



1 October 2026

Committee Secretariat
Senate Standing Committee on Economics
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

via email: economics.sen@aph.gov.au

To the Committee Secretariat,

Re: *Senate Economics Reference Committee on Social Housing*

The Tenants' Union of Tasmania welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the *Senate Economics Reference Committee on Social Housing*. Our submission is limited to outlining Tasmania's current investment in social housing.

The Tenants' Union of Tasmania is a not-for-profit community legal centre providing information, advice and representation to more than 57,000 residential tenants living throughout Tasmania. We also offer community legal education and training and advocate for the improvement of residential tenants' rights.

Tasmanian Government commits to building 3500 social housing properties

On 21 April 2021, during a State Election campaign, the Tasmanian Liberals pledged an extra \$280m to build 2000 social housing homes.¹ This would be additional to the 1500 social housing properties they had already committed to build.

Following their election victory in May 2021, the Premier and Treasurer Peter Gutwein MP in his Budget Speech confirmed that increased demand for social housing would be met through investment in social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives:²

To meet the increased demand for social and affordable housing we are making an unprecedented investment in housing supply. We are investing a record \$615 million into social and affordable housing, and homelessness initiatives, including our record election commitment of \$280 million to build new social housing for Tasmanians in need. **In total we will build 3500 new homes by 2027, adding an additional 2000 homes to our current plan to deliver 1500 homes by 2023.** [emphasis added]

¹ Roger Jaensch, '3500 New Homes to Create Jobs, Deliver More Housing, and Secure Tasmania's Future' (Media Release, Liberal Party of Australia (Tasmanian Division), 20 April 2021). David Killick, 'Libs to Throw \$280m at Public Housing Crisis', *The Mercury* (Hobart, 21 April 2021) 6.

² Peter Gutwein, *2021-22 Budget Speech: Securing Tasmania's Future, Delivering our Plan* (Budget Speech, House of Assembly, Tasmania, 26 August 2021) <https://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/Documents/2021-22-Budget-Speech.pdf>

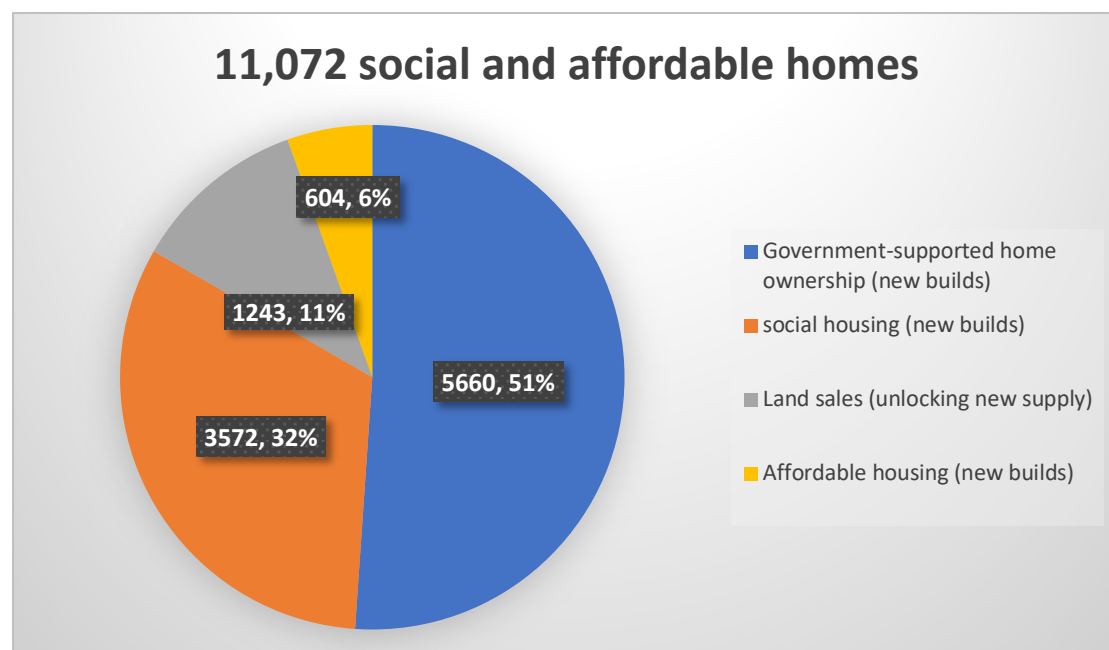


Tasmanian Government commits to delivering 10,000 social and affordable homes by 2032

On 1 March 2022, the Premier Peter Gutwein and the Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing Michael Ferguson MP announced a “massive 10-year housing package, in excess of \$1.5 billion, to build on our existing reforms and take further action to provide affordable housing”.³ Although the Government committed to delivering 10,000 social and affordable homes by 2032 there was no change to the social housing target of building 3500 homes.

Homes Tasmania Dashboard

The recent launch of the Homes Tasmania Dashboard transparently tracks progress towards the Tasmanian Government’s commitment of 10,000 social and affordable homes against the 2032 target. Relevantly, the State Government’s social housing target is now 3572, and the total target is to deliver 11,079 social and affordable homes by 2032.

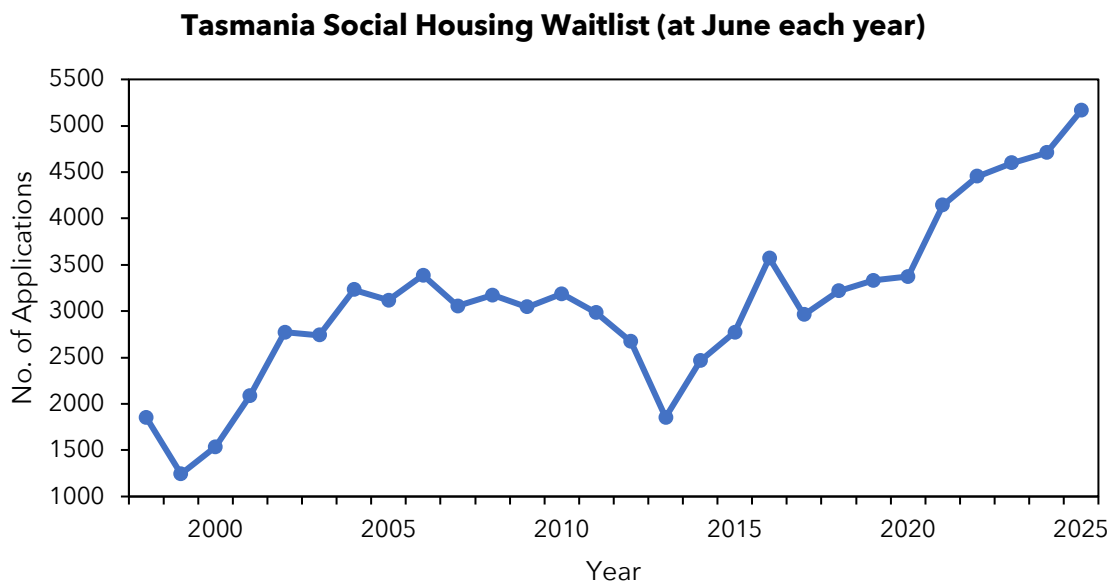


Relying on the Dashboard’s timeframe October 2020 - December 2025, Homes Tasmania has already built 1832 social housing properties which equates to around one new social housing property each day for just over five years.⁴

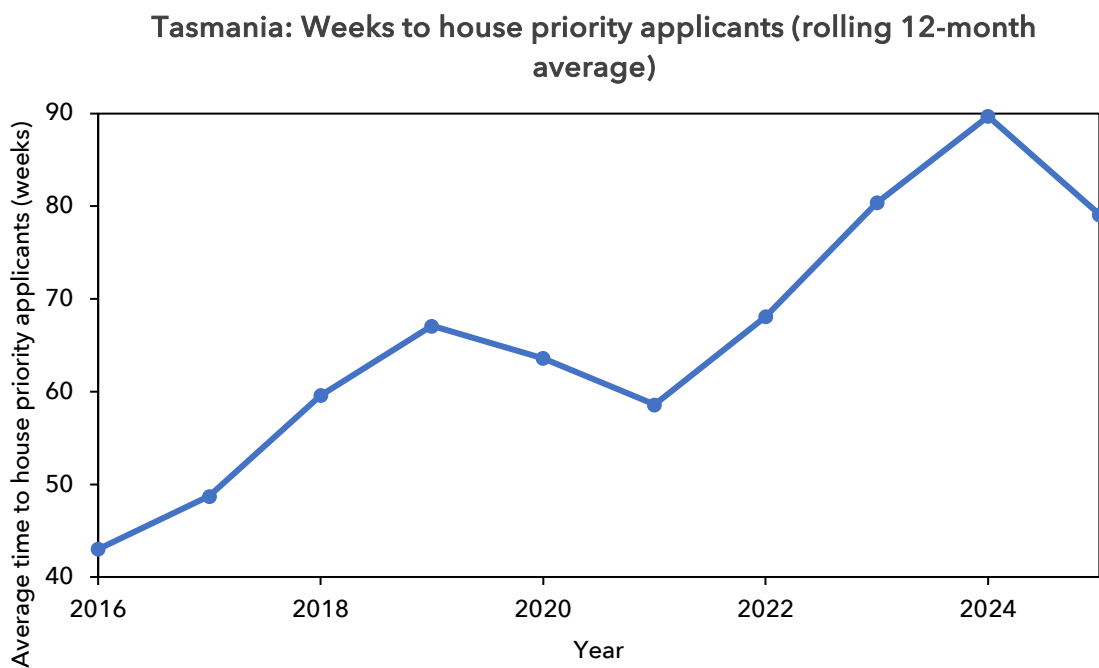
However, when contrasted with the number of applicants on the social housing wait list, the Tasmanian Government’s commitment to build 3572 social housing properties by 2032 is insufficient. In 2020 there were 3372 applicants on the social housing waitlist. At the end of 2025, it had ballooned to 5163 applicants (53 per cent increase) leading to long wait times to be housed.

³ Peter Gutwein, Premier, and Michael Ferguson, Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing, ‘Over \$1.5 Billion Investment to Provide More Housing Than Ever Before’ (Media Release, 1 March 2022).

⁴ 1832 social housing properties have been built in 1918 days (1 October 2020 – 31 December 2025) which equates to almost one (0.95) being built each day for the last five years. Over the same timeframe, 204 were sold (62) or demolished (142) resulting in a net gain of 1628 social housing properties: Homes Tasmania, Data Request (D26/40210) dated 30 September 2026.



Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services – Housing and Homelessness (1998 – 2025)



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It is unlikely that Tasmania is the only Australian jurisdiction experiencing heightened demand for social housing, particularly given the acknowledgement that the proportion of social housing dwellings when compared to all household dwellings has declined in all Australian States and Territories at every Census since 2006.

Proportion of social housing dwellings in Australian Jurisdictions (%)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT
2006	6.23	3.96	4.39	8.92	5.46	6.87	20.83	9.96
2011	5.85	4.01	4.59	7.93	5.60	6.88	12.06	9.08
2016	5.78	3.60	4.20	7.43	4.90	6.89	11.17	8.02
2021	5.44	3.20	3.83	6.66	4.28	6.44	17.82	6.86

Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2026, Table 18A.3; Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 'General Community Profile'.

While Tasmania does have a higher proportion of social housing properties when compared against some other Australian jurisdictions, it also has greater need. Utilising national population and social housing wait list data, Shelter Tasmania recently highlighted the increased demand for social housing compared to other Australian States and Territories:⁵

Australia		Tasmania	
Population	27,536,900	Population	576,100
Housing Waitlist	163,000	Housing Waitlist	5336
Demand as % of population	2.1%	Demand as % of population	3.2%

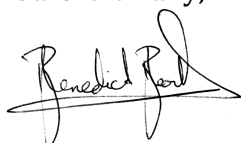
The most recent data from Homes Tasmania (August 2026) reports 5830 applicants on the social housing wait list and an average wait time to be housed of 90.9 weeks.⁶ This is an extraordinary 13 per cent increase in the number of social housing applicants in Tasmania since December 2025.

Recommendation

We strongly support the *Everybody's Home* and *National Shelter* submissions including increasing the proportion of social housing in all Australian jurisdictions to 10 per cent of all housing stock.

If you have any queries, or would like to discuss our submission further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,



Benedict Bartl
Principal Solicitor
Tenants' Union of Tasmania

⁵ Shelter Tas, *Budget Priority Statement 2026-27: Housing First: Keeping People Housed* (Budget Submission, November 2025) <https://shelbertas.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/ShelterTas-Budget-Priority-Statement-2026-27-FINAL.docx.pdf>

⁶ Homes Tasmania, *Homes Tasmania Dashboard Supplementary Report: August 2026* (Report, August 2026) https://www.homes-tasmania.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/294147/Housing-Dashboard-Supplementary-Report-August-2026-1.pdf