

## **HAFF Round 3 Opens New Opportunities for Faith Sector to Deliver Social and Affordable Housing**

**30 January 2026**

Faith Housing Australia (FHA) welcomes today's announcement by Minister for Housing Clare O'Neil that Round 3 of the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) is now open, marking the largest round to date and supporting the Government's commitment to deliver 40,000 social and affordable homes by mid-2029, as part of its broader target of 55,000 new homes.

FHA CEO Amanda Bailey said Round 3 represents an important milestone in establishing social and affordable housing as essential national social infrastructure.

"The true impact of the Housing Australia Future Fund is its catalytic effect—establishing social and affordable housing as essential social infrastructure alongside schools, hospitals and transport. Rounds 1 and 2 delivered critical system learnings, and Round 3 builds on this foundation to accelerate delivery."

FHA welcomed the move to a simpler, demand-driven application process and the introduction of dedicated streams for Partnerships at Scale, Housing Diversity and First Nations housing.

"Streamlining the program and introducing partnerships at scale reflects sector feedback and aligns more closely with the development lifecycle of mission-driven organisations. Reducing bid costs and uncertainty will help unlock well-located land held by faith-based organisations and accelerate projects across Australia."

Faith-based community housing providers were selected as preferred partners to deliver more than 10 per cent of the HAFF Round 1 pipeline, demonstrating the sector's readiness and governance capacity to contribute to national delivery.

FHA estimates that, with the right policy settings and funding certainty, faith sector partnerships could develop and deliver more than 20,000 additional dwellings over the next five to ten years on land already owned and embedded in local communities.

"Faith-owned land represents one of Australia's largest underutilised sources of well-located sites for social and affordable housing development. Round 3 creates new opportunities to mobilise this land through partnerships with community housing providers, industry and government."

FHA also welcomed the Government's focus on diverse cohorts, regional communities and the dedicated First Nations stream.

"Housing Diversity and First Nations streams recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Faith-based providers are embedded in communities and deliver housing alongside support services for people with no viable option in the private market, including women and children fleeing violence, older Australians on fixed incomes and people exiting homelessness."

Looking ahead, FHA said multi-year funding certainty, clear forward commitments and transparent parameters for funding will be critical to sustaining delivery beyond this round.

"Long-term funding certainty will enable social and affordable housing to be delivered as essential social infrastructure, crowding in private and philanthropic capital and supporting a continuous national pipeline of housing for people who need it most."

"Faith Housing Australia members stand ready to mobilise mission-driven land for redevelopment, aggregate projects and partner at scale to deliver housing that strengthens communities, builds social cohesion and supports long-term social outcomes across Australia."

**ENDS**

## **Additional spokespeople available for interview**

### **Rob Stokes – Chair, Faith Housing Australia; former NSW Planning Minister and Group Executive – Housing at Anglicare Sydney**

Available to discuss planning reform, land-use unlock, national housing reform and the role of density and place-based infrastructure in community acceptance.

*“Australia’s housing challenge is fundamentally a land, planning and infrastructure challenge. Faith-owned land is well located, and HAFF Round 3 provides a practical pathway to convert community land into homes at scale.”*

### **Anne Duggan – Public Officer, Faith Housing Australia; Partner, RTG Capital**

Available to discuss governance, capital and transaction structuring, institutional investment in social housing, and long-term stewardship.

*“The HAFF is creating the policy and capital architecture needed for long-term social and affordable housing delivery. With predictable funding frameworks, social housing can be delivered as essential social infrastructure with strong governance and stewardship.”*

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## **Faith Housing Australia – Background Brief**

### **Who is Faith Housing Australia (FHA)?**

Faith Housing Australia is the national peak body representing faith-based community housing providers, faith landholders, and enabling partners (planners, architects, developers and financiers). FHA members operate across social, affordable, crisis, transitional and specialist housing, and are deeply embedded in local communities across Australia.

### **Why faith land matters**

Faith-based organisations collectively control a significant portfolio of well-located land—often near transport, services and established communities. Many sites are underutilised or suitable for redevelopment, presenting a major opportunity to deliver social and affordable housing at scale in locations with deep community connections and close to jobs and transport.

### **Key land insights (preliminary mapping, analysis by SuburbTrends and Urban Bio):**

- ~9,850 faith-owned properties across NSW, QLD, SA and WA (~28.4 million sqm of land)
- 3,200+ large parcels (>3,000 sqm) with strong housing potential
- 2,430 sites within 800m of train stations, including 890 large parcels
- In NSW alone, 747 places of worship sites within 800m of a train station
- More than 20,000 potential dwellings identified on Sydney Metro sites

### **The 20,000-home pipeline**

Based on national land mapping and member data, Faith Housing Australia estimates that faith-sector partnerships could deliver more than 20,000 new social and affordable dwellings over the next 5–10 years, with the right funding certainty, planning pathways, and partnership frameworks. This pipeline includes:

- Church and faith-owned land in metropolitan, suburban and regional locations
- Mixed-use redevelopments combining housing, community facilities and services
- Partnerships with community housing providers, philanthropic capital and government

## Public support for faith-led housing

Research by McCrindle shows strong community backing for faith-led housing initiatives:

- **92%** of Australians agree repurposing underutilised faith land can help address the housing crisis
- **88%** support faith communities using their land to create social and affordable housing
- **83%** would welcome such developments in their neighbourhood
- **85%** agree faith groups are well placed to support affordable housing initiatives
- **88%** believe this is a practical and scalable solution

## HAFF Round 1 case study: Wesley Mission - Woden Valley Uniting Church redevelopment (ACT)



### Project overview:

- 83 affordable housing units
- 15 specialist units for people living with enduring mental illness
- Supported with additional ACT Government funding
- Located opposite Curtin shops and near the future light rail network
- Includes a new community hall and landscaped public spaces

This HAFF Round 1 project demonstrates how faith-owned land can be repurposed to deliver integrated housing and community infrastructure in well-located urban areas