

Media Release

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For immediate release

Community housing input to maximise housing redevelopments

By partnering with community housing organisations, the Victorian Government has been able to greatly increase the number of social housing units to be delivered on three aged public housing sites in Melbourne, says Community Housing Industry Association Victoria's (CHIA Vic) CEO Lesley Dredge.

The redevelopments, which include the sale of land to private developers with housing to be built for sale on the private market, were initially only to boost the number of social housing dwellings by 10 per cent. By partnering with community housing organisation HousingFirst, the increase is now closer to 50 per cent.

'Community housing's business model enables organisations to tap into various inputs such as grants, tax exemptions and subsidies that mean we can deliver more high-quality, affordable housing at a much lower cost to the taxpayer than would be possible via private developers or government agencies,' Ms Dredge says.

In Northcote, 87 rundown public housing units will be replaced by 106 new units, in North Melbourne, the 112 existing units will be replaced by 133 and in Preston will see a huge uplift to 90 units from 26.

There can be no doubt that the government needed to take decisive action to maximise the number of available dwellings – and rehouse those tenants currently living in sub-standard conditions in rundown estates, Ms Dredge says.

'Victoria has the unenviable record of having the lowest percentage of social housing in Australia, with 62,419 households on the Victorian Housing Register as at December 2018. Those are households desperate to access safe, secure and affordable public or community housing and are only some of the Victorian households experiencing extreme housing stress – impacting on all aspects of their lives and the communities in which they live,' Ms Dredge says.

'Victoria needs to create 3,000 social housing properties a year for the next decade just to house those with a priority housing need. Doing nothing is just not an option.'

CHIA Vic's CEO Lesley Dredge is available for comment on 0407 886 066.