



ACT Government

## BUDGET 2007-2008

*Taking the Territory forward*

# MEDIA RELEASE

No. 77

### **\$4.3 MILLION TO EXPAND PUBLIC HOUSING**

Public Housing in the ACT will receive a major boost in the 2007-08 Budget, with an investment of \$4.3 million to increase public housing stock.

The Minister for Housing, John Hargreaves said this funding builds on the \$30 million over three years, announced in the 2006-07 ACT Budget.

“The \$4.3 million will be used to support recently announced initiatives of the Affordable Housing Task Force, including the expansion of public housing,” Mr Hargreaves said.

“The funds are to be used to construct and/or purchase approximately 17 two bedroom dwellings on small blocks, over the next twelve months.

“This type of housing is underrepresented in the ACT public housing portfolio and there is a growing demand for such accommodation.”

Mr Hargreaves said the units would allow the Government to better match housing stock to the needs of tenants.

“Such housing will provide an attractive alternative for existing public housing tenants who are occupying larger houses and who are seeking to downsize. This may be because their families have reduced in size, or as they get older, they need disability modifications that are not suited to their existing older houses.”

“It also means that the larger houses which are vacated can be reallocated to families with children on the waiting list.”

Mr Hargreaves said this Budget initiative strongly supported recent reforms aimed at housing Canberrans who were most in need and at the earliest opportunity.

“Public housing tenants who have more bedrooms than they require are being encouraged to move to alternative properties that met their needs and that they would be happy with.

“We have a situation where families with three or more children are waiting for public housing, while single tenants are residing in three and four bedroom homes.

“Housing ACT estimates that under-utilisation has resulted in the equivalent of 500 three-bedroom homes sitting empty.

---

**5 June 2007**

Enquiries: Caitlin Bessell

6205 0145

0434 605 614

[caitlin.bessell@act.gov.au](mailto:caitlin.bessell@act.gov.au)

“Housing ACT will increasingly develop well-located, attractive alternative accommodation to help make such a move a little easier, including the properties to be funded in the 2007-08 Budget.”

Mr Hargreaves said the Government was also seeking to encourage public housing tenants with high incomes to move to home ownership or private rental.

“To achieve this Housing ACT is enhancing its ‘Sale to Tenants’ program and the Government will introduce ‘shared equity’ schemes to assist tenants who are unable to borrow the full value of their current property,” he said.

“Many tenants have an ambition to own their own home and the Government is pleased to be able to assist them to achieve this ambition. However, the Government also realises that for many older tenants and those with children, a move from public housing rental may not be reasonable, despite their income.”

“Guidelines are to be developed in consultation with tenant and community organisations, to ensure that these changes to public housing policy are delivered sensitively and fairly.”