

Housing & Homelessness

The increasing unaffordability of housing is putting severe strain on WA families, forcing many to cut back on other basic costs, such as food. We know the WA Government is focusing on addressing the housing crisis, and these investments are positive. However, WACOSS is concerned that the scale of investment in increasing the supply of affordable and social housing and reducing housing costs is simply not big enough to resolve the issue.

WA Labor 2025 Election Commitments

Election Commitment	\$19.5 million boost in housing and homelessness support
Status	<i>Funded (BP2, V2, P493 & P496 & P598)</i>
Investment	\$19.5 million over 4 years
Description	This funding includes, \$6 million over four years for the Community Housing Capacity Building Program; \$10.4 million over four years for metropolitan homelessness outreach expansion; and \$3.06 million over four years for Housing First Support Services Expansion – Bunbury
Implications	<i>This funding will increase access to support for people experiencing homelessness.</i>

Election Commitment	\$154 million to deliver hundreds of additional rental, affordable and social homes
Status	<i>Funded (BP2, V1, P178 & BP3, P174)</i>
Investment	\$175.2 million
Description	This funding includes a \$75 million fund for Keystart to support Build to Rent Loans, with applications to open in 2025-26. It also includes \$79.5 million investment to deliver 151 new social dwellings, and \$20.7 million to help deliver 234 new affordable dwellings funded by the Housing Australia Future Fund. It is unclear how this funding is dispersed through the outyears.
Implications	<i>Increasing access to affordable and social rental homes is critical. WACOSS is concerned that this funding is insufficient to keep up with our growing population, let alone the existing need. With the National Rental Affordability Scheme expected to end in 2026, the gap in affordable housing will become even greater.</i>

Election Commitment	\$130 million to raise the thresholds for stamp duty relief for first home buyers
Status	<i>Partially Funded (BP3, P76)</i>
Investment	\$119 million from 2024-25 to 2028-29

2025 - 2026 Budget

Description	This increases the threshold for stamp duty relief for First Home Buyers. The estimated impact on revenue in the Budget is less than considered in the election commitment.
Implications	<i>This will let more First Home Buyers access stamp duty concessions. The thresholds however, remain low considering the cost of housing. Additionally, this form of demand side investment risks pushing the cost of housing even higher.</i>

Election Commitment	Home ownership package
Status	<i>Funded (BP2, V2, P605 & BP3, P174)</i>
Investment	\$170.8 over 4 years
Description	Expansion of Keystart's Shared Equity Scheme. The Budget also states an intention to fund the scheme to 2031-32, for a total of \$210 million and estimates it will deliver an additional 1,000 loans to help more Western Australians into home ownership.
Implications	<i>This will help some people to buy a home who otherwise may not have been able to.</i>

Election Commitment	Establishment of a housing innovation fund
Status	<i>Funded (BP2, V1, P187 & P188)</i>
Investment	\$50 million over 4 years
Description	Investment to support Western Australian businesses to explore new ways to build houses faster and more affordably, facilitate uptake of new technology and boost productivity, through the provision of grants and low-interest loans.
Implications	<i>This may support businesses to reduce costs and timeframes to build houses.</i>

Election Commitment	Boosting the availability of housing for essential workers in regional WA
Status	<i>Partially Funded (BP2, V2, P718 & BP3, P192)</i>
Investment	\$25 million over 4 years; \$104 million over 3 years
Description	The Regional Housing Support Fund aims to accelerate regional housing development by offering grants of up to \$5 million to address feasibility challenges impacting the delivery of housing projects in the regions. Funding is available to local governments and private developers to fast-track new housing projects and increase land availability in regional areas. Double the GROH construction program to over 100 new builds.
Implications	<i>The \$145 million committed by the Government may include other housing initiatives specific to regional locations.</i>

	<p><i>This investment in GROH will support the State Government to attract staff and deliver vital services in regional Western Australia. Whilst this investment is welcome, community and social services continue to struggle with housing staff and community members accessing support.</i></p> <p><i>The investment to address the feasibility issues of delivering housing in regional WA is welcome. This must be accompanied by additional investment to address the various other barriers in housing availability.</i></p>
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Election Commitment	Expand Night Space in Kununurra
Status	<i>Funded (BP2, V2, P493 & P413)</i>
Investment	\$5.9 million over 3 years
Description	<p>Replicate the Ngurra Buru (Broome Night Space) in Kununurra to provide a safe place for vulnerable young people.</p> <p>Planning for the three-year pilot will commence in consultation with local community representatives and the Department of Communities to identify a suitable location and engage support services including meals, access to youth mentors and next-day family follow-up.</p>
Implications	<i>This will provide a safe place for young people in Kununurra. This is a welcome commitment, however, it is disappointing to see that it is not recurrent funding.</i>