



National Shelter

National Policy & Advocacy Framework 2026-2028

A housing system that delivers greater affordability, security and equity for people and communities across Australia.

Why This Framework Matters

Australia is facing one of the most significant housing challenges in its modern history. Across the country, too many people are struggling to find a home that is safe, secure, affordable and appropriate to their needs. Rising housing costs, rental stress, homelessness and growing inequality are affecting individuals, families and communities, with the greatest impacts felt by people already experiencing disadvantage.

At the same time, there is growing recognition that housing is more than a market outcome. Housing is essential social and economic infrastructure that underpins health, wellbeing, participation, productivity and opportunity. The decisions made today will shape housing outcomes for current and future generations.

National Shelter is Australia's independent national peak body for housing advocacy. We work to advance housing justice by influencing policy, investment and system reform that improves outcomes for people experiencing housing stress, housing insecurity and homelessness.

This Framework sets out National Shelter's advocacy priorities for 2026–2028. It provides a clear and practical agenda for addressing the interconnected challenges of housing affordability, housing supply, rental insecurity and homelessness, while supporting coordinated action across the Shelter Network and our national partners.

Developed in partnership with State and Territory Shelter organisations, national member bodies and key stakeholders, the Framework reflects a shared commitment to long-term, system-wide reform and collaboration.

Our Vision

Every person in Australia has access to a safe, secure, affordable, accessible and appropriate home.

Our commitment to housing justice is grounded in the progressive realisation of the right to adequate housing, ensuring continuous action towards safe, secure, affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for all.

How We Create Change

National Shelter improves housing outcomes through:

- Policy leadership
- Evidence-informed advocacy
- Sector collaboration and partnerships
- Government engagement
- Public engagement and communications
- Amplifying lived experience and tenant voices

Over the next three years, we will focus our efforts on the reforms needed to create a housing system that delivers greater affordability, security and equity for people and communities across Australia.

National Housing Reform Priorities

National Shelter's national advocacy efforts will focus on the core reform priorities outlined below. These priorities will be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect changes in housing markets, policy settings, and other relevant social and economic conditions.

Priority 1: Demonstrably Grow Public, Social, Affordable and Specialist Housing

Australia needs more housing that remains affordable for people on low and modest incomes.

We advocate for:

- Long-term housing investment
- National housing targets and accountability
- Growth in public, social and affordable housing
- Expansion of supportive and specialist housing
- Better use of government and community-owned land
- Stronger housing delivery capacity and innovation

Priority 2: Reform Renting and Strengthen Housing Security

Renting should be affordable, secure and a legitimate long-term housing option.

We advocate for:

- Stronger renter protections
- Ending unfair evictions
- Improved rental affordability
- Better-targeted Commonwealth Rent Assistance
- National rental reform principles
- Increased supply of affordable rental housing

Priority 3: Plan and Shape Better Cities and Communities

Housing outcomes are shaped by planning, infrastructure and access to opportunity.

We advocate for:

- Well-located homes close to jobs, services and transport across all jurisdictions
- Housing targets and delivery frameworks aligned with projected population growth and demographic trends
- Better integration of housing and infrastructure investment
- Inclusionary planning approaches
- Transit-oriented development
- Affordable housing outcomes through planning reform

Priority 4: Expand Housing Choice and Opportunity

Australians need more pathways to secure housing throughout different life stages.

We advocate for:

- Shared and limited equity programs
- Community land trusts and cooperative housing
- Alternative tenure models
- First Nations-led home ownership pathways
- More affordable pathways into secure housing
- Housing policy settings that improve equity and opportunity

How We Work

National Shelter works collaboratively with governments, communities, researchers, industry and people with lived experience to achieve lasting housing reform.

Our Advocacy Principles

- **Housing as Essential Infrastructure:** Housing should be recognised as critical social and economic infrastructure.
- **Housing Justice:** Everyone should have fair access to safe, secure, affordable and appropriate housing.
- **Prevention Before Crisis:** Housing insecurity should be addressed before it becomes homelessness.
- **Evidence and Lived Experience:** Research, data and lived experience should shape policy and decision-making.
- **No Net Loss, Only Net Gain:** Australia's housing system must grow, not reduce, the supply of public, social, affordable and specialist housing.
- **First Nations Self-Determination:** Housing solutions for First Nations communities should be community-led and grounded in self-determination.

→ **Collaboration:** Requires meaningful and lasting reform requires partnership across sectors and jurisdictions.

→ **Place-Based Solutions:** Housing policy should recognise local circumstances and support responses tailored to the needs of different communities, regions and housing markets.

Working Together

We work with:

- Governments
- Other peak and industry bodies
- First Nations organisations
- Community housing providers
- Homelessness services
- Tenant organisations
- Researchers and academic institutions
- Industry and investment partners
- People with lived experience
- Property and development sector
- Disability, health and aged care organisations

Our Role

National Shelter exists to advance systemic change on behalf of service providers and housing organisations, rather than delivering services in its own right.

We:

- Influence national housing policy
- Promote evidence-based policy development
- Advocate for housing system reform for low-income households
- Convene national housing conversations
- Support coordination across jurisdictions
- Elevate tenant and lived-experience voices
- Coordinate and amplify the collective national voice of State and Territory Shelter organisations and wider National Shelter members

- Hold governments accountable for commitments and outcomes
- Monitor and publicly report on progress against national housing commitments, targets and reforms to strengthen accountability across governments.

We do not:

- Build housing
- Deliver homelessness services
- Manage housing assets
- Duplicate the work of members, specialist sectors, or government.

What Success Looks Like

National Shelter's advocacy is focused on achieving measurable improvements in housing outcomes across Australia.

More Homes

- ✓ Growth in public housing
- ✓ Growth in social and affordable housing
- ✓ More supportive and specialist housing

Better Renting

- ✓ Stronger tenant protections
- ✓ Improved affordability
- ✓ Increased housing security

Stronger Communities

- ✓ Better planned cities and regions
- ✓ More housing close to jobs, transport and services
- ✓ Reduced housing inequality

Greater Opportunity

- ✓ More pathways to secure housing
- ✓ Improved housing outcomes for priority groups
- ✓ Greater equity across generations

Our Commitment

National Shelter will continue to be an independent, evidence-informed and collaborative advocate for housing justice.

We will champion practical reforms that improve affordability, security and equity while expanding access to safe, appropriate and affordable homes.

Working alongside governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities, researchers, service providers, industry and people with lived experience, we will pursue a housing system that delivers better outcomes for all Australians.

Housing is more than a roof over our heads. It is the foundation for dignity, well-being, participation, opportunity and belonging.



CONTACT

Jackson Hills

Chief Executive Officer

National Shelter

0411 395 842

Jackson.Hills@shelter.org.au