

23 January 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

Affordable housing a priority for new Premier

NSW Federation of Housing Associations today welcomed new Premier Gladys Berejiklian's comments on the need for the government to do more to tackle housing affordability in Sydney and throughout New South Wales.

NSW Federation of Housing Association CEO Wendy Hayhurst agreed with Premier Berejiklian about the need to increase supply but said this was only part of the solution.

"I congratulate Ms Berejiklian on her appointment as Premier and look forward to working with her to help address housing affordability," Ms Hayhurst said.

"I particularly welcome her comments about how she will seek external advice on the issue and is open minded as she looks for solutions.

"Not surprisingly, she said housing affordability was the number one issue the public raises with her.

"Our key workers - our police officers, childcare workers, train drivers and hospital staff - are sleeping on friends' lounges or travelling long distances because they can't afford to live near their workplaces.

"Our research shows that NSW needs at least 100,000 new social and affordable homes over the next 20 years to prevent decade long waiting lists in much of the state from blowing out even further."

In September NSWFA wrote an open letter to the previous premier setting out four key initiatives that would make a real difference to affordable housing numbers.

1. Inclusionary zoning and affordable housing targets for privately owned development sites.
2. Use of government land destined for housing development - rather than seeking to maximise the return to the Treasury, the Government should set an example by mandating ambitious affordable housing targets on its major land holdings.
3. Government incentives to trigger private and not for profit investment into affordable housing. This would include expanding the Social and Affordable Housing Fund through, for example, designating a fraction of stamp duty receipts again inflated by the dramatic rise in property transaction values seen since 2011.
4. Actively supporting the creation of an Affordable Housing Financial Intermediary.

"There has been some signs of progress but much more to do. I look forward to engaging with the new Premier on all these factors," Ms Hayhurst said.

Media contact: Olivia Greentree 0439 411 774.