

## Media Release

1<sup>st</sup> May 2022

### National housing peaks give thumbs up to a National Housing Plan

Housing sector peak bodies representing low-income households and community housing providers have welcomed [today's policy announcements by the Australian Labor Party](#) as a timely recognition of the urgent need to tackle intensifying housing unaffordability.

The media focus has been on the Help to Buy shared ownership scheme to assist lower and moderate-income households get on the housing ladder.

Ms Emma Greenhalgh, Chief Executive Officer National Shelter, said 'We know that shared equity purchase initiatives to facilitate lower income households into home ownership work. The West Australian government has been successfully running just such a scheme for over a decade. A welcome aspect of this approach is its potential attractiveness for people looking to re-enter home ownership as well as for potential first home buyers. This is critical, particularly for older women, facing housing challenges following a family separation when there had been joint ownership'.

But we know that cost of living pressures have been hitting renters particularly hard. Just in the past week we've seen yet another report highlighting just how tough renting is for many Australians. Anglicare's nationwide survey of nearly 46,000 homes advertised for rent found the grand total of 720 (less than 2%) that were affordable to a single person on the minimum wage. So, the ALP commitment to develop a National Housing and Homelessness Plan provides a real opportunity to build our way out of this crisis.

'National Shelter and CHIA have been calling for a national housing strategy for years. It needs to bring together the interconnected elements that make up the housing system to design one that responds to the housing needs of all Australians', Emma continued.

Ms Wendy Hayhurst, Chief Executive Officer at the Community Housing Industry Association, said 'The plan, the proposed supply and affordability council and the national housing agency - Housing Australia - aren't made for a media sound bite. But together they provide the necessary ingredients to move us towards solving housing unaffordability – good quality information, and a forum to bring partners together under national leadership'

She went on to say, 'There is a lot to do, we know that social housing has reduced to less than one in twenty homes across Australia. That's because public and community housing has grown by only 4% over the past 25 years while our population has increased by 30%. Only 1-2% of housing built each year is social and affordable housing – far short of the 16% we managed in 1950s and 1960s. Without a long-term national strategy, we're going to keep going backwards.'

National Shelter and CHIA call on all sides of politics to prioritise making housing affordable to all Australians and look forward to working with whoever forms the next government to achieve this.

National Shelter's full suite of policy positions is available at <https://shelter.org.au/site/wp-content/uploads/National-Shelter-Policy-Positions-FINAL-3.pdf>



CHIA's election platform is available at <https://www.communityhousing.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CHIA-2022-Federal-Election-Platform-web.pdf?x84932>

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