

Funding cliff looms for social and affordable housing: Peak body tells Senate Inquiry the next Budget is critical for people waiting for a home

In its submission to a Senate Committee¹, Australian Community Housing (ACH) projected a sharp drop in social and affordable homes unless permanent funding is confirmed in the 2027–28 Budget. Despite the ever-increasing need, social and affordable housing will fall to just 3.5% without this investment, according to new economic modelling.

Around **190,000 households** are on **social housing waitlists nationally**, and the number assessed as being in **greatest need has risen by close to 70%** since 2018². Social housing has fallen from around 6% of housing stock in the 1990s to about 4.1% today³.

55,000 social and affordable homes are due for delivery by 2029 when the current funding pipeline (2025–2029) ends. This is the most significant Commonwealth investment in decades; however, this hard-won momentum is at stake at the next federal Budget. With new housing taking between three to five years from funding to finished homes, next year's federal Budget is make or break.

"If we want homes being built in 2030 and beyond, the next round of investment has to be decided now," said ACH CEO Mark Degotardi. *"A gap in funding decisions becomes a gap in homes for people who need them."*

"A social or affordable home does more than provide the secure shelter people urgently need, it gives people the stability to put down roots, keep children at the same school, stay close to work and family, and make plans for the future."

New economic modelling⁴ commissioned by ACH ahead of next year's budget shows that without a permanent funding program, the share of **social and affordable housing is projected to fall to around 3.5% by 2050**. Australia needs around 23,000 additional social and affordable homes each year – 510,000 through to 2050 – to return to 1990s level: this 6% is the minimum target called for across the sector. ACH's modelling shows year by year, the scale of delivery required and the funding needed.

ACH is proposing a permanent national program that builds on the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) and provides a predictable pipeline of investment beyond 2029.

ACH is calling on the Albanese Government to:

- **invest \$2.5 billion a year** in real terms through the HAFF from 2029–30

¹Australian Community Housing, Submission to the Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into Social Housing, September 2026.

²Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Housing assistance in Australia 2026: Households and waitlists, 23 June 2026, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/housing-assistance-in-australia-2026/contents/households-and-waitlists>

³National Housing Supply and Affordability Council, State of the Housing System 2025, 21 May 2025, <https://nhsac.gov.au/reports-and-submissions/state-housing-system-2025>

⁴Modelling commissioned by ACH from Polis Partners.

- include the **funding in the forward estimates in the 2027–28 Budget** to allow certainty for the sector, and enable projects to continue moving through the development pipeline

States and territories would contribute alongside the Commonwealth. The program would build on the HAFF while allowing a broader mix of funding approaches to support projects in different markets and communities.

Interviews plus **ACH's submission to the Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into Social Housing** and their **2027–28 Budget platform** are available on request. Contact Anna Lensky 0425 766 780, anna@pitchprojects.com

Further quotes attributable to Mark Degotardi, CEO, Australian Community Housing:

“Community housing providers have built strong teams and partnerships with governments, lenders, builders and investors. A reliable pipeline gives those organisations the confidence to keep people, keep investing and keep projects moving.”

“Our modelling shows the scale of the task clearly. Reaching 6% by 2050 means around 23,000 additional social and affordable homes a year, delivered through sustained Commonwealth, state and territory investment.”

“The HAFF has created a national platform for social and affordable housing. The next step is to turn that platform into a permanent pipeline that continues beyond 2029.”

About Australian Community Housing

Australian Community Housing is the national peak body for Community Housing Providers (CHPs). CHPs are not-for-profit organisations that manage, own and develop social and affordable housing working alongside the public housing system. Unlike private landlords, CHPs are focused on people, not profit and reinvest every dollar back into homes, services and communities. ACH's member CHPs collectively manage and own around 149,000 homes across the country providing:

- **Social Housing** – for people on very low incomes who cannot access suitable accommodation in the private rental market, often for people with specific needs such as individuals experiencing homelessness, escaping domestic and family violence, or living with disability.
- **Affordable Housing** – rented at below-market rates, affordable housing helps key and essential workers, as well as people on low to moderate incomes, to live closer to where they work and study.
- **Specialist Disability Accommodation** – purpose-built housing designed for people with disability and high support needs, enabling independence, accessibility, and tailored support services.
- **Transitional Housing** – short-term supported housing that helps people move from homelessness into longer-term, stable housing options.

CHPs are registered under government regulatory frameworks and are regularly assessed against service, governance and financial performance standards.

ENDS

Media enquiries: Anna Lensky | anna@pitchprojects.com | 0425 766 780