

# HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS



Your faith | Your vote | Your voice

As Christians, we are called to love our neighbour, protect the vulnerable in our community and challenge unjust systems. Having safe, secure and affordable shelter is a basic human right. Everyone has a right to a place they can call home.

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## OUR CONCERNS

Since the last state election in 2021 the housing crisis in WA has worsened. According to Core Logic, rents in Perth rose by 13.6% in 2024, faster than in any other Australian city. Perth now has the second most expensive rental housing in Australian only surpassed by Sydney, and rents in some regional areas are higher than in Perth.

This means many low-income families can no longer afford housing and are becoming homeless. This is especially so for First Nations people who make up 4% of the WA population but 35% of those experiencing homelessness. *Shelter WA* indicates that homelessness has grown by 38% since 2021 putting many homelessness services under stress. In September 2024 *Anglicare* found that there was not a single property for rent in WA, not even a room, which was affordable by someone on Jobseeker or Youth Allowance.

Since 2021 the WA Labor government has substantially increased spending on social housing but not enough to overcome the desperate shortage of social housing caused by underspending in previous years. As a result, since 2021 the numbers of people on wait lists for social housing have increased from 16,500 to over 20,000 and average wait times for social housing have increased 45% to 148 weeks. Social housing makes up only 3.6% of the housing stock in WA, less than the national average and less than the OECD recommendation of 10%. *Shelter WA* indicates that at least 5000 new social houses need to be provided each year to overcome the current shortage.

The WA Labor government has passed legislation to give better protection to tenants, but have imposed no cap on rent increases as other Australian governments have done.

## ASK YOUR CANDIDATES

- Will you commit to providing 5000 new social affordable dwellings each year?
- Will you commit to a target of 10% social affordable housing in all new developments?
- Will you introduce a rent stabilisation mechanism to protect renters from excessive rent increases?
- Will you extend the rent relief programme beyond June 2025 to enable financially stressed families to remain in their accommodation?
- Will you increase funding to homelessness services, including providing more short-term accommodation for people in housing crisis?
- Will you support the establishment of a First Nations Housing Peak Body to develop policy to overcome indigenous homelessness and a First Nations Tenancy Support Programme?



Uniting Church in Australia  
Western Australia