

SHORT ON HOMES

How rebuilding the Housing
Trust can fix SA's housing crisis

SA 
UNIONS
STRENGTH IN UNITY
~ SINCE 1884 ~

A SAFE & SECURE HOME IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT

Every South Australian worker deserves to live in a quality home close to their workplace and the community they love.

The workers building these homes deserve to come home from work safely, not be put at risk by employers - cutting corners to maximise profit.

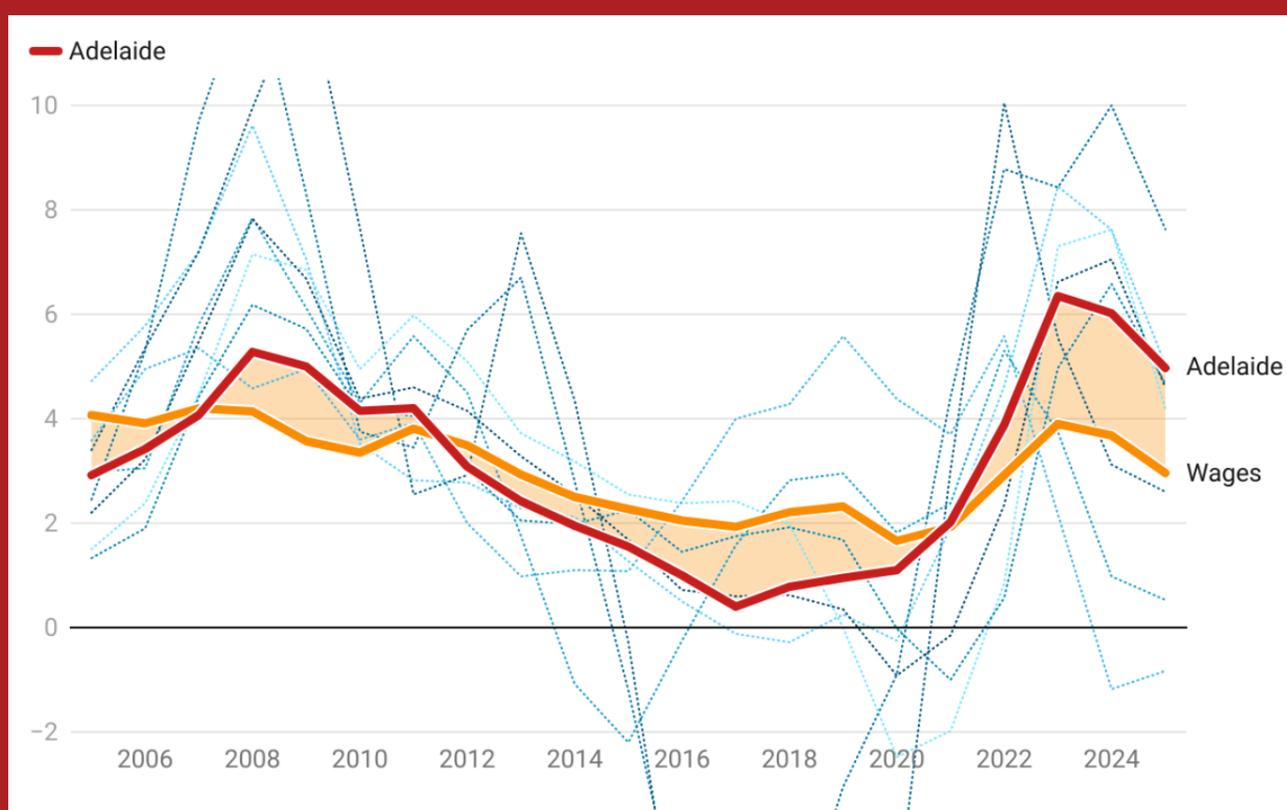
The SA Government must do more to boost the supply of affordable homes in our state. It cannot be a passenger, waiting for the Commonwealth Government or private developers to fix the problem.

The State Government must take the reins.

Workers are proposing effective and practical steps for the SA Government to take to build affordable homes for everyone that needs one, make home construction safer for workers, and guarantee a skilled workforce for the future.

Rents in Adelaide compared with wages

National average rent increasing much faster than wages



SOUTH AUSTRALIANS - LOCKED OUT OF HOMES

More and more South Australians are being locked out of the housing market. Homes in Adelaide are among the most expensive in the nation, while the pay packets of South Australians are the smallest in mainland Australia.

In the last five years, the median house price in Adelaide has soared by 84 per cent to reach over \$1 million.

Houses in Adelaide are now less affordable than Melbourne, Brisbane, or Perth, with the median house price sitting at 11 times median worker's income.

South Australian workers who are looking to rent face one of the tightest markets in Australia, with a vacancy rate of just 0.8 per cent and median rents which are now as unaffordable as Sydney. In the year to October, Adelaide saw the second-highest rent increase of any capital city.

WE CAN'T RELY ON PROPERTY DEVELOPERS

South Australia desperately needs more homes, but the private interests we rely on to build them are failing to guarantee supply.

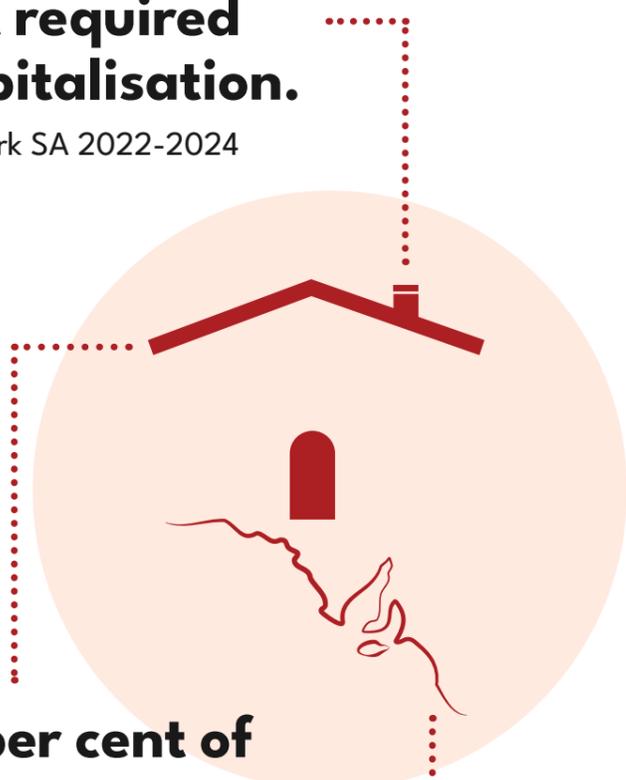
Private developers and professional landlords are simply not building enough homes to address the crisis.

Too often, property developers hold back supply by hoarding land and waiting for prices to rise to increase their profits.



SafeWork SA
was notified of
132 serious injuries
to apprentices,
including **51**
that required
hospitalisation.

SafeWork SA 2022-2024



63 per cent of
serious injuries
from falls occur
in residential
construction.

SafeWork SA 2020

82% of construction
site safety issues
are in residential
construction.

SafeWork SA 2020

NO HOMES WITHOUT WORKERS TO BUILD THEM

South Australia's home building sector is also held back by shortages of skilled trades people. The build time for new houses in South Australia has blown out by 36 per cent in the last five years. Competition from major infrastructure and defence projects will only make it harder to find skilled tradespeople to build homes.

We need 30,000 more workers to build enough homes to meet demand - 15,000 of which will need to be tradespeople - **but almost half of South Australian apprentices in trade occupations drop out before completion.**

Many apprentices earn well below the national minimum wage, with some first year apprentices taking home just \$15.67 per hour.

The most common reason apprentices give for not completing their training is dissatisfaction with their pay and working conditions.

High apprentice drop-out rates should come as no surprise when the construction sector fails to keep apprentices safe or pay them a living wage.



REBUILD THE HOUSING TRUST

If private interests can't provide homes that workers can afford to buy or rent, the State Government has a responsibility to step in and drive supply.

We have built our way out of a housing crisis before, and we can do it again.

The Housing Trust must once again become of the primary builder of homes in our state.

AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE SA HOUSING TRUST BUILT OVER HALF OF ALL NEW HOMES TO GUARANTEE SUPPLY.

The private sector is failing to deliver safe, secure, affordable housing.

BOOSTING SKILLS & STANDARDS

Rebuilding the Housing Trust isn't just about the State Government building homes now- It's about ambitiously building capacity for our state by lifting standards across the industry and supporting more apprentices to complete their training.

As a model employer, the Housing Trust can help the next generation of South Australian tradespeople to develop their skills through safe, secure, and well-paid jobs on public housing projects.

Demand for public housing from South Australians is sky-high.

Over 17,000 South Australians are stuck on the waiting list for a Housing Trust home.

The first 100 homes made available as part of the Housing Trust's new "Rent to Buy" program attracted thousands of applications.

Public housing cannot simply be a safety net for the most vulnerable.

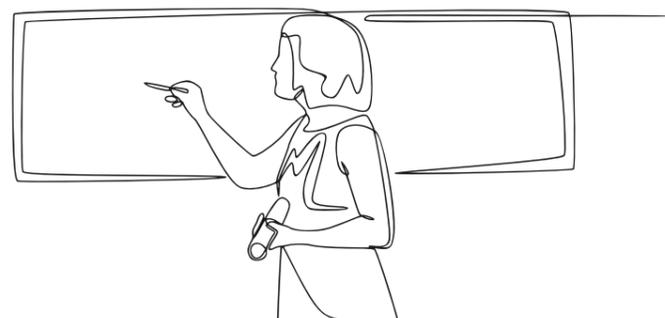
The State Government must take the reins and increase housing supply, expanding the stock of public housing to make good homes available at affordable prices.

To make a meaningful impact on the housing crisis, the State Government must show ambition and itself build 12,000 homes – at least matching the number delivered by the Walker Corporation at its Riverlea development.

By rebuilding the Housing Trust – including by making more land available for public housing – the State Government can deliver a legacy of secure housing and accessible pathways to home ownership for South Australian workers.

The State Government must expand workforce and apprenticeship numbers in public sector workplaces like SA Water to meet the infrastructure demands of the new homes our community needs built.

The State Government also must commit to paying young workers a living wage by raising apprentice and trainee rates and by abolishing junior rates in State Awards.



INVEST IN INNOVATIVE BUILDING METHODS AND PLANNING REFORM

The build time for new houses in South Australia has blown out by 36 per cent in the last five years. **South Australian home builds are the second-slowest in Australia.**

The State Government should investigate how it can support innovative building methods and ensure that any Government investment delivers a stake of public ownership. State Government investment into modular and component housing methods would deliver faster builds and lower prices because:

- Modular homes can be constructed on site with shorter timeframes.
- Bulk material purchases will bring prices down.

As a major home builder, the State Government can deliver novel housing options which aren't provided by the private sector. Adelaide needs more apartments suitable for families who want to enjoy city life, while leveraging existing infrastructure.

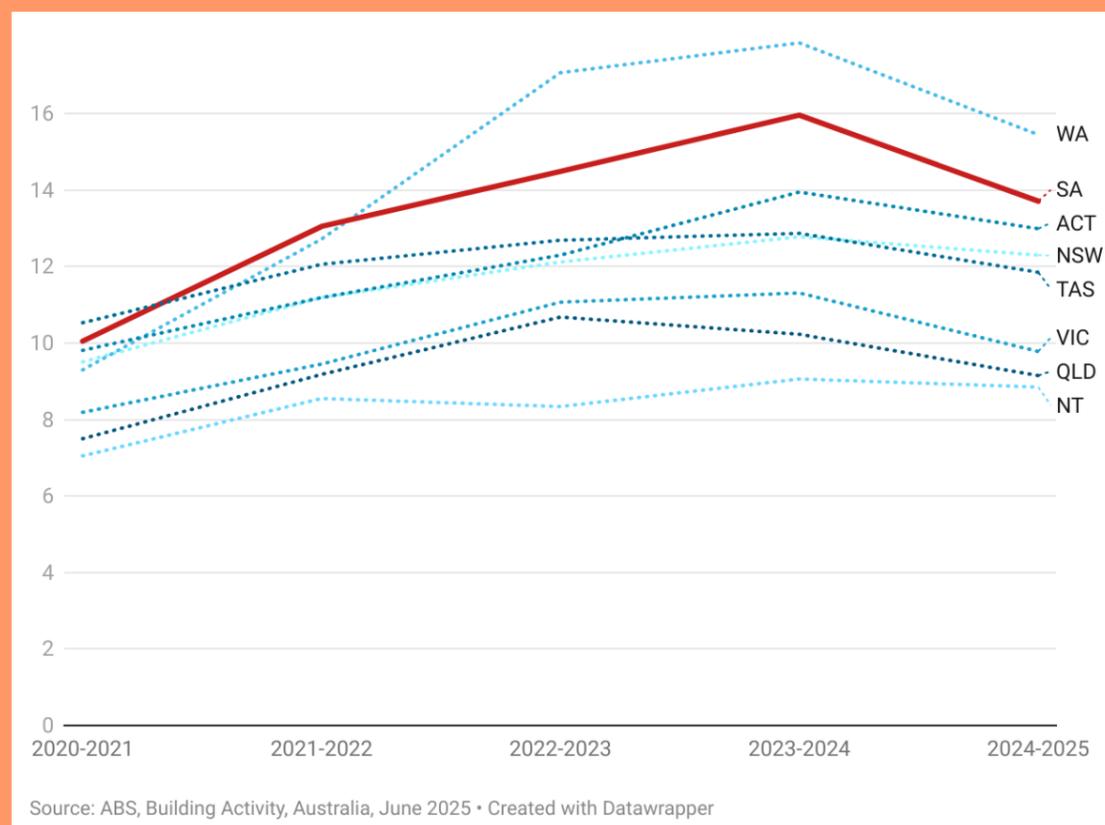


The State Government must also pursue all options to speed up planning approvals, including architectural pattern books, like the Housing Pattern Book in New South Wales, which offers affordable, sustainable, and easy-to-build multi-dwelling designs which can be purchased for \$1 and get approved within ten days.



Average completion time for new houses (months)

SA home builds are the second-slowest in Australia



SA UNIONS' RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOOST HOUSING SUPPLY

1 REBUILD THE HOUSING TRUST TO DELIVER 12,000 NEW HOMES

Rebuild Construction Capacity

We must rebuild the Housing Trust into South Australia's primary residential developer, mandating the construction of 12,000 new properties.

Expand Public Housing (50%)

Allocate half of all new builds as permanent, secure public housing to directly address the affordability crisis.

Create a Perpetual Rent-to-Buy Engine (50%)

This program must be perpetual, by strictly enforcing a "sell one, build one" policy where every sale immediately funds the construction of a replacement home.

Unlock Supply & Density

Power this expansion by accelerating State Government land releases and pursuing strategic urban infill projects to maximise existing infrastructure.

2 DRIVE INNOVATION IN BUILDING METHODS & PLANNING REFORM

Reform Planning for Efficiency:

Maximise land utility by overhauling planning rules to prioritise efficiency, particularly along major transport corridors.

Fast-Track Approvals

Slash administrative delays by implementing architectural "pattern books" that allow for immediate approval of pre-vetted designs.

Deliver the 'Missing Middle':

SA Government must lead on delivering medium-density options the private sector refuses to risk, specifically targeting family-sized apartments.

Innovative building methods

Investigate public investment into modular and component-based housing manufacturing to drastically reduce build times and drive down costs.

3 MOBILISE & UPSKILL 30,000 MORE WORKERS

Leverage Public Projects for Training

Use the Housing Trust pipeline to train the next generation of tradespeople, ensuring every public project supports safe, secure, and well-paid jobs.

Modernise Wage Standards

Attract and retain workers by committing to higher apprentice and trainee rates and immediately abolishing junior rates in State Awards.

Scale SA Water Apprenticeships:

Significantly expand apprenticeship intake at SA Water to guarantee the skilled workforce needed to deliver critical housing infrastructure.