to provide enough affordable housing for everyone who needs it. Yet in Victoria, years of neglect have left our public housing in crisis and homelessness services at breaking point.

We have seen no net increase in the amount of public housing for over 10 years. In 2022 there were 63,921 dwellings, a drop from 64,768 in 2012. In that time, the waiting list has ballooned to record levels of over 120,000 people.

In a wealthy state like Victoria, nobody should be without a place to call home.

The Greens have drafted a Bill which would require the government to develop a plan to end homelessness in Victoria by the end of this decade. The legislation encourages the government to adopt the Housing First model, which prioritises the provision of long-term, secure housing, followed by wrap-around support and services.

To support the plan to end homelessness, the Greens will push the next government to build 100,000 new high quality, sustainable, accessible public homes in the next decade, followed by ongoing investment in new public homes so we never fall behind again.

Our plan for more public housing will be funded jointly by the state and federal governments, with an initial contribution of \$6 billion over the forward estimates by the Victorian Government for public and cooperative housing.

FUNDING FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

Victoria's homelessness services play an essential role in our housing system, by providing intensive support to people experiencing homelessness and connecting them to transitional accommodation and long-term housing. However, the long-term shortage of affordable housing has pushed the sector to its limits.

The severe lack of affordable housing in Victoria means services struggle to find suitable accommodation for their clients, often relying on motels and rooming houses in the absence of any other options. Recent cuts to government funding for services means support workers are struggling to meet increased demand and are forced to turn people away.

The Greens' plan will support our housing and homelessness services by increasing their funding by \$100m over the forward estimates. We will also guarantee ongoing funding so they can continue their essential work.

FIRST NATIONS HOUSING

When this land was colonised, First Nations people were violently dispossessed of their land and removed from Country. We continue to see the long-lasting and severe consequences of this invasion today.

The number of First Nations people experiencing homelessness has been steadily increasing for over a decade. One in six First Nations people in Victoria have accessed a homelessness service - more than ten times the

rate of other Victorians.¹ First Nations people are also overrepresented on our housing waiting list, making up about 7% of the Victorian Housing Register, compared to less than 1% of the population. And First Nations people have lower rates of home ownership than other Victorians and are more likely to experience barriers to private rental, such as racism.²

We will support First Nations communities to control their own housing, by investing in cooperative housing models for First Nations people through our \$6 billion investment in public and cooperative housing.

We will also ensure First Nations people are given priority access to new public housing through the Victorian Housing Register.

A YOUTH HOUSING GUARANTEE

There are increasingly high rates of youth homelessness, often due to family breakdown and family violence. 26% of people experiencing homelessness in Victoria are aged between 12 and 24.³

Due to the severe shortage of affordable and appropriate housing options for young people, young people experiencing homelessness often end up in unsuitable housing such as rooming houses or overcrowded short-term accommodation.

Experiencing periods of homelessness at a young age is also a strong predictor of experiencing homelessness later in life, and increases the likelihood of poor physical and

¹ Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework, [2021 Annual Report Card](#), p 11.

² 43 per cent of Aboriginal Victorians own or are purchasing their own home compared to 68 per cent of the general community. [Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework](#), p 7.

³ Youth Affairs Council Victoria, [Youth Homelessness](#).

mental health, substance abuse and interactions with the justice system.⁴

The Greens' plan will ensure all young people are able to access appropriate housing by guaranteeing that any person under 25 who presents to a homelessness service will be provided with appropriate youth housing options, funded through our extra funding to homelessness services. Our plan to end homelessness will ensure young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are connected with appropriate supports and services, such as specialist youth accommodation.

TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE HOUSING

LGBTIQ+ people experience high levels of discrimination and face severe barriers accessing crisis care and accommodation. They are also twice as likely to have experienced homelessness than the general Victorian population.⁵

The Greens will establish a dedicated community-led and community-run crisis accommodation facility, with associated support and health services, for trans, gender diverse and non-binary people, to be located in Melbourne's inner north. We'll look to roll out a network of similar safe accommodation options across the state.

⁴ Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee, [Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria](#).

⁵ [Victorian Pride Lobby calls on Real Estate Institute of Victoria to tackle LGBTIQ+ housing discrimination](#), ABC News, August 2022.

WOMEN'S HOUSING

Older women are the fastest growing group of people experiencing homelessness, increasing by 31% from 2011 to 2016.⁶ Women are also particularly vulnerable to homelessness as a result of family violence, the gender pay gap and the superannuation gap.

The Greens will ensure that our big build of public housing includes women's-specific housing. We will also ensure that our additional funding to homelessness services is directed to services that assist women experiencing or at risk of homelessness, particularly older women and survivors of family violence.

FIND ALL OUR POLICIES:

greens.org.au/vic/platform

⁶ Australian Human Rights Commission, [Risk of Homelessness in Older Women](#).