

10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing

Engagement Summary Findings

The Victorian Government is developing a 10-Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy for Victoria. Our vision is to make sure there are enough social and affordable homes available in Victoria, in the right locations, that are accessible to people who need them.

In March and April 2021, we asked you about your ideas and experiences of the housing system, to help us to finalise the strategy. This report is a summary of what you told us when we asked you about your ideas for:

1. How a perfect housing system could meet everyone's needs
2. How a perfect housing system would help people to find and keep a house
3. What could make social housing communities stronger
4. How communities within social housing could better connect with the local community
5. How Homes Victoria should share information and ask for feedback from people who live in social housing
6. How the housing system could be better for everyone

Who did we speak to?

Through 13 focus groups and 31 phone interviews we spoke to 113 people who live in public or community housing, or are in need of social housing in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. 84 of you told us more about yourself.



GENDER

79% women

19% men

1% non-binary

1% other gender identity

AGE

18-24 10%

25-34 8%

34-44 17%

45-54 16%

55-64 24%

65-74 18%

75-84 7%

28% speak a language other than English at home

46% identified as having a disability



91% have lived in social housing for more than 12-months

What were your key messages for Homes Victoria?



1. Everyone is an individual

You told us that social housing must provide for the needs of everybody by making sure there are various types of housing and support services for different needs.

2. New houses must meet the needs of the individual

You told us that people's physical and mental health conditions, and how people want to live should be considered when they are allocated a house.

3. Staff must be invested in positive outcomes

You told us that social housing staff and any support workers should be professional, respectful, protect privacy and respond to concerns quickly.

4. Navigating the system should be easier

You told us that the housing system can be confusing and needs to be simplified to make it easier for people to navigate. This includes:

- the application process
- the different housing options
- support services
- understanding tenant rights.

5. Residents can share their skills and knowledge

You told us that residents can help bring the community together by sharing their skills and running activities for others.

6. Social housing needs to be safer

You told us that you don't always feel safe in neighbourhoods with a high-density of social housing. This could be improved by:

- improving the built form design
- working with the police
- running community programs that build community connections.

7. There needs to be less stigma about people who live in social housing

Some of you told us that you have experienced unfair treatment because you live in social housing. You suggested that this could be reduced by educating the public or running campaigns that challenge stereotypes about people who live in social housing.

8. Information should be more accessible

You told us that information about social housing needs to be easier to access and understand. It could be online, or by using hard copy flyers that are available at different places and in different languages or through support workers, doctors or schools.

9. People should be able to find out where they are on the waitlist

You told us that it is too hard to find out where you are on the waitlist, and that this should be accessible and in one place like My.Gov.au

10. Maintenance issues should be fixed quickly and easily

You told us that the maintenance process needs improvement. Repairs should be high-quality, carried out in a reasonable timeframe and residents should have the ability to track maintenance requests

11. Houses should be designed to reduce living costs

You told us that houses should be designed so that they are energy efficient and have built-in fittings like shelving and appliances, to reduce living and moving costs.

12. There needs to be different ways to communicate with Homes Victoria

You told us that people want to have the option of sharing their feedback with Homes Victoria in different ways. These include using computers, mobile phones, writing or having face to face conversations.

Preferences change depending on whether people have a current address.



What is next?



We will use **your ideas** and reflections **to finalise** the **10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing**. Your contributions have also **helped us to understand how we can improve the social housing system** for the people that use it.



Contact us

If you have questions or want to learn more about the 10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing, please contact us at housingstrategy@homes.vic.gov.au



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