



Election charter to address housing crisis

The Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) has today unveiled its comprehensive election platform, "Changing Housing for Good," calling on all political parties to commit to addressing Australia's escalating housing crisis through significant expansion of social and affordable housing.

"Housing is at the eye of the cost-of-living storm. In this election, we know increasing community housing is the best solution to this crippling problem and it has overwhelming public support," CHIA chair Chris Smith said.

The election charter calls for four key commitments:

1. Legislate a comprehensive National Housing and Homelessness Plan - A 10-year, evidence-based plan enshrined in legislation to ensure enduring national leadership beyond electoral cycles.
2. Adopt a "1 in 10 in 20" target - Aim for one in ten homes to be social and affordable within 20 years, up from less than 4% currently.
3. Ensure climate resilience in social housing - Address poor energy performance in social housing to reduce emissions and tenant energy costs.
4. Invest in community housing sector capacity - Overhaul the National Regulatory System and expand support for not-for-profit housing providers.

Recent research from Redbridge, commissioned by CHIA, Homelessness Australia and PowerHousing Australia, reveals housing affordability has become a vote-changing issue, with 73% of voters in key electorates saying it will influence their vote in the upcoming federal election.

"Fewer than four per cent of Australian homes are social or affordable. To fix our broken housing system it needs to be more like one-in-ten."

Economic analysis from Swinburne University of Technology demonstrates that quadrupling the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) from 30,000 to 120,000 homes would deliver \$12.79 billion in social and economic benefits over 25 years.

"This research explodes the myth that social and affordable housing is purely an expense," CHIA CEO Wendy Hayhurst said. "In fact, it provides taxpayers with a powerful economic return while also building a more inclusive and healthy society.

Analysis of 2021 Census data revealed more than 640,000 Australian households' housing needs were not met by the private rental market, with the figure projected to reach almost one million by 2040.

"We are asking for a commitment that puts a significant dent in the current rates of housing stress and homelessness. Australia needs one in 10 homes for social and affordable housing, and quadrupling the Housing Australia Future Fund. A different future for Australian housing is achievable with the right action.

CHIA is calling for the Federal government to increase investment in social and affordable rental housing supply to \$2 billion per year (up from \$500 million) and lead the development of a National Framework for Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning to ensure affordable rental housing in new developments.

"The current government has made a series of policy and funding commitments that provide a foundation for relieving high and growing levels of homelessness and rental stress. However, the extent of unmet housing need requires considerable further action via a long-term and sustained response."

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