

HOMES FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT.

EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A SAFE, SECURE AND AFFORDABLE HOME.

Housing is a human right. The ACT Greens have a vision for housing where people will be able to live securely and affordably without having to fork out over \$1 million dollars to buy their own home.

Under an ACT Greens housing system, a home is less about bricks and mortar, and more about community, comfort, sustainability and accessibility.

Right now, more people than ever are struggling to put a roof over their heads. In Canberra, there are more than 3,000 people on the growing public housing waiting list.

For decades, Labor and Liberal Governments have refused to directly fund public housing, resulting in a plummeting number of affordable homes.

The two old parties have finally woken up to the crisis, but they're hand-balling the solution to the same developers that created the housing crisis in the first place, and not placing enough emphasis on the responsibility of governments to fix housing affordability.

The ACT Greens have a plan to fix the housing crisis that recognises the importance of public housing, rental reform, planning reform and strong community services.

Our goal is to return to a situation where public housing is once again readily available to the many people in our community who are simply unable to afford the private market.

Canberra needs publicly owned, affordable and high-quality homes. The ACT Greens' plan will see everyone currently on the public housing waiting list able to access a safe, secure and affordable home within the next term of parliament.

The Government has a responsibility to dramatically increase investment to deliver abundant affordable housing in the ACT and make this vision a reality.

THE ACT GREENS WILL:

- ▲ **Build and buy 10,000 new public homes** over the next ten years
- ▲ Establish a **publicly owned developer and builder** for public housing
- ▲ Create a **prefabrication manufacturing hub** for public housing
- ▲ Initiate a **pilot project for homeowners to sell their homes to the government** for use as public housing
- ▲ Create more **accessible and secure homes for people with disabilities**
- ▲ Fund Housing ACT to be a **landlord of choice**
- ▲ **In-source and adequately fund repairs and maintenance** for all public housing properties.

BUILD & BUY 10,000 PUBLIC HOMES

Rebuilding the ACT's Public Housing

Decades of governments under-investing and selling off public housing stock has seen the number of public homes decline in the ACT while the public housing waiting list grows.

Now we have a critical lack of housing for people who need it most. Currently there are over 3,000 applicants on the waiting list, and people often wait years before they are offered a home.

While they wait, more people are experiencing homelessness or struggling in the expensive private rental market, yet public housing is still seen as the landlord of last resort.

Groups who are impacted most by this situation include First Nations communities, people with disability, refugees, and people who are unemployed or earning a low-wage, including many who deliver essential services.

The best way to end homelessness and solve the housing crisis is to provide enough affordable housing for everyone - and the most secure kind of affordable housing is public housing.

The commodification of the private housing market, which is increasingly occupied by investors driving up house prices, has meant more and more people are living in rental stress and unable to afford private rental prices.

The ACT is an expensive place to live, especially if you aren't wealthy.

Essential workers are spending up to 76% of their income on rent.

It hasn't always been like this. When Canberra was first established, the Government provided homes as an essential service for people moving here to contribute to the city.

The Government built homes, and most people lived in public housing, meaning there was little stigma attached to it.

With a wider range of tenants, including more people who pay market rents, the ACT Government would have a sustainable income stream, which could be used to deliver even better public housing infrastructure.

Jurisdictions around the world have high proportions of their residential sector as public housing, built and owned by governments – some like Paris are over 20%, compared to the ACT's 6%.

After decades of neglect, we are finally seeing some direct investment into public housing in the ACT, but it is not enough.

Much of the recent renewal of the ACT's public housing has been financed by selling older public homes, meaning the total number of public homes is actually in decline.

We need to radically transform and accelerate the way we invest in public housing.

ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC DEVELOPER AND BUILDER

The ACT Greens will establish a public authority to take responsibility as the public developer and builder of an ambitious expansion of ACT public housing.

This public developer and builder will be tasked with building and buying 10,000 homes over ten years.

This will see the ACT Government in a position to be able to offer everyone currently on the public housing waiting list a place to live within the next Assembly term. This will see more people call public housing home – including young people, older people, families, First Nations community members, refugees and migrants who have chosen Canberra as their home.

Establishing a public developer and builder will ensure a focus on direct housing provision rather than profit margins. The authority will be tasked with looking at ways to accelerate this ambitious building program.

It will enable efficiency as we examine innovative options such as patent designs, bulk supply arrangements, and trades hubs. We will also work with suppliers to utilise modular and prefabrication building models, learning from other jurisdictions such as Queensland who are also investing in skills development in new building technologies including modular and prefabrication systems.

This will enable us to provide affordable, climate-wise public homes quickly and efficiently.

In the process, the Government will create hundreds of skilled construction apprenticeships, training opportunities and jobs that will strengthen workers' rights and careers in the construction sector. There will be opportunities to link into the apprenticeships, training and skills accreditation offered by the Canberra Institute of Technology.

The Greens' public housing package will ensure public housing tenants are provided with homes that meet their current and future needs.

Tenants with disability will have access to suitably accessible homes, as we will ensure that 70% of new public homes meet enhanced accessibility standards and that homes purchased for public housing are retrofitted as necessary to meet tenants needs.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S ROLE IN BUILDING CANBERRA'S PUBLIC HOMES

To complement the role of the public developer and builder, we will work with private sector developers and builders to facilitate more adaptive reuse, making the most of properties that already exist.

We will look at suburbs and precincts that are currently being developed to ensure there is adequate public housing provided as part of these new areas of Canberra – continuing our commitment to ensuring all communities across Canberra have a proportion of public housing.

The ACT Greens will also establish a pilot program to allow people selling their homes to offer them to the Government for use as public housing.

FINANCING OUR AMBITIOUS BUILD AND BUY PROGRAM

The cheapest and most effective way to fund public housing is through direct government investment.

The ACT Greens will invest \$2.2 billion in capital investment over the next term of Government to enable the public housing developer and builder to deliver this program. Our independent costing projects this will cost \$228 million over four years, comprised of interest on new gross debt. The total infrastructure capital required to deliver this plan is \$5.9 billion over ten years. This will result in \$1.7 billion in interest payments over the whole program.

This will enable the authority to build the public homes we need without having to sell existing public homes to fund it.

The Federal Government should step up as a co-investor in this program. The ACT Greens will continue to fiercely advocate for the Federal Labor Government to pay their fair share and reverse decades of neglect.

We will reverse the false economics that have forced Housing ACT to purchase land from the ACT Government at ever-climbing market rates. Instead, land will be provided at a discounted rate that reflects the wider community benefit that can be achieved by ensuring more people struggling in the private housing market have an affordable alternative.

Our independently costed plan demonstrates that reversing the decline in public housing is achievable. With the community's support and the Greens' political will, we can take on the housing crisis and rebuild public housing.

PUBLIC HOUSING AS A LANDLORD OF CHOICE

Setting Housing ACT up for Success

As a model landlord, Housing ACT works hard to support more than 20,000 Canberrans who call a public housing property home.

It is often a challenging job, and one that can be made harder with a lack of resources. For too long, Housing ACT has had to juggle the challenging task of meeting the needs of tenants with complex needs, deal with a shrinking revenue base and maintain ageing public housing stock.

With an additional 10,000 homes in the pipeline that will provide homes to thousands of families, we will also bolster the capability of Housing ACT to support the needs of housing tenants.

INCREASED CAPACITY FOR HOUSING ACT

The ACT Greens will increase the staff levels in Housing ACT to enable more engagement with tenants to support their housing experience and enable case management support for tenants with complex needs.

We will establish a team of community mental health professionals embedded in Housing ACT. This will support

Housing ACT's ability to support tenants with complex needs to maintain their tenancies.

This program will be built from the lessons of the successful PACER model which enables diverse professionals to collaborate on a case management basis to support people with complex needs. These staff will be co-located with the Housing Practitioner team and engaged on a rotational basis to foster learning across teams and Directorates.

We will invest in a technology innovation program to enable better use of IT – to bring housing tenant and property management systems into the current century, enable better record keeping and give staff more time to support tenants.

GIVING TENANTS AGENCY AND CONTROL

The ACT Greens will introduce programs that promote tenant control and engagement, community development and community-building, among housing communities and their neighbours. Tenants know their own needs best. We will support communities in multi-unit complexes as well as First Nations communities to promote self-determination and control.

We will ensure that Housing ACT has the funding to implement and facilitate these programs and partner with community organisations who support people to sustain their tenancies, access services and build community.

Our plan will ensure that we deliver public housing that actually meets people's needs.

INSOURCING PUBLIC HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

The ACT Greens will insource public housing repairs and maintenance – providing an efficient and effective workforce of government-employed tradespeople to ensure the ACT's public homes are well-maintained, comfortable and resilient to climate change.

This will provide hundreds of jobs and training opportunities for the construction sector, and further strengthen the ACT Government's commitment to creating skilled, climate-literate career opportunities.

We will continue the ACT Government's work to modernise existing public homes to ensure they meet the needs of our tenants.

We will work with Housing ACT and other government partners to ensure we have the capacity to manage a rapid expansion in the number of public housing properties.

We will provide appropriate funding to maintain the quality of our public homes – to ensure homes are climate-wise, accessible and comfortable, fulfilling our responsibilities as a model landlord.