



Homes for NSW Strategy 2025–2035

Reforming how we plan, build and manage
social and affordable housing in NSW

October 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Government pays respect to the Traditional Custodians throughout NSW. We listen and learn from the knowledge, strength and resilience of Aboriginal communities. We extend our respects to Elders past and present, the Stolen Generations Survivors and their descendants. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands, sky and waters of NSW. We extend this acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that are employed by the NSW Government and recognise the unique and vital contributions they provide.

Disclaimer

The use of the term Aboriginal people throughout this document is inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people, First Nations and Traditional Custodians.

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A message from the Minister for Housing and Homelessness



From the worst landlord to the best.

For too long, the NSW Government was one of the worst landlords in NSW. People were left waiting, living in homes that were falling apart, treated as numbers instead of neighbours. That era is now over.

Our mission is simple but profound – to become the best landlord in NSW. One that listens, that responds quickly, that shows empathy and respect. Because housing is more than just buildings. It is about giving people dignity, safety, and a sense of belonging.

The Homes for NSW Strategy 2025-2035 marks a new era for social and affordable housing in our state. It is our blueprint for a housing system built on fairness and humanity, where every person has a safe place to call home and the support to stay there.

This Strategy is our promise to tenants, to people on the waitlist, to families doing it tough. You deserve better, and we are delivering it. It is backed by the largest investment in social and affordable housing in NSW history – \$6.1 billion to directly build thousands of new homes, repair the ones we have, and restore pride in public housing.

We are changing the culture of public housing. Because when we treat housing as a human right, we unlock what is best in our communities – stability, opportunity and hope.

This Strategy has been shaped by the voices of those who live this reality every day. Tenants, advocates, Community Housing Providers, Specialist Homelessness Services, unions, and frontline workers. Their experiences and insights have been our compass, and I want to thank them for their important contributions.

In this Strategy we are taking practical steps to reform outdated policies that cause stress and insecurity, like fixed-term leases and the “two-offer” rule. We are giving people greater certainty, more choice and fairer rules. We are coordinating services, so people get the support to make the most of their lives.

This marks a new chapter, one defined by empathy, accountability and action.

A government that doesn’t turn away, but turns up.

A landlord that listens.

A housing system that cares.

Because everyone deserves a home, and in NSW, that is exactly what we are building.

The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC

Minister for Housing and Homelessness

A message from the Secretary of the Department of Communities and Justice



The vision and way forward is clear –every person in NSW has access to a decent home and the support they need. At its core, this is about people –both the people we serve across NSW and our partners across government, community organisations, sector experts, and people with lived experience.

This speaks to the heart of our work at the Department of Communities and Justice. A decent home is a fundamental pillar for economic security, physical and mental wellbeing, and connection to essential services. By combining access to housing with the right support at the right time, we build a holistic approach that brings compassion into focus, working to end housing insecurity and homelessness.

This 10-year Strategy is an ambitious and pragmatic commitment to ending housing insecurity and homelessness. It really is about everyone working together, building strong partnerships and a collaborative approach.

Together, we can make a difference and ensure every person in NSW has a safe and secure place to call home and the support they need to thrive.

Michael Tidball
Secretary, Department
of Communities and Justice

A message from the CEO of Homes NSW



I am incredibly proud to launch the Homes for NSW Strategy 2025–2035 –a landmark moment for Homes NSW and all the communities we serve.

Homes NSW's vision is to deliver quality homes and services that change lives and end homelessness –and this Strategy is a bold commitment to ending housing insecurity and homelessness in our state. It's a clear roadmap for generational reform, designed to transform the social housing and homelessness system so that every person in NSW has access to a decent home and support if they need it.

We're putting people back at the heart of social housing to create a system that's fair, inclusive and empowers people to have greater control over their property and their future.

Together with the NSW Government's historic \$6.6 billion *Building Homes for NSW* program, the Strategy offers an unparalleled opportunity to deliver better outcomes for generations to come.

We can't do it alone. Real change takes partnership –across government, community and the people we serve. I'm confident that by working together, we can build a future where every person in NSW has a safe, secure place to call home.

Rebecca Pinkstone
CEO, Homes NSW





Welcome home

We are working together to put people at the heart of what we do. We're proud to deliver the Homes for NSW Strategy to build more social housing and create a more connected and viable system.

Executive summary

A home is a basic human right, yet for many people and families it is increasingly difficult to find and keep a home.

The Homes for NSW Strategy will bring transformational change to the non-market housing and homelessness system. It puts people at the heart of what we do to improve lives for our tenants, people waiting for social housing and people experiencing homelessness. It builds new homes thanks to the largest investment in social housing in the state's history. It also seeks to bring together different parts of the system behind a common vision and with a promise to work more collaboratively to improve outcomes for our shared customers.

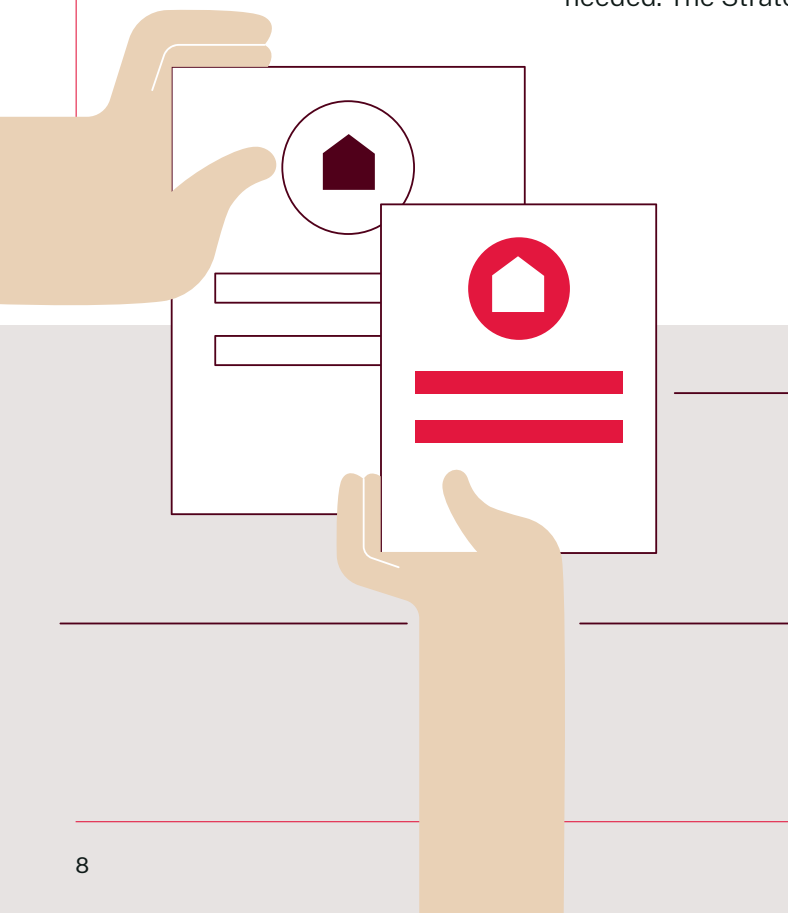
The Strategy sets out a 10-year system-wide vision that **everyone has access to a decent home and support if they need it**. Including everyone in this vision is ambitious, but recognises that a home is a fundamental human right that is critical for physical and emotional wellbeing.

At Homes NSW, we recognise that urgent and systemic change is needed. The Strategy sets out the

actions Homes NSW will take to achieve the vision under three key priorities: **customer-driven service, more and better homes, and a system that works**. We have also set **transformational targets** to hold us accountable.

We are proud to deliver the Homes for NSW Strategy. We believe it will drive critical systemic change and help us to realise our bold ambition that everyone has access to a decent home and support if they need it. This is essential to enabling the stability people need to re-engage with family, rebuild better physical, emotional and financial wellbeing, and create greater local community connections.

It will take time to make the changes needed. To build a sustainable system that is recognised as essential social infrastructure will require ongoing collaboration with provider partners, the commitment of successive governments, and the support of the people of NSW.



The current crisis and roadmap for change

The current NSW housing and homelessness crisis comes at a significant personal cost for many people and families across the state. Many people living in the private rental market are in rental stress¹ and rates of homeownership, particularly among younger people, are in decline.

Employment is no longer a safeguard against homelessness; 18% of people seeking homelessness services are employed² while older people, Aboriginal people, women and children leaving violence, and people with a disability are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity. And it is putting unprecedented pressure on social housing and crisis services.

To address the ongoing crisis, we have developed the Homes for NSW Strategy.

Through this Strategy, we are committed to producing more integrated solutions across:

- social housing
- affordable housing
- Aboriginal housing
- key worker housing
- homelessness policy and programs.

Putting people at the heart of the system is key to addressing the crisis.

This Strategy outlines how we will address the crisis. It does what our residents, customers, service partners and stakeholders have been calling out for us to do. It focuses on people's needs. It builds more social housing, and it creates a more connected and viable multi-provider system.

The following key actions are the significant changes we are making under this Strategy:

- changing our service culture to put people at the heart of what we do
- building more homes
- improving system viability and integration.

Unlike private rental, which is driven by financial returns, the main driver for social housing is a social return. Providing stable, supportive and affordable housing has individual and social benefits such as economic security, physical and mental wellbeing, and facilitating access to jobs and services. It also contributes to the prevention of homelessness, which has substantial social, personal and economic costs, particularly for people with complex needs.

Social returns are more than just a roof overhead – they require person-centred service.

Person-centred service must consider the unique needs of the individual or family, which may include:

- cultural safety
- communication needs
- physical requirements relating to location, accessibility or ease of upkeep
- support needs relating to health, community connection, ageing or other services.

The shift to person-centred service is a culture change and requires realignment of our processes, policies and what we reward in the organisation. While effective and efficient use of limited resources is a key priority, it must be balanced with the need to respond flexibly and compassionately to sustain tenancies and ensure thriving communities.



1. See for example: 2021 New South Wales, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics.
2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Specialist Homelessness Services annual report data tables 2022-23, Table Clients.19 Clients aged 15 or over, by labour force status, and by state and territory.



We're building more homes



8,400

new social homes
by 2031 for people
in need



1,200

affordable homes
by 2031



33,500

upgraded public and
Aboriginal homes

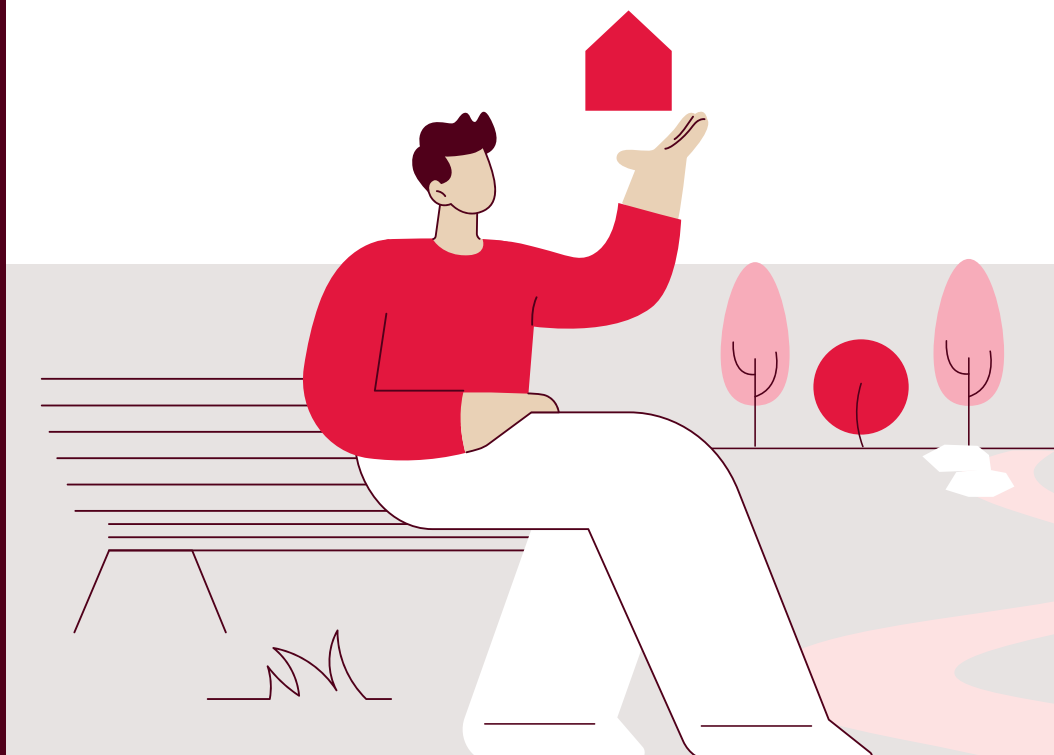
The best way to match need to service is to provide as much choice as possible.

Reviews of fixed-term tenancies have been used to terminate the tenancies of public housing tenants because they are earning an income. We will stop this practice to give tenants the security and stability they need to pursue employment and, at the same time generate higher rents to sustain the system. We are also reviewing the two-offer policy to consider whether our new approach to allocations could give people more choice about where they live.

We are also making it easier for people to access our products and services by:

- improving our communication
- reviewing our policies and products to ensure they deliver the desired customer outcomes
- using online solutions to allow people to understand their eligibility or swap homes.

We are underpinning this commitment with a target to achieve a tenant satisfaction score of 75% by 2035. This will require significant effort and improvement.



For the first time in a long time, we have money to build more social housing.

The \$6.6 billion *Building Homes for NSW* program announced in the 2024/25 NSW budget is the largest investment in social housing and homelessness in our state's history. It is genuine new money for a system surviving on too little for too long. The funding will deliver 8,400 new and replacement social homes, with at least half of the new homes going to women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

This commitment will support tenant and community wellbeing, and enhance customer and community outcomes with decent homes that are:

- affordable
- healthy
- accessible
- well-designed
- secure
- safe
- appropriate for the household.

We have already allocated \$1 billion to directly improve maintenance of public housing properties. There is also now Commonwealth money available for new social and affordable homes, and we are working to maximise that investment.

This new money will stop the decline of social housing as a share of the market. In NSW, insufficient funding for housing has resulted in the loss of social housing. Government-owned social housing has been sold to pay for maintenance, and homes have been lost from the portfolio due to a lack of maintenance. Over the past 20 years, the size of the NSW Government-owned social housing portfolio has reduced by 672 properties, despite new builds and acquisitions, and restorations and repairs that make uninhabitable properties into homes again.

We are reconnecting the housing and homelessness system.

In 2024, the NSW Government created Homes NSW to produce better outcomes for people in housing need. Homes NSW brings together different parts of government responsible for delivering social housing, Aboriginal housing and homelessness responses.

In NSW, social housing and homelessness services are delivered by a “multi-provider system”, which includes Community Housing Providers (CHPs), specialist homelessness services, Aboriginal

providers, Homes NSW and others. We are proud of the maturity and diversity of this system and the variety of strengths, capacities, ambitions and roles it contains.

Homes NSW is one of the many providers, but is also pleased to adopt the role of “system steward”, to provide leadership and direction. One of our priorities as steward is ensuring that all customers receive a quality service that meets their needs, regardless of where they access the system or which organisation assists them. Another is to create opportunities to pool and prioritise resources to improve integration and viability of the state's housing and homelessness system.



The background

“We’re all human beings and people need to be placed in buildings or homes that are safe and meet personal needs.”

— Focus group participant



The Homes for NSW Strategy outlines our vision and three priorities for the non-market housing and homelessness system. It also contains a set of actions under each priority to move us closer to the vision.

Non-market housing and homelessness products and services require market intervention for people and households on low incomes.

Non-market housing currently comprises around 5% of housing in NSW.

The Strategy does not cover private rental and home ownership, except to the extent that:

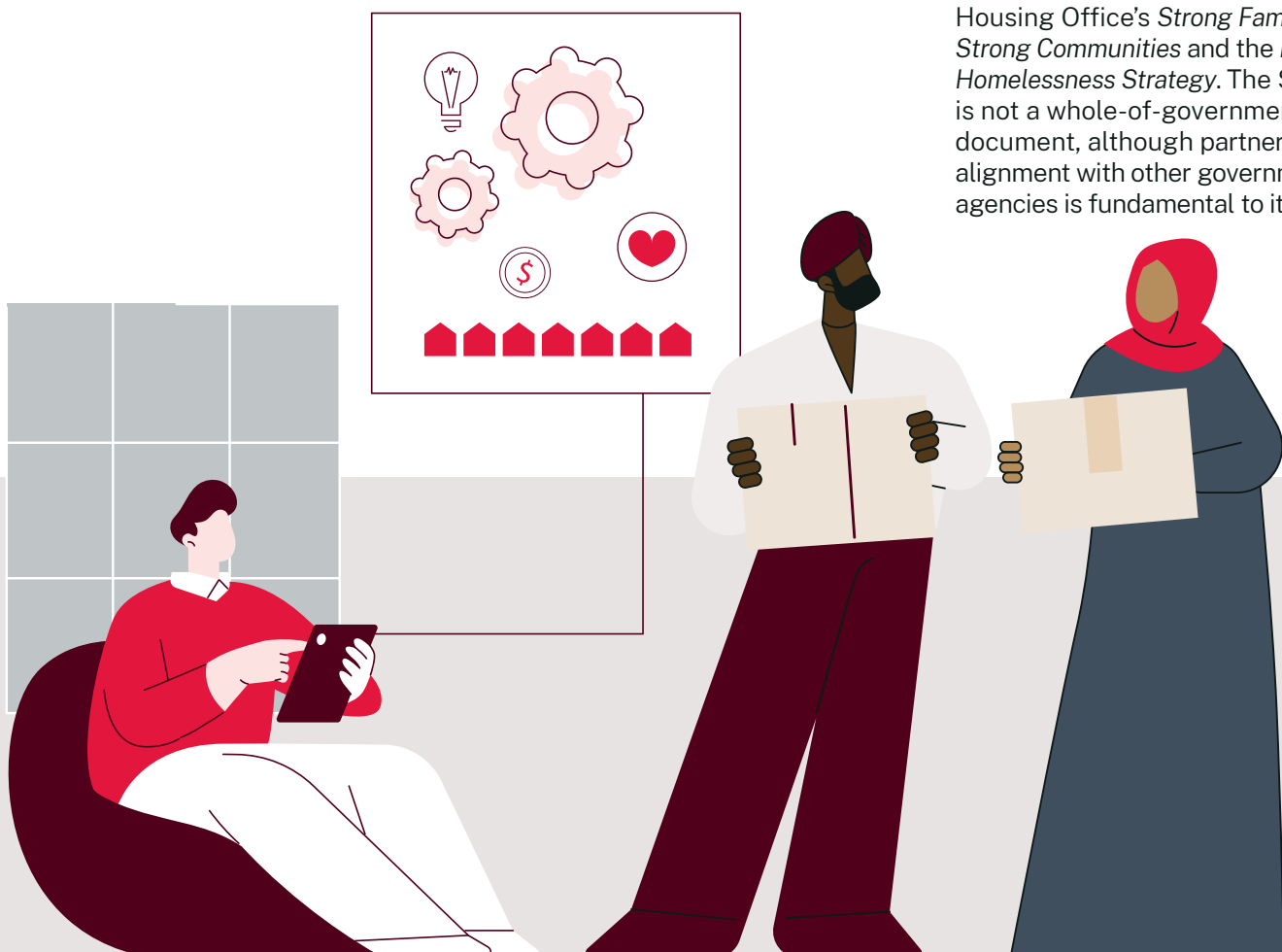
- Homes NSW assists people to access and maintain tenancies in the private rental market
- the Aboriginal Housing Office assists Aboriginal people and families to purchase homes.

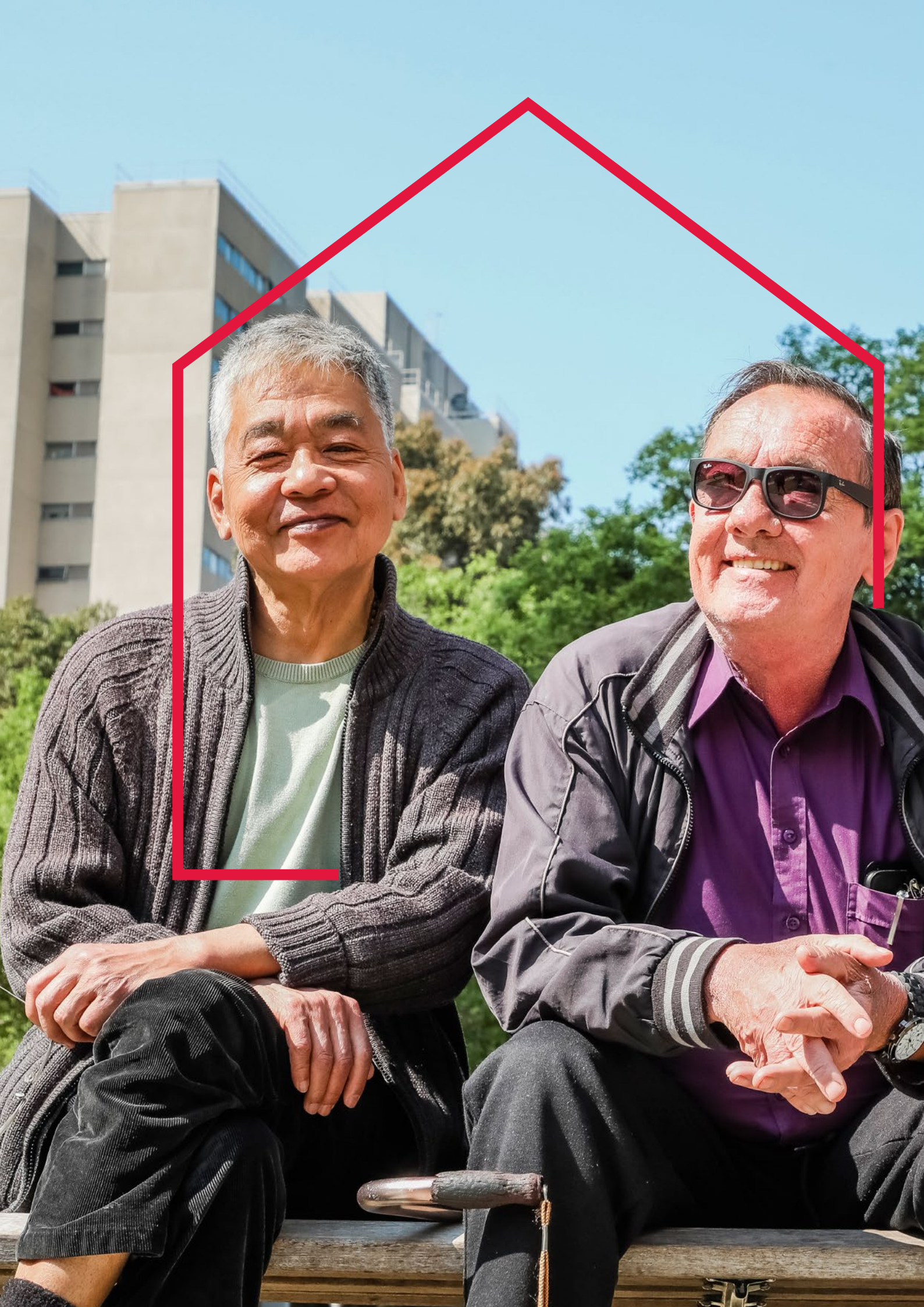
Please refer to Annexure 2 (page 59) for more information about the non-market housing and homelessness system.

The proposed actions in the Strategy are ambitious and entail major reform.

Homes NSW has benefited from the allocation of historic levels of state funding and new Commonwealth investment in social and affordable housing supply. No new funding has been committed to the service and system reforms in the Strategy. Some reforms will require additional resourcing, and others will have to be achieved within existing resources by finding efficiencies and prioritising what works. Any future funding to implement the reforms will have to be progressed through normal budget processes.

The Strategy replaces the *Future Directions for Social Housing* strategy and links and reinforces related strategies such as the Aboriginal Housing Office's *Strong Family, Strong Communities* and the *NSW Homelessness Strategy*. The Strategy is not a whole-of-government document, although partnership and alignment with other government agencies is fundamental to its success.







The Strategy for change

A home is a basic human right. It provides shelter, a safe space, and a place to develop, work, learn and feel connected to others.

The vision

Our vision is that everyone has access to a decent home and support if they need it.



The Homes for NSW Strategy's 10-year vision is that everyone should have access to decent housing and support to keep it. Consultation feedback was overwhelmingly supportive of the vision.

The vision is deliberately bold and broad because a home is fundamental for both physical and emotional wellbeing.

No one can reach their full potential without a decent home. A home offers shelter, a safe space, and a place to develop, work, learn and feel connected to others. The whole market and non-market housing systems should be delivering a decent home and support to everyone in NSW who may need it.

At Homes NSW, our most direct contribution is in the non-market housing and homelessness system. The system exists for people who cannot access or afford to keep a home in the private market. That includes people:

- living in, waiting or eligible for, or seeking social, crisis, transitional and affordable housing
- experiencing homelessness and using or seeking homelessness services
- eligible for or receiving private rental assistance products from Homes NSW.

The reference to 'seeking' housing or services acknowledges that the system currently excludes some people in dire need of housing and homelessness services; for example, people who have a negative classification from a previous social housing tenancy and people on certain visas.

Increasing social housing will also improve long-term market outcomes.

Social housing plays an important role in stabilising market dynamics and brings potential to put positive pressure on market housing to do better by introducing real competition for higher standards at the lower end of the market.³

It also acknowledges that people should be able to expect fair, equal and non-discriminatory access to a decent home, and have a voice in making key decisions about their housing and changes to housing policy and practice that impacts them.

3. Flanagan et al. (2019) A conceptual analysis of social housing as infrastructure, AHURI Final Report No. 309, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/309, accessed 14 April 2025

A 'decent' home

A decent home is one that is affordable, healthy, accessible, well-designed, secure, safe and appropriate for the household. It provides more than shelter. It ensures comfort, stability, connection to community, and the foundation for a good life.

'Decent' is intended to encompass all key elements of the human right to housing.⁴ This includes:



We believe that everybody has the right to a decent home.

We intend to realise decent homes through the Strategy's actions, including:

- adopting asset standards in social housing
- embedding Homes NSW's new maintenance system
- agreeing system-wide social housing baseline tenancy policies
- abolishing 2, 5 and 10-year fixed-term leases in public housing
- reviewing policies to ensure eviction is a last resort.



4. See Article 11, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights available at www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights, accessed 11 April 2025

What ‘support’ means

A well-functioning system doesn’t just provide a decent home – it helps people to keep it.

Small and large life events and circumstances, such as illness, job loss, family breakdown, and the impact of chronic disadvantage can destabilise households and put housing at risk. Ensuring people are connected to appropriate support can help sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness.

The word ‘support’ in the vision covers both financial and non-financial support.

Financial support includes the products currently offered by Homes NSW to start or sustain tenancies in the private market such as bond loans and tenancy subsidies. Non-financial support could include a broad range of interventions, for example:

- assistance to apply for social housing
- early intervention
- outreach
- care coordination
- links to education and training
- links to health and legal services.

Support can vary in duration and intensity. Some people may only need advice about what they are eligible for, or a one-off bond loan. Others may require long-term supported accommodation with intensive and long-term non-financial support.

Housing and homelessness services are vital in providing and facilitating access to support.

The coordination required to access the right support services that meet people’s needs at the right time is critically important. In the provision of ongoing or more intensive support services, we also respect the ‘housing first’ principle of ensuring a clear distinction between housing provider and support provider.⁵

Across the social housing system, providers have a role in both:

- connecting customers with support services
- investing in and partnering with those services to improve housing and other social outcomes.

In some cases, Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) provide significant levels of support to their customers directly.

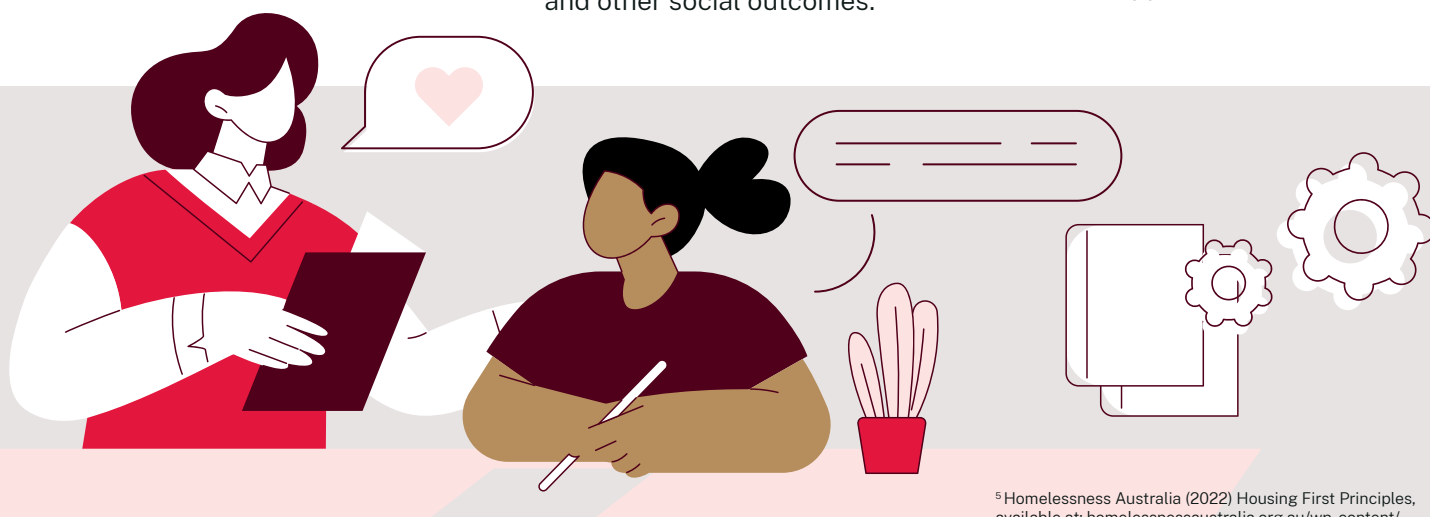
However, more needs to be done to understand the need for support across the system and how we can address it.

A decent home is key to enabling social stability.

This includes for people re-engaging with family, establishing and maintaining friendships, and in creating greater local community connections.

Not all support is provided by government or a government-funded service. We cannot underestimate the significant support that people receive from family and friends. This informal support is often not recognised but it is critically important.

Our housing and homelessness services should encourage and facilitate greater engagement with informal supports.



⁵ Homelessness Australia (2022) Housing First Principles, available at: homelessnessaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Housing-First-Principles.pdf, accessed 9 April 2025

Our ambition

We want a future in which everyone has access to an affordable, accessible, and safe home. We also want to ensure that people who need help to keep their home can get that support.

For some, the vision will feel aspirational during a housing and homelessness crisis. Others won't think that we have set the bar high enough. We believe the vision strikes the right balance of being ambitious and practical. But we know that there is a lot of work to do.

It will take time to make the changes needed to deliver on the vision.

Our ability to achieve the vision will also be impacted by forces outside our control such as affordability in the private rental market.

Achieving the vision will require ongoing collaboration with provider partners, as well as the commitment of successive governments and the support of the people of NSW to build a sustainable system that is recognised as essential social infrastructure.

Priorities

We recognise that urgent and systemic change is needed.

This is why the Strategy is focused on a set of clear and immediate actions to transform the system.

The three priorities proposed during consultation received positive feedback and have not been changed. They are:

**1.
Customer-driven
service**

**2.
More and
better
homes**

**3.
A system
that works**

Like the vision, it is intended that these priorities guide the work of all providers in the system.

The actions under each priority are for us at Homes NSW. They do not dictate the action other providers in the system should take. Some of the actions we are taking in our role as the system steward require us to work in collaboration with our partners to develop and implement.



Transformational targets

Each priority sets high-level transformational targets to drive change and amplify transparency.

Our priority-level targets will enable us to track our progress, and we will report on them regularly. They are high-level and will be supported by the detailed shared measurement framework to be developed with our system partners. We anticipate the inclusion of a suite of indicators to measure our collective progress towards agreed outcomes. The framework will give us a more detailed understanding of the system's health and the impact of the changes set out in this Strategy.

The shared measurement framework may identify additional targets under each priority. Considering the Strategy's 10-year horizon, we expect the framework to be continually refined to ensure it guides the alignment between our vision and priorities, and the dynamic nature of the housing and homelessness system. It will also evolve as we improve data collection and reporting stemming from the data improvement strategy.





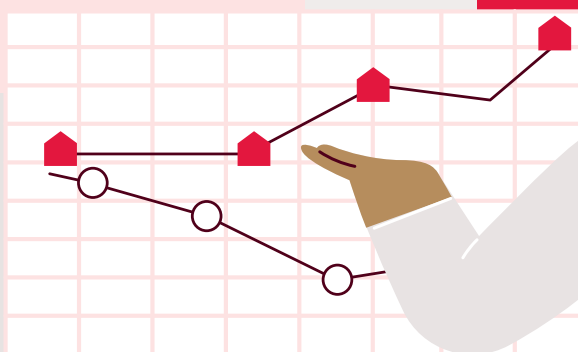
Measuring progress

This Strategy contains several high-level targets that will drive action and accountability.

The targets are ambitious and designed to stretch our systems to deliver. They will be supported by a comprehensive shared measurement framework that will provide detail and further clarity on performance against the various actions.

We are looking to establish and clearly articulate the outcomes and indicators across the housing and homelessness system, and the Strategy's priority areas.

The shared measurement framework will be developed collaboratively and will include agreed indicators to be captured and reported by all system partners.







Priority 1

Customer-driven service

We want to build a system that is genuinely person-centred. One that treats people with kindness, dignity and respect. We want to transform the system to positively change lives.

Priority 1: Customer-driven service

“To be able to provide sufficient and adequate housing, we also need to focus on providing an environment within these homes that will lead to greater health, education, employment, social and community outcomes.”

— Stakeholder consultation interviewee

At Homes NSW, we are committed to leading generational change in the culture of service delivery across the system.

We want to build more homes. And we want to build a genuinely person-centred system.

This means a system that treats people with kindness, dignity and respect. It means a system that provides a platform to positively change lives.

In the last 10 years, the system has been driven by rationing and residualisation – treating social housing as a scarce resource and a ‘last resort’ only to be allocated to the most vulnerable people. This has resulted in negative impacts on our customers and communities, on our staff, and on our customer service culture.



Building our customer service culture

To embed a system-wide customer service culture, we need to start with organisational change.

This starts at the top by being clear on what our core responsibilities are and realigning the business to achieve them. This includes clear customer service standards for social housing applicants and residents.

At Homes NSW, we hold various roles in the non-market housing and homelessness system.

- **Social housing landlord**
We want to be the best landlord in NSW. We will do this through improved maintenance, building a service culture and focusing on sustaining tenancies. We also want to ensure that applicants can get matched to the services they need as quickly as possible.
- **System steward**
We want all customers to receive a quality service that meets their needs, regardless of where they access the system or which organisation they are assisted by.

The reform actions span both these roles.

Reform actions

We are introducing major reforms to transform our service delivery.

The reform actions we will take are:

Changing how we resource and support our front-line teams and how we measure staff and team performance to support good service.

This will likely require changes to tenancy management ratios, clearer key performance indicators and better use of technology to support service delivery.

Improving our communications with customers.

This includes reviewing the tone and content of our letters, website, policies and forms. Our communications must be easily understood and be simple and clear for our customers.

Ensuring that our staff better reflect our customer base.

This includes consideration of cultural diversity, gender and disability, and employment of people with lived experience, including social housing residents.

Embedding customer feedback to drive system improvement through tenant and community engagement, and improved complaints management.

Our customers have unique insights and experiences in using the system, which offers us an opportunity to make our services more inclusive, sustainable and better aligned with the reality of people's experiences.

Developing service standards which are person-centered and flexible, strengths-based, culturally appropriate and trauma informed.

It is critical that our customers are clear about what to expect from us. We will work with partners and customers to agree to objective and quantifiable standards for service delivery. We will then implement these standards at Homes NSW, ensuring our front-line teams have the resources and training to do so. This is intended to hold us to account and acknowledge that we have work to do to reach the agreed service standards. We also look forward to a future where clear service standards could be applied across the system via contracting arrangements or other business mechanisms.

Harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies to improve customer experience.

We will be responsible and ethical in our use of new technologies with a focus on privacy and transparency. This will ensure we maintain community trust while delivering targeted, efficient and compassionate service. We can use AI to:

- automate routine communications such as sending timely updates, reminders and responses to common enquiries. This facilitates customers receiving more consistent information, faster.
- reduce administrative tasks. This creates space for staff to deliver quality face-to-face service.
- develop predictive maintenance tools. These will help identify property issues before they escalate, reducing disruptions and improving our overall asset management.

Making accessing our products and services easier

We are reviewing and refreshing all our policies to ensure they are customer-centred and that they support people to create positive change.

We want to make entry less confusing. People need to see what products and services they are eligible for and we must make it easier for them to access. Everyone should be able to understand their housing and support options and be matched to appropriate services and products. Smarter tools will help customers find out quickly and easily what support and assistance is available for them. Our priority housing guidelines and eligibility criteria will not change; however, we will improve our allocations approach to ensure homes meet people's needs and strengthen communities.

We will bring housing and homelessness services and providers together.

This will be undertaken through a local coordination approach to ensure people are connected to the right support at the right time to get and keep a home. We will also improve screening, triage and referral at intake to link people quickly to the right support.

Reform actions

We need to do more to understand support needs and address them across the system.

The reform actions we will take are:

Building and implementing a system-wide online entry point matching customer needs to services and products.

This will involve implementing a needs assessment process to provide more efficient assistance to customers. This includes making the social housing application processes easier to understand, such as introducing plain-language forms. We will continue to actively support vulnerable customers and cohorts with their applications.

Reviewing private rental products.

A clearer pathway and smoother transition between social housing products is required. This includes how private rental assistance interacts with the social housing register to ensure that applicants and staff are maximising their time and use of resources.

Abolishing 2, 5 and 10-year fixed-term leases in public housing.

Over time, we will be phasing out 2, 5 and 10-year fixed-term leases and moving tenants to what is known as a periodic lease. This is a continuous lease with no end date. Eligibility reviews will no longer take place. This will offer tenants more long-term security in their home and remove unnecessary paperwork.

Reviewing the 'two-offer' policy.

We are reviewing the two-offer policy as part of our consideration of a new approach to allocations. Under the two offer policy a person offered social housing must accept one of two reasonable offers or be removed from the social housing register. We have received feedback that this creates anxiety for applicants and results in some people accepting unsuitable homes.

Developing an online tool to assist tenants to proactively swap homes.

Implementing this across the system will reduce the transfer list.

Reviewing our negative classification policy.

We will do this in line with private rental market practice.

Revising our anti-social behaviour management policy.

This will drive improved practice in managing neighbourhood complaints and anti-social behaviour.

Improving our approach to allocations to ensure homes meet the needs of customers.

We are running several different approach trials to allocating vacant public housing properties to identify what best meets people's needs and strengthens communities.

Ensuring consistency and fairness across the system

As system steward, we are responsible for ensuring the system is both fair and consistent.

Standards and baseline policies aim to ensure that no customer will receive a sub-standard service. Providers require flexibility to be responsive to the different:

- needs of their local areas
- needs of their different portfolios
- ways that they engage with their customers
- characteristics of the communities they serve
- needs of different cohorts.

We understand that being flexible enables innovation which generates best-practice models and better customer outcomes.

We will also aim to focus on outcomes rather than just outputs.

To get better outcomes for the people we serve we want to do better at considering individual circumstances rather than taking a one size fits all approach.

Reform actions

We need to create a fairer, clearer and more consistent social housing system by aligning key tenancy policies, establishing shared asset standards, and streamlining complaints management across all providers.

The reform actions we will take are:

Developing system-wide baseline tenancy policies.

Key examples of policies that should be broadly consistent between providers include rent-setting, mutual exchange, tenancy succession and absence from a dwelling (for example when a tenant is in custody).

Reporting on shared asset standards across the system.

This will ensure homes are built and maintained to a baseline standard and that irrespective of provider, residents can expect their home to be well-maintained and upgraded appropriately.

A system-wide approach to complaints management.

Tenants and advocates have expressed confusion about the complaints pathways for providers across the system. Homes NSW will review complaints management across social housing providers to refine processes that ensure all customers receive consistent, timely and fair outcomes.



Transformational targets

Success should be reflected in all customer interactions and satisfaction.

We have chosen these targets because the success of any customer-driven service system should reflect in:

- how satisfied its customers are with the services provided to them
- opportunities for them to interact and provide feedback.

We will use the *National Social Housing Survey* (NSHS) undertaken by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to measure tenant satisfaction for people in public housing, community housing and state-owned and managed Aboriginal housing. This will be

measured both collectively for all providers and separately by provider category. The NSHS takes place bi-annually, so we will also report on this target over the same timeframe.

In 2022/23* the NSHS reported a 60.7% tenant satisfaction for all providers collectively in NSW:

- 53.1% for public housing
- 71.1% for community housing
- 59.5% state-owned and managed Aboriginal housing.

Priority 1 has two targets:

A minimum

75%

tenant satisfaction rate by 2035 for all social housing providers.



Increased tenant engagement interactions with Homes NSW.



*the most recent data



Raising satisfaction rates will require significant efforts.

Reaching a 75% satisfaction from existing levels for public housing, community housing and state-owned and managed Aboriginal housing will require significant efforts, but we are committed to doing our best to achieve this result through the actions identified in this Strategy.

Further consultation is required to understand what we need to do differently for Aboriginal tenants to improve satisfaction. To inform our work, we are developing an *Aboriginal Wellbeing Framework* in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Office and NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations.

We also aim to increase interactions with our tenants.

We will measure this by recording Homes NSW tenant engagement specifically to capture tenant voices and lived experiences to inform:

- policy
- the type of homes we build
- how we support the people who live in them.







Priority 2

More and better homes

We're building more and better social and affordable housing to change lives and support people and communities to thrive.

Priority 2: More and better homes

For the first time in a long time there is money available to replace, upgrade and maintain ageing social homes. This is thanks to the commitment of the NSW Government in the 2024/2025 Budget.

To deliver these new homes, the NSW Government will work in close partnership with:

- Community Housing Providers (CHPs)
- Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs)
- communities
- local councils
- the private sector.

The NSW Government is also working with the Commonwealth to maximise the opportunity to grow social, affordable and transitional housing across our state through Commonwealth initiatives.⁶ This new funding will allow us to create social and affordable housing for people in need.

The availability of affordable housing will become more important within the system to alleviate housing stress for very low-to-moderate income households as new affordable homes are delivered under the *Housing Australia Future Fund* and other programs.

The *Building Homes for NSW* Program is an investment in more and better homes for the people of NSW.



\$5.1 billion

investment in social, affordable and key worker housing supply



\$1 billion

investment in critical maintenance



50%

of new homes prioritised for women and children leaving domestic and family violence

6. Current Commonwealth initiatives include the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), the National Housing Infrastructure Facility – Social and Affordable Housing Program and Crisis and Transitional Housing Program (NHIF SAH, NHIF CT), the Social Housing Accelerator Program (SHAP), National Housing Accord and the Housing and the Housing Support Program Federation Funding Agreement – Social Housing Program.

7. Homelessness NSW (2023). Rare, brief and non-recurring: A system wide approach to ending homelessness together, homelessnessnsw.org.au/rare-brief-and-non-recurring-a-system-wide-approach-to-ending-homelessness-together, accessed 14 April 2025.

The new homes we build and acquire must support our aim to make homelessness ‘rare, brief and not repeated’.

This means providing long-term housing so people do not get stuck in the crisis system.⁷ New homes must also be the type of homes that support tenant and community wellbeing and enhance customer and community outcomes—homes that are:

- accessible by public transport
- close to shops and services
- well designed, well built, and well maintained.

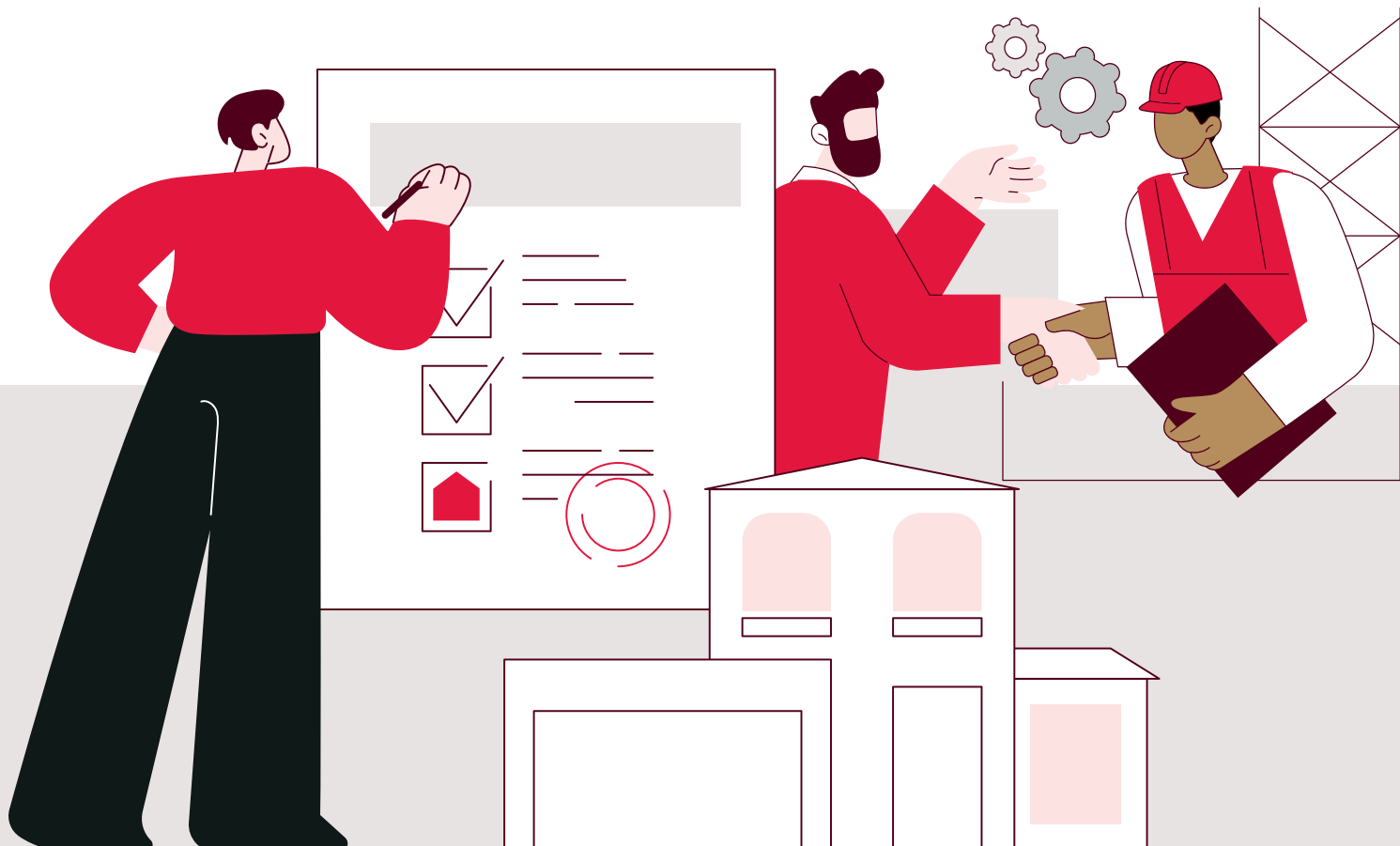
Investment in existing social housing communities is also a priority. This includes large sites of social housing and other areas of concentration. Recently, large areas of renewal has been primarily addressed via major redevelopment. We are considering a more strategic approach to the way we work in areas of concentrated social housing to improve outcomes for those communities.

It’s important to recognise that the new homes we build will still not meet existing or anticipated future levels of demand.

This is despite the historic levels of funding from the NSW Government and investment from the Commonwealth. Continuing to address the housing and homelessness crisis will require additional funding in the future. It also requires us to get clearer on:

- defining the role that affordable, key worker, crisis and transitional housing plays in the system
- how we can best utilise them to meet the urgent housing need in NSW.

We must also reconsider our financial assistance products to save and sustain private market tenancies where possible.



Increasing social and affordable housing for people in need

“A decent home to me, means that I’m able to live comfortably, knowing I’m able to afford and have a sense of security in the home.”

— Stakeholder, Homes NSW formation consultation

Delivering the Government’s commitments under *Building Homes for NSW* will require a combined effort across the entire system. To deliver new homes, we will collaborate and partner with others including:

- the community housing sector
- developers
- builders
- maintenance providers
- councils
- other government and non-government stakeholders.

Our restructure is designed to maximise delivery. We have also created a prioritisation framework to decide where the new homes will be located. The framework considers:

- housing demand
- growth opportunities
- environmental risk
- access to services
- value for money
- time efficiency.



Reform actions

We need to deliver more high-quality, accessible and sustainable social and affordable homes, while improving design standards, climate resilience, financial supports, and system access.

Councils are key partners bringing local understanding of housing needs and opportunities.

We need to ensure a coordinated approach to engaging with councils, including:

- clarifying responsibilities between Homes NSW, CHPs and councils
- understanding what councils are doing in the local area related to housing and homelessness
- explaining our expanded role in providing affordable and key worker housing.



The reform actions we will take are:

Delivering our commitments under the *Building Homes for NSW* program.

This includes meeting our target of 8,400 social homes and aiming for 1,200 affordable homes by 2031, in partnership with the community housing sector.

Establishing a new Homes NSW Design Office.

This will ensure new social housing is of high quality and provides a legacy for the future. The Office will offer design guidance for all new properties to be accessible, culturally appropriate and climate resilient. We will also explore opportunities in the Government's NSW Housing Pattern Book for low and mid-rise housing. Good design can reduce long-term costs, promote resident safety, ensure new developments fit in with their neighbourhoods, and build in flexibility so that our social housing can better meet changing tenant needs.

Ensuring new social and affordable housing is accessible to people with disability.

We will also enhance the accessibility of existing homes. New social housing in NSW must be built to the Livable Housing Design Guidelines silver level.⁸ We will reform the modification policy to streamline the process for simple modifications.

8. This refers to the Access Institute, Silver Level, *Livable Housing Design Guidelines* (SLHDG). New builds implement silver level in all ground floor or lift-serviced homes with level access, allowing easy adaptation to meet the changing needs of people as they age, allowing them to stay in their home.

Embedding climate and disaster resilience into property design and maintenance.

We will review climate risk modelling and develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan and Net Zero Plan in partnership with the community housing sector that identifies priority risks and opportunities and provides a detailed roadmap to put adaptation into practice.

Delivering environmental sustainability initiatives to approximately 6,000 public homes.

This will help keep homes cooler in summer and warmer in winter and reduce tenant energy bills.

Reviewing financial assistance products enabling people to start/sustain private tenancies.

The intention is to be clear about the purpose of these products and where they can be deployed to have the greatest impact. To best respond to the needs of our customers, this may include designing new products or reconfiguring old products.

Reviewing the way people can access affordable housing in NSW.

Many people do not know how to access affordable housing and there is no statewide register. We will consider how affordable housing can best meet housing needs.

Maximising our resources.

We will do this by re-tenanting homes quickly when they become vacant and proactively managing rental arrears.

Delivering well-maintained homes to support thriving tenancies and communities

Delivering homes is much more than putting a roof over someone's head – it's about delivering quality homes and communities, where people can thrive.

At Homes NSW, we have the largest property portfolio in the state, maintaining over 95,000 homes. We need to make the best use of these existing homes, including undertaking timely repairs, refurbishments and modifications.

Reform actions

We need to strengthen tenant voice and local community involvement, improve maintenance quality and transparency, and ensure the management of large sites of social housing genuinely supports cohesive, empowered neighbourhoods.

The reform actions we will take are:

Embedding and improving the new maintenance system.

This is focused on quality, accountability, better outcomes for tenants and better value for taxpayers. It enables more local suppliers to service their own communities and removes crucial decision-making from major maintenance suppliers. We will also introduce new technology to support self-service to enable customers and staff to track repair requests and escalate repairs concerns.

Developing a new management approach for large sites of social housing.

This will outline commitments about how we engage with tenants in concentrated areas of social housing during the renewal process. This management approach is about more than just renewal and redevelopment; it also supports ensuring cohesive neighbourhoods and empowers residents to be involved in decisions affecting them.

Continuing to bring tenant participation in-house and supporting tenant-led initiatives in local communities.

Community development is an essential function of a social landlord. We will support local community and tenant-led initiatives to build strong communities. We will ensure tenants inform our service delivery in a way that suits them. This includes working in partnership (where appropriate), for example, to assist with elevating the voice of Aboriginal tenants.



Growing key worker housing to support regional and rural service delivery

Our focus has broadened to include affordable and key worker housing.

The ongoing housing crisis presents unique issues to the delivery of priority government services. Without access to suitable housing, key workers are locked out of locations facing market failure. This is risking vacancies in key roles that would disrupt health, education, emergency services, and other critical government functions.

The NSW Government typically addresses this issue through employing agency-led housing initiatives in education, policing and healthcare in regional and remote NSW. While these programs have collectively housed thousands of government workers over time, there is increasing demand to serve a broader range of workers and communities.

We're committed to empowering key workers.

While the NSW Government's housing agency previously focused on social housing, our focus has broadened to include affordable and key worker housing. We recognise the need to collaborate with other government agencies, including the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and NSW Health to deliver key worker housing in areas of need. The expanded use of affordable housing is included in priority 3.

Reform actions

We need to design a clear, consistent model for key worker housing that meets community needs by defining its purpose, eligibility, and expanding access to support more essential workers.

The reform actions we will take are:

Developing a new operating model for key worker housing.

This will enable the delivery of services that communities need.

We are consulting with stakeholder agencies on:

- a policy and proposal defining key worker housing purpose and eligibility
- an operating model enabling more efficient delivery, with the capacity to grow.



Transformational targets

We are increasing social and affordable housing to house people in need.

By 2031, the *Building Homes for NSW* program will deliver 8,400 new social homes including replacing 2,200 social homes and aiming for 1,200 affordable homes. This includes homes that will be built in partnership with community housing providers, developers and builders. The 1,200 affordable homes are anticipated to be delivered in projects initiated by us.

We will also upgrade 33,500 existing public and Aboriginal homes by 2028 to improve their quality and standards. The upgrades are likely to focus on energy efficiency and thermal comfort and are aimed at:

- improving the overall quality of life for residents
- making homes warmer in winter and cooler in summer
- reducing energy bills.

We have chosen this target because a key goal is increasing social housing to house people in need. Building more homes and upgrading existing homes speaks directly to this goal.

We will report on the new social and affordable homes we deliver cumulatively each year including how many of them are Aboriginal housing. The spread will not look even as some years will have higher or lower numbers of new homes built than others. Cumulative numbers will enable us to measure aggregate progress towards the target each year.



Priority 2 has three targets that will be delivered under the *Building Homes for NSW* program:

Delivering

8,400

new and replacement social homes aiming for 1,200 affordable homes by 2031



Upgrading

33,500

public and Aboriginal homes by 2028



Increasing the number of social homes each year.



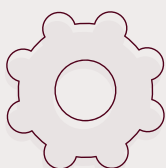
We will also increase the number of social homes each year.

Social housing matters to many people – and changes lives.

We're building new and replacement homes targeted to:

- women and children escaping domestic and family violence
- Aboriginal people and their families
- older Australians
- those living with disability
- young people without family support.

We have not chosen the number of people on the social housing register as a target because it can be highly influenced by administrative practices including negative classifications, application requirements and ongoing eligibility checks. This is demonstrated by the fact that the number of people waiting for social housing nationally has been largely flat over the past 20 years, despite rising housing need (as indicated by the number of people experiencing homelessness and rental stress statistics).







Priority 3

A system that works

We're working together with all providers to transform the non-market housing and homelessness system for a better future for all.

Priority 3: A system that works

Providers have different strengths, capacities and ambitions, and play different roles in the system. This diversity characterises, and is a key strength of, the multi-provider system in NSW.

As a truly multi-provider system, services are delivered by a range of providers, not just government. Homes NSW is one of the many providers, but we hold the dual role of “system steward”. Other providers include Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs).

We are proud of the capacity and maturity of our multi-provider system in NSW.

The state’s CHPs have considerable depth of experience and expertise in social housing management and delivery and vital knowledge of their local communities. They operate at a wide range of scales and locations and can also specialise in meeting the needs of diverse customer cohorts.

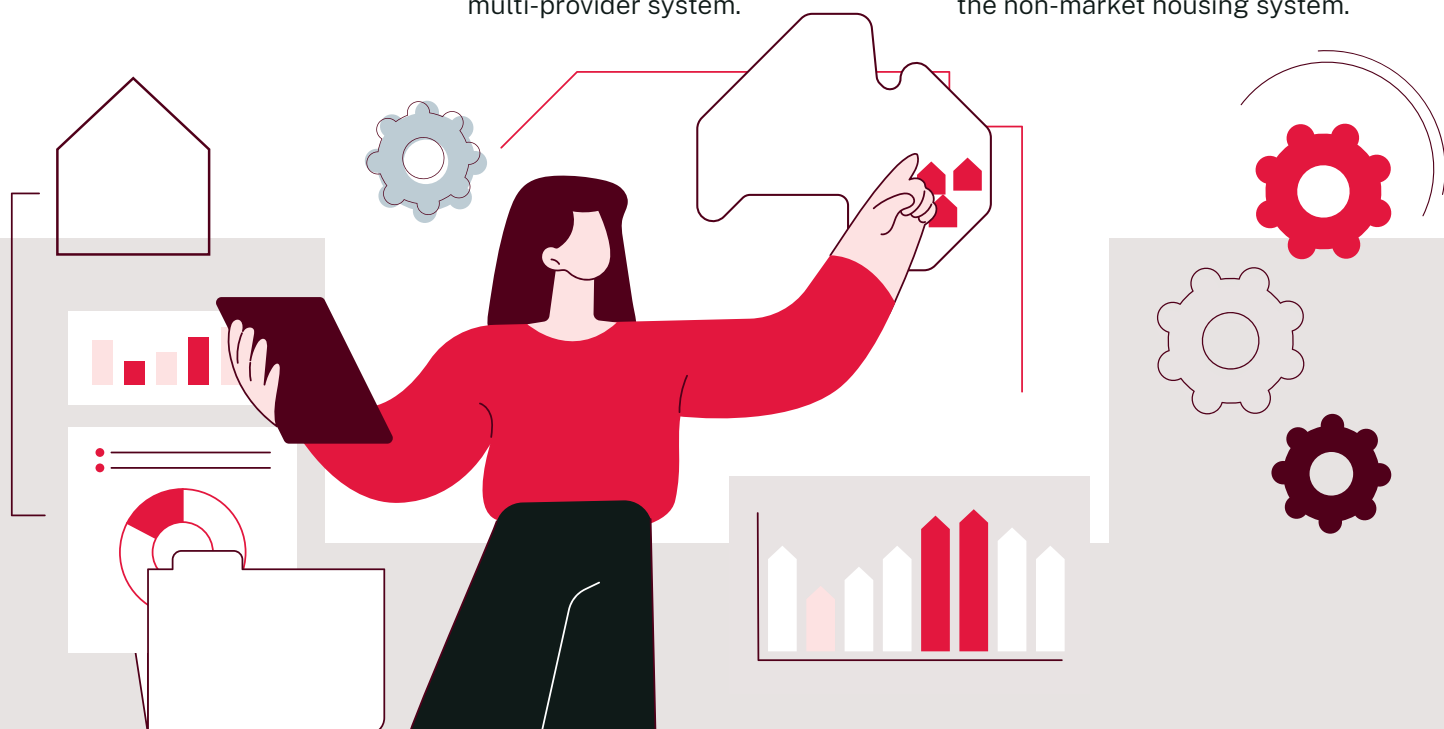
The ever-growing sophistication of our partnership arrangements is not only enabling new supply now but is strengthening the system for the future. Our investment in CHPs also delivers secondary impacts, allowing them to build social housing and leverage it to fund the building of more social and affordable housing in the longer-term. That is why we have committed to supporting the growth of the CHP sector in a viable multi-provider system.

The diversity of our multi-provider system is also key to our strategic approach.

As system steward, we want to provide certainty to all stakeholders with a clear strategy for the multi-provider system. It is a strategy that values diversity by supporting opportunities for smaller and specialist providers, particularly ACHPs. It must also articulate the value of local providers already embedded in communities and local service systems. This strategy will influence how we:

- procure services
- deliver policy and program reform
- measure our performance over time.

As the housing and homelessness crisis is affecting groups of people who have not previously required housing assistance, under the Strategy, affordable housing will take on a more prominent and strategic role in the non-market housing system.



Affordable housing strengthens our system.

The provision of affordable housing is no longer just concerned with mitigating housing stress for low-to-moderate income households. It is now needed for people experiencing homelessness or significant housing vulnerability. Across NSW, fully employed people are seeking to access temporary accommodation in motels or are living in camping grounds due to housing shortages and housing unaffordability.

The CHP sector in NSW, in partnership with the NSW Government, has successfully secured a significant proportion of funding under the Commonwealth's *Housing Australia Future Fund*. This will grow the scale and capacity of our state CHPs and deliver much needed new affordable housing supply.

While affordable housing will always require some form of subsidy, using mixed-tenure development models also improves the financial sustainability of social housing providers. The greater availability of affordable housing across all providers may also improve outcomes for customers by enabling them to move between the two tenures as their needs change over their lifetime.

There is significant expansion of delivery of affordable housing on the horizon.

This is being driven by a range of funding, planning and investment models with capacity to drive new operational models and new players in the affordable housing market. A key strategic priority is continuing to support the growth of affordable housing delivered by CHPs while also exploring the opportunity for public and ACHP delivery. Alongside supporting the growth of affordable housing, to ensure that we maximise the impact of our investment in this product we are also focused on improving regulation and compliance, and designing a more equitable access system.



Providing positive leadership as system steward

At Homes NSW, we will set the foundations for collaboration across the system.

During consultations, stakeholders told us that as system steward, they want us to:

- provide leadership of the multi-provider system
- strengthen connections and system governance
- enable system participants to work to their strengths in contributing to system objectives
- champion Closing the Gap priorities to improve Aboriginal housing outcomes
- provide clarity about desired outcomes for the system
- measure collective progress towards an agreed vision and objectives.

Stewardship does not mean that we determine all aspects of the system. Rather, it means that we set the foundations for collaboration across the system, including clarifying the scope for shared decision-making.



Reform actions

We need to strengthen system stewardship by providing clear leadership, improving governance, supporting provider growth and viability, simplifying how partners do business with us, and aligning efforts across government to achieve shared housing outcomes.

The reform actions we will take are:

Leading and collaborating with provider partners to create and maintain effective system governance at both statewide and local levels.

This includes working with providers and other government agencies with whom we share customers (including Health and Communities and Justice) to establish ongoing and ad hoc meetings and forums that:

- support providers to identify where their actions impact other parts of the system
- facilitate collaborative discussions.

This will help us work collaboratively to achieve the system-wide outcomes and actions articulated in this Strategy.

Working with our partners to develop a strategy to grow the community housing sector and support sector viability.

We want to support growth and development of our delivery partners to increase their overall share of social housing. In a resource constrained environment, we must make the best use of every dollar. This means building on local services, lifting our expectations about organisational capability and reducing service duplication. The focus of our work will be:

- setting targets for the proportion of Aboriginal housing in the system
- articulating the role of specialist providers
- reducing mixed management arrangements.

Making it easier for our partners to do business with us by reviewing our procurement and contracting approach.

We can provide clarity by communicating commercial positions, designing clear entry points for each program and making business decisions aligned with agreed system-wide priorities. This will also require changes to our existing procurement processes to ensure strategic outcomes are sought and rewarded. This includes through a more nuanced understanding of value-for-money, and by involving partners in creating template agreements and delivering our revised direct dealing policy.

Initiating and coordinating government responses and supporting providers across government.

This includes leveraging housing reforms across NSW Government agencies and supporting providers to access Australian Government resources such as the Housing Australia Future Fund and National Housing Infrastructure Facility.

Working with our partners to identify changes to policy and practice, improving long-term financial sustainability for providers.

Many CHPs have already broadened their income base by introducing affordable housing into their developments. Homes NSW is considering both adopting this approach and models of tenure flexibility that attach tenure to a person rather than a property.

Outlining clear principles for a multi-provider system in NSW

Our partners are key to delivering on our commitments under this Strategy.

Community housing providers and Aboriginal community housing providers are already major partners in delivering the *Building Homes for NSW* program.

We will maximise resources to expand the ability of the system to meet customer needs.

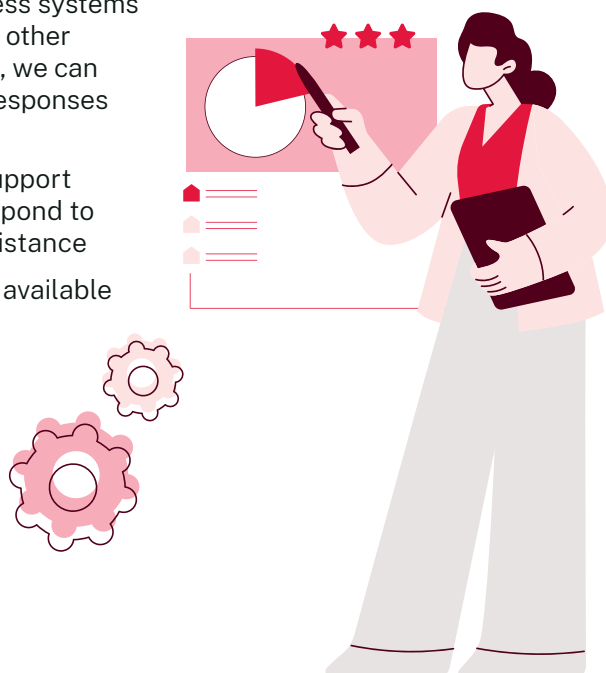
At Homes NSW, we recognise that all providers bring resources, networks and expertise to our shared goal of assisting people in housing need. Supporting and facilitating collaboration across the system maximises outcomes for our customers.

By bringing together parts of the housing and homelessness systems previously split between other agencies or sitting alone, we can think cohesively about responses across the system that:

- marry housing and support services to better respond to people who need assistance
- make the best use of available resources.

For example, local coordination networks have the potential to join up services across funding streams from government agencies to assess and respond to local need. This approach draws on and builds up local community capability by using local resources more efficiently, targeting new investment to where it is needed, and supporting innovative, culturally appropriate responses. This integrated approach creates better outcomes for customers because it better matches service to need. It also acknowledges that preventing and responding more effectively to homelessness requires integration across government and systems.

This approach builds on the work done by some Aboriginal providers who have already been co-ordinating local services to deliver better outcomes for their communities.



Reform actions

We need to better prevent and respond to homelessness by strengthening local collaboration networks, shifting contracts to focus on sustainable outcomes, and working more closely with councils to deliver the right housing locally.

The reform actions we will take are:

Establishing local collaboration networks to support vulnerable individuals.

This includes those whose tenancies are at risk or who are homeless. Local collaboration networks will enable care coordination between housing, homelessness and health providers working with other relevant local services to support rough sleepers and other people with complex need to access and sustain long-term housing.

Reforming contracts to focus on outcomes that sustain tenancies and end homelessness.

We will build greater flexibility into our contracts with housing and homelessness services to drive responsive service delivery that meets customer needs.

Closer collaboration with local councils.

Councils play a key role in identifying local housing needs and developing connected and resilient communities. This includes:

- working together to ensure the right housing is being delivered locally
- creating a plan to improve collaboration in our shared efforts to reduce homelessness.

Champion Closing the Gap priorities to improve Aboriginal housing outcomes

We are working with Aboriginal people and communities to close the gap.

Problems in our service culture are experienced most profoundly by Aboriginal families and communities. As system steward, we are working with Aboriginal people and communities to close the gap; however, we recognise that the system is still a long way from this point.

We have a clear obligation under the National Agreement on *Closing the Gap* to build the community-controlled sector. Our long-term goal is to resource Aboriginal-controlled organisations to deliver social housing and homelessness services to Aboriginal communities, so that Aboriginal people have a choice of service providers. This will also allow communities to leverage their own successful, Aboriginal-led models of service-system coordination to improve outcomes for Aboriginal families and communities.

As part of our commitment to *Closing the Gap*, we must transform ourselves.

That means transforming both our workforce and our service delivery at Homes NSW. However, for as long as we fail to remedy Aboriginal people's mistrust of the agency and its predecessors, we will struggle to recruit Aboriginal talent.

Reform actions

We need to strengthen cultural safety by growing the Aboriginal community-controlled housing and homelessness sector, building a more representative workforce, and embedding cultural confidence across the system.

The reform actions we will take are:

Increasing investment in Aboriginal community-controlled service delivery.

This means increasing the number of properties under management by Aboriginal Community Housing Providers and increasing homelessness service delivery by Aboriginal providers. We will also develop a joint statement of commitment with the Aboriginal Housing Office to grow the Aboriginal community-controlled sector.

Improving cultural safety for both Aboriginal customers and Aboriginal staff.

We will also provide better support and opportunities for emerging Aboriginal talent. We will develop an anti-racism strategy with a key focus on:

- cultural safety for Aboriginal staff
- locally delivered, mandated cultural training
- clear cultural confidence indicators.

Establishing clear Aboriginal cultural confidence service indicators for the whole system.

Increasing the number of Aboriginal staff employed at all levels of Homes NSW.

Improving our service culture depends on this. We will aim to have a staffing profile that matches the cultural demographics of our customers.



Measuring collective progress towards the vision and objectives

We will work with peak bodies, service providers, and customers to develop a shared measurement framework.

Key priorities for the indicators are that they:

- **prioritise person-centred outcomes**

Previous indicators such as the number of people on the register, or the number of exits from social housing have encouraged practices and policies that resulted in poor outcomes for some individuals. For example, we will be phasing out 2, 5 and 10-year fixed-term leases in public housing, so our tenants feel secure in their social home and confident to pursue employment without the risk of eviction.

- **include customer service standards**

At present, there are no clear standards for customer service in public housing managed properties. These include phone call response times, maintenance response times, management of complaints and appeals.

- **are culturally appropriate**

This will ensure we are measuring what really matters to our Aboriginal customers and tenants, and our performance against these. This includes reporting on our performance against Closing the Gap targets.

- **provide timely feedback to drive continuous service improvement**

The integration of indicators into service delivery allows for ongoing data capture and more timely feedback. This allow us to adjust our programs and practices to do more of what works well and adjust where needed.

- **are integrated into service delivery to streamline data collection.**



Reform actions

We need to drive positive outcomes for people in the non-market housing and homelessness system by measuring progress via the shared measurement framework.

As system steward we will focus on:

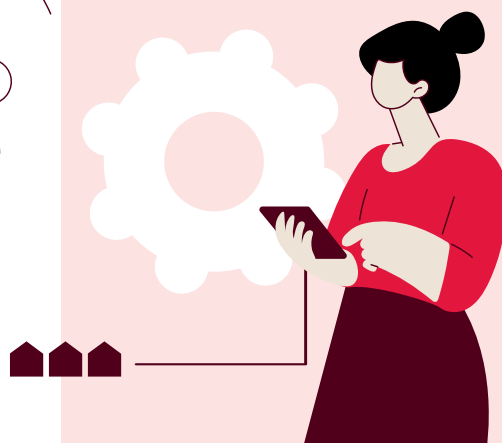
Developing a shared measurement framework

The shared measurement framework will include agreed indicators to be captured and reported by all system partners. Implementing consistent systemwide indicators and reporting will ensure transparency, drive delivery of our priorities and provide a better understanding of the role played by each part of the system.

The process of developing the indicators must be collaborative to ensure they are captured efficiently and provide a meaningful benchmark of progress.

Developing a data improvement strategy

As we develop the framework, there is potential to encounter issues in data consistency and capture. These issues will be captured in a data improvement strategy that will progress data improvements across the system. This may include integrated reporting across different parts of the system, for example, Specialist Homelessness Services sector and Community Housing Providers.



Transformational targets

We are in an ongoing housing and homelessness crisis. Our aim is to assist as many households as possible to secure housing.

To ensure we build a new system that works, we have developed the following targets:

- **Increasing the number of households assisted with secure housing.**
This will include households that are able to access social, affordable and key worker housing as well as assisting households to secure or maintain tenancies in the private rental market.
- **Supporting the growth of the community housing provider sector in a viable multi-provider system.**
We want to support the growth of our community partners to leverage their particular strengths in developing new social and affordable housing and

harnessing resources in their local communities to improve outcomes for their customers. We will work collaboratively to develop a strategy to grow the community housing sector and support its viability. Achievement against this target will be measured by the release of the growth strategy and progress against the strategy.

- **Ensuring at least 10% of social housing is managed by ACHPs by 2035.**
As an important step towards meeting our commitments under *Closing the Gap*, we aim to increase the proportion of social homes managed by Aboriginal community housing providers. We are striving to increase this from 4.2% at present⁹ to at least 10% by 2035.

Priority 3 has five targets:



Increasing the number of households we can assist to secure housing.



Supporting the growth of the CHP sector in a viable multi-provider system.





- **Increasing the number of Aboriginal-controlled homelessness services.**

Aboriginal-controlled organisations are the experts on the needs of Aboriginal families and communities. We support their role as leaders of policy and practice development on Aboriginal homelessness.

- **We also aim to reduce the number of repeat episodes of homelessness.**

This target is aligned with The NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035 which sets out a vision to 'make homelessness rare, brief and not repeated because people have a safe home and the support to keep it'.

Ensuring at least

10%

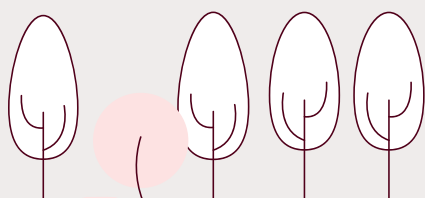
of social housing is managed by Aboriginal Community Housing Providers by 2035.



Increasing Aboriginal-controlled homelessness service delivery



Reduce the number of repeat episodes of homelessness



⁹ Social_Housing_Residential_Dwellings | Tableau Public 6,539 (ACHP managed dwellings) as a percentage of 155,905 (total social housing dwellings in NSW)





Thank you

The NSW Government would like to thank the many agencies, organisations and individuals who have given their time, experience and expertise to the development of the Homes for NSW Strategy 2025-2035. We're guided by your voices and insights, which have shaped a clear direction for Homes NSW over the next 10 years. Together, we can make a difference and build a fairer system for generations to come.

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks for the support and contributions we received during consultation.

We received strong participation, which saw:

- 242 survey responses
- 60+ formal submissions
- 150+ stakeholders engaged.

Most importantly, we had a balanced and representative mix of voices, with around:

- 50% of participants identifying as people with lived experience
- 50% professionals from the housing and homelessness sector.

We acknowledge that these do not represent every voice of contribution. We remain committed to listening, learning and evolving our work in partnership with the sector, ensuring the voices of people with lived experience are at the heart of change.

Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association NSW (ACHIA NSW)

“Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) stand ready to partner with Homes NSW, with mainstream CHPs, private industry and all institutions seeking to invest in diversifying the housing continuum to enable families to live longer, stronger and better lives; housing is the linchpin of better life opportunities for tenants.”

Blue CHP Limited

“We are pleased to see a focus on sustainable tenancies and better housing outcomes.”

Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM)

“The vision provides an appropriate system-wide purpose and direction for all providers to work towards over the next 10 years.”

CHIA NSW

“CHIA NSW supports the long-term vision and direction of the Homes for NSW Strategy. As the peak body representing not-for-profit community housing providers, we look forward to continuing our successful partnership with the NSW Government to deliver more homes and outcomes for the people of NSW.”

Common Equity NSW

“We support the emphasis on a customer-driven approach, that empowers tenants and communities, and on improved access to diverse housing options.”

Counterpoint Community Services

“For far too long, tenants have raised valid concerns only to be left feeling dismissed. A customer-driven, person-centred service model is an overdue but critical shift.”

Domestic Violence NSW

“DVNSW supports the inclusion of trauma-informed approaches and the need to emphasise safe housing.”

Homelessness NSW

“We need a strategy that recognises housing as a human right. A secure and safe home is the centrepiece of a stable life, where with the right wraparound supports, people can heal and thrive.”

Legal Aid

“Homes NSW has a key role to play with regard to priority reform 2, by building the Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector, and particularly Aboriginal community-controlled housing providers (ACHPs), to deliver the best services to Aboriginal people.”

NSW Council of Social Service

“NCOSS commends Homes NSW for taking a system-wide approach to reform – it is fundamental to truly making an impact.”

Supported Accommodation and Homelessness Services Shoalhaven Illawarra Ltd (SAHSSI)

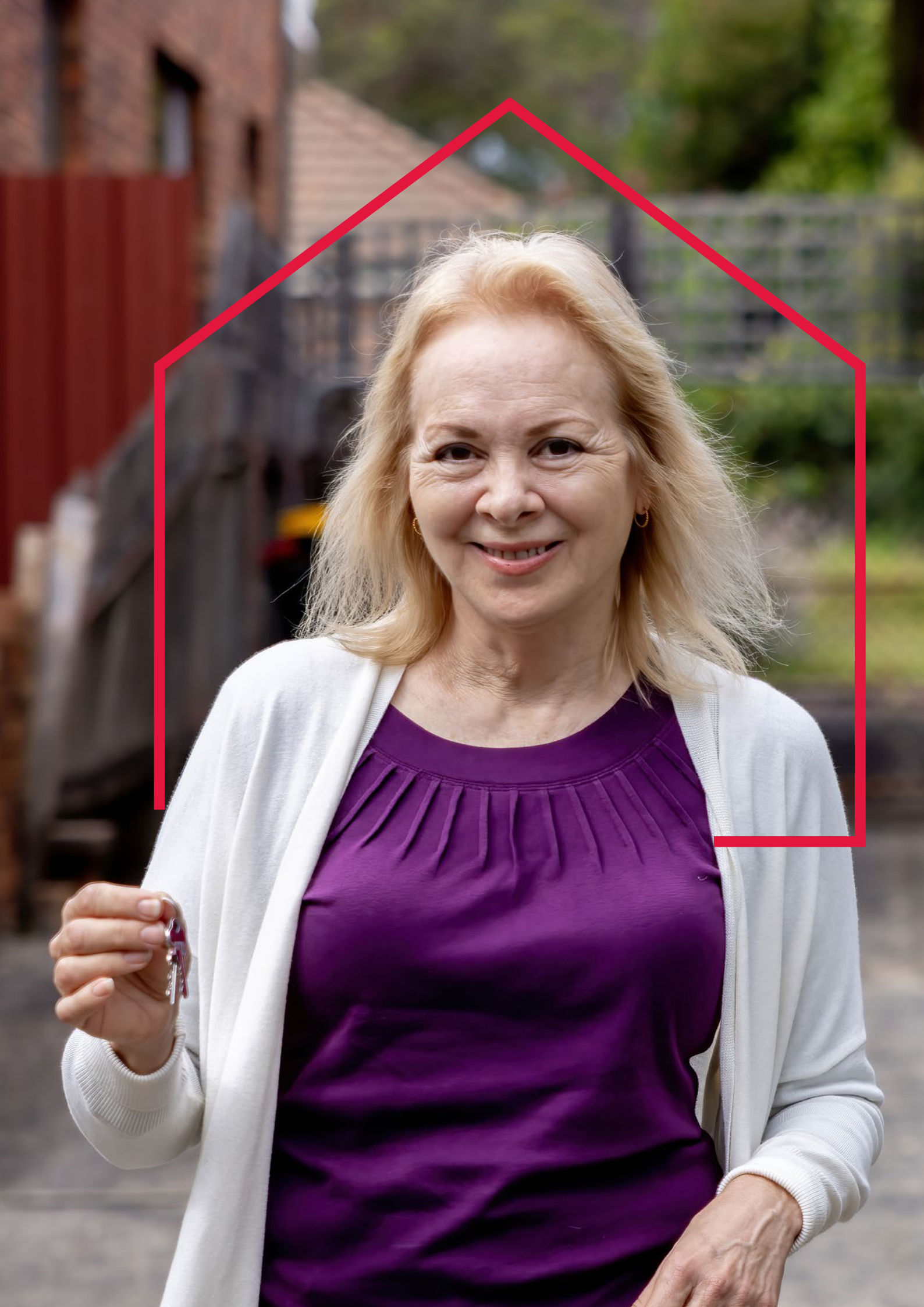
“We are thoroughly encouraged to see this change in rhetoric and recognition of the important and life-long role that social housing will play in many clients’ lives.”

Tenants' Union of NSW

“Tenants know best their homes, their communities, their strengths and their challenges. Listening to and acting on their experience and expertise needs to be the foundation for transforming the public housing system in NSW.”

Organisations that contributed to our development of this Strategy include:

Albury City	Hunter Ageing Alliance (HAA)
Asylum Seekers Centre	Justice and Equity Centre (JEC)
BlueCHP Limited	Legal Aid NSW
Bridge Housing	Link Wentworth
Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM)	Local Government NSW (LGNSW)
Cancer Council NSW	Mission Australia
Centre for Housing and Urban Research (CHUR), Macquarie University	National Disability Services (NDIS)
City of Sydney	NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS)
Climate Change, Place and Mental Health Incubator, University of Sydney	NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)
Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association (CPSA)	People with Disability Australia (PWDA)
Common Equity NSW	Prestige Infrastructure
Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) NSW	REDwatch
Community Industry Group	Refugee Advice & Casework Service (RACS)
Counterpoint Community Services	Shelter NSW
Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW)	Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast (SJASC)
End Street Sleeping Collaboration	Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)
Faith Housing Australia	Supported Accommodation and Homelessness Services Shoalhaven Illawarra (SAHSSI)
Foyer Foundation	Sydney Cohousing
Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA)	Tenants' Union of NSW
Hands Off Glebe	Tweed Shire Council
Health NSW	Uniting NSW.ACT
Home in Place	Western Sydney Community Forum (WSCF)
Homes North	Women's Housing Company (WHC)
Homelessness NSW	Yfoundations
Housing All Australians (HAA)	
Housing Industry Association (HIA)	





Annexures

We're working together with all providers to transform the non-market housing and homelessness system for a better future for all.

Annexure 1: Action tables



Priority 1: Customer-driven service

Targets	Homes NSW actions
1. Attaining a minimum 75% tenant satisfaction rate by 2035 for all social housing providers.	1. Building our customer service culture 1. Changing how we resource and support our front-line teams. 2. Improving our communications with customers. 3. Ensuring that our staff better reflect our customer base. 4. Driving system improvement, through tenant and community engagement and improved complaints management. 5. Developing service standards that are person-centred and flexible, strengths based, culturally appropriate and trauma informed. 6. Harnessing artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies to improve customer experience.
2. Increasing tenant engagement interactions with Homes NSW.	2. Making accessing our products and services easier 7. Building and implementing a system-wide entry point that matches customer need to available services or products. 8. Reviewing private rental products. 9. Abolishing 2, 5 and 10-year fixed-term leases in public housing. 10. Reviewing the 'two-offer' policy 11. Developing an online tool to assist tenants to proactively swap homes across the system to reduce the transfer list. 12. Reviewing our negative classification policy in line with the private rental market practice. 13. Revising our anti-social behaviour policy to drive improved practice in managing neighbourhood complaints and anti-social behaviour. 14. Improving our approach to allocations to ensure homes meet the needs of customers.
	3. Ensuring consistency and fairness across the system 15. Developing system-wide baseline tenancy policies. 16. Reporting on shared asset standards across the system. 17. Implementing a system-wide approach to complaints management.



Priority 2: More and better homes

Targets	Homes NSW actions	
3. Delivering 8,400 new and replacement social homes and aiming for 1,200 affordable homes by 2031.	1. Increasing social and affordable housing to house people in need	18. Delivering our commitments under the Building Homes for NSW program. 19. Establishing a new Homes NSW Design Office. 20. Ensuring new social and affordable housing is accessible to people with a disability and enhancing the accessibility of existing homes. 21. Embedding climate/disaster resilience into property design and maintenance. 22. Delivering environmental sustainability initiatives to approximately 6,000 public homes. 23. Reviewing the wide range of financial assistance products currently available to enable people to start and/or sustain private tenancies. 24. Reviewing the way that people can access affordable housing in NSW. 25. Maximising our resources by re-tenanting homes quickly when they become vacant and proactively managing rental arrears.
4. Upgrading 33,500 public and Aboriginal homes by 2028.	2. Delivering well-maintained homes to support thriving tenancies and communities	26. Embedding and improving the maintenance system 27. Developing a new management approach for large sites of social housing. 28. Continuing our efforts to bring tenant participation in-house.
5. Increase the number of social homes each year.	3. Growing key worker housing to support regional and rural service delivery	29. Developing a new operating model for key worker housing that enables the NSW Government to deliver services that communities need.



Priority 3: A system that works

Targets	Homes NSW actions	
6. Increasing the number of households we can assist to secure housing.	1. Providing positive leadership as system steward	30. Leading and collaborating with provider partners in creating and maintaining effective system governance at both a statewide and local level.
7. Supporting the growth of the CHP sector in a viable multi-provider system.		31. Working with our partners to develop a strategy to grow the community housing sector and support sector viability.
		32. Making it easier for our partners to do business with us by reviewing our procurement and contracting approach.
		33. Initiating and coordinating governmental responses and support providers across government.
8. Ensuring at least 10% of social housing is managed by Aboriginal Community Housing Providers by 2035.	2. Outlining clear principles for a multi-provider system in NSW	34. Working with our partners to identify changes to policy and practice improving long-term financial sustainability for providers.
		35. Establishing local collaboration networks.
		36. Reforming contracts to focus on outcomes that sustain tenancies and end homelessness.
9. Increasing Aboriginal-controlled homelessness service delivery.	3. Champion Closing the Gap priorities to improve Aboriginal housing outcomes	37. Facilitating closer collaboration with local Councils.
		38. Increasing investment in Aboriginal community-controlled service delivery.
		39. Increasing the number of Aboriginal staff employed at all levels of Homes NSW.
10. Reduce the number of repeat episodes of homelessness.	4. Measuring collective progress towards the vision and objective	40. Improving cultural safety for both Aboriginal customers and Aboriginal staff and providing better support and opportunities for emerging Aboriginal talent.
		41. Establishing clear Aboriginal cultural confidence service indicators.
		42. Developing a shared measurement framework.
		43. Developing and implement a data improvement strategy.

Annexure 2: Non-market housing and homelessness system

This Strategy is focused on the non-market housing and homelessness system (the system), which sits within the broader housing system that includes:

- private market homes (owned or rented)
- government laws and policy settings that affect housing (such as planning, tenancy regulation and taxation).

In NSW, around 95 per cent of households live in market housing. Of those:

- about one-third of households live in a home that they own without a mortgage
- about one-third live in a home that they own with a mortgage
- about one-third live in private rental.

In NSW, as in most parts of Australia, the number of renters is increasing. Our rates of homeownership, particularly among younger people, are in decline.

The remaining 5% of households live in social housing and other non-market housing.¹⁰

Products and services in the non-market system require a market intervention for people and households on low incomes.

This intervention is predominantly in the form of government funding. The NSW and Australian Government share the cost of funding the non-market housing system. In 2023-24, the NSW Government spent \$892 million on homelessness and social housing. In the same period, the Commonwealth contributed \$516 million through the *National Housing and Homelessness Agreement*.

Non-market housing and homelessness includes:

- crisis accommodation
- temporary accommodation
- informal housing¹¹
- social housing
- affordable housing
- medium-term, transitional and key worker housing.

It also includes services provided to people living in or seeking this accommodation or experiencing homelessness.

10. As of June 2024 there were 3,467,500 residential dwellings in NSW (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1325233/australia-nsw-residential-dwelling-quarterly-stock>) and 155,905 social housing dwellings in NSW (https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/dcj.statistics/viz/Social_Housing_Residential_Dwellings_17032188360200/Dashboard?publish=yes)

11. Informal housing refers to housing that sits outside regulation under the Residential Tenancies Act, or where residents in practice have very limited access to regulatory protections. This includes caravans, boarding houses, lodging, and some share housing.

Non-market housing

5%

- Affordable housing
- Social housing
- Private rental products
- Medium-term housing
- Transitional housing
- Key worker housing
- Crisis accommodation
- Homelessness service
- Informal housing



Market housing

95%

- Private rental
- Home ownership with mortgage
- Home ownership without mortgage

This Strategy is focused on the non-market system because this is where we can assert and deliver the most impactful influence.

The non-market system operates alongside broader government social support systems including:



Health



Child protection



Corrections



Aged care



Disability support



Commonwealth income support

Many housing and homelessness system customers have long and continuing engagement with these other service systems. Sometimes these systems cause housing need or homelessness. At other times, they can prevent or reduce the need for housing and homelessness services. However, unlike the *NSW Homelessness Strategy*, the *Homes for NSW Strategy* will not be a whole-of-government response. The strategy and policies of other government agencies will form part of the context only.

The non-market system is a multi-provider system delivered by community housing providers, homelessness service providers and Aboriginal-controlled organisations in cooperation with the NSW Government. NSW is the only state or territory with a shared access system for social housing called *Housing Pathways*. It has delivered:

- a 'no-wrong-door' approach for housing assistance by public housing and participating community housing providers
- streamlined access to social housing across the state.

Social housing

Social housing is secure, affordable housing for people on very low and low incomes who have a housing need. It is the largest part of the non-market system comprising about 4.5% of all NSW households. Across the state, there are around 155,000 social housing properties. NSW has as much social housing as Queensland, ACT and Victoria combined.

Social housing includes:

- public housing managed by Homes NSW and the Aboriginal Housing Office
- community housing managed by not-for-profit, non-government registered community housing organisations.

NSW has a genuine multi-provider system, including a robust and mature community housing sector and an emerging registered Aboriginal community housing sector. In NSW, CHPs and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers now own or manage around 30% of social homes. Homes NSW supports this multi-provider approach because of its capacity to:

- increase the scale of delivery
- draw on additional sources of funding and other resources
- deliver greater product and service variation and specialisation
- encourage innovation.

The amount of social housing as a proportion of the housing market has steadily declined over recent decades. This means fewer housing options are available for people on lower incomes.

The homelessness system

A wide range of services are working to prevent and respond to homelessness in NSW. These include services for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, crisis and temporary accommodation, and a range of other accommodation and support services.

The Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) program is a key NSW Government response to homelessness, supporting people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Services include:

- early intervention
- outreach
- case management
- links to education and training
- provision of crisis and transitional accommodation with tailored supports.

The SHS program's primary objective is ensuring that people who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness are supported to achieve safe and stable housing in the community.

Affordable housing and key worker housing

Affordable housing is housing made available to very low-to-moderate income households where rent is discounted or set against household income, so that the households can meet other basic living costs.

Government key worker housing is provided to attract and retain workers where the lack of suitable housing is a barrier to service delivery, productivity, and service outcomes. The focus for key worker housing is locations with hard-to-fill roles across core education, health and safety services.



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