

Statement

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Housing

Minister for Water

Minister for Equality



Tuesday, 26 March 2024

NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS TO EASE HOUSING CRISIS

The Allan Labor Government is continuing calls for the Albanese Government to significantly increase funding for housing and homelessness services as part of negotiations for a new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.

Population growth, ageing social housing and a rise in homelessness have led to unprecedented pressure on all states and territories. To assist the most vulnerable people in our communities across Victoria, we need to deliver support, care, workforce capacity, and more homes all over the state.

Through our landmark \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build, more than 9,200 homes have been completed or are underway – and we are on track to deliver more than 12,000 much-needed new social and affordable homes and create more than 40,000 jobs in construction. We're also providing \$1 billion for at least 1,300 new social and affordable homes across rural and regional Victoria.

This work can and should continue with combined funding from the Commonwealth that counters the current shortage of social housing in Victoria and delivers measurable improvements in supply into the future.

Through our Homes First Program, we are building on the nation-leading Homelessness to a Home program, which provided housing and support to 1,845 households experiencing homelessness over a period of four years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are getting on with the job, but there is much more to do.

This week's Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council meeting between states, territories and the Commonwealth continued the consensus approach in addressing the nation-wide housing crisis.

In addition to our call for further funding, the Allan Labor Government is also backing calls from the Victorian Aboriginal housing and homelessness sector for a separate First Nations National Housing and Homelessness Plan. In doing this, we can address the lived experience of hardship and disadvantage that so many Aboriginal people face in finding safe, connected, and accessible homes.

We also support a First Nations schedule to the new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement for dedicated First Nations housing funding, and capacity-building for the Aboriginal community-controlled sector. This is an important part of meeting responsibilities under Closing the Gap and builds on entry points that enable First Peoples to access culturally safe homelessness services.

We are also continuing to advocate for measures to ease workforce pressure in the sector, better resource early intervention and prevention measures to stop people from becoming homeless, and to better link the services that people rely upon in homelessness services, crisis accommodation, and social housing.