

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Housing assistance key to easing cost of living pressures**

Following the release of a Galaxy poll which indicates that 8 out of 10 Australians are concerned about a lack of infrastructure and affordable housing, National Shelter Chairperson Adrian Pisarski has called for an all party commitment to building the supply of affordable housing, stating "Australian voters clearly realise that housing costs are impacting on their quality of life".

The research which was commissioned by the Benevolent Society cites the nation's growing and ageing population as reasons for concern among voters.

According to National Shelter, Australia needs to build at least 220,000 new affordable dwellings by 2020. "We need to triple the 70,000 dwellings being built by current programs to 2014," he said.

"Housing costs represent the single largest expense faced by low and moderate income earners.

"Some people are paying up to 60%, if not more, of their net income to put a roof over their head," he continued.

"Political parties are obsessed with home ownership assistance, when the real problems are in our rental markets," Mr Pisarski said.

- More than 60% of the 1.1 million households in housing stress are renters
- We have 493,000 too few affordable and available rental properties
- Vacancy rates are below 2% in every capital and many regions
- Rents are rising at 3 times the CPI
- More than 105,000 people are homeless on any given night

"The infrastructure we have for our population is not sustainable and we need to develop new mechanisms and spending to ensure our future population is adequately housed," Mr Pisarski said. Measures National Shelter wants commitments to include:

- A specific residential development task force to advise government on how to meet the affordable housing shortfall
- Housing elevated to a Cabinet Ministry linked to Urban and Regional Development
- Honouring Prime Minister Rudd's commitment to build 100,000 affordable rental units through NRAS
- Sustained spending on Public Housing beyond the economic stimulus

***Housing Australia Affordably***, National Shelter's policy platform makes extensive recommendations to parties to improve housing affordability in Australia. It and the data behind this release are available at [www.shelter.org.au](http://www.shelter.org.au)

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