



Affordable Housing Action Plan

**Progress Report
2008**

www.actaffordablehousing.com.au



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Actions on affordable housing

Actions on affordable housing

The ACT Government released its *Affordable Housing Action Plan* in April 2007, containing 62 initiatives to provide more affordable housing and rental accommodation for Canberrans. The Action Plan focuses on home ownership, private rental, community and not-for-profit housing, public housing, and supported accommodation (including emergency housing).

Since the release of the plan, actions to implement all of the 62 initiatives have commenced. The key actions undertaken are summarised below.

More land to ease demand

- The Government has accelerated the new land release program to address demand for land, with more than 3,400 dwelling sites released in 2007-08 (the largest residential land release program since self government), a further 4,200 new dwelling sites scheduled for release in 2008-09, and an average of 2,750 dwelling sites to be released per year in the following four years.
- Blocks of land are now available for over-the-counter purchase, with sites available in Bonner, Franklin and Ginninderra Ponds.
- The ACT Government is continuing to closely monitor the land supply pipeline to ensure appropriate and efficient responses to land supply in the future.
- The ACT Government is also working to maintain competition in the housing market by releasing land through a range of ways including government land releases, joint-ventures and private englobo estates.
- Through the *Building the Future* program funded in the 2008-09 Budget, \$200 million has been committed principally to support trunk infrastructure in new developments over the next five years.

Steps towards a streamlined planning system to help deliver more homes

- The *Planning and Development Act* and a restructured Territory Plan have been introduced, which provide for fast-tracked approval processes in greenfield sites.
- Further amendments are being made to improve the operability of the legislation, particularly in relation to extending the range of exempt development, increased tolerances, and reduced requirements for amendments to developments already approved.
- A new compact housing code has been introduced to help facilitate affordable house and land packages. The ACT is the first jurisdiction to introduce such a code for blocks under 250m².
- A new electronic development application lodgement and tracking system is being developed to improve processing times.
- The fees for failure to develop land within the relevant timeframes have been increased to discourage land banking and land speculation. These are currently subject to review in respect of commercial development.

Stamp duty concessions to help first home buyers and pensioners

- The Government has enhanced its stamp duty concession scheme for eligible first home buyers, including through:
 - allowing the deferral of payment of stamp duty for up to 5 years;
 - increasing the stamp duty income threshold to \$120,000 per annum;
- Another key measure has been the introduction of a Pensioner Duty Concession Scheme for people on aged or disability pensions and Veteran Gold Card holders to assist them in moving to more suitable accommodation.

New initiatives to help more people into the housing market

- The ACT Land Rent Scheme commenced on 1 July 2008. The scheme allows eligible households to rent (rather than purchase) the land component of their property and has been designed to help a number of Canberrans who might not otherwise be able to buy their own home to have access to the housing market. The scheme will be reviewed after six months with a view to opening the scheme up to other lessees at the general land rent rate.
- The Government now requires that 15% of all new residential estates must now include house and land packages for \$300,000 or less.
- To meet this requirement, the Land Development Agency (LDA) has introduced the *OwnPlace* program with a panel of builders who are able to construct affordable housing on compact blocks.

More affordable rental accommodation

- The Government has called for expressions of interest from institutional investors to implement an affordable private rental accommodation scheme which will provide 200 to 400 additional affordable rental dwellings. The ACT Government is also working with the Commonwealth to assist in the implementation of the National Rental Affordability Scheme, which creates incentives for private developers to provide affordable rental accommodation.
- The ACT Government is also engaged in discussions with other State and Territory governments to review the Commonwealth Rent Assistance scheme.

Support for public, community, and not-for-profit housing providers to meet the range of housing needs for Canberrans

- The Government has supported CHC Affordable Housing to enable it to deliver 1,000 new properties for sale or rent over the next ten years. To achieve this, a program of direct sale of land from LDA (including three properties and further provision of an additional 120 sites in 2007-08) has been established, together with an equity injection of \$40 million (with the transfer of properties from Housing ACT to CHC), and provision of a \$50 million loan facility from the ACT Government.
- Shared equity schemes for public housing and community housing tenants are being explored to allow more tenants to buy their homes.
- Tenant information and advocacy services have been expanded.
- Public housing stock is being restructured to achieve more targeted housing that is available to best meet tenants' needs. The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS) will be purchasing 16 new blocks from the Land Development Agency (LDA) in 2008-09 in keeping with this strategy.
- A review of eligibility criteria has occurred to ensure that public housing is available without delay for those who are most in need. Priority applicants are now being housed within three months.
- A pilot for a youth stairwell model has commenced at Kanangra Flats. The program provides support to young tenants with similar backgrounds in multi-unit complexes, helping them to build supportive community networks.

Encouraging a new standard for innovative affordable housing

- The ACT Government funded the Housing Industry Association and Australian Institute of Architects *Affordable Housing Design Competition*, and also the Master Builders Association Special Affordable Housing Award for 2008. The winners of the HIA/RAIA competition were announced in March 2008, with Marcus Graham and John Katsanevakis winning a prize for their design for a site in Holt, and a prize awarded to the Expert Client and Vision Building Group for their design for a site in Franklin. The MBA Chief Minister's Special Affordable Housing Award was announced in June 2008, with the Village Building Company, together with Project Coordination, Oztal Architects, and Sanctum Interior Design, and Mark Porreca announced as joint winners.
- Innovation in the design and construction of affordable housing products will be showcased in two new demonstration villages, to be located in Franklin and in Dunlop.

Ensuring a sufficient supply of skilled workers to meet demands for housing construction

- In May 2008, the ACT Government released its ACT Skills Future strategy which includes a number of long term initiatives designed to address the skills challenge. The strategy includes accelerating apprenticeships, building relationships between industry groups, Registered Training Organisations and Group Training Organisations, and reviewing the age criteria for participation in education and training.
- A Bachelor of Building and Construction Management and a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning are being introduced at the University of Canberra, in collaboration with the construction industry, to promote career pathways and encourage entry to the industry.



Actions on home ownership

Actions on home ownership

Action Plan Goal: To ensure the healthy operation of the private market to allow it to deliver a range of housing options in locations across the ACT and to facilitate the goal that residents should not have to spend a high proportion of their gross income to purchase housing services.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Land Supply		
Manage land supply to ensure that adequate land is available to meet demand for residential blocks in different geographic markets in a range of locations across Canberra.	Adopt the principles of the land Supply Strategy 2006-07 to 2010-11 as the foundation for addressing housing affordability.	The land release program has been accelerated with 3,470 dwelling sites released in 2007-08, in excess of the target of 3,200. This is the greatest number of dwelling sites released since self government.
	Supplement the land release targets in the Land Supply Strategy by initiatives relating to community housing and institutional investment in rental accommodation.	Land has been allocated to CHC Affordable Housing for development, with further allocations of 120 dwelling sites scheduled each year. Land has also been identified for the private rental initiative. This will complement the Commonwealth's National Rental Affordability Scheme.
	Introduce over-the-counter sales of land at a range of block sizes and prices, with particular emphasis on the release of land (prices from \$60,000 to \$120,000) that provides for dwellings in the price range of \$200,000 to \$300,000. Transitional arrangements should apply in the short term, but be in place for no more than 6 months.	Provisions to allow over-the-counter sales have been adopted. More than 100 blocks are now available for sale over-the-counter at the LDA, with 86 sites in Bonner, 28 in Franklin, and 20 at Ginninderra Ponds. The Government now requires that 15 per cent of all new land released includes affordable house and land packages. This has been implemented in releases in Crace, Casey and other Gungahlin releases. The LDA has established the OwnPlace initiative to provide new house and land packages for less than \$300,000 to eligible home buyers. Following the expiration of the transitional period, the OwnPlace scheme has been introduced and land is now available for sale over-the-counter.
	Establish quarterly targets for over-the-counter sales, and implement monitoring systems to ensure performance against those targets.	Accelerated land release program targets have been set, with priority being given to meeting demand. The majority of future land releases will feature a component of over-the-counter sales. Monitoring arrangements are being developed.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Land Supply		
<p>Manage land supply to ensure that adequate land is available to meet demand for residential blocks in different geographic markets in a range of locations across Canberra.</p>	<p>To limit speculation in the land market, announce a program of regular englobo land releases, targeting two land sales annually with at least one third released by this means.</p>	<p>Englobo land releases are now a component of the Land Supply Program, with the aim of delivering one third of the land released over the next five years in this way.</p> <p>Specific sites have been identified for release in the next five years.</p> <p>Current englobo releases include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macgregor West 1 (768 dwelling sites released) • Casey 1 (700 dwelling sites released) • Casey 2 (1,100 dwelling sites to be released 2008-09)
	<p>Urgently review the need for trunk infrastructure to meet land supply, community housing and private land release needs and ensure budget funding is provided to meet these needs.</p>	<p>Through the <i>Building the Future</i> program funded in the 2008-09 Budget, \$200 million has been committed principally to support trunk infrastructure in new developments over the next five years.</p>
	<p>Benchmark land development costs every two years through independent analysis.</p>	<p>Studies will be undertaken every two years and will focus on changes required to enhance land release and affordable housing initiatives.</p>
Land Supply Pipeline		
<p>Improve measurement, monitoring and management of the land development and house building pipeline as a means of enhancing the land supply process.</p> <p>Use the land development pipeline to develop a supply strategy that is capable of responding reasonably quickly to changes in demand.</p>	<p>Develop more robust mechanisms for calculating and monitoring the developers' and builders' pipeline and distinguish between the greenfields and redevelopment pipelines.</p>	<p>A Chief Executives Steering Group on Land Supply has been established with representatives from the Chief Minister's Department, the LDA, the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA), and Treasury.</p> <p>Procedures have been reviewed to ensure the pipeline can be more rigorously measured and monitored. Closer links with industry are also being developed so that changes in demand and supply can be more readily identified.</p>
	<p>In addition to the planning pipeline, adopt a four year builders' and developers' pipeline (one year builders' and three year developers') maintaining inventory on the shelf at each stage of the pipeline to improve responsiveness.</p>	<p>An inventory of serviced land has been developed.</p> <p>Concept Plans have been approved for Ngunnawal 2c (475 dwelling units), Flemington Road (1,225 dwelling units), Jacka (approximately 1,500 dwelling units) and Moncrieff (approximately 1,800 dwelling units). The planning ready land bank is currently 1,100 dwellings.</p> <p>Land is now available over-the-counter. Increased emphasis is being given to the preparation and approval of Estate Development Plans ahead of demand.</p>
	<p>Add an additional inventory to the pipeline of approved Estate Development Plans (EDPs) accounting for 8 to 12 months of current demand.</p>	<p>ACTPLA has prepared an EDP inventory which has been included in the pipeline.</p>

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Land Supply Pipeline		
<p>Improve measurement, monitoring and management of the land development and house building pipeline as a means of enhancing the land supply process.</p> <p>Use the land development pipeline to develop a supply strategy that is capable of responding reasonably quickly to changes in demand.</p>	<p>Progress with implementation and status of the pipeline be reported twice a year.</p>	<p>Progress has been reported, leading to major increases in the production of land. Progress reports will continue to be produced.</p> <p>In addition, a Chief Executives Steering Group on Land Supply has been established and meets regularly.</p>
	<p>Review the practices, processes and delegations associated with land supply (including direct sale). This review should cover the financing, planning, land release and development approval aspects of land supply.</p>	<p>Disallowable Instruments for over-the-counter sales and sales to CHC have been implemented.</p> <p>A new direct sale process was introduced with the new planning legislation.</p>
<p>Ensure ACTPLA and LDA's statement of intent reflects a greater balance of financial, social (including geographic needs) and urban design.</p>	<p>Incorporate principles from the Land Release Strategy and Affordable Housing Steering Group report into the Statements of Intent for both ACTPLA and Land Development Agency. In particular, key activities for 2007-08 to 2010-11 should include clear, quantitative measures for delivering affordable housing outcomes.</p>	<p>The ACT Planning and Land Authority and Land Development Agency Statements of Intent for 2007-08 and 2008-09 incorporate the principles of the ACT Government's Affordable Housing Action Plan.</p>
	<p>Incorporate into the work plans of other agencies relevant elements of the land release Strategy and the Affordable Housing Steering Group Report</p>	<p>The Departments of Disability, Housing and Community Services, Treasury, and Territory and Municipal Services are implementing initiatives related to their responsibilities under the Affordable Housing Action Plan. These agencies are represented on the Chief Executives Steering Group on Land Supply. A key focus is the better coordination of the provision of trunk works and infrastructure to support land releases.</p>
Compliance		
<p>Ensure compliance measures operate effectively to support the land supply strategy.</p>	<p>Increase the penalty for failure to develop on new land within the specified times to up to five times the rates applying to the block.</p>	<p>Increased fees for failure to develop and complete development have been included as part of amendments to the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>.</p> <p>The process of assessment and administration is currently under review, including industry consultation.</p>

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Compliance		
Ensure compliance measures operate effectively to support the land supply strategy.	Introduce a hardship test for owners of individual blocks where financial difficulties may impact on completion of development, and set lower penalties for individuals and higher penalties for corporations.	A hardship test is incorporated in the <i>Planning and Development Act</i> . A change of circumstances test is also being considered to take into account changes in market conditions and other issues.
Diversity of housing products		
Increase diversity in the market by incorporating the new affordable house and land products.	Increase diversity in the market by introducing a new affordable house and land product.	To provide for affordable housing the Minister for Planning has approved a <i>Planning Guideline on Compact Block Housing for New Estates</i> which will assist in increasing the range of housing alternatives in suburban estates while ensuring that residential amenity is maintained. This will provide opportunities and market entry points for housing choice for compact blocks of up to 250m ² . The LDA has introduced the OwnPlace initiative that offers affordable house and land packages to eligible home buyers.
	Ensure that the land released each year provides a range of appropriately priced block sizes in diverse locations.	A range of block sizes are now available in the LDA estates.
	Require 15 percent of the blocks released each year target house and land packages within the \$200,000 to \$300,000 price range; (10 per cent for \$60,000-\$120,000 land).	Future estates will include the requirement to provide 15 per cent affordable house and land packages. The Village Building Company has already exceeded this target with the development in West Macgregor achieving 162 house and land packages for less than \$300,000, and a further 120 packages targeted at the affordable housing market (\$300,000 - \$350,000).
	Work with the industry to establish one or two demonstration villages showcasing affordable land and housing packages.	Demonstration housing projects to promote innovation and excellence in design are included in estates at Franklin and Dunlop.
	Release two new demonstration projects with about 25 per cent of the housing targeted at households of medium income or lower.	Demonstration housing projects will be provided by the Village Building Company in Franklin and Dunlop estates.
	Incorporate examples of highly sustainable and accessible housing in the demonstration villages packages.	The LDA and ACTPLA are working with the Village Building Company to develop examples of sustainable and accessible housing. The LDA is working with Village Building Company on a rolling house building program, with a minimum of four dwellings at any one time on each site for demonstration.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Diversity of housing products		
Increase diversity in the market by incorporating the new affordable house and land products.	Work with the industry to enhance apprenticeship training and other skills development in the demonstration villages.	One of the principal partners in the Crace Joint Venture, PBS, has developed a long association with the Master Builders Association (MBA) Group Training scheme, and is providing opportunities for training and skills development as part of the apprenticeship and cadetship programs.
	Introduce an annual Excellence in Housing Affordability Award with a total prize value of \$20,000 to encourage excellence in affordable dwelling construction and design.	In 2007-08 the ACT Government committed \$20,000 to support the HIA/RAIA collaborative Affordable Housing Design Competition, and the MBA Special Affordable Housing Award. A number of awards have been presented as a result, demonstrating the many innovative design opportunities for affordable housing in Canberra. Support has also been committed to the Housing Industry Association Affordable Housing Award for October 2008.
Planning and Building Regulation		
Ensure the planning legislation and requirements facilitate the achievement of key Government and community priorities such as affordable housing and aged care.	As part of the ACT Planning and Land Authority Review reassess the impact of planning requirements on the cost of new dwellings.	Reforms to the planning system have commenced, with the new <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> and the restructured Territory Plan which commenced on 31 March 2008. Consultations are being held with industry to address implementation issues with the new legislation. Affordable housing provisions have been included as part of the planning system reform through the <i>Planning Guideline on Compact Block Housing for New Estates</i> .
Other measures		
Through a variety of mechanisms that do not unduly affect the market, implement initiatives to assist in increasing access to affordable home ownership.	Seek not-for-profit providers to participate in a shared equity scheme or schemes for low-income earners and eligible first homebuyers.	CHC Affordable Housing has undertaken, through its financing agreement with the ACT Government, to establish a shared equity scheme.
	Continue to work through Housing Ministers' Council to explore a national approach to addressing housing affordability, particularly in relation to shared equity.	The Policy and Research Working Group had established an Affordable Home Ownership Sub-Committee to progress a nationally collaborative approach to shared equity. This work has now been subsumed into the work being undertaken by a Housing Working Group established by COAG to develop a new National Affordable Housing Agreement, which is to commence in January 2009.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Other measures		
<p>Through a variety of mechanisms that do not unduly affect the market, implement initiatives to assist in increasing access to affordable home ownership.</p>	<p>Introduce a land rent scheme</p>	<p>On 1 July 2008, the ACT Government introduced a new land rent scheme for eligible lessees at a discount land rent rate. This scheme is the first of its kind in Australia and is attracting considerable interest.</p> <p>A mandatory educational program has been developed with the Canberra Institute of Technology to inform consumers interested in the land rent scheme. Five courses have been held to date, with full attendance. Six more are scheduled over the coming two months, with interest remaining high.</p> <p>It is intended to review the scheme after six months, with a view to opening the scheme to other lessees at the general land rent rate.</p>
	<p>Increase the Home Buyer Concession Scheme property valuation criteria to include median priced properties.</p>	<p>From 1 July 2007, property value thresholds were increased, with the upper threshold extended to median price for both established dwellings and blocks of land.</p> <p>The income threshold has also been extended to \$120,000 per annum.</p> <p>Duty concessions for people on aged or disability pensions and Veteran Gold Card holders have also been introduced to assist them in moving to more appropriate accommodation.</p>
	<p>Provide conveyance duty deferral for first home buyers for up to five years.</p>	<p>Deferral of duty for first home buyers for up to five years is now available through the <i>Revenue Legislation (Housing Affordability Initiative) Amendment Act 2007</i> which provides for amendments to the <i>Duties Act 1999</i>, the <i>Taxation Administration Act 1999</i>, the <i>Rates Act 2004</i> and the <i>Land Tax Act 2004</i>.</p>
	<p>Work with industry to consider whether there is an efficient and effective mechanism for charging stamp duty once during the initial development process.</p>	<p>Deferral of duty payments until a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued is now available for eligible purchasers.</p> <p>The LDA is now also offering 'call' options for detached OwnPlace blocks, where final payment on the land is not due until construction is complete and a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued.</p>
	<p>Defer land payment (except for deposit) on affordable government house and land packages until a certificate of occupancy is issued.</p>	<p>The <i>Revenue Legislation (Housing Affordability Initiative) Amendment Act 2007</i> allows conveyance duty deferral for up to five years for first home buyers, and also allows for deferral of payment of conveyance duty for affordable house and land packages until the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued.</p> <p>The LDA 'call' option arrangements provide the option of land payment deferral.</p>
	<p>Work, including through the Housing Minister's Council, to seek a review of the taxation regime to ensure equitable treatment of home mortgages.</p>	<p>The ACT, together with other States and Territories, is seeking to have taxation issues considered in the context of new National Affordable Housing Agreement.</p>



Actions on private rental

Actions on private rental

Action Plan Goal: Support the effective operation of the private rental market to ensure a balance between supply and demand and the availability of a range of accommodation options to suit varying income levels and individual needs.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Increase the supply and range of properties available for private rental.	Call for expressions of interest from institutional investors to develop and rent 200-400 private rental dwellings. Incorporating the potential for shared equity and on sale to eligible tenants as part of a wider land release of up to 1000 sites.	Expressions of Interest have been sought, and the evaluation process is near completion.
	Support the introduction, through a non-government provider, a homeshare program to both provide accommodation for low-income singles or students and support older people to remain in their homes.	An expression of interest has been received to set up a three year pilot scheme. Arrangements are being finalised to undertake a trial program for 12 months.
Assist people in need to access private rental accommodation	Expand the provision of tenant information and advocacy services by providing an additional worker.	An increased allocation of \$80,000 to the Tenants Advice Service was provided in the 2007-08 budget.
	Work with the Australian Government and other States and Territories to improve the effectiveness of Commonwealth rental assistance to reduce the stress levels of private renters.	States and Territories have commissioned modelling work on Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). The effectiveness of CRA will be considered in the context of negotiations on a National Affordable Housing Agreement through the COAG Housing Working Group.



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**Actions on community
and not-for-profit housing**

Actions on community and not-for-profit housing

Action Plan Goal: Support the community housing sector to enable it to grow and to meet the accommodation needs of Canberrans, particularly those who do not meet the income criteria for public housing.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
<p>The following objectives apply to community housing:</p> <p>Enhance the capacity of the community housing sector to deliver innovative affordable housing solutions;</p> <p>Focus community housing sector as a provider of affordable housing for people on low to moderate incomes, particularly those who are not eligible for public housing;</p> <p>Enhance the capacity of the community housing sector to deliver innovative affordable housing solutions.</p>	<p>Establish Community Housing Canberra as a not-for-profit entity independent of Government.</p>	<p>DHCS is developing a nationally consistent regulatory framework for the community housing sector through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the work of the National Not for Profit Housing Sector Development Sub-Group; and • Consultation with community housing providers, peak bodies, CMD, Treasury and the Commissioner for Revenue. <p>The <i>Revenue Legislation (Housing Affordability Initiative) Amendment Act</i> also introduces new provisions in the <i>Duties Act</i>, the <i>Rates Act</i> and the <i>Land Tax Act</i> that provide for organisations such as CHC Affordable Housing to be exempt from the payment of duty and land tax, as is the case with Housing ACT.</p>
	<p>Increase the asset base of Community Housing Canberra by around \$40 million by transferring title to 135 dwellings and also provide a \$3 million capital injection.</p>	<p>The CHC asset base has been expanded by \$40 million with the transfer of 132 properties from Housing ACT and another three properties in the process of being transferred.</p>
	<p>Provide a revolving finance facility of \$50 million to Community Housing Canberra.</p>	<p>The ACT Government and CHC Affordable Housing have entered into an agreement for a \$50 million revolving finance facility to enable 1,000 new affordable dwellings within 10 years.</p>
<p>Target the growth in Community Housing Canberra owned dwellings at 10 per cent per annum.</p>	<p>Increase the supply of affordable rental housing by:</p> <p>250 dwellings within 5 years; and</p> <p>500 dwellings within 10 years.</p>	<p>Planning is well underway to meet these targets.</p>
	<p>Increase the supply of affordable dwellings by:</p> <p>470 dwellings within 5 years; and</p> <p>1,000 dwellings within 10 years.</p>	<p>Planning is well underway to meet these targets.</p>
	<p>Establish with CHC a program of monitoring of the delivery against targets, and evaluation of the business model.</p>	<p>Monitoring conditions have been included in the Quarterly Report and Statement of Corporate Intent.</p>
	<p>Renew 75 per cent of the assets transferred to Community Housing Canberra within five years, and 100 per cent of the assets within seven years.</p>	<p>CHC has already commenced refurbishments and has developed a program to achieve the target.</p>

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Ensure the supply of land to enable community housing providers to meet future client needs.	Implement with LDA a rolling program of land sales to Community Housing Canberra for affordable housing projects with the first three projects in Belconnen and Gungahlin to start in 2006-07.	<p>The LDA's 2007-08 Statement of Intent provides for a rolling program of sales to CHC Affordable Housing of 120 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>A Memorandum of Understanding between LDA and CHC has been finalised to guide land supply arrangements over the next five years. Construction of the first properties under this arrangement is expected to commence in the second half of 2008.</p>
	Identify development sites throughout Canberra for a mix of housing development which enhances the provision of affordable and accessible housing.	<p>As surplus sites become available they are assessed to ensure that a mix of housing which meets the needs of both the local and wider community will be provided.</p> <p>The ACT Government has written to the Commonwealth identifying surplus Commonwealth land suitable for housing.</p>
Support the transition from rental accommodation to home ownership.	Ensure that Community Housing Canberra incorporates a shared equity scheme for eligible tenants and home buyers, as part of its business model.	CHC is currently exploring other purchasing/financing options for eligible tenants and home buyers.



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Actions on public housing

Actions on public housing

Action Plan Goal: Support Housing ACT as the provider of public housing to ensure Canberrans on low incomes or who meet entry criteria are able to be appropriately accommodated within appropriate timeframes.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Strengthen the role of Housing ACT as the key provider of social housing in the ACT.	Housing ACT continue to provide housing support to households in stress on low incomes (below \$32,700).	Public housing eligibility criteria are benchmarked against 60% of Australian Average Weekly Earnings (AAWE) for single and 75% AAWE for two applicants, plus 10% AAWE for each additional household member.
	Continue to examine the sale of up to 500 public housing properties with a tranche of sales to be to public housing tenants on moderate or high incomes.	The 2003-2008 Public Housing Asset Management Plan is being reviewed. The Government has announced a program to encourage public housing tenants on higher incomes (over \$80,000) to purchase their home, or consider renting in the private market. The introduction of a Shared Equity Scheme will assist those public housing tenants on more affordable income to acquire their public housing property.
	Housing ACT aim to house top priority waiting list applicants within three months.	Procedures have been reviewed to ensure top priority applicants are now being housed within three months.
Ensure the supply of sufficient stock to meet existing and future clients needs.	Continue stock restructuring program to increase proportion of two bedroom dwellings including the purchase of up to 20 of the new stand alone house and land packages.	Housing assets are being restructured to better meet client needs. DHCS has agreed to purchase 16 dwelling sites from LDA. These sites will be progressively released during 2008-2009, and will include some compact blocks.
	Continue to maximise the return to public housing in future joint ventures and redevelopments.	A Joint Venture Agreement for a site in Lyons was entered into in June 2007.
	Introduce a shared equity program for eligible tenants through enabling Housing ACT to retain equity in houses sold to tenants.	Housing ACT is finalising the development of the program.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Ensure stock meets diverse client needs.	Housing ACT to continue to better align stock to client needs.	<p>From July 2006, the ACT Government allocated \$30 million over three years on new public housing stock. In 2006-07 DHCS acquired 25 additional properties and in 2007-08 a further 27 properties were acquired.</p> <p>As the aging population increases in Canberra, the ACT Government will work to ensure that new and renovated housing provides options for accessibility and incorporates universal design. This will help to reduce waiting times for people who require modified or special needs housing.</p>
Encourage the Commonwealth to develop a more effective and viable funding base for public housing.	Work with other States and Territories to encourage the Commonwealth to fund public housing based on the realistic cost of managing the asset, including provision for managing higher complexity tenancies.	The Commonwealth Government has committed to work cooperatively with State and Territory governments and the Australian Local Government Association to negotiate a National Affordable Housing Agreement that includes increasing the supply of social housing (including crisis housing).



Actions on supported accommodation

Actions on supported accommodation

Action Plan Goal: Maintain and enhance the role of supported accommodation providers to ensure that all Canberrans at risk of homelessness, on low incomes, with special needs or requiring emergency accommodation are able to be appropriately accommodated with no or minimal delay, and if appropriated, assisted to move to longer term accommodation.

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Ensure the supply of suitable accommodation for people on low income or with special needs.	Expand the stairwell model of accommodation for key client groups.	Housing ACT has commenced a youth stairwell model at Kanangra Flats to enable tenants with similar backgrounds to receive appropriate levels of support.
Enhance the living skills of clients	Continue reforms of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and expand outreach programs to assist in preventing evictions.	New three year funding contracts are now in place. The ACT will implement further initiatives to address homelessness and work with COAG.
Support the transition of tenants to longer term sustainable accommodation.	Strengthen the transitional housing program.	Suitable public housing properties awaiting sale or re-development are being used as temporary transitional accommodation for clients exiting SAAP services. Currently 21 properties are being utilised for transitional housing.



Actions on aged accommodation

Actions on aged accommodation

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
<p>Ensure the supply of sufficient land to meet the increasing demand for aged accommodation</p>	<p>Continue to identify development sites throughout Canberra for a mix of housing developments that enhances the provision of affordable aged housing.</p>	<p>The direct sale of the O’Connell Education site at Griffith for a 160 bed aged care facility has been agreed.</p> <p>The redevelopment of Morling Lodge has been commenced.</p> <p>The ACT Government is continuing to identify potential sites (infill and greenfield) for affordable aged accommodation, and is working with service providers to assist in site selection to match their needs.</p> <p>The ACT Government has partnered with industry to open a display home that will model an adaptable and accessible housing design which enables people who are older, and people with disabilities, to remain in their own home as they age.</p> <p>Stage Two of the Affordable Housing Strategy has now commenced, to identify further ways to provide affordable housing for older Canberrans.</p>



Actions that apply to all sectors

Actions that apply to all sectors

Objective	Initiatives	Achievements
Skills		
Ensure the supply of sufficient skilled workers to meet current and future demand for housing construction.	Ensure there is sufficient labour for the building industry to deliver the goals of the affordable housing strategy. This is to be achieved through the work of the Skills Commission; by working with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions on mutual skills recognition; and continuing the Live in Canberra campaign.	<p><i>ACT Skills Future – key initiatives in a long term strategy to address the skills challenge</i> sets out the Government's response to the Skills Commission report and includes actions to expand the workforce, increase productivity and participation, and enhance education and training, including vocational education.</p> <p>Industry has responded to the skills shortage by expanding initiatives such as the Australian Schools Based Apprenticeship Program, apprenticeship training, and cadetship programs for building industry para-professionals. The Commonwealth Government has established Skills Australia to work with industry.</p> <p>A Bachelor of Building and Construction Management, and a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Canberra have been established.</p> <p>\$30,000 allocated in 2007-08 budget is to be matched by payment from construction industry. The chair of Building and Construction has been appointed.</p>
Ensure adequate accommodation for skilled workers, including short term residents.	Develop accommodation options such as a caravan park and a 2-3 star motel in areas such as Stromlo to accommodate workers on short-term basis and to respond to peaks in industry demand.	A site for a 2 to 3 star motel and a caravan park has been identified in the Stromlo area.
Data		
Ensure the ACT has access to accurate data on which to base future land release and service projections.	Ensure the ACT has access to accurate data on which to base future land release and service projections and continue to work with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to ensure the availability of high quality data.	<p>The demographic capacity is being expanded within the Chief Minister's Department, and the ACT Government is participating in a COAG national housing supply data initiative</p> <p>ACTPLA is now providing planning data on its website.</p>
	Implement an education campaign to ensure people who move to Canberra update their Medicare immediately.	The education campaign was launched in August 2007.



National affordable housing initiatives and further information

National affordable housing initiatives

Earlier in 2008 the Federal Government announced measures aimed at boosting housing affordability, including the Housing Affordability Fund, the National Rental Affordability Scheme; a National Land Audit; a National Housing Supply (Research) Council; First Home Saver Accounts, and a homelessness strategy - A Place to Call Home.

These measures will provide significant opportunities to further the commitments already made by the ACT Government in the *Affordable Housing Action Plan*, particularly in relation to increasing private rental properties and streamlining planning systems. The ACT Government has been working with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) process to facilitate the Federal schemes for homebuyers in Canberra.

Glossary

ACTPLA	ACT Planning and Land Authority
CHC	CHC Affordable Housing (formerly Community Housing Canberra)
CMD	Chief Minister's Department
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DHCS	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services
LDA	Land Development Agency
TAMS	Department of Territory and Municipal Services

Further information

www.actaffordablehousing.com.au

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