



Public
housing and
homelessness
support

For
the
Future

South
Australian
Labor



Acknowledgment of country.

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians whose ancestral lands we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country. We also pay our respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their nations in South Australia, as well as those across Australia.

Foreword

It is a key responsibility of government in a modern society to ensure access to safe, stable and suitable homes for everyone in our community.

Labor accepts this responsibility.

Labor will deliver a public housing system responsive to our community's needs.

We will support those who need it – people facing homelessness, people in public housing or those seeking public housing.

We will ensure that public housing support is linked to other critical government services including health, justice, child protection as well as early intervention and community safety programs.

South Australia's regional and rural communities will also benefit from increased investment and support in public housing, giving people choice about where to work, live, raise their families and retire.

Currently there are between 1500 and 2000 of the state's public housing stock lying empty. At least half of those are in need of significant refurbishment to make them habitable again.

Labor will conduct a maintenance blitz to get more of these homes available once more to low income and vulnerable South Australians.

These investments will support South Australian jobs.

Thousands of local construction jobs will be directly created and supported as well as many thousands more indirect jobs.



Peter Malinauskas MP
SA Labor Leader



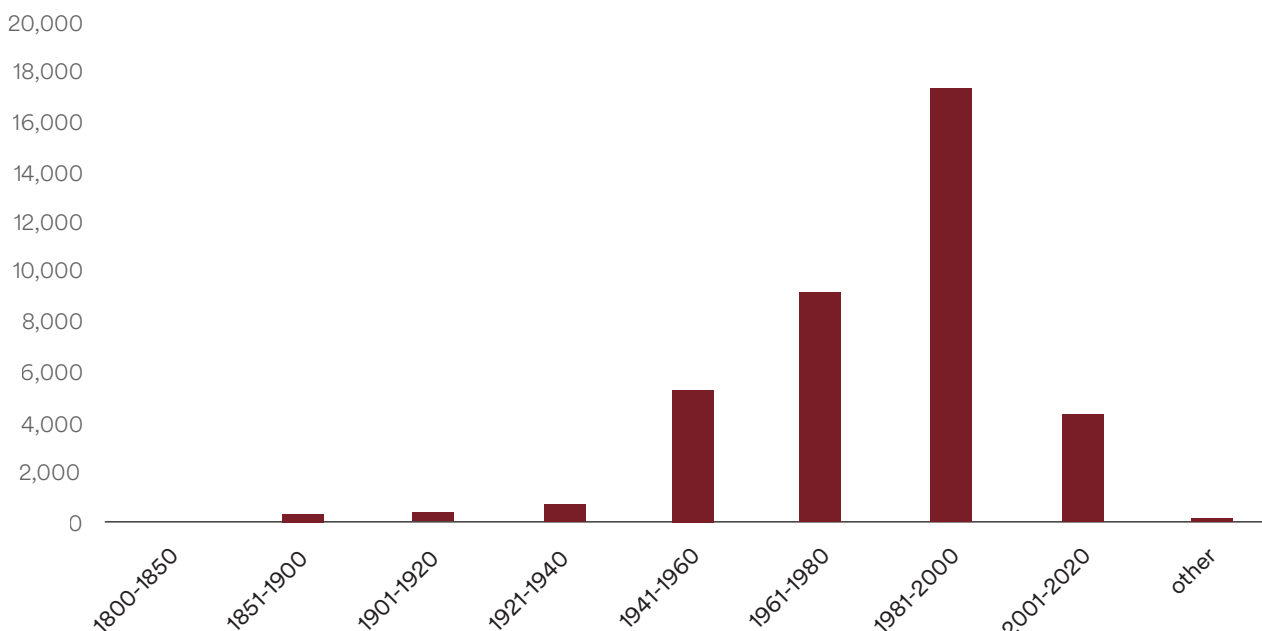


SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S AGEING PUBLIC HOUSING

South Australia has some of the oldest public housing stock in Australia, with a large proportion more than 40 years old. Some are even more than 100 years old as the Triennial Review of the SA Housing Trust by PWC, last published in 2018 shows.

Our current stock also doesn't reflect our changing demographics, with nearly 50% of dwellings offering three or more bedrooms when there is increasing demand for smaller homes for older tenants and single people as well as specialised homes for those living with a disability.

Figure 12: Public and Aboriginal Housing dwelling build year



Source: DCSI/Renewal SA information requests

Public housing provides a vital safeguard for the most vulnerable members of our community – people escaping family violence, the homeless, people with disability and older people with limited resources.

Around 5% of all homes and 20% of rentals are provided through public housing. Public housing stock is ageing – some homes more than 100 years old – and no longer suitable for those who need help.

- ✔ Around 85% of public housing residents and those on the waiting list are single people or single parents,
- ✔ approximately half of the public housing stock has three bedrooms,
- ✔ more than half of all homes have at least one person with disability living there, and
- ✔ more than half of the homes have tenants who are approaching or past retirement age.

Current tenants and those on the waiting list homes have very low incomes and can't afford high utility bills.

We need homes that are smaller, more energy efficient and are accessible for older people and people with disability.

A Malinauskas Labor Government's

PUBLIC HOUSING PLAN

COST: \$177.5 million

Labor will build 400 new houses – 250 in metropolitan Adelaide – fifty of those in a new Common Ground style facility – and 150 in regional South Australia, including in Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Strathalbyn, Whyalla and Port Augusta.

We will also identify 350 untenanted homes needing major works to once again be habitable. We anticipate the spend on each of these houses will be in the region of \$80,000.

In total this will provide 750 homes back into the public housing pool to deliver more housing options for people escaping family violence, older single women, people with severe illness or disability and those who are homeless.

Additionally, we will invest in a maintenance blitz to 3,000 homes needing minor upgrades up to a value of \$7,500.

Table 5: Public and Aboriginal Housing profile of bedrooms per dwelling

Number of bedrooms	Proportions of overall stock portfolio
1	14%
2	38%
3	45%
4+	4%

Source: DCSI/Renewal SA information requests

A photograph of a person sleeping on a sidewalk in front of a brick wall. The person is lying on their side, covered with a grey hoodie and a white blanket. A newspaper and a white plastic bag are next to them. The brick wall is made of dark bricks and has a vertical pipe or seam running down it. The sidewalk is made of concrete and has some stains on it.

SUPPORT FOR HOMELESSNESS

NEW COMMON GROUND-STYLE FACILITY

COST: \$4.15 million

The new Common Ground style facility is based on a housing model which adopts a permanent, supportive housing solution to end homelessness, providing a safe place to live permanently and the support to help them achieve stability in their lives.

All residents pay a maximum of 30% of their income in rent, or no more than 75% of market rent. Residents have the same rights and responsibilities as residents in any other apartment building. They have a lease or residential tenancy agreement, with no limits on the length of stay.

Common Ground buildings house a mix of formerly homeless people and low-income residents, generally in a 50:50 ratio.

Services are located on-site with links to other existing community services, this assists residents to maintain their tenancies and connect them to the local community. Common Ground residents have access to on-site medical, dental and mental health services.

Labor will invest an additional \$4.15 million to provide wrap around services at the new facility.



INVESTING IN SUPPORT FOR THE HOMELESS

We have a homelessness crisis in Adelaide, with hundreds of people forced to sleep in city doorways, on a bench or under a tree every night.

Labor is committing \$6 million to boost specialist homelessness services in the CBD where we need it most and to three organisations – St Vinnies, Catherine House and the Hutt St Centre – that know exactly how to make a difference.

Unbelievably, these groups had their funding slashed under the Marshall Liberal government with skilled and dedicated staff losing their jobs – taking all their experience with them.

House prices have skyrocketed in recent years – with a 25% jump in 2021 alone and rents are now rising across South Australia.

People with jobs can't get a rental home and those who are worse off are increasingly facing homelessness.

The Liberals set up a system where trusted providers were shut out, where people can't get case management, where the data just doesn't add up and where the SA Housing Trust is housing fewer new people every year than they have in decades.

It's hard to find anything the Liberals have done right. They even promised \$20 million for specialist homelessness projects years ago and then spent a fraction of it.

The Labor Party has always been committed to ensuring our state's most vulnerable are supported, not ignored.

Our commitment to these trusted providers – in addition to our existing specialist homelessness services – will help with people's health and mental health. This will reduce the burden on our health system that the Liberals have left in crisis. The additional services will give people the foundation to get back into jobs or education and deal with the trauma that left them in crisis.

The Hutt St Centre has identified opportunities to use additional funding for employment pathways, allied health and keeping the centre open in the afternoon to deliver home and living skills training.

St Vinnies has a plan from early intervention to case management and long term accommodation that requires additional support to provide individual solutions to the complex circumstances of people in crisis.

Catherine House needs support to keep 16 crisis beds for women operating – the loss of which could see some of the most vulnerable in our homeless population back on the street.

Importantly, this \$6 million injection will give respect back to the people who are sleeping on the streets and stop them being handballed from one service provider to another without getting the help they need. We have a goal to end homelessness, and we take that goal seriously. It's only going to happen if we put resources into the expert organisations who are out on the streets every day.



20 HOMELESSNESS HOSPITAL DIVERSION BEDS

COST: \$4.5 million

All too often, South Australians experiencing homelessness are discharged from hospital with nowhere secure to stay while they fully recover. This often means these people end up back in the emergency department, further increasing ramping and hospital overcrowding.

Labor will establish a 20-bed Discharge Support Service in partnership with the not-for-profit sector, offering patients experiencing homelessness a stable recovery.

Putting additional supports around South Australians experiencing homelessness drastically reduces their chances of returning to emergency departments – and costs vastly less than a hospital stay.

This follows a similar project in Western Australia, and a trial run by CALHN with Baptist Care that was unfortunately discontinued under the Liberals.

The service will be planned in conjunction with experts in homelessness and hospital avoidance and will be operational by mid 2024. The funding allocation over the forward estimates will be \$4.5 million for the service.

