Planning for the Future:
New directions for community housing in New South Wales
2007/08 – 2012/13
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I am delighted to be launching this five-year strategy for community housing, *Planning for the Future*. The Iemma Government is strongly committed to the growth of the community housing sector in New South Wales to support the Government’s efforts to provide housing assistance to people in need as outlined in the State Plan.

This strategy builds on the strong performance of community housing over the last 25 years. Since I became Minister for Housing, I have been particularly impressed with the commitment and innovation of the organisations I have encountered in the community housing sector.

Community housing has a strong track record of housing some of the most vulnerable groups in our society. Making the tenant the central focus of its delivery is a key feature of the sector’s success.

This strategy sets clear goals, including an ambitious target to grow the sector from 13,000 to 30,000 homes over the next 10 years. Achieving this will rely on strong partnerships between Government, community housing providers and other partners, for example local government. The Iemma Government intends to provide additional support for growth in the sector through channelling a greater proportion of new housing supply through community housing, and continuing to transfer stock from public housing to community housing management.

This Government has also established an Affordable Housing Innovations Fund, valued at almost $50 million, which will be released by competitive tender over the next three years, with an expectation that considerably more funds will be leveraged from the private sector through debt equity partnerships.
We will also spend an initial $70 million directly through community housing providers to develop social and affordable housing. We will also be offering long-term leases that will give providers the certainty of income to borrow to acquire more affordable housing.

We will be supporting selected high-performing organisations to take on a larger-scale housing development role and to be equipped to borrow funds from the private sector. We envisage community housing organisations being able to negotiate effectively with financial institutions and developers to create new housing models and opportunities. We want to see entrepreneurial skills and effective risk management across the sector.

Planning for the Future sets out directions for the range of community housing providers, with a commitment to maintaining diversity. Organisations with strengths in providing housing support will have increased opportunities, as will organisations with a strong presence in a specific location. Strongly performing organisations with specialist roles will continue to be supported. I want to build on the community development experience of community housing organisations. They have an important role in helping their tenants participate effectively in their communities, including tailored approaches to accessing employment opportunities. Increasingly, community housing will be involved in managing properties on housing estates and contributing to neighbourhood stability.

I released a consultation draft of Planning for the Future in April 2007. I want to thank all those who provided such valuable feedback and helped shape this strategy. Planning for the Future was developed by the Community Housing Advisory Committee, a group with recognised expertise in community housing financing, delivery and management. I am very pleased to have been able to draw on their expertise. The collaboration has resulted in a robust strategy.

Planning for the Future signals an exciting and challenging direction for community housing in NSW. I invite all current and potential partners to join in implementing this strategy, to provide more housing to people in need in NSW.

The Hon Matt Brown MP
Minister for Housing
Minister for Tourism
A vision for community housing in NSW

Vision

Community housing

> more opportunities
> responsive services
> stronger communities

The Iemma Government is strongly committed to expanding the community housing sector, to build on the sector’s performance over the last 25 years. The plan to invest in the growth of community housing is based on the following factors.

> Community housing has a strong track record of providing responsive services to the most vulnerable groups in our society.

> Community housing is linked to extensive local networks of service providers. Through these networks, tenants are offered not just housing, but other support services which they may need to sustain their tenancies.

> Community housing contributes significantly to the stability and wellbeing of the neighbourhoods, suburbs and towns where it operates.

> Community housing has high satisfaction ratings from its tenants.

> Community housing providers can combine government grants with borrowings and other funding sources to build on government investment and provide more homes. It also has tax advantages that reduce the costs of providing these new homes.

The larger community housing organisations have experience in providing affordable housing for low-to-moderate income families. As the NSW Government seeks to increase the supply of affordable housing, community housing is the appropriate sector to achieve this goal.

This strategy is consistent with other housing policy directions in a number of states and territories. In particular, the state and territory Housing Ministers envisage community housing playing a major role in the delivery of an expanded program of supply in social housing and in managing affordable housing.
The social housing sector in NSW consists of public, community and Aboriginal housing. Community housing’s primary contribution is in the variety of housing providers and in the flexibility of the services offered. This allows the sector to offer support to a diverse and varied client group. Existing government directions for public housing, such as a focus on housing for those with high and complex needs, have also influenced community housing provision.

This approach allows each component of the social housing sector to build on their inherent strengths, in turn strengthening services to our clients. Proposed actions, such as developing a common access system, will recognise the different components while also providing for better and easier access to all social housing by those individuals and families who may need assistance.

Vision

The vision for community housing in NSW places people at its centre. It offers housing for more people, tailored to their needs, in a way that strengthens local and regional communities.

More opportunities means more housing for those in need. It means different forms of housing, suited to individual needs, whether for those at risk of homelessness or for people in housing stress who are not eligible for public housing. It means housing with support for those who are re-establishing their lives. It also means opportunities for communities, for stability, for economic prosperity and for good social outcomes.

Responsive services consider the needs of individuals and their community. It means that services will vary from person to person and from place to place. But it also means that services will continue to be of the best quality possible.

Target

To grow community housing from 13,000 to 30,000 homes over the next 10 years.

Community housing can make an improved contribution to the wellbeing of neighbourhoods and communities generally, as well as the individual lives of tenants. This can be through neighbourhood regeneration activities, by facilitating tenant participation in the broader social and economic life of their communities, or by providing opportunities for individuals to be involved in the design and delivery of housing services. Stronger communities can also flow from the stabilising benefits for tenants of secure and affordable housing.

This ambitious target will continue a 10 percent growth in community housing each year.
A vision for community housing in NSW

Key messages

The community housing sector in NSW has achieved significant results in the last 10 years, particularly in providing housing and associated support for those experiencing housing stress and in strengthening the capacity of the sector.

Community housing can take a broader role in contributing to the housing effort in NSW. Planning for the Future is a strong statement of support for community housing. It lays out a clear future for this sector, a future in which there will be more community housing and a greater diversity.

Growth will come from a number of sources. Housing NSW will continue to transfer stock to be managed by community housing providers. Importantly, growth will also come from providers’ own equity and borrowings as they invest in new supply, by leveraging government investment.

Housing NSW has developed the debt equity model as a way of attracting new resources to affordable housing projects. Under the model, the Iemma Government provides up to 60 percent of a project’s costs and a registered community housing provider provides the remaining funds through a combination of debt, its own funds and contributions from partners, such as local government. The community housing provider then owns the properties and manages them as affordable rental housing. Debt equity projects are structured so that rent revenue is sufficient to cover all ongoing costs, including debt servicing, maintenance and management costs.

Planning for the Future provides a number of new opportunities for high-performing providers to expand their housing to include affordable housing.

These initiatives, announced in March 2007, include:

> $49.8 million in new funding to establish an Affordable Housing Innovations Fund to kick-start investment in affordable housing by expanding debt equity partnership programs, as well as to provide 70 new rental properties in Western Sydney;

> $70 million of funding directed to community housing providers to allow them to develop housing directly; and

> offering long-term leases over community housing properties to provide a predictable income stream to support debt finance to build affordable housing.

Alongside this new affordable housing stream, Government funding for traditional community housing will be targeted mainly to those with high and complex needs.
Planning for the Future provides a strategic plan for the whole of the community housing sector across NSW, recognising that different providers offer different strengths and opportunities. All providers will need to demonstrate that they can operate to high standards in their provision of housing services. High-performing providers in medium-or-high-demand locations will find opportunities to expand their business through social and affordable housing. They may focus on particular aspects of the business, such as particular population groups, or operate as general providers. In low-demand locations, specific responses will be developed.

Importantly, it is a future that offers valuable roles for each type of community housing provider. Some providers will grow significantly and some incrementally, while others will choose to remain the same size. Some may join up with related agencies, such as support service providers, to offer a range of appropriate services. Some will improve their business by strengthening current skills and strategies and others may diversify their role through partnerships. Some organisations with very small numbers of properties may decide that their tenants will be better served by their properties being managed by a larger, better resourced provider.

Other elements of the sector, including tenant-managed cooperatives and the Crisis Accommodation Program, have been identified as areas where future strategies will be developed.

The next five years will be a significant period for community housing. This strategy provides a blueprint for action. It will require the commitment of everyone to deliver the vision.

Planning for the Future is being launched at a time of unprecedented community and government discussion on housing affordability and various options for increasing the supply of affordable housing. A number of these options envisage a more substantial role for the community housing sector in delivering and managing housing, often in partnership with the private sector. The strategy will be revisited to keep it relevant.
A changing sector: Community housing in NSW

NSW has a long history of community housing being provided by churches, charities and other not-for-profit organisations. These organisations play an extremely valuable role in housing a whole range of people, from the aged to people with disabilities and people suffering from a mental illness. This strategy focuses only on those providers that have a relationship with Housing NSW, whether through the receipt of funding or the use of properties. Around 31,500 people in NSW live in long-term community housing. This is secure, subsidised rental housing that not-for-profit community-based organisations, or housing providers, make available for people on low incomes and people with special needs. Some providers also manage affordable rental housing for those on low-to-moderate incomes.

In 1996, the NSW Government released a strategy to grow the community housing sector and make it more professional, creating an alternative long-term provider system for people experiencing housing stress. The Office of Community Housing, established as a result of the 1996 strategy, works with providers to make their services more professional and strengthen their governance structures.

Since that time, the community housing sector has undergone major change. The most noticeable change is that the number of properties under management more than doubled in the 10 years from 6,000 to over 13,000 in 2006. This has been accompanied by many changes in operations, in programs and in tenant outcomes.

A voluntary accreditation system was introduced in 1998. Through this system, many providers strengthened their administration, policies and operating systems. A rigorous performance based registration system, introduced in 2005, built on these gains to show that providers have been achieving the right outcomes.

Provider numbers have consolidated since 1996, as a result of amalgamations in the late 1990s and, more recently, moves initiated by providers to join forces so they can deliver a better quality of service.

Importantly, community housing in NSW has demonstrated its credentials in delivering housing for people most in need. Innovative programs have become part of the everyday work of community housing providers. Projects include:

- the Port Jackson Supported Housing Program, which provides housing for a range of people who need support services to live independently;
- the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative, in partnership with NSW Health, which brings together housing and support services for people suffering from a mental illness;
- My Place, which supports homeless people in inner Sydney to move into crisis accommodation and eventually into independent living.

Providers have demonstrated an ability to deliver excellent services. In the 2007 National Social Housing Survey, an overwhelming 85 percent of community housing tenants said they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their overall housing services, higher than the national average. This is part of a general improvement in service delivery, up from an already high 78 percent in 2002.
A broader role for community housing

Planning for the Future signals a strengthening of skills, infrastructure and service delivery to better equip the sector to take up the challenges of a greater role in social housing and affordable housing. Key features include:

> networks of providers in each region offering a range of housing services;
> increasing the use of partnerships, with the private sector to fund more housing;
> some consolidation of the sector, as providers with very small numbers of dwellings join up with larger providers to deliver a better service;
> the growth of a number of larger providers, with the capacity to undertake their own housing development activities;
> sustainable business and subsidy models for all providers;
> the introduction of incentives for providers to leverage government funding to increase the amount of housing produced;
> involvement of some community housing providers in the delivery of a broader range of services, including services to private renters and home ownership schemes; and
> a continuing focus on tenant choice, tenant participation and responsiveness to a range of needs.

The increased role played by the community housing sector will complement the role of Housing NSW in its delivery of public housing.

Demographic and social changes in NSW have resulted in greater targeting of housing assistance, predominantly to households on the lowest incomes and those with increasingly complex needs. Reforms, such as Reshaping Public Housing, signalled the intention for government assistance to support those most in need.

There is also a need for more rental housing that is affordable for low-to-moderate income earners. This means housing that allows families to afford food, health care and education as well as assisting workers to stay close to the communities that need them.

The NSW State Plan identified the potential for an expanded role for the community housing sector to provide affordable housing.

Governments in Europe, North America and the UK have boosted the role that their not-for-profit sector plays in the development and delivery of social and affordable housing. More investment from private industry has followed this commitment. For example, private lending into the not-for-profit housing sector in the UK has now reached about $100 billion. This approach has resulted in a significant increase in housing available for lower-income earners.

Increasingly, other Australian states and territories are considering a broader role for community housing: a role that builds on its capacity to deliver services to those most in need, but also recognises the role community housing can play in helping those who need more affordable rental housing or low-cost home ownership.

Planning for the Future reflects these national and international directions and, building on the demonstrated achievements of community housing in NSW, outlines opportunities for greater engagement by the sector in the provision of affordable housing.

In this strategy, affordable housing refers to the range of housing products for households on low-to-moderate incomes who are experiencing housing stress. Affordable housing will be managed by some community housing providers. Often housing will be acquired or constructed by community housing providers as well.
Responding to the challenge

There are five main drivers for change in the community housing sector:

> the high and complex needs of tenants;
> the impacts of demographic change and increased targeting on revenue;
> creating sustainable communities;
> increased demand for affordable housing options; and
> accessing additional funds.

This strategy draws on community housing providers’ unique capabilities to meet the challenges faced by social housing. It does this by increasing the size, efficiency and capacity of providers, thereby helping more people in need.

1. High and complex needs of tenants

Most social housing providers now house many tenants with complex needs. Community housing providers will increasingly deliver wider benefits for tenants by establishing formal links with other service providers. The Housing and Human Services Accord builds on and develops established practice in both community and public housing. The Accord establishes a partnership approach across housing and human services agencies, between community and public housing, and with providers of related services. Such partnerships will become increasingly important in addressing need. This approach builds on the benefits of stable housing to provide support that helps people live independently and sustain their tenancies.

Community housing can:

> serve a broad spectrum of client types, from those with very high support needs through to moderate-income earners;
> draw on strong links with support services to help tenants receive the necessary support to maintain a tenancy.

2. Impacts of demographic change and targeting resources

The NSW Government has responded to demographic and social changes by greater targeting of housing assistance. This means that households on the lowest incomes and those with special needs are given priority access to housing. This is generally already the case in community housing, which has increasingly focused on these groups in recent years.

Increased targeting generally leads to a greater number of small, low income households, which in turn means less rent is collected. It can also mean higher costs to appropriately accommodate tenants with higher support needs. This can mean that rent revenue may not cover expenditure.

The community housing sector offers ways to improve income and make operations viable.

Community housing can:

> use a number of rent approaches, for example reflecting location and amenity, sub-market rent levels as well as rents related to tenant income, while still preserving affordability for those who live in community housing;
> use different business models, human resources structures and property portfolios which adapt quickly to changing demand and market conditions as well as adding to the capacity to respond to a wide variation in client groups.

3. Creating sustainable communities

There are strong links between having a decent home and good health, educational attainment and the capacity for people to get jobs. Social housing must deliver not only ‘bricks and mortar’ but broader social benefits to individuals, thereby contributing to the creation of sustainable communities. Tenants have clearly said they appreciate the social benefits that can be delivered by community housing.

Community housing’s tenancy and housing management policies can help to build stronger communities, by actively involving residents in identifying issues and working with other service providers.

Planning for the Future: New directions for community housing in New South Wales
providers and Government to develop and implement strategies to resolve issues relating to urban, social, economic and environmental factors, such as how to reduce crime in a local area or how to promote local employment opportunities.

Active involvement of the community results in better service delivery. An early example of community renewal is that of the Claymore Estate, led by Argyle Community Housing, which transformed the community through a process of empowerment and self-determination. Another example is St George Community Housing, which is involved in the urban renewal of the Bonnyrigg Estate in Western Sydney as part of the Bonnyrigg Partnerships Consortium.

Similarly, the development of large-scale stock transfers will result in an increasing number of community housing providers operating on housing estates. Indeed, in a number of instances, they will be responsible for the management of whole estates.

Community housing can:

> understand local needs and support options and develop innovative responses to those needs;
> support sustainable tenancies and broker solutions if problems arise, by using flexible allocations and management policies;
> encourage local enterprise and voluntary action by building trust and attracting support from local community leaders and businesses;
> encourage tenant participation, from input at board level through to tenant committees and other groups;
> help promote tenant mix on large social housing estates.

4. Demand for affordable housing options

The private rental market, which has long been the primary source of affordable rental housing, is becoming tighter as rents increase and areas undergo gentrification. There is a growing group of low- and moderate-income households who struggle to find affordable housing in the private rental market.

Developing more affordable housing options is vital for ongoing local and regional economic development.

Providing more affordable housing is now a key housing challenge. The role that the not-for-profit sector can play has already been recognised at the national and state levels.

Community housing can:

> provide options, ranging from crisis housing for the homeless to affordable housing, by using different housing procurement, financing and management approaches;
> deliver housing for low-to-moderate income earners, based on a strong track record;
> tailor its delivery around lower wage workers who are needed by local businesses.

5. Accessing resources

Commonwealth State Housing Agreement funding has reduced in real terms over the past decade. For an increase in housing to be realised, we need to attract alternative sources of funding that will achieve long-term sustainability and growth to assist more people in need.

Community housing:

> can leverage investment by attracting non-government borrowing and other sources of capital;
> can develop housing more cost-effectively because providers have charitable tax status, so more people can be housed for the same funding;
> is an attractive partner for both non-government and government organisations, including private development partners;
> can generate commercial revenue through fee-for-service activities, giving providers a stronger revenue base.
Responding to the challenge

The change matrix
The “community housing change matrix” illustrated below links these drivers and the benefits offered by community housing with our objectives to show how we arrived at the vision and themes for action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drivers for Change</th>
<th>High and Complex Needs</th>
<th>Demographic and Social Change</th>
<th>Sustainable Communities</th>
<th>Affordable Housing</th>
<th>Accessing Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Need to deliver a broader range of services to tenants with high and complex needs</td>
<td>Increased targeting of tenant need and steady decline in rent revenue</td>
<td>Need for wider social benefits, mutual obligation and sustainable communities</td>
<td>Role for not-for-profit sector in delivering affordable housing</td>
<td>Need to attract alternative sources of funding to achieve sustainable growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benefits of Community Housing

- > successful track record of service across a spectrum of client groups
- > strong links to support services help maintain tenancies successfully and increase the viability of the housing arrangement
- > multiple rent approaches to reflect location, amenity, market rents, tenant income
- > range of business models, human resources structures and property portfolios adapted to market conditions and variation in client groups
- > local providers grasp local needs and support options
- > flexible allocations and practices to broker solutions and support sustainable tenancies
- > support for broader social objectives including tenant participation
- > providers accountable to government (and attractive to investors) through rigorous registration process
- > sector experience in delivering affordable housing
- > tax exemptions
- > leveraging investment through non-government borrowing and other capital sources
- > partnerships, including private development partners
- > commercial revenue generated by fees-for-service
- > volunteer skills and capacity

Themes

- Theme 1 – Growth
- Theme 2 – Diverse and Flexible Responses
- Theme 3 – Stronger Communities
- Theme 4 – Capacity and Confidence
- Theme 5 – Viability and Sustainability
Our vision for community housing will be delivered through five themes. Three are strategic themes, concerned with the delivery of housing. Two are enabling themes, concerned with the critical success factors that providers need to achieve growth. Each theme emerges from the challenges and opportunities facing community housing and social housing more broadly.

The five themes are:

1. **Growth**
   - Facilitate growth and continued innovation in the community housing sector to assist more people in need

2. **Diverse and flexible responses**
   - Support diverse and flexible responses to meet individual and local needs using local opportunities

3. **Stronger communities**
   - Support individuals and their local communities to become more sustainable, self-sufficient and resilient

4. **Capacity and confidence**
   - Building the capacity of and confidence in community housing to ensure sector growth and the delivery of quality tenant outcomes

5. **Viability and sustainability**
   - Putting in place financing and structural arrangements that achieve long-term business sustainability for community housing providers

In the following sections, these themes are translated into actions. Housing NSW will lead on some actions. For others, Housing NSW will support the sector in delivery. With the community housing sector and Housing NSW working together, we can achieve this vision.
1. Growth Objective

Facilitate growth and continued innovation in the community housing sector to assist more people in need

Housing need is increasing, which creates an opportunity for community housing to play a greater role in growth through its own investment.

Larger providers have more scope to broaden their roles, including borrowing and repaying debt. The ability of providers to borrow, coupled with tax and other concessions that reduce housing costs, make community housing an attractive partner for the NSW Government in delivering affordable and social housing in high-need areas.

Expanding resources for growth

This strategy aims to overcome past constraints to investment by the sector. The Government has made a series of new commitments aimed at supporting community housing providers to play a greater role in developing and owning their own properties.

> The first commitment was the creation of an Affordable Housing Innovations Fund, valued at almost $50 million, to boost the supply of affordable community housing and encourage providers to leverage. This fund, to be administered jointly by Housing NSW’s Office of Community Housing and the Centre for Affordable Housing, will support projects in which providers bring both debt funding and equity to affordable community housing projects for which they will own title.

> The second commitment is to increase the duration of leases to give potential investors greater certainty and confidence in providers. In the short term, this will involve extending up to 600 existing five-year leases to 35-year leases for a limited number of growth providers. Long-term leases provide certainty of income, which in turn will enable community housing providers to borrow against the income stream generated from a long-term lease. These borrowings will be used by the organisation to buy or build additional housing for which the community housing provider will hold title and will be used as affordable housing.

Housing NSW will also build on recent successes of the transfer of management of existing public housing stock to community housing providers. The current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement has allowed an average of 500 properties to be transferred each year. This will continue into the future, subject to future agreements. Management transfers will happen both in high need areas to support larger-scale provider operations, and strategically in lower-demand areas to improve the efficiency of operations.

The remainder of growth will come from private sector investment, planning initiatives and investment by community housing providers themselves.

The contribution of the different components, different avenues of Housing NSW funded supply, transfer of management and provider funded supply will change over the course of the 10 years. Targets will be set in the annual review of the action plan.

Targeting real growth to high-need locations

The NSW Government has committed to helping those in most need. This means considering the relative affordability of housing markets, the ability of people to access affordable housing near their work, the appropriate form of housing for people (eg. size and configuration), demographics and patterns of migration. It also means considering the availability of social housing already available in a location.

Just as Housing NSW has encapsulated these drivers into its long-term asset planning, so too they will be considered for community housing. This means that resources will be targeted to areas that get the best return for investment, and lead to the right kind of housing for people who need it. This means that areas with the greatest relative shortage of social or affordable housing – parts of the Sydney metropolitan area, Central Coast and Hunter, and the North Coast – will see the biggest increases.

How providers will access growth resources

In the coming years, growth providers will emerge in NSW. These providers, large, high-performing providers, who undertake their own investment and development and who have diversified products, will become significant players in social housing.

To accelerate the emergence of these providers, the Iemma Government is targeting a small number in the first instance, with an expectation that this number will increase over time. The Government is committed to investing in selected providers to enable them to develop.

The long-term leasing pilot, $70 million for development and Affordable Housing Innovations Fund resources, will be concentrated in competitively selected growth providers. Over time, different strategies will be developed to foster a healthy market of growth providers. Such an approach will provide the scale needed for investment, protect the interests of tenants in community housing and protect the NSW Government’s assets.
Facilitate investment in community housing by providers

1.1 Establish targets, to be reviewed annually, for different components of growth which will achieve the increase in homes from 13,000 to 30,000.

1.2 Establish a $49.8 million Affordable Housing Innovations Fund to stimulate mixed public and private debt and equity models for financing affordable housing.

1.3 Pilot long-term leases as a means of providing lenders with confidence about revenue levels.

1.4 Explore ways to spend up to $70 million in capital funding through direct delivery by registered community housing providers.

1.5 Review use of current funding streams, including headleasing subsidies, as a means of leveraging investment.

1.6 Explore approaches to rent setting that support debt repayment while preserving affordability.

1.7 Develop operational policy principles to guide affordable housing provision.

1.8 Boost the capacity of providers to broker partnerships that bring additional resources.

Invest funding in community housing supply

1.9 Increase the proportion of all Housing NSW new supply and asset reconfiguration that is managed by community housing.

1.10 Continue the transfer of management of existing housing from public to community housing providers.

Expand community housing through non-government investment in community housing

1.11 Community housing providers will negotiate and raise debt finance to fund housing provision.

1.12 Community housing providers will explore ways to utilise their equity to invest in new supply.

1.13 Community housing providers will establish partnerships with organisations willing to invest in community housing.

1.14 Community housing providers will negotiate with relevant local authorities to maximise the yield through use of planning and other incentives available to affordable housing developments.

1.15 Community housing providers will structure development projects to maximise tax exemptions available to them.

Expand partnerships delivering community housing

1.16 Develop tools and resources to support partnerships between community housing providers and private partners.

1.17 Develop a partnerships model for churches, housing providers and other equity holders that considers the needs of all parties and allocates risk appropriately.

1.18 Participate in the renewal of public housing estates and provide opportunities through that process for asset transfers, community building and diversification of affordable housing options.
2. Diverse and flexible responses

Objective

Support diverse and flexible responses to meet individual and local needs and priorities using local opportunities

Diversity and flexibility are already hallmarks of community housing operations. These will remain as important characteristics into the future. Providers can offer diverse types of housing, including crisis accommodation, supported housing, rental housing to low-to-moderate income households and assistance into the private rental market. There needs to be a range of providers to respond flexibly to local circumstances and the needs of different client groups.

One of the great strengths of community housing is its capacity to deliver a range of different types of housing services. Community housing can tailor housing responses around the needs of individuals, families and local communities.

This strength is particularly important in responding to tenants who need a high level of support. To support innovative, flexible responses, Housing NSW will continue to focus government-funded community housing on those most in need. Providers will also strengthen their already firm base by establishing partnerships, a critical element to getting the best possible outcomes for tenants with high needs.

However, community housing is also able to assist households across the whole spectrum of housing need, from those who are homeless and experiencing crisis housing. Community housing is positioned to assist people at different stages in their housing need and support them as they move through different kinds of housing assistance.

In this context, diverse and flexible responses will include affordable housing and assisting people into private rental. The range of models of housing and support provision in community housing is a key strength in addressing the needs of different groups, and in offering different types of services.

As the role of community housing expands, we must ensure that households in need have equitable access to housing opportunities offered by both community and public housing. Applicants for social housing will benefit from an integrated system of information on social housing, and common access and assessment arrangements. In this context, the development of a common access framework is critically important.

Just as households need different types of housing and related services, there is also no single preferred model or size of community housing provider that would meet the needs of all client groups across the state. Good service delivery comes as a result of both government frameworks that support good outcomes and local responses developed around local need.

This strategy further supports a diverse range of delivery models for providers, and supports consideration of the particular challenges faced by rural and regional housing. This strategy aims to ensure that community housing providers in all localities are able to deliver the benefits of community housing, including support for high-needs tenants, access for particular population groups, and the use of housing agencies to help strengthen communities and improve opportunities.

In some locations in NSW, there may be a clear case for a single social housing provider to improve efficiency and service quality. The relevant locations will be identified jointly by Housing NSW and community housing providers, and will form part of an integrated approach to delivering social housing services. In making any final decision, consideration will be given to whether a community housing provider or public housing can better serve the community interests in that location.
## 2. Diverse and flexible responses

### Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will do to achieve diverse and flexible responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to housing meeting a range of needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Explore jointly the best way to attract the support resources needed for tenants with additional needs, including how to best implement the Joint Guarantee of Service, and the Housing and Human Services Accord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Collaboratively develop a common access framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3 Realign portfolio stock to meet changing tenant requirements, such as:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- the increasing need for dwellings with fewer bedrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>- the need for accessible, adaptable and universal housing design.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Respond to the needs of particular population groups

| 2.4 Refine the range of community housing provider delivery models that meet the needs and aspirations of specific population groups, such as Aboriginal communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and older people. |
| 2.5 Community housing providers will work with Aboriginal community housing providers to strengthen their joint efforts to offer high-quality services to Aboriginal households. |
| 2.6 Work with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office to improve housing responses and access to mainstream community housing by Aboriginal communities. |

### Recognise tenants’ different life stages and preferences

| 2.7 Develop affordable housing that offers pathways for tenants, including rental and home-ownership opportunities. |
| 2.8 Enable providers to deliver housing products that assist low-to-moderate income households into private rental and home ownership. |
| 2.9 Increase prospective tenants’ awareness of community housing. |
| 2.10 Develop a strategy for tenant-managed cooperatives. |

### Support specific geographical or regional responses

| 2.11 Continue development of Housing NSW planning frameworks that involve robust cross-provider service planning at regional and local levels. |
| 2.12 Develop strategies to enable community housing to respond appropriately to low-demand areas, including new delivery models and facilitate service delivery innovation. |
| 2.13 Develop community housing provider delivery models that meet local need more efficiently. |

### Respond to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

| 2.14 Deliver a rolling five-year Crisis Accommodation Program strategy that integrates with Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) and other planning, and contributes to the development and delivery of homelessness responses that are diverse, flexible and client focussed. |
| 2.15 Seek opportunities to integrate Aboriginal SAAP services with community housing to assist in exit, transitional and long-term housing. |
| 2.16 Strengthen existing partnerships to support homeless people. |

Housing NSW will lead these actions and strategies  
Housing NSW will support the sector to lead these actions and strategies
3. Stronger communities

Objective

Support individuals and their local communities to become more sustainable, self-sufficient and resilient.

Community building and tenant participation have always been trademark characteristics of community housing. Despite an increased focus on growth and viability, community housing will retain this focus on people and communities into the future.

Community housing has always focused on building stronger communities through its community based governance structures. Community housing providers on estates have shown they can help build stronger social housing neighbourhoods. Providers can also play a role beyond estates, by building on their partnerships with other community development agencies and supporting tenants in a range of ways.

This strategy aims to strengthen the community building potential of providers both on and off social housing estates. We will support providers to develop innovative responses to community needs.

Community housing excels in developing ways to encourage the involvement of tenants in community building activities. Tenant participation in developing and delivering housing can lead to involvement in board structures and policy making processes, and better equip tenants for employment.

Community housing plays a broader role in building stronger communities. For example, the supply of affordable housing is critical in supporting local and regional economic development and improving regional competitiveness by keeping workers close to jobs.

Housing providers also contribute to local economies through their roles as employers and purchasers of local services and products.
## 3. Stronger communities

### Actions

#### What we will do to achieve stronger communities

##### Social and economic participation by tenants in their communities

| 3.1 | Expand activities that encourage tenant participation and cohesion including:  
- building tenant participation into advisory and decision-making structures within organisations  
- exploring the establishment of a state-wide tenant consultative body to discuss key issues. |
| 3.2 | Increase tenants’ independence and engagement through micro-enterprises or community activities and leadership. |
| 3.3 | Increase social and economic participation of tenants through improved access to training and employment. |

##### Encourage community development activities by community housing providers

| 3.4 | Continue developing partnerships that:  
- enhance outcomes for mutual clients  
- build stronger communities in disadvantaged social housing neighbourhoods. |
| 3.5 | Continue promoting or leading neighbourhood management strategies that result in:  
- greater involvement of local tenants in developing and managing housing and broader neighbourhood solutions  
- improving coordination and integration of services that benefit tenants  
- a diverse mix of housing management models linked to tenant needs. |
| 3.6 | Engage in the physical and social renewal of specific housing estates. |
| 3.7 | Contribute to the development of balanced communities through housing allocation policies. |
| 3.8 | Explore options for tenant involvement in the management of housing estates through, for example, establishing tenant-managed cooperatives. |
| 3.9 | Share experiences and build on the expertise of public and community housing work carried out on estates. |
| 3.10 | Pursue community development outcomes by exploring the capacity of community housing providers to:  
- identify and develop the services needed in a locality and support tenants to participate in these organisations  
- support informal service provision within the community, such as neighbourhood watch or social clubs  
- play a role in the development of community enterprises. |
| 3.11 | Explore the role of allocations and affordable housing projects in building stronger communities. |

##### Contribute to local and regional economic development

| 3.12 | Promote good practice and build skills and capabilities in activities that support economic development goals. |
| 3.13 | Build on the role that community housing providers play within the local economy, especially in regional locations. |

Housing NSW will lead these actions and strategies  
Housing NSW will support the sector to lead these actions and strategies
4. Capacity and confidence

Objective

Providers have worked hard in the past 10 years to make their services more professional and strengthen their governance. Accreditation, registration, consolidation initiatives and many more activities demonstrate providers’ credentials.

While our vision offers an expanded role for providers, it requires providers to gain the knowledge and skills to initiate, negotiate, finance and deliver housing projects, and to be responsible for their long-term management. Many community housing providers will need to build skills in areas like property development and management of larger property portfolios, as well as new skills in negotiation, financial modelling and contract management, to enable them to enter into partnerships with the private sector or financial institutions to provide more housing.

In the early years of the strategy, our focus will be on providers who are capable of taking on growth roles. As the skills in the sector are advanced, this group is likely to expand.

The NSW Government has provided the legislative framework for regulating the sector. This will give private lending institutions confidence that the Government is committed to a healthy, vibrant community housing sector, and will lead to increased lending to the sector at reasonable rates.

The Housing Act 2001 has been amended to recognise and regulate community housing activities and provide the necessary platform for the future development of the sector. A regulatory code will build on the Performance Based Registration System and clearly detail the outcomes all providers must meet for registration.

Build the capacity of and confidence in community housing to ensure sector growth and the delivery of quality tenant outcomes

Growth in community housing requires a skilled and capable sector, in which the Government, investors, tenants and all stakeholders have confidence.

The outcomes will focus on the delivery of high-quality services to tenants and applicants, protection of government investment, and the effectiveness of business planning and risk management. Regulation will be proportionate to the level of risk to which providers are exposed.

Under the new framework, all community housing providers that receive assistance from Housing NSW will need to become registered. They will also need to demonstrate that they meet the outcomes set out in the proposed regulatory code.

We will continue to research new approaches and evaluate existing programs for the future planning of new supply and the provision of support services.
# 4. Capacity and confidence

## Actions

### What we will do to develop capacity and confidence

**Manage risk through regulation**

| 4.1 | Implement amendments to the *Housing Act 2001* that recognise, support and regulate a sustainable community housing sector. |
| 4.2 | Develop a risk-based regulatory code to implement the legislative amendments in line with the growth and diversification of the sector. |

**Building confidence in the community housing sector**

| 4.3 | Provide a public register of community housing providers, with appropriate information relating to their registration status. |
| 4.4 | Identify and respond to systemic factors creating risks in the sector and support “at risk” organisations. |
| 4.5 | Support the continuous improvement of the sector through better management and feedback on performance data. |
| 4.6 | Draw on performance data to provide publicly available information on sector performance to help build investment and partnerships. |

**Develop a community housing sector development strategy**

| 4.7 | Work to strengthen the capacity of community housing in critical areas, including in the development and provision of affordable housing. |
| 4.8 | Develop a community housing workforce strategy that:  
- identifies the current scope of the workforce  
- identifies workforce requirements, including the critical skills needed for the continued and future development of the community housing sector  
- supports the development of the workforce and governance structures. |
| 4.9 | Adopt appropriate standards in all new areas of business for community housing providers and develop a cooperative approach to sharing existing best practice. |
| 4.10 | Support industry resourcing and representation as a means of sector development. |
| 4.11 | Work to build the capacities of growth providers to better meet the challenges of expansion. |

**Target resources by strengthening the research base**

| 4.12 | Use housing market and housing needs data for planning and targeting new supply to need. |
| 4.13 | Explore potential mechanisms to collect and distribute useful research findings to the whole community housing sector. |
| 4.14 | Develop an evaluation framework and commit resources to the evaluation of sector activities. |

**Prepare partners to work with community housing providers**

| 4.15 | Implement a strategy to promote the benefits and achievements of the community housing sector to a wide range of partners, including relevant professional and trade associations, and financial institutions. |
| 4.16 | Promote and educate potential affordable housing partners about community housing. |
| 4.17 | Increase awareness of community and affordable housing to prospective tenants. |

Housing NSW will lead these actions and strategies

Housing NSW will support the sector to lead these actions and strategies
5. Viability and sustainability

Objective

Put in place financing and structural arrangements that achieve long-term business sustainability for providers.

Viability of operations underpins service to tenants. For community housing providers to continue to provide excellent service, no matter what their size or target group, they must have sufficient operating capacity and flexibility to cover all their costs in an efficient way, both today and in the long term.

This strategy seeks to build a firm foundation for both the continuity of the community housing sector and its expansion through promoting viable and sustainable organisations.

Providers operate in a wide variety of sizes and configurations, with some managing less than 10 properties to others managing over 2,000. Different providers have different strengths, whether in meeting the needs of a single tenant group or large and diverse tenant groups.

The introduction of a regulatory code under the Housing Act 2001 will mean that all providers receiving properties or funding from Housing NSW will need to meet standards for service delivery. Some organisations with small numbers of properties will choose to join up with larger housing providers. Increasingly, networks of providers may appear as a cost-effective means for jointly offering a range of services.

The challenges include the need to develop rent models that generate increased and predictable revenue, as well as the refinement of business models from which providers can benefit and grow. Recurrent subsidies will need to be designed to recognise the different operating costs in different locations and for various client groups. Simultaneously, we will need to preserve the flexibility that allows community housing to meet the needs of its tenants and local communities.

This strategy seeks to encourage organisational efficiency as a way to increase viability. New models of cooperation and resource sharing for smaller community housing providers, both with other housing and service providers in related areas, will encourage economies of scale while still preserving local responsiveness.
## 5. Viability and sustainability

### Actions

**What we will do to achieve viability and sustainability**

**Increase the funds available by developing alternative rent models**

| 5.1 | Identify alternative rent models to increase funds available while preserving tenant affordability. |
| 5.2 | Identify rent and other operating models that support the operation of affordable housing. |
| 5.3 | Assist tenants to access Commonwealth Rent Assistance. |

**Support best uses of the subsidy stream for community housing**

| 5.4 | Review operating subsidies in the light of sector reform. |
| 5.5 | Assess costs and benefits of the headleasing subsidy stream and formulate a strategy for its future role within the community housing sector. |

**Improve maintenance management**

| 5.6 | Formulate funding models for the sector that provide sustainable funding for maintenance provisions. |
| 5.7 | Adopt a pre-emptive approach to maintenance by developing an asset management framework aimed at:  
- improving community housing provider management of their portfolios to respond actively to the changing needs of tenants  
- promoting a housing life-cycle approach to management and supply strategies  
- ensuring properties transferred to community housing management from public housing meet an appropriate standard. |
| 5.8 | Consider sustainable design principles for new developments to improve asset performance and environmental sustainability. |
| 5.9 | Eliminate any unfunded maintenance liabilities. |

**Develop viable business models that ensure flexibility of service delivery**

| 5.10 | Support community housing providers who are seeking voluntary amalgamation or other forms of consolidation. |
| 5.11 | Identify sustainable business models for the range of community housing services. |
| 5.12 | Develop a Business Development Fund to support trials of different organisational business models, including hybrid models in which community housing providers work with others in related sectors. |
| 5.13 | Develop transitional strategies as community housing providers move to new and more sustainable business models. |

**Encourage organisational efficiency**

| 5.14 | Explore ways to share resources between community housing providers and to optimise efficiency on costs. |
| 5.15 | Develop necessary business tools, such as information technology and purchasing systems, to support community housing provider viability and sector growth. |

**Diversify products delivered by community housing providers**

| 5.16 | Expand the level of fee-for-service work by community housing providers on behalf of others. |

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- **Housing NSW will lead these actions and strategies**
- **Housing NSW will support the sector to lead these actions and strategies**
Appendix 1.
Community housing in NSW

What is community housing?
Community housing is provided by the not-for-profit sector and offers secure, subsidised rental housing to people on low-to-moderate incomes that is affordable and appropriate to their diverse needs.

The level of community housing provision varies across Australia. NSW has the largest community housing sector. The role of community housing is recognised across Australia as a responsive, flexible and desirable provider of social housing for lower-income people and those that require additional support services.

Community housing’s capacity for tenant participation is demonstrated in the National Social Housing Survey. In the 2007 survey, community housing tenants in NSW acknowledged the contribution community housing makes. The 2007 survey results show 87 percent satisfaction, compared to 78 percent in 2002. The survey demonstrates the outcomes and benefits to community housing tenants, including the sense of wellbeing and improvements in life, such as employment.

Most of the community housing providers offer long-term housing as the primary type of housing assistance. In June 2007, these community housing providers managed around 14,000 properties, providing housing for 31,500 people, many with additional needs.

Approximately $135 million of Commonwealth and State Government funding was allocated to community housing providers in 2006/07 to assist in their operations. Forms of accommodation are diverse, and include standalone dwellings and congregate dwellings, like group homes or boarding houses.

The structure of community housing in NSW
Community housing forms part of the social housing sector. Other parts are public housing, provided through Housing NSW, and housing for Aboriginal people, administered through the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office.

Community housing now accounts for around 10 percent of social housing in NSW, assisting almost 70,000 people through long-term community housing and crisis accommodation in 2006/07.

Community housing providers vary widely in size and configuration. Currently, five percent of community housing providers manage between 200 and 2,000 properties, together almost 70 percent of the total community housing stock. The 95 percent of community housing providers, who manage the remainder, manage smaller property portfolios, many of them with fewer than 20 properties. Those with few properties tend either to be tenant-run housing cooperatives or those for whom community housing is a secondary rather than a core activity.

The community housing sector offers a range of housing types, from crisis accommodation to medium-and-long-term accommodation, both supported and unsupported. The graph below shows diversity of community housing providers by provider type in 2006/07.

Planning for the Future: New directions for community housing in New South Wales

Community housing providers in NSW 2006/07

Crisis accommodation providers (156) 41%
Partnerships (118) 31%
Housing cooperatives (39) 10.5%
Housing associations (35) 8%
Other (32) 8.5%

2 Community Housing 2005/06, Commonwealth State Housing Agreement national data reports, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
There are four main community housing provider types in NSW. These are described in detail below.

1. Housing associations
Housing associations are specialist social housing landlords. Most of them are generalist housing providers with the capacity to specialise as required by local needs and opportunities. There are 35 housing associations in widely dispersed locations across NSW. They manage property portfolios ranging from less than 50 to over 2,000 homes.

Housing associations provide assistance to people who meet Housing NSW’s eligibility criteria. They are required to apply the same basic eligibility criteria as public housing and prioritise their applicants on the basis of housing need. While most associations have a mix of tenants, some housing associations have particular specialities.

Housing associations may operate under a variety of legal structures, including trusts, state incorporated associations, cooperatives and companies. In NSW, housing associations are governed by the Associations Incorporation Act 1984, while all companies in Australia fall under the Corporations Act 2001. The role of the board of a housing association is vital to ensure strong and effective governance. Often the board includes tenants and other community partners as well as skilled experts. The organisation employs staff to manage the day-to-day running of the organisation and to provide necessary support, advice and information to tenants. Associations are funded on a recurrent basis to manage properties leased from the private rental market through the Community Housing Leasing Program (CHLP). Some stock has been financed through other programs and sources, and many undertake fee-for-service management for other organisations.

The peak body for housing associations is the NSW Federation of Housing Associations. The Federation’s Strategic Framework — 2004/05 to 2008/09 sets out directions identified by the sector and strategies to help housing associations deliver high-quality, professional services to tenants and applicants.

2. Tenant-managed housing cooperatives
The tenant-managed housing cooperatives model is consumer based, consisting of groups of self-selected tenant members willing to invest voluntary time and effort in the management of the cooperative. Under the funding program’s terms, at least 65 percent of cooperative members must be eligible for public housing.

The cooperative model provides tenant members with maximum levels of participation and control. As such, cooperatives are formed, controlled, and managed democratically by tenant members, on the basis of ‘one member one vote’. The model relies significantly on members’ willingness for ongoing participation, and cooperatives support this through processes and programs for capacity building within the cooperatives.

The cooperative model is one that combines minimum government funded administration with a high level of accountability to Government. Due to the fact that they are self-managed by tenants, most are small to medium in size. There are 39 housing cooperatives across NSW.

Cooperatives are accountable under the Cooperatives Act 1992, the Fair Trading Act 1987 and the Residential Tenancies Act 1987. The Association to Resource Cooperative Housing (ARCH) is the peak body for cooperative community housing projects.

3. Supported accommodation and crisis accommodation program providers
Community housing provides the principal source of crisis and transitional accommodation for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and in crisis in NSW. These services are provided through the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP), a joint Commonwealth and NSW Government initiative administered by Housing NSW. The CAP forms part of a wider service network, which includes support services provided under the auspice of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP).
In 2006/07, CAP provided housing assistance to approximately 39,000 people. While many of the organisations providing accommodation under CAP are mainstream community housing organisations, a substantial proportion of them are dedicated homelessness support services. These organisations frequently offer both housing and support services. They usually have a relatively small number of properties, in some cases fewer than 10, and have often been established to meet the needs of very particular communities or groups.

4. Housing partnerships

Housing partnerships provide housing assistance, in partnership with organisations such as churches, charitable bodies and local government. Housing NSW provides funds for the purchase or construction of properties, but not for recurrent purposes such as staff costs and maintenance. While partnership organisations often have expertise in community service provision, they usually do not have housing expertise as their core business.

Churches Community Housing, part of the NSW Ecumenical Council, was established in 1996 to encourage and resource church participation in government funded community housing.

Many local governments are also involved in the provision of community housing in their own right or through partnerships. According to the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, councils across NSW provide self-care units, hostels and nursing homes for elderly people and purpose-built dwellings to meet the needs of women and children, young people and people with disabilities. In addition to being a community housing provider, local government also provides a range of support to local community housing providers and schemes, including involvement of councillors on management committees, community grants and the use of council owned housing.

The Office of Community Housing

The Office of Community Housing is Housing NSW’s business unit that oversees the community housing sector in NSW. The Office of Community Housing plays a major role in the sector’s strategic development and in ensuring that community housing is effectively managed, operates in the public interest and is accountable to Government. It administers a registration program that assesses community housing provider performance and indicates where intervention may be needed to protect tenancies and government assets.

Community housing tenants in NSW

The following graphs show tenants by household type, and the range and number of tenants with special needs assisted by community housing in NSW.

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3. 2006/07 Annual Community Housing Data Collection, Office of Community Housing.
Key community housing facts

> In 1996, community housing was formally recognised as a long-term delivery mechanism for social housing in its own right.
> In 1996, the community housing portfolio in NSW was 6,000 properties.
> In 1999, the community housing sector managed 8,500 properties.
> There were 8,700 households in community housing in 1999 and this increased to 11,500 in 2003 and to approximately 14,700 by 2006/07.
> In 1999, community housing represented 6.6 percent of the social housing in NSW and this has increased to 10.7 percent by 2006/07.
> In 2007, the Housing Act 2001 was amended to recognise community housing as a viable and diversified component of the NSW social housing sector.

The chart provides a breakdown of community housing tenants by age. A high proportion of household members are aged under 18 years. Whilst there is a smaller proportion of older tenants, it is expected this proportion will increase over time. Many tenants will need additional support as they get older.

There is a large number of households with additional needs. This figure also shows the range of support needs of community housing tenants.
Affordable housing
Affordable housing is housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of low-to-moderate income households and priced so that these households are able to meet other basic living costs.

Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP)
Funds the lease or purchase and maintenance of properties used to accommodate people who are homeless, administered by the Office of Community Housing. The Crisis Accommodation Program is closely aligned to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, which is administered by the Department of Community Services.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance
Money paid by Centrelink or the Department of Veterans’ Affairs to people in the private rental market on low incomes to help cover the cost of their rent.

Community Housing Advisory Committee
Strategic body advising the Office of Community Housing and the Minister for Housing on strategic matters affecting the community housing sector. See facing page for Committee membership.

Community housing
Housing provided by the not-for-profit sector to offer secure, subsidised rental housing to people on low-to-moderate incomes that is affordable and appropriate to their diverse needs.

Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA)
Agreement under which the Commonwealth Government makes a financial contribution to the provision of housing by the states and territories. Provides strategic direction and funding certainty for housing assistance across Australia.

Housing and Human Services Accord
2005 agreement between Housing NSW and human services agencies, establishing a partnership approach to the provision of housing and support services for people with complex needs, helping them to live independently in social housing.

Housing stress
Housing is affordable when people renting or purchasing homes can pay their housing costs and still have sufficient income to meet other basic needs, such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. Lower-income households paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent or mortgage are often considered to be in housing stress. However, a household that does not spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing still may not have enough to live on, because they have other high fixed costs, such as a chronic health problem.

Joint Guarantee of Service
Agreement between NSW agencies coordinating the delivery of services to people with mental health problems and disorders who have ongoing support needs living in social housing. Aims to improve housing outcomes and access to services for people receiving assistance.

Performance Based Registration System
Registration system for community housing providers that receive funding or properties through Housing NSW, administered by the Office of Community Housing. Provides benefits for all stakeholders, particularly tenants, by intervening early to address community housing provider under-performance.

Public housing
Housing NSW provides affordable rental housing for people living on low incomes. Housing is allocated to those who can least afford accommodation in the private market and applicants must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)
The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth governments and is administered by the Department of Community Services. SAAP is closely aligned to the Crisis Accommodation Program, providing support services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless and in crisis. The current SAAP program emphasises the development of flexible service models that support early intervention, post-crisis stability and transition of clients into long-term stable housing.

Social housing
Housing provided on a not-for-profit basis, managed either by state agencies or by not-for-profit or community agencies, and largely funded through the CSHA. Public and community housing are two of the delivery modes for social housing in NSW.
Housing NSW wishes to acknowledge the essential work of the Community Housing Advisory Committee, and the Committee’s sub-group responsible for developing key components of Planning for the Future. The following stakeholders participated in the Committee’s work.

Community Housing Advisory Committee members

The Community Housing Advisory Committee is a strategic body responsible for advising the Minister for Housing and the Office of Community Housing on strategic matters affecting the community housing sector.

Mr Vic Smith  
Chair

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