



# Tasmanian Greens Party Policy 2014

## Housing

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The Tasmanian Greens believe having a secure, affordable place to call home is a fundamental human right. We recognise that the availability, affordability and form of housing in any society influences the nature and wellbeing of the community and its social cohesion. The Tasmanian Greens encourage housing that supports communities, is environmentally sustainable, is thermally efficient, minimises cost of living pressures and avoids suburban sprawl. A secure, affordable home provides the foundation for economic, social and physical wellbeing.

The Tasmanian Greens recognise that homelessness has a profoundly negative impact on affected individuals and families, leading to social and economic isolation as well as physical and mental health problems. We believe tackling and preventing homelessness is both core government business and a shared community responsibility.

We believe the focus of new housing developments should be on liveability, sustainability and creating communities where people want to live, work and play. We also support the rejuvenation and refurbishment of existing social housing to create more comfortable, affordable homes and more connected, safe communities.

Social housing and support will continue to target those in greatest need such as the homeless, low-income families, single aged pensioners, people living with disability and Tasmanians on low fixed incomes. To ensure that all Tasmanians have a place to call home, we support continued government and community sector investment in sustainable social and affordable housing as well as a competitive private rental market that protects tenants' rights.

The Greens will continue to implement strategies to improve the standard of both new and existing homes so that they are safe, energy efficient and water efficient, and connected to key services, education and employment opportunities. We recognise that a significant level of financial support is required to increase the supply and meet demand for social and affordable housing in Tasmania.

### Measures

#### Social and Affordable Housing

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

1. apply liveability standards detailed in the Tasmanian Government's Residential Development Strategy to all new social and affordable housing developments;
2. retrofit existing social housing complexes to extend building life, minimise resource use and improve tenants' amenities and lower their cost of living;
3. support research and development into innovative, sustainable housing design;
4. encourage sustainable urban infill housing development and creative use of urban space to build stronger, happier, more connected communities;
5. provide a security of tenure for tenants along with agreed regular reviews of rental levels;
6. develop innovative tenancy agreements that encourage tenants to take care of homes;
7. continue to enable tenants, where appropriate, to purchase Housing Tasmania homes at market rates;

8. develop a Good Neighbour Charter to apply when social housing is proposed for a particular site.

### **Energy and Water Efficiency**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

9. maintain investment in energy efficiency upgrades for low income households in the public and private rental markets;
10. standardise 7 star NatHERS rating for all new homes;
11. regulate minimum energy efficiency and water efficiency standards for all new homes;
12. establish achievable minimum standards for existing homes;
13. ensure that the initial extra cost of efficiency measures are spread over a reasonable timeframe for occupants who can demonstrate that the cost will cause financial hardship;
14. develop partnerships with water and energy authorities to manage demand by installing solar hot water systems, meters, tanks and reuse systems;
15. continue to provide education and support programs for all new efficiency measures.

### **Home Safety**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

16. mandate strict safety standards for all new constructions;
17. enable low income earners to trade off any subsidies they receive on energy costs against the installation costs of smoke detectors and circuit breakers to improve home safety.

### **Maintenance**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

18. set consistent and fair standards for the maintenance of all publicly funded accommodation so as to provide a healthy living environment for the occupant, and optimise the potential for community participation and social inclusion.

### **Future Demand**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

19. support research to determine the probable future demand for social housing so as to advise the public as to the availability of appropriate and affordable housing, and the conditions under which it will be made available.

### **Housing Debt**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

20. negotiate the transfer of debt incurred under the former Commonwealth Housing Agreement from Housing Tasmania to the Consolidated Fund and negotiate with the Australian Government to extinguish that debt.

### **Winter Electricity Rebate**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

21. create innovative schemes that enable Health Care Card holders to trade the subsidy they currently receive in exchange for double glazing, heat sealing and insulation to minimise their home energy costs.

### **Building Materials Supply**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

22. prepare a building material supply strategy to guarantee an environmentally sustainable availability of resources.

### **Sustainable Communities**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

23. apply the Residential Development Strategy to ensure that any new sites developed for housing have appropriate recreational and green spaces nearby, are pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and have access to transport, education, employment, health and community services.

### **Alternative Housing**

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

24. encourage the development of innovative housing schemes including cooperatives and co-housing arrangements;
25. establish trials of social housing on small acreages for those qualifying for public housing who have an interest in co-operative living and small-scale agricultural or compatible enterprises.