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“This budget is measured in lives, not just homes” Havelock Housing welcomes historic ACT Social Housing Investment

Havelock Housing has welcomed the ACT Government's landmark 2026–27 Budget commitment to housing, calling it an important step forward for the most vulnerable Canberrans and urging that its true measure of success be counted in lives changed, not just buildings completed.

The Budget includes a new \$364 million Public Housing Pipeline program to build and buy 450 additional public homes, significant new investment in maintenance and repairs to existing public housing, and new indexed funding for crisis and transitional housing delivered in partnership with the Commonwealth Government. More than half of the new homes will be supported through the Commonwealth's Housing Australia Future Fund Facility Round 3, with community housing providers set to manage and operate those dwellings over 25 years.

Havelock Housing CEO Kylie Maidens said the joint investment from both the ACT and Commonwealth governments was a significant moment for the sector and for the people it serves.

"This is exactly the kind of coordinated, long-term investment that saves lives," Ms Maidens said. "When the ACT and Commonwealth governments work together on housing, the people who benefit most are the most vulnerable in our community. I don't know a single one of our 406 tenants who would say this investment isn't needed or isn't enough."

Ms Maidens said the impact of stable housing cannot be reduced to a headcount of new dwellings.

"We should be framing this funding in terms of lives saved, not just houses built. A safe, secure home is the foundation for everything else. It means someone can access healthcare, look for work, reconnect with family, and start to rebuild. When we invest in housing, we reduce pressure on emergency departments, on corrections, and on every other homelessness service in Canberra that is already stretched to its limits. That return on investment needs to be part of the conversation."

Havelock currently supports 406 tenants across most suburbs in the ACT. As Canberra's population grows, Ms Maidens said demand for social and community housing is growing with it, and providers like Havelock are ready to move quickly when new capacity becomes available.

"The need in Canberra is real and it is growing. As our city grows, more people fall through the gaps. We work at the frontline every day and we see it. If new homes became available tomorrow, Havelock would fill them. The pipeline cannot grow fast enough."

Ms Maidens also welcomed the Budget's increased investment in maintenance and repairs to existing public housing, noting that the standard of properties is a day-to-day reality for the people who live in them.

"Social housing in Canberra has a historically significant maintenance and renewal backlog. Boosting investment in repairs and upgrades is not a bureaucratic line item. It is a direct improvement to the daily living conditions of vulnerable Canberrans. People deserve to live in homes that are warm, safe and in good repair. This investment moves us closer to that standard."

Havelock said it looked forward to continuing its long-standing delivery partnership with the ACT Government and the broader sector, including managing joint Commonwealth-funded dwellings under the Housing Australia Future Fund.

"Havelock has been at the frontline of homelessness response in Canberra for over 40 years. We are ready, willing and capable of doing more. The path from homelessness to stability is one we walk with our tenants every day, and investments like this one give us more of the tools we need to do that work," Ms Maidens said.

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About Havelock Housing

Havelock saves lives by creating a community that cares. As the oldest and largest frontline Community Housing Provider in Canberra, Havelock has more than 40 years of experience delivering social, affordable and specialist disability housing across the ACT and Southern NSW. Havelock currently manages 210 properties across the ACT, housing 406 tenants. Investment in community housing and wraparound support reduces pressure on emergency services, hospitals and corrections, delivering better outcomes at lower cost. People don't choose homelessness. Havelock is there when they need it most.

havelockhousing.com.au

BACKGROUND

Since 2015, Havelock Housing has supported more than 2,000 individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Havelock has worked with people from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances, including those experiencing rough sleeping, domestic and family violence, mental health challenges, disability, youth homelessness, and families requiring housing support.

Today, Havelock Housing manages 406 active tenancies, providing stable and affordable housing to 406 residents across their portfolio.

Havelock's services are built on the belief that safe housing is a fundamental foundation for wellbeing, independence, and community connection.

Havelock Housing is committed to providing inclusive, person-centred support and does not discriminate based on age, gender, cultural background, religion, sexuality, disability, relationship status, or life circumstances.

Through a combination of housing, tenancy support, case management, maintenance services, and community development initiatives, Havelock Housing continues to support individuals and families to sustain their housing, improve their wellbeing, and build positive futures.

Havelock's numbers -

- Over 2,000 people supported since 2015
- 406 residents currently housed
- Operating across a diverse portfolio of rooming accommodation and independent housing options