

Yvette Berry MLA

Deputy Chief Minister
Minister for Early Childhood Development
Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Minister for Housing and Suburban Development
Minister for Women
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
Minister for Sport and Recreation

Member for Ginninderra

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE
Questions on Notice Paper No 1
4 December 2020
Question No. 72

MRS KIKKERT: To ask the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development:

- (1) Is there currently an ACT disability housing strategy.
- (2) How does the ACT Government support disability housing, in relation to both public and private housing.
- (3) How many applicants on the ACT housing waiting list are identified as living with a disability, to the date this question on notice was published.
- (4) How many of these applicants are currently on the priority waiting list.
- (5) How many people living with disability are currently residing in ACT housing, to the date this question on notice was published.
- (6) What percentage of ACT housing properties accommodate people living with disability.
- (7) What concerns have been identified by the ACT Government in relation to disability housing, and what measures will the Government take to improve and/or resolve these concerns.

MINISTER BERRY: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Housing Strategy (the Strategy) outlines the ACT Government's strategy for disability housing and includes a range of commitments specific to this issue. The ACT Housing Strategy can be found at <https://www.act.gov.au/homes-housing/act-housing-strategy>

- (2) The ACT Government supports the full continuum of housing needs, as set out in the Strategy. The Strategy recognises that there are people in the ACT community on low incomes and facing disadvantage who are left behind in the current housing market. It continues the ACT Government's long held commitment to intervening where the housing market fails to provide for these people in our community. The Strategy is based around five goals that focus on making improvements in the housing market to address issues of most concern to the community. Goal one within the Strategy is "an equitable, diverse and sustainable supply of housing for the ACT community," with a key objective to encourage well designed, environmentally sustainable, and accessible housing.

Actions under this goal include planning for the integration of new housing types in existing urban environments, including links to transport, open space, community and cultural facilities, and undertaking appropriate planning and design for greenfield estates to support a variety of housing types and urban environments. In addition, new requirements under the *Civil Law (Sale of Residential Property) Act 2003* require property owners to disclose whether the home is an adaptable housing dwelling when it is advertised for sale or lease. This will help buyers to determine whether the property is adaptable to their needs, prior to viewing the home.

The ACT Government has supported two disability accommodation projects under the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund grants. The Summer Foundation has developed a new housing needs tool, to support people with disabilities and their families to find suitable accommodation. Rights and Inclusion Australia is undertaking a project to reduce housing stress amount people with a disability in the ACT, by identifying suitable housing options available to this cohort.

Through the public housing Growing and Renewing program, the ACT Government is delivering high-quality modern public housing to meet the diverse needs of the Canberra community. The program is well underway and will deliver, where possible, purpose-built Class C gold (or higher platinum) standard housing that adapts to the needs of people living with disability and as people age in place.

As a registered NDIS Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) provider, Housing ACT is currently in the process of enrolling disability housing properties for SDA. Once SDA is established, there will also be a focus on identifying further opportunities and partnerships for the provision of affordable disability housing to people with moderate to low support needs and people otherwise ineligible for social housing.

- (3) Among households who had applied for social housing (as at 4 December 2020) there were 490 households with at least one person with disability. Among these 490 households, were 554 persons with disability (some households have more than one person with disability) and 188 of these persons identified their primary disability as being physical.

- (4) Of the 490 households on the social housing waitlist with persons with disability, 61 were on the Priority waiting list. Among these 61 households on the priority list were 100 people who were identified as persons with disability, 25 of whom identified their primary disability as being physical.
- (5) On 4 December 2020, there were 5,508 households in Housing ACT public housing with at least one person with disability. Among these 5,508 households there were 6,298 people with disability.
- (6) Of the public housing properties held by Housing ACT at 4 December 2020, 51% are occupied by households with at least one person with disability.

The total Housing ACT property portfolio also includes properties managed under the Housing Asset Assistance Program (HAAP). These properties are leased to community organisations and other entities for the provision of community housing, homelessness, and other welfare services. Some community housing providers under this program offer specific housing for people with disabilities (for example Focus ACT, L'Arche). Specific household and tenant information is limited for HAAP properties and has not been considered in the above answers.

- (7) The ACT Government provides support for forums where people with disability and their supporters can safely discuss issues regarding disability housing and raise concerns.

The Office for Disability have run several consumer forums. The *Having a Home* forums provided an opportunity for people with disability, their family and carers to discuss housing-related issues they have experienced living in the ACT.

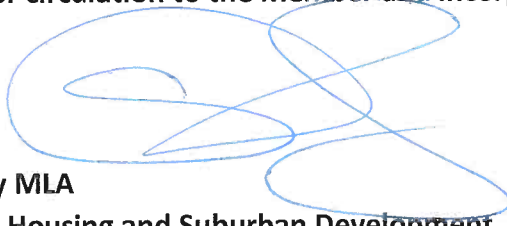
The ACT Government has heard about the lack of accessible and affordable housing in the Canberra housing market and this feedback has shaped the ACT Government's actions and commitments. The Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory also includes a commitment to amend building legislation to set a proportion of new residential properties in the ACT built to meet Universal Design standards to make them able to be adapted and accessible to all people regardless of age, disability or other factors.

The ACT Government has supported two disability accommodation projects under the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund grants. The Summer Foundation has developed a new housing needs tool, to support people with disabilities and their families to find suitable accommodation. Rights and Inclusion Australia is undertaking a project to reduce housing stress among people with a disability in the ACT, by identifying suitable housing options available to this cohort.

The outcome of these projects will provide information to the Government about the issues faced and types of enhanced support required for members of community with disabilities.

An example of the Government's work to address the issues raised, was the completion of 66 Class C Adaptable two-bedroom units at Kaleen ('Toolangi') in March 2019. Thirty three units at the site have been identified as public housing and are managed by Housing ACT and the remaining 33 units are managed by CatholicCare and target low to middle income households, older people (particularly women) in rental stress and people with disability.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Housing and Suburban Development

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This response required 2 hrs 50 mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$299.52