

VICTORIAN PUBLIC  
TENANTS ASSOCIATION

# 2025-26 Budget Submission



## Who We Are

The Victorian Public Tenants' Association (VPTA) is the voice of public housing in Victoria.

As the peak body representing existing public housing renters and those on the waiting list, our goal is to provide advice to renters, and to improve and expand the public housing system in Victoria. Although not formally part of our role, we also assist community housing renters where possible. We believe all social housing renters deserve a representative voice, regardless of their specific tenure type.

While our work is in Victoria – we are the only peak body in Australia which exclusively represents public housing renters or people who live in social housing.

We undertake systemic advocacy and provide policy advice to the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing ('the Department'), undertake community engagement work and operate a free and confidential telephone advice service.

In the 2023-24 financial year we helped more than 1,300 residents and housing applicants. The VPTA's workload has more than doubled since 2020, and demand continues to grow.

## Acknowledgment of Country

This submission was prepared at the VPTA office, on the lands of the Wurundjeri people in Na'arm.

The VPTA team is privileged to work across Victoria. In all places, we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country. We offer our respect to Elders and their ancestors who have cared for the land, sky, and waters for tens of thousands of years.

## Recommendations at a glance

1. Expand the role of the VPTA to include advocacy formally for community housing renters and therefore implement recommendations from the Social Housing Regulatory Review for which Government has indicated support, including recommendations 1.6, 4.2, and 4.3.
  - a. This should include additional, short term funding to facilitate the change from governance and operations perspectives.
2. Make the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advocacy Program ongoing.
3. Review the VPTA's base funding and increase to a level which facilitates ongoing employment of sufficient staff to meet demand.
4. Ensure 13 per cent of homes delivered through Plan for Victoria are social homes.
  - a. Ensure that a strong proportion of new homes is publicly owned and managed, and that at least ten per cent of these are Aboriginal community-controlled homes.
5. Ensure future Affordable Housing programs feature rent setting mechanisms that refer to household incomes rather than market rents.
6. Accept and implement the VPTA's recommendations from the Consultation Report (Appendix 1), including Recommendation 20, viz that Government should fund the VPTA to implement an expanded version of the process at all future High Rise Renewal project sites.
7. Commit to a 100 per cent uplift of the number of public housing dwellings on the high rise sites, with the balance to be community housing properties and genuinely affordable housing for key workers.
8. Rule out the sale of any public land that is currently the site of a public housing home.
9. The Government issues Housing Asset Bonds over a ten year period to create an immediate pool of additional public housing properties, managed and maintained by Homes Victoria.
10. Provide greater investment in community services statewide, ensuring that regional areas are appropriately serviced.
11. Ensure public housing grows in all areas of Victoria, including through the prioritisation of public housing on inner urban renewal sites.
12. The Victorian Government amends the *The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* to specify that housing is a human right, and to clarify the application of the Act to community housing providers, in keeping with numerous recommendations, such as the Legal and Social Issues Committee *Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria*.
13. The Victorian Government ought to take up the earlier, joint recommendations of the VPTA and VCOS to install solar panels on some existing public housing homes.

## Sustaining tenancies and increasing equity for renters in social housing

The VPTA's workload has more than doubled since 2020.

There has also been a significant change in the nature of the issues raised with our team. For example, in 2018-19, more than half of our workload was related to maintenance issues, but as the VPTA has become busier, the number of maintenance issues has remained constant. Concurrently, the proportion of issues directly related to a lack of stock has risen dramatically. Callers seeking assistance to access a safe and secure home accounted for over half of all work in the most recent financial year.

Despite this drastic and sustained change in demand, there has been no increase to the VPTA's base funding, which in 2018-19 did not adequately meet the staffing and demand needs of either the organisation or Victoria's public housing renters, and now in 2024-25 prevents the organisation from maintaining an appropriate staffing level.

The VPTA's team provides a valuable service to renters, applicants, and the Victorian Government. Housing office staff refer issues to the VPTA for resolution when they feel renters may benefit from assistance by a neutral third party.

Our work with applicants has assisted in easing stressors around the inherent uncertainty of waiting for a social housing home to become available. Our work with renters has helped to sustain tenancies and resolve unsafe situations. We provide constructive, clear advice to Homes Victoria and the Department alike, bridging the communication gap between renters and Government.

As Government continues to deliver the Housing Statement and the High Rise Renewal Program, additional pressure is placed on the VPTA to service communities in distress, while our resourcing has not similarly increased. As a result, service delivery in other areas of the State is at risk of being scaled down or delayed.

The VPTA must be properly resourced to continue these efforts, reach renters across Victoria, and employ staff securely.

Additionally, the VPTA has experienced a shift in the nature of our callers. In 2024, 30 per cent of callers were either not yet living in either form of long-term social housing or were community housing residents.

The VPTA continues to advocate to formally become the peak body for both public and community housing renters. The organisation is already functioning in this role and is funded to assist Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community housing renters through the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advocacy program.

Both the Victorian Ombudsman and the Social Housing Regulatory Review Panel have recommended that community housing renters have a dedicated advocacy body.

The VPTA was heartened to note that the Victorian Government supported, in principle, the Review Panel's relevant recommendations which directly relate to the VPTA and broadening our work:

- 1.6: Create a single advocacy body for social housing tenants,
- 4.3: Establish a support and referral service for complaints and disputes.

Further, with regard to the Panel's recommendation 4.2 (strengthen complaints management processes for registered community housing agencies), the Government has indicated an intention to offer full support. The VPTA welcomes this decision.

Recommendation 4.2 requires community housing renters, who have made a complaint, to be linked with advocacy support. This is a natural role for the VPTA to play as it is well within the scope of existing work that our team does, though this currently has no financial resourcing.

It's time to finish the job and formally expand the VPTA to be the peak body for all social housing renters.

Recommendations:

1. Expand the role of the VPTA to include advocacy formally for community housing renters and therefore implement recommendations from the Social Housing Regulatory Review for which Government has indicated support, including recommendations 1.6, 4.2, and 4.3.
  - a. This should include additional, short-term funding to facilitate the change from governance and operations perspectives.
2. Make the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advocacy Program ongoing.
3. Review the VPTA's base funding and increase to a level which facilitates ongoing employment of sufficient staff to meet demand.

## Addressing the urgent need for more social housing investment

It has become a cliché to refer to housing insecurity and homelessness as a wicked problem. Nonetheless, this simple truth remains.

There are many causes of this problem, and not all (such as wage policies, the development of the gig economy, various tax settings, and the glaring inadequacy of income support payments) are within the reach of the Victorian Government.

One central lever available to the Victorian Government is the ability to begin to redress the current imbalance between supply and demand in the Victorian housing market. It is this imbalance which drives a lack of access to affordable and appropriate housing.

By investing strongly in strengthening social housing, and especially public housing for the Victorians who need it, Government can re-introduce and strengthen one of the pillars of housing security that in its absence has seen growing disequilibrium and inequality – public housing.

The VPTA remains a proponent of growth in both public and community housing. As an organisation, we appreciate that both tenure types work together in delivering the broader social housing system. Certainly, the scale of work to be done necessitates having two tenure types. However, there remain core differences between public and community housing that even full-throated delivery of all the recommendations in the Final Report of the Social Housing Regulatory Review would not resolve. Critically, these include both rent setting policies and allocation policies.

The VPTA is in the process of seeking further, professional modelling to accurately predict the quantum of public housing growth Victoria requires and will seek to update this submission when that information is available.

In the absence of this figure, the VPTA continues to urge the Victorian Government to commit to delivering at least 13 per cent of the homes delivered through Plan for Victoria as social housing.

This recommendation is based on the findings from recent analysis by the University of New South Wales and the University of Sydney, which indicated that in 2021, six per cent of Victorians households had an unmet housing need.<sup>1</sup> The same analysis projected need to 2041 and identified annual growth of between five and a half and six per cent in social housing being required in regional Victoria, and an average of eight to nine per cent growth required in Melbourne.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Van den Nouwelant, R, Troy, L and Soundaraj, B, 'Quantifying Australia's unmet housing need: A national snapshot.' <https://cityfutures.adelaide.unsw.edu.au/documents/702/CHIA-housing-need-regional-snapshots-v1.3.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Van den Nouwelant, R, Troy, L and Soundaraj, B, 'Quantifying Australia's unmet housing need: Regional snapshots.' chrome-

Additionally, more attention is required to rent settings in future Affordable Housing programs.

The median income of single Victorians, when compared to median rents indicates that this group of people likely cannot afford to rent anywhere in the State, and lower income larger families are also highly likely to experience difficulty, especially in metropolitan Melbourne.

*Table 1: Median weekly incomes compared to median rents.*

Household type	Median weekly income	Median rent – metropolitan Melbourne	Median rent – regional Victoria	Affordable rent	Difference between median income affordability and rent – metro	Difference between median income affordability and rent – regional
Single	\$803	\$480	\$285	\$241	+ 99.2%	+18.2%
Family	\$2,136	\$550	\$450	\$641	- 14.2%	- 30%

Sources: Median weekly income, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Snapshot of Victoria: High level summary data for Victoria in 2021'.

Median rents: Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Victoria, 'Rental Report September 2024', pg 8, Both accessed October 2024.

Difference: VPTA consequent calculation

Note: Household types referenced for median rents; singles – 1 bedroom flat, families – 3 bedroom house.

As the table indicates, median weekly rent for a single person in regional Victoria exceeds affordable rent amounts by 18.2 per cent, and by 99.2 per cent in metropolitan Melbourne.

Any future Affordable Housing programs in Victoria must charge a rent that is calculated with reference to incomes, rather than to market rents in order to be said to be providing a genuinely affordable option. A simple discount on market rent is unlikely to deliver affordability for many of the target households.

#### Recommendations:

4. Ensure 13 per cent of homes delivered through Plan for Victoria are social homes.
  - a. Ensure that a strong proportion of new homes is publicly owned and managed, and that at least ten per cent are Aboriginal community controlled homes.
5. Ensure future Affordable Housing programs feature rent setting mechanisms that refer to household incomes rather than market rents.

## Responding to the ambition of high-rise renters

The VPTA will always be supportive of public housing renters having safe, affordable and healthy housing.

However, it has now been more than one year since the announcement of the High-Rise Renewal Program and there are still unanswered questions.

The renters already impacted by relocations have told the VPTA that they are feeling anxious and worried. They report that their questions about the right of return have not been satisfactorily answered by Homes Victoria.

Renters have clearly stated that they want a guaranteed right of return to public housing on the original sites. Nevertheless, they continue to wait for information.

The VPTA has conducted extensive consultation with renters at the first sites to be relocated, North Melbourne and Flemington, holding approachable events for conversations about the community's own ambitions for the homes that will be built back.

The people who currently live at the renewal sites, and who wish to return to them, are the subject matter experts in their own housing needs and desires, the strengths and weaknesses of how the sites work now and how communities function in these places. It will be critical that Government takes these views into account when planning future development. These recommendations can be found at Appendix 1.

In renewing the 44 high rise sites, there is a real opportunity to drive much greater growth in social housing than the existing ten per cent growth commitment. This equates to fewer than 1,000 new units over the course of the thirty-year program and falls short of the ambition shown by this Government when approaching other infrastructure projects.

Additionally, the management of the new public housing units is not yet clear, with the exception the 'red brick' sites in Carlton. As renters expressed strongly to us during our consultations at North Melbourne and Flemington – they do not want government to abrogate their responsibility to the ongoing management of public assets.

Our high-rise sites are well located, close to education and work opportunities, hospitals, and public transport. These sites are incredibly valuable, and they have a strong legacy of providing homes for people who might otherwise be experiencing homelessness. Government has yet to provide a guarantee that this land will continue to be held in public hands.



### Recommendations:

6. Accept and implement the VPTA's Recommendations from the Consultation Report (Appendix 1), including Recommendation 20, that Government should fund the VPTA to implement an expanded version of the process at all future High Rise Renewal project sites.
7. Commit to a 100 per cent uplift of the number of public housing dwellings on the high rise sites, with the balance to be community housing properties and genuinely affordable housing for key workers.
8. Rule out the sale of any public land that is currently the site of a public housing home.

### **Swift action to address the waiting list**

In addition to infrastructure programs that are underway, further direct investment from Government will be necessary to drive the level of growth in public housing that Victorians urgently need. The VPTA is supportive of this direct investment being accompanied by policy reforms which push the property development industry to earn their social license to operate, such as mandatory inclusionary zoning.

The Big Housing Build has provided a substantial injection of new community housing properties. The VPTA strongly believes that the next stage of growth should be focused on the public housing stock portfolio. Government must also continue to address the severe disadvantage experienced in First Nations communities by allocating a portion of new homes to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations – in line the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework, *Mana-na Woorn-tyeen Maar-takoort* (Every Aboriginal person has a home).

However, these homes will not appear overnight. An alternative is required to meet the growing and urgent demand for assistance which exists now.

In keeping with the Governments existing commitment and direction to increase the use of head-leasing to bolster the social housing stock portfolio, the VPTA continues to recommend an additional solution to increase stock in the short to medium term - Housing Asset Bonds ('HAB').

Housing Asset Bonds can be used to pull privately owned stock into the public housing portfolio to home the thousands of Victorians who desperately need a home now. This initiative provides an avenue for existing property investors to incorporate their rental homes into Victoria's public housing stock portfolio for ten years, in return for a guaranteed rental income at a fixed rate of market rent plus one per cent.

Research by Prosper Australia indicates that in metropolitan Melbourne there were in excess of 143,000 vacant homes in 2023.<sup>3</sup> These homes must be put to use for the Victorians who need them.

Homes Victoria would become responsible for management costs and maintenance. While private owners would continue to pay Council rates and mortgages, without property administration risks such as gaps in tenancy. Properties would be returned to their owner in the state it was received, less reasonable wear and tear, as with a private lease.

Eligible properties would need to be:

- Owned prior to the announcement of the HAB; and
- Compliant with the minimum standards set out in the Residential Tenancies Act Regulations.

Homes Victoria could target the dwelling size and location of HAB property intake to meet the needs of the current waitlist. The cost of HAB properties to Government would be offset by the rent charged by Homes Victoria.

The reforms to the Vacant Property Residential Land Tax system taking effect from 1 January 2025 may incentivise property owners to join the HAB program, as well as providing a source of income to offset the cost to Government of the HAB program in the short to medium term. In the longer term, this income stream could act as a pipeline for funding direct investment in public housing construction.

The HAB is not intended to replace long term investment in Government owned, public housing construction. It is recommended as a temporary solution, until the required homes are available.

**Recommendation:**

9. The Government issue Housing Asset Bonds over a 10 year period to create an immediate pool of additional public housing properties, managed and maintained by Homes Victoria.

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<sup>3</sup> Prosper Australia, 'Speculative Vacancies 11: Empty Homes in Melbourne 2019 - 2023', 2024, pg 9.

## Preserving Melbourne's unique character and turning off the tap to housing insecurity

Melbourne's public housing towers are just the latest iteration of the important history of these sites – delivering housing for those locked out of the market.

Public housing, especially in the inner urban areas of Melbourne has been in decline for some time through managed transfers.

While the renewal of assets is important to provide safe homes, renewals frequently feature a transfer of management of the blocks to the community housing sector. At the time of writing, most of the inner urban 'walk up' developments are in a process of renewal or are likely to be in the future. Further, save for the two 'red brick' towers in Carlton, there has been no guarantee from Government that any of the new social housing on the high rise or the walk-up sites will be publicly owned and managed.

The VPTA foresees a significant future risk that the only public housing close to the city is in the red brick towers at Carlton, and all other public housing is progressively pushed to outer suburban and regional areas.

Such a change would inevitably lead to a shift in the character of Melbourne – which is admired worldwide for its richness and diversity.

Further, the residualisation of public housing and its residents over many years means newer public housing renters often have a high level of reliance on community services, which are generally clustered in inner urban areas.

Cities are for everyone. They represent excitement and a sense of possibility. It is the most vulnerable among us who can most benefit from being close to a city and the services and opportunities inherently available there with greater ease. We must protect access to inner city living for all Victorians by proudly providing world class publicly owned and managed housing close to and within Melbourne's boundaries.

Therefore pushing public housing out of inner urban areas presents two problems of fairness. Firstly, it would further entrench a notion of two classes of social housing renters. Secondly, it would create additional demand for community services in regional and outer suburban areas, at a scale they are not currently being delivered – disadvantaging existing residents and setting new public housing households up to fail.

Regardless of Government's intention as to the tenure type of new social housing on the high-rise sites, the centralisation of community services is a topic that should be addressed.

Regional Victorians are not insulated from housing unaffordability, and services which help people to sustain private rental and home ownership are required to prevent other Victorians from unnecessarily falling on to the

Victorian Housing Register as well as to assist the people who will be moving into these communities in new properties delivered through both the Big Housing Build and the Regional Housing Fund.

Traditionally, it has been thought that housing affordability is an urban issue, but this is no longer the case.

The 2014 Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot found that of 12,845 available private rentals in Victoria, fewer than two percent were suitable for a household relying on income support payments, and only one fifth were suitable for households receiving the minimum wage.<sup>4</sup>

Further, Anglicare's Essential Worker analysis identified a list of professions for whom staff receiving the Award Rate, with no student loans, and claiming the tax free threshold would struggle to source an affordable home in the private rental market. As shown in the tables below, regional Victoria is not immune to this issue, where overall the report found only 0.6 per cent of rentals were affordable for these workers.<sup>5</sup>

*Table 2: Affordable Rentals available to Essential Workers in Australia*

Occupation	% Affordable
Aged care	1.5
Ambulance officer	2.2
Cleaner	0.9
Construction worker	0.9
Delivery driver	0.9
Dispatcher	1.2
Early Childhood educator	0.9
Firefighter	3.4
Freight driver	0.9
Hospitality worker	0.8
Meat packer	0.9
Nurse	1.4
Postal worker	0.9
Retail worker	1.2
School teacher	3.7
Social and community services worker	1.4

Source: Anglicare Australia, Rental Affordability Snapshot: Essential Workers Report, pg 10

<sup>4</sup> Anglicare Victoria, 'Rental Affordability 2024 Snapshot – Victorian Rental Market', pg 6.

<sup>5</sup> Anglicare Australia, 'Rental Affordability Snapshot: Essential Workers Report', pg 11.

*Table 3: Percentage of Affordable Rentals for Essential Workers in Victorian Regions*

Region	% Affordable
Ballarat	1.5
Bendigo	1.6
Geelong	2.8
Hume	0.4
Latrobe – Gippsland	2.7
Mornington Peninsula	0.6
North West Victoria	5.4
Shepparton	1.4
Warrnambool and South West	0.7

Source: Data compiled from the Anglicare Australia 2024 Rental Affordability Snapshot: Essential Workers Report, pg 12.

High housing costs are preventing Victorians from meeting other living costs which is anecdotally correlated with increasing demand for community services and emergency relief.

Services statewide need greater funding from Government to meet this growing demand.

*Recommendations:*

10. Provide greater investment in community services statewide, ensuring that regional areas are appropriately serviced.
11. Ensure public housing grows in all areas of Victoria, including through the prioritisation of public housing on inner urban renewal sites.

## Other Matters

In addition to these issues, the VPTA maintains its strong commitment to the following proposals:

### Housing as a human right

Victoria has an opportunity to lead the nation by becoming the first State to legislate a human right to housing.

Consensus has been building strongly around the need to provide greater clarity as to the status of housing in the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*, ('the Charter').

The Government commissioned independent Social Housing Regulatory Review has called for the role of community housing providers to be clarified in the Charter,<sup>6</sup> a recommendation which the VPTA is pleased that Government supports. While this additional clarity on the topic of community housing providers specifically would provide welcome certainty for both renters and providers, the VPTA believes that Government could go further.

Support for establishing a broader right to housing within the Charter has already been expressed in Victoria:

- The Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee's final report from their Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria.<sup>7</sup>
- The Victorian Ombudsman's social housing complaints handling investigation.<sup>8</sup>
- The Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee's final report from their Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria.<sup>9</sup>

The United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises housing as a human right at Article 11.<sup>10</sup>

That housing is a human right is uncontested. Our legislation should reflect this core truth.

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<sup>6</sup> Social Housing Regulatory Review Panel, 'Social Housing Regulation Review Final Report', May 2022. Pg 21.

<sup>7</sup> Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee, 'Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria – Final Report', March 2021, pg xxxv – xxxvi.

<sup>8</sup> Victorian Ombudsman, 'Investigation into complaint handling in the Victorian social housing sector,' 2022, pg 98.

<sup>9</sup> Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee, 'Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria – Final Report', November 2023, pg xxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the High Commissioners, Human Rights, 'International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights', <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>.

Recommendation:

12. The Victorian Government amends the *The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* to specify that housing is a human right, and to clarify the application of the Act to community housing providers, in keeping with numerous recommendations.

Solar panels

Some reports have indicated that household electricity bills could increase by up to 47 per cent between October 2024 and September 2025, due to the combined effect of ongoing inflation and the expiry of federal energy subsidies.<sup>11</sup>

Residents in public housing are stretching the lowest incomes in Victoria and stand to gain the most from the installation of solar panels on their existing homes.

The VPTA has warmly welcomed initiatives to include solar panels on new social housing homes but notes that people who live in existing public housing homes have still not had an opportunity to access solar panels.

It is estimated that the installation of solar panels on some public housing homes would lead to around \$500 per annum in household savings through lower bills.

In July 2022 the VPTA surveyed social housing renters to find out what they would do with an extra \$500 per year in their household budget. Overwhelmingly, participants responded that they would buy more food to feed their family, use more hot water, or purchase health necessities (such as filling scripts or purchasing mobility aids) that are currently out of reach financially.

Recommendation:

13. The Victorian Government ought to take up the earlier, joint recommendations of the VPTA and VCOS to install solar panels on some existing public housing homes.

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Read, The Australian Financial Review, 'Electricity bills to surge 47pc next year as government support ends,' <https://www.afr.com/policy/economy/inflation-hits-3-year-low-of-2-7pc-but-rate-cuts-remain-distant-20240925-p5kda7>.

## Appendix 1 - Recommendations from Consultation Report

### Setting communities up for successful relocations

1. Consult with community organisations in advance of communicating new sites to residents to ensure information and policies will be clearly articulated to households, and likely questions can be anticipated and answered in detail.
2. Communicate to renters that their building is becoming a part of the program before making a public announcement.
3. Conduct a household audit of affected buildings as part of the decision-making process to ensure that nearby relocation options are suitable for the households being relocated, in terms of size and layout.
  - a. Ensure properties are available, or there is a clear pipeline to access the required properties, prior to commencing relocations. The Department should consider access to community supports, health services, faith-based organisations and facilities, as well as school zones.
4. Create clear, written and audio materials in community languages which specify:
  - a. The Right of Return,
  - b. The policies and procedures returned renters will have their tenancies managed under, especially with regard to rent and the social housing tenure,
  - c. The conditions their tenancies will be managed under during temporary relocation, and ongoing relocation in the event households do not elect to return to their original site.
5. Increase the financial support available to renters for relocation if they are unable to take their existing furniture and appliances to their new property.

### New homes

6. Ensure that at least a portion of the new social housing homes are publicly owned and managed housing.
7. Ensure the dwelling mix of new social housing responds not only to demand for new applicants on the Victorian Housing Register, but also the make-up of the existing building residents to facilitate rights of return.
  - a. Homes for families should include larger bedrooms and living spaces to allow for children to share a bedroom comfortable.
  - b. Homes with more than one bedroom should be structures so that the toilet is not in the main bathroom.
  - c. New homes should allow for good ventilation, with windows that open and close, as well as balconies with high barriers for the safety of children.
  - d. Kitchens should be separated from living spaces in multi-bedroom apartments.



- e. Built in storage should be prioritised.
- f. New homes should use hard flooring, rather than carpet.

### **New buildings and surrounds**

- 8. Ensure new buildings are staffed with trained security personnel and are designed to maximise passive (eg. Sightline from balconies) and formal (eg. CCTV) surveillance to support onsite security.
- 9. Ensure security doors are used in new buildings, with peepholes.
- 10. Ensure there is no decrease in the number of car parks available to each unit, and increase this if possible.
  - a. Car parks should be included in the basement of each building, with additional security measures to access the car parking.
- 11. Outdoor play spaces should have soft surfaces, including sporting fields.
- 12. Include multipurpose outdoor sporting fields, responding to the preferences of the community.
- 13. Shared spaces should include an area for older children and teenagers to study and learn if this cannot be delivered within individual apartments.
- 14. Community rooms should be flexible to allow for smaller or larger meetings and include cooking facilities.
  - a. Community rooms should be accessible via a booking system to ensure their security.
- 15. Outdoor spaces should include areas for residents to participate in communal gardening and food growing, in addition to play, exercise and relaxation.

### **Re-establishing communities**

- 16. Consult with community leaders to consider ways Homes Victoria may be able to support communities to remain connected while they're temporarily separated by relocations.
- 17. Community centres should be equipped to run activities in community languages.
- 18. Consideration should be given to how community members support each other informally and buildings and sites designed in a way that provides for this, including by ensuring as many areas as possible are fully accessible.
- 19. Consideration should be given to areas for the provision of onsite services.

### **Continuous improvement**

- 20. Government should fund the VPTA to implement an expanded version of this consultation process at all future High Rise Redevelopment project sites.