

Housing & Suburban Development

ISSUE: Housing ACT Construction and Renewal Program

Talking points:

- At 30 June 2017 the public housing stock portfolio was approximately 11,800 properties with a value of over \$5 billion.
- Housing ACT delivers an annual Capital Program to realign and renew the portfolio so that it better matches the needs of tenants and responds to the changing tenant profile using a ‘salt and pepper’ approach that sees public housing in most of Canberra’s suburbs.
- The program is largely self-funded through property sales principally on the open market but also through the Sale to Tenant and Shared Equity schemes.
- New dwellings are delivered through construction, purchase of new dwellings on the private market and the purchase of land plus construction of new dwellings.
- All new properties are constructed to a 6 star energy rating making them more energy efficient, so they are cheaper to run and maintain.
- As far as practical the dwellings are constructed to Adaptable Class C or Liveable Housing Design ‘Gold level’ which allows people to age in place, remaining in their established communities.
- The delivery of the Capital Program provides a significant contribution to the local economy – through the use of local architects and builders
- The Public Housing Renewal Program has increased the rate of renewal of the public housing portfolio.
- Housing ACT is developing a long term asset management plan which will focus on continuing to upgrade Canberra’s ageing public housing stock, improve tenant outcomes and support the broader renewal of Canberra’s city and urban areas.

Key Information

- Public housing is located through most of Canberra’s suburbs – generally close to shops, buses, employment, health and other community services – on average there is about 7 per cent of public housing in each suburb.

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- In addition to having the highest level of public housing of all other jurisdictions ACT public housing is the oldest.
- Houses are generally purchased through the open market, Housing ACT has purchased vacant land from the now Suburban Land Agency, the Asbestos Taskforce (Mr Fluffy blocks) and Treasury (surrendered land rent blocks).
- Housing ACT has also used vacant community facility land to develop public housing mainly for older people (including Mura Gunya – for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) and other projects such as Common Ground and Karinya House for Mothers and Babies.

Details of the 2016-2017 Capital Program

Sales

Raised \$36.1 million through a total of 60 sales including:

- \$23.6 million through auction sales (34 properties)
- \$5.2 million through Sale to Tenant (5 properties - \$2.4m) and Shared Equity (eight properties - \$2.8m)
- \$1.1 million through the sale of two vacant blocks
- \$2.9 m from the sale of three properties through 'Build to Sell', and
- \$3.2 million through the sale of eight properties (O'Connor) finalised in July 2017 to the Public Housing Renewal Taskforce.

Construction / Purchases

During 2016-17, the Capital Program delivered 80 new properties:

- 52 were delivered through the Construction Program,
- 28 were delivered through direct purchase from the market (20 dwellings and 8 blocks of land).