

Build Homes, Build Hope

Campaign Summary

Not for distribution beyond St Vincent de Paul Society members and staff

Introduction

Across NSW, thousands of people are without a place to call home and many more are living in chronic housing stress. Social housing should be a safety net that supports people experiencing homelessness and housing stress but there isn't nearly enough to meet community needs. More than 53,000 applicants are on the waiting list right now and the waiting time is in excess of 10 years in some parts of the State. In response, the St Vincent de Paul Society has launched the *Build Homes, Build Hope* advocacy campaign to call on the NSW Government to build more social housing.

Goal

The Society is campaigning for the NSW Government to increase the supply of social housing by at least 5,000 homes every year for the next ten years. We will also urge Government to explore strategies to further increase supply to match the actual level of need.

Campaign actions

Social Justice Representatives, members, volunteers, staff and supporters will be encouraged to take the following actions to support and build the campaign.

1. *Collect petition signatures*

We will seek to gather more than 15,000 signatures on the *Build Homes, Build Hope* petition and have this tabled in NSW Parliament, possibly in May 2020. Local conference members, volunteers, and staff will be asked to sign the petition and reach out to broader networks to secure signatures too. We'll also seek to secure signatures at local Vinnies stores. If the petition is popular, we may seek to table two lots of 10,000 signatures.

2. *Meet your local MP*

Social Justice Representatives, staff and members will be encouraged to engage with their local NSW MP about social housing throughout the campaign. We'll begin with a briefing of MPs in October to November 2019. In the new year we'll encourage MPs to visit their local Vinnies service or centre. They'll then be encouraged to attend the tabling of the petition in NSW Parliament. In August we'll endeavour to secure their participation in the CEO SleepOut followed by a local *Build Homes, Build Hope* Forum. Other opportunities for engagement will be developed and supported during the campaign. All told, we'll seek to have 150 engagements with MPs across NSW. Ideally, all engagements will be planned with the Social Justice Team and/or Committee.

3. *Host a local community forum*

We'll endeavour to host 15 *Build Homes, Build Hope* Forums where local community members, come together to learn more about social housing and ask their MP to make a commitment to deliver more social housing. Local media will also be encouraged to attend.

4. *Gather personal stories*

We'll seek to identify and gather personal stories from 50 people who can share their positive experience of social housing or the difficulty experienced while waiting for social housing. We'll use these stories in meetings with MPs, at forums, and in the media too.

5. Other campaign actions

A number of other campaign actions may be pursued, such as seeking endorsements from allied organisations and writing submissions to an inquiry, should capacity and opportunities present.

Campaign resources

Lots of resources are being developed to support Social Justice Representatives, members, volunteers, staff and supporters to undertake the actions above. They can be found at www.socialjustice.vinnies.org.au/resources

The Social Justice Network

To stay up to date with the campaign we encourage member, volunteers, supporters and staff to join the Social Justice Network at www.socialjustice.vinnies.org.au/join

Contact

For more information about *Build Homes, Build Hope* please contact Rhiannon, Sarah or Mark from the Social Justice Team at social.justice@vinnies.org.au or 0448 832 400.

Table

Campaign Action	Description	Start	Finish
Collect stories	Identify people waiting for social housing or living in social housing who are willing to share their story; interview them; write up their story; secure consent to use story.	September 2019	February 2020
Collect petition signatures	Engage our colleagues and communities to sign the petition.	September 2019	April 2020
MP engagement: initial briefing	Introduce MPs to the campaign; share the Briefing Paper and a story if available; urge MP to write to the Minister or Shadow Minister to share our policy recommendations.	October 2019	December 2019
MP engagement: visit to Vinnies service	Invite MP to tour the local service; talk with key staff and service users in need of housing; urge MP to ask the Minister or Shadow Minister to adopt our policy recommendation.	February 2020	April 2020
MP engagement: presentation of petitions	Invite MP to attend the tabling of the petition in NSW Parliament and to contribute to the debate.	April 2020	May 2020
MP engagement: CEO Sleepout	To be agreed based on discussions with Fundraising. Invite MPs to attend CEO Sleepout, arrange for key CEOs to urge MPs to support more social housing.	June 2020	June 2020
MP engagement: Host local Social Housing Forums	Invite MP, community and local media to forum during Homelessness Week. Share facts. Share story. Public ask of MP.	August 2020	August 2020