

MEDIA RELEASE

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What Australians Actually Want From Their Housing

“We can now replace myths and assumptions with real evidence about the kinds of housing Australians want”, said Jane-Frances Kelly, Cities Program Director at the Grattan Institute, on the release of the report, *The Housing We’d Choose*.

Grattan examined the housing preferences of more than 700 Sydney and Melbourne residents in a detailed survey.

It found that once people took into account real-world factors such as current housing costs and their income, they chose a far wider range of housing types than the stereotype of all Australians wanting a detached home on a large block would suggest.

However, “we’re just not building the variety of housing that Australians say they want”, Jane-Frances said.

In particular, she pointed to shortages (compared to what we say we want) of semi-detached homes and apartments in the middle and outer areas of both Melbourne and Sydney.

The report argues that there are barriers to delivering more of the housing people say they want. These include the cost of materials and labour for buildings over four storeys, land assembly and preparation, and the risk and uncertainty of our planning systems.

Building enough of the right housing is not only vital to meet the range of choices individuals would like to make, but also for the way in which our cities will grow.

City structure can significantly affect congestion, the distance we have to travel to work and to see friends, the cost of infrastructure, concentrations of disadvantage and other issues vital to both our everyday lives and the health of our cities.

“We should not be afraid to shape our cities: otherwise we risk them shaping us”, Jane-Frances said. “But we should shape them in accordance with what Australians say they want, not just what we think they want.”

[Download a copy of the report.](#)

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