Good morning

My name is Daisy Ellery and I am Chairperson for Housing for the Aged Action Group.

We are calling on all parties contesting this federal election to put affordable housing back on the policy agenda.

Public housing for the homeless and pensioners gets barely 3% of the housing funding. The other 97% goes to people in the top 20% of income.

At the last census there were 105,000 people who were homeless. It is likely to be much higher now.

There are currently over 200 000 people on the public housing waiting list in Australia. And we know that at least twice that many have just given up and don't even bother to apply.

The Turnbull government doesn't care about people on low incomes living in housing poverty. The first thing they did when they got into government was to abolish the role of Housing Minister.

They then defunded National Shelter and Homelessness Australia and tried to silence the community who mobilise action on housing.

They then defunded the National Housing Supply Council that did important research on the terrible state of housing in Australia.

The Labor Party is not much better. They have announced they will limit negative gearing and reduce the capital gains tax. But the money they save will not go into affordable housing.

We need to change the debate in this country. Ending homelessness is possible.

Australians have done it before.

After the Second World War, when our national debt was much higher than today, the nation built 670,000 public housing homes in just over ten years.

More recently, during the Global Financial Crisis, the government invested $6.1 billion in building and repairing social and public housing. But this was to create jobs, and was not part of a long-term housing strategy

Governments expect people to survive in the private rental market and offer small amounts of Rent Assistance which gets taken up in rent increases anyway.

More and more people are retiring with a mortgage. More and more older people are living in insecure private rental. Every day, our Home at Last service sees older people in housing stress, spending up to 75% of their pensions on rent, facing eviction in 60 days, then couch surfing, living in cars, unable to afford a home.

We don’t want subsidies that line landlord’s pockets, we want a older person’s housing strategy and a plan to build more and better public housing!

Mr Turnbull and Mr Shorten:

Do not underestimate the power of the older person’s vote. Housing for the Aged Action Group urges you to act now to fix this housing crisis for our older Australians.