

ACT Shelter AGM 2025

Date: Monday 17 November

Time: 12.30-1.30pm

Location: Online (Microsoft Teams)

Attending:

ACT Shelter members: Brooke McKail; Ed Wensing; Eddy Bourke; Geoff Buchanan; Josh Anlezark (left 1:05 pm); Kate Gorman; Kylie Denny; Lucy Hohnen; Prahbjot Singh; Sarah Spiller;

ACT Shelter staff team: Corinne Dobson (CEO) Deb Pippen (Staff team)

John Alati (Returning Officer), Stephen Agarwal (Auditor, left 1:04 pm)

Chair: Lucy Hohnen

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair opened the meeting and provided an Acknowledgement of Country.

2. Quorum

The Chair confirmed that a quorum was present.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion: That the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted.

Moved: Sarah Spiller

Seconded: Geoff Buchanan

4. Chair's Report

The Chair presented a summary of the Chair's Report and encouraged members to read the Annual Report, which contains the full report.

Key points included:

- EC, staff and members are committed to the longevity and sustainability of ACT Shelter.
- The past year involved significant transition and consolidation amid ongoing sector challenges.
- ACT Shelter has been steadfast in its commitment to systemic advocacy for housing justice.

- The Executive Committee met regularly with a focus on strategic direction and financial oversight.
- The Chair noted the appointment of a new CEO, new committee members and new office-bearers this year.
- The Chair acknowledged Corinne Dobson for taking on the CEO role in challenging circumstances from April, the role has a significant workload and Corinne has succeeded in raising the profile of ACT Shelter in a short period of time.
- Priorities for the coming year include financial sustainability; collaboration with ACTCOSS; rental reform; and maintaining a strong advocacy profile for housing as a human right.
- Thanks were extended to all Executive Committee members, including outgoing members, staff, members, and stakeholders for their support.

Motion:

That the Chair's Report be accepted.

Moved: Brooke McKail

Seconded: Prahbjot Singh

5. CEO's Report

The CEO presented her report, noting:

- The importance of ACT Shelter's role as the only housing peak body in the ACT.
- This year is ACT Shelter's 50th anniversary, marking its establishment in 1975; many underlying challenges remain the same.
- The contribution of former CEO Travis Gilbert, who was in the role for nearly a decade, and the staff team.
- ACT Shelter faces significant financial challenges following the loss of a substantial portion of funding.
- Ongoing efforts to raise ACT Shelter's policy and advocacy profile and to improve organisational viability.
- Have sought to raise profile of the organisation, and to ensure ACT Shelter has the processes and systems in place to run effectively.
- Key advocacy work during the ACT Election was undertaken in partnership with ACTCOSS, particularly on the urgent need for more social housing.
- Continued engagement with National Shelter and national tenancy reform processes.
- Funding adequacy and sustainability are the foremost organisational challenges ahead.

- Activities are planned to mark the organisation's 50th anniversary, including a celebratory event the week after the AGM.

Motion: That the CEO Report, as captured in the Annual Report and presented verbally, be accepted.

Moved: Josh Anelzark

Seconded: Kate Gorman

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Prahbjot Singh, presented the Treasurer's Report, noting:

- The deficit reported this year reflects a significant reduction in funding following the ending of a one-off ACT Government grant period, effectively halving the budget.
- ACT Shelter has drawn on accrued reserves to continue operations.
- Staffing costs are the largest component of expenditure; this year there was a prolonged transition period between CEO appointments and extended planned staff leave.
- Difficult decisions will need to be taken to address financial challenges, including reduced staff capacity.
- ACT Shelter has this year established an Executive Committee Finance Sub-Committee, and strengthened financial reporting.
- ACT Shelter will need to continue advocating for adequate, ongoing funding.
- The Treasurer thanked the past Treasurer John Lawrence.

Additional discussion clarified:

- Previous funding increase under a previous ACT Parliamentary Agreement was time-limited rather than ongoing.
- Auditor Stephen Argarwal confirmed that ACT Shelter is a going concern, however there is a risk to ongoing viability beyond June 2026.
- The Chair noted there is a critical need to ensure ongoing sustainable funding, the financial situation is precarious.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report and budget be accepted.

Moved: Ed Wensing

Seconded: Brooke McKail

Stephen Argawal left the meeting.

7. Appointment of Auditor

The Chair advised that the Executive Committee sought a new auditor following many years with the same firm. After seeking quotes and advice from comparable organisations, AccountAbility was recommended. It is anticipated the appointment will provide the proactive financial advice needed in the current financial situation.

Motion: That AccountAbility be appointed as auditor.

Moved: Geoff Buchanan

Seconded: Brooke McKail

8. Election of Executive Committee Members

As Returning Officer, John Alati outlined the election process in accordance with the Rules of Association. Six nominations were received, including two nominations for office bearer positions (Lucy Hohnen for President, Brooke McKail for Deputy Chair). In accordance with the Rules, these nominations were taken as elected. Four nominations for ordinary members were also taken as elected, consistent with the Rules.

There was a discussion of the position of Treasurer, in which Brooke McKail nominated for the position with support of outgoing Treasurer Prabjhot Singh. The position of Deputy Chair was therefore declared vacant, to be resolved by the Executive Committee as soon as possible after the meeting.

Motion: To appoint Brooke McKail as the sole nominee for Treasurer

Moved: Geoff Buchanan

Seconded: Eddy Bourke

The position of Secretary was discussed. Ed Wensing nominated for the position, as a founding ACT Shelter member and life-member, concerned about viability and future of the organisation. The nomination was accepted.

Motion: To appoint Ed Wensing as the sole nominee for Secretary

Moved: Brooke McKail

Seconded: Geoff Buchanan

Motion: To appoint four ordinary members – Geoff Buchanan, Kate Gorman, Prabjot Singh and Josh Anlezark

Moved: Eddy Bourke

Seconded: Ed Wensing

Incoming Executive Committee

Office Bearers

- **President/Chair:** Lucy Hohnen (elected unopposed)
- **Treasurer:** Brooke McKail (elected unopposed)
- **Secretary:** Ed Wensing (elected following nomination)
- **Deputy President:** Vacant (to be managed by the Executive Committee)

Ordinary Members

- Geoff Buchanan
- Kate Gorman
- Prahbjot Singh
- Josh Anelzark

9. Other Business

- Members were encouraged to attend and promote the 50th anniversary event, which will bring together key figures from ACT housing policy over the past 50 years.
- Ed Wensing advised he has donated historical ACT Shelter and ACTCOSS records to the archives, with materials to be displayed at the anniversary event.

10. Close

The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting.