

More Homes More Opportunity



The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria

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I WANT TO BE THE PREMIER WHO GOT MILLENNIALS INTO HOMES

I want to start by sharing with you an email I received yesterday, from a woman named Kelly.

Kelly is a single mum. She lives in Boroondara with her daughter – on Bills St in Hawthorn, where we’ve just finished building 200 social and affordable homes.

Up until this point in their lives, Kelly and her four-year-old daughter Ava had been sleeping in the same bedroom together, in the same bed together, since Ava was a baby.

But now, Kelly just moved into one of our brand-new homes. And now, for the very first time, little Ava has a room of her own.

Her mum wrote: *“When I told Ava we were moving, she was most excited about...decorating her own room.”*

The first thing Ava got for her room was a pink bedhead – because that’s what she had dreamed of.

If you ever want a reason why I care deeply about homes, here’s one: I want families to have decent homes because I want kids to have decent lives. For kids to have their own little space. Their castle. With a pink bedhead.

Now, Ava can walk to Auburn Primary with her mum. Before you know it, she’ll be catching the train to uni at Kooyong Station.

She’s all set to take on the world, because now she has her castle – and she won’t lose it.

We have a Big Housing Build. We are building 13,300 social and affordable homes. That’s 13,300 places to flip through a cookbook or stick your son’s painting on the fridge. So if you ever want more reasons why I care about homes – I’ll give you 13,300 more.

Because more homes mean more opportunity:

- More opportunity to rent or buy
- More opportunity to live where you want, near the people you love
- More opportunity to start off your life – or start all over again.

More homes crystallises my agenda: to help busy families and build for our future.

And I am so proud, that here in Victoria, our state is building more homes than any other in the nation.

The latest ABS data reports Victoria completed building 60,000 homes in the past 12 months. 15,000 more than New South Wales.

Victoria is number one in home approvals, number one in home starts, number one in home completions. And best of all: number one in first home buyers.

However – the job's far from done.

We know there's only one way out of the housing crisis: we need to build our way out.

I've doubled down on that.

On Sunday, I announced an increase in homes and height at 50 train stations, to deliver more affordable options in the suburbs.

But...industry needs a kickstart to get those buildings moving.

That's why on Monday, I announced tax cuts to slash the upfront costs of apartments, units and townhouses for anyone buying off-the-plan.

But...communities deserve to know that when they grow, the services and infrastructure they need will grow with them.

That's why, on Tuesday, I announced a simpler system where property developers help pay for local transport, schools and parks in all suburbs.

But...what about larger families trying to move into new homes in the outer suburbs?

That's why on Wednesday, I announced the longest-ever pipeline of new greenfield land supply – ten years' worth of family homes and backyards.

But...anxiety about building quality is making some people wary of buying into these projects.

That's why, today, we announced a tough new building watchdog for buyer piece of mind.

We are pulling every lever in unison. All of these announcements work together to build more homes.

This is not just a housing 'week'. This is a housing Government. We have a housing agenda. And I have another housing announcement today.

Let me take you back. In the 80s, you were allowed to build two dwellings – two houses – on your lot without a planning permit. There were rules – certain height, certain setback, and so on. But it was a right enshrined in law. So long as you met the criteria, you could confidently build a second home on your property and add to the housing stock in this state.

Jeff Kennett removed that right in 1993. And today, it's still a nightmare to try and subdivide. Everyone has their own story about it.

Even if you're building something very modest, like a townhouse. Something that has no impact on residential character other than adding more faces and friendly neighbours into a community. It's too hard.

What's the most frustrating thing about that?

Townhouses are exactly the kind of homes we need to build.

The suburban townhouse is uniquely Australian. And it's a top choice for people in their 30s trying to buy a home with a few bedrooms, and a backyard, and a carport – not too far out.

It's the achievable dream for the modern millennial.

If you're an owner, it's also a good way to make a bit of money while you build someone else a home.

I can't think of too many losers when it comes to townhouses, and I believe the community is ready to see more of them. Everyone has evolved on this. But the planning rules haven't. It's still too hard in this state to subdivide your property and build a townhouse.

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Today, I am announcing that we will fix it. My Government will make it easier than ever to build a second house on your block.

Not a granny flat – a house.

There are live options available to us. We're going to bring together the experts to tell us which is best. It's not a review to tell us whether we should do something. It's to tell us how to get it done.

We need to get this one right, because the old system wasn't perfect either. We need protection for things like trees and car parks, and rules in flood and heritage overlays must still apply.

When we get the answers back in early 2025, we'll have a plan to make Victoria the townhouse capital.

That gives owners on big blocks an opportunity.

That gives young Victorians an opportunity.

All political parties, all Governments, say they believe in that opportunity.

But the truth is in their actions.

After this week, there should be no doubt, that only Labor will back your choice to live where you want – in or out, up or down.

Because Labor is the party of home ownership.

Labor is the party of home building.

And the Liberals are the party of home blocking.

They showed that this week.

In one instant – in their immediate, gut-instinct reaction to the idea of more homes and gentle density around train stations – they revealed whose side they are on.

And it's not yours.

A million millennials watched the mask drop, in real time, on Church St, Brighton last Sunday morning.

After that, I'm not sure how the Liberals can continue to call themselves the party of aspiration. And the Greens – they're not even trying to be.

Labor believes in home ownership because we believe it is a vehicle for social mobility. For millions of working-class people, it's the only thing that ever has been.

The Greens don't understand that because they're not a working-class movement.

In Labor, we believe there are four big things that can propel a family to a better standard of living: A good job. A strong union. A great education. And the equity in their home.

There is only one party that stands for all four and wants people in their 20s, 30s and 40s to have it: Labor.

Millennials are the largest adult generation ever.

There's more in this country than any other group.

They grew up watching the Simpsons, but they aren't Bart and Lisa anymore. They're Homer and Marge.

They are working full time. They are spending the most money in our economy, because they're the ones raising kids.

They are the working age population. They are the median consumer.

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They are the main characters of our economy.

They are the ones making the decisions with their wallets that will determine the future of our country.

We should be doing absolutely everything we can to give them confidence and security.

But by letting the housing crisis fester, we're making them drive our country forward with one hand tied behind their backs.

And we're forcing them to make extraordinary sacrifices just to play the game of life.

Just to get on the board.

They are sacrificing more than money. They are sacrificing time. Time spent at work, or on their way to work, because they can only afford to live 40 kilometres away.

And if they've decided they won't buy a house – which is understandable – it means they are sacrificing opportunity.

They are making these sacrifices for one simple reason: the ratio of house prices to the median wage isn't 3 to 1 anymore. It's more like 10 to one.

It's not a \$60,000 house on a \$20,000 wage. For a 34-year-old now, it's an \$800,000 house on an \$80,000 wage.

For a 34-year-old today, the biggest, most vital and most inescapable financial decision of your life is four times harder than it was 40 years ago.

And it's getting harder every year.

Well, when you bend something for too long it breaks. And I've felt something snap this year.

It's turning.

I feel the forces keeping the status quo in place are weakening and the forces of change are getting stronger.

I feel like we're finally ready to have a real conversation about how our biggest city can build more homes to fix the housing crisis.

A conversation that is rational and calm, about more height near transport – about gentle density – and a conversation about all the things that come with it that might lead to a better life.

A conversation about people who've had a good run of things finding some space in their suburbs – and their hearts – for young singles and families.

Unless we start those conversations, we will never change the status quo.

That, above all, is why I believe my actions have captured the public interest.

Not because it represents the beginning of a planning process.

But because it represents the beginnings of change.

I am ready for this fight.

I know a thing or two about getting things done. I delivered Skyrail. Removed the level crossings. Built the Metro Tunnel. We transformed the transport system. Now, I'm ready to build the homes around it.

There will be blockers. We know who they are, and we know their greatest weapon: fear.

The only thing in politics that beats fear is purpose, and I have one:

I want to be the Premier who got millennials into homes.

I consider that to be the fight of my life.

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