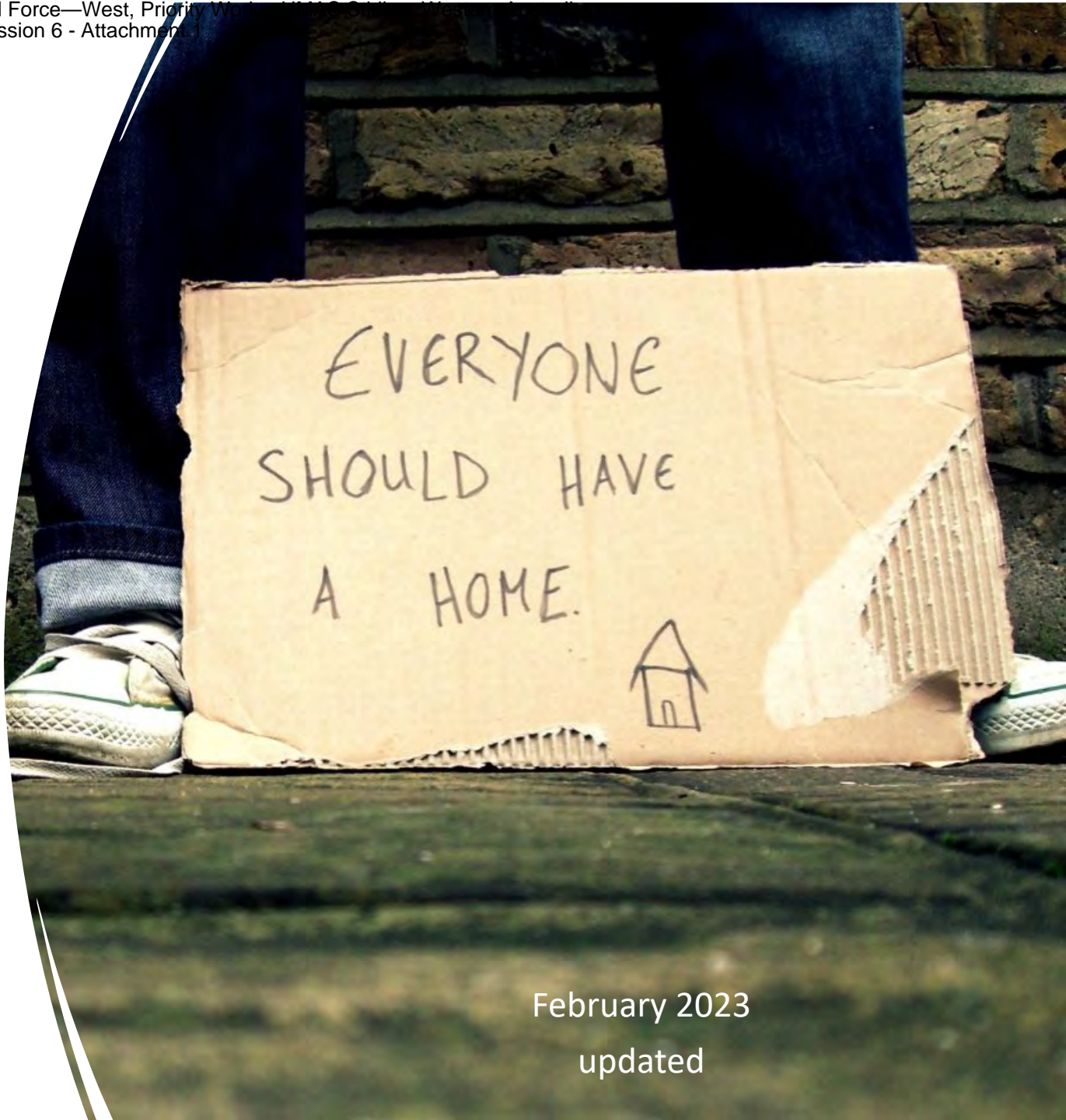Pauline Logan
Consulting
& ASSOCIATES

Imagined if_
Futures

# Snapshot - homelessness and housing in the South Metropolitan region

## Towards a collective approach

EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A HOME.

February 2023

updated

# Acknowledgements

This Snapshot was prepared for Imagined Futures by Pauline Logan Consulting.

Pauline Logan Consulting is based on the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people. Pauline Logan Consulting recognises the continuing connection of the Whadjuk Noongar people to land, waters and culture, and pays deep respects to Elders past and present.

Pauline Logan Consulting thanks all those who shared their reflections, insights, suggestions and learnings to inform this Snapshot and help shape a direction for a regional plan with a shared goal of ending homelessness.

**Imagined Futures**

The Imagined Futures partnership brings together commonwealth, state and local government departments, not-for profit agencies, businesses, philanthropists, and community members across the local government areas of Cockburn, Fremantle, and Melville. Imagined Futures recognises that tackling complex social issues is beyond the capacity of any single organisation to resolve, and that the only way to effect large-scale change is through working together, pooling, and mobilising the resources available in our community to achieve shared goals.

The partnership's approach is informed by principles for collective impact and has a proven track record of working in a way that goes beyond information exchange, to developing shared strategies and delivering collaborative projects. Imagined Futures is recognised by the State Government as the District Leadership Group for the South West Metropolitan Region. It is auspiced by St Patrick's Community Support Centre Ltd.

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# Project rationale and purpose

The State [Government's All Paths Lead to Home: WA's 10 year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030](#) and the [WA Alliance to End Homelessness' Strategy to End Homelessness](#) have set the strategic direction for ending homelessness in Western Australia.

Central to both strategies is the need to develop whole-of-community approaches and place-based responses:

• By collaborating and co-designing with people with lived experience, the community services sector, business and philanthropy, the community, and other levels of government, we can better design and deliver appropriate and flexible housing options and services that respond to the diverse needs of vulnerable people in our community.

• Homelessness looks very different across Western Australia and between metropolitan, regional, and remote areas. Appropriate place-based responses need to be developed, which are informed by local needs, context, and capacity.

In 2019 the Imagined Futures Housing and Homelessness working group was formed to support the State Government's strategy with place-based interventions. The group comprises representatives from 26 agencies with representation from Commonwealth, State and Local Government, not-for-profits, and business.

To deliver on the high-level strategic directions, the working group has identified the need for a regional plan that encapsulates the features of what makes the region unique.

• The aim is for a plan that details how best to maximise local resources and networks, in terms of service delivery, the availability and diversity of suitable housing options, and other factors which are critical to the objective of ending chronic homelessness.

• In addition, the Department of Communities is currently exploring place-based approaches to procuring homelessness services building on a pilot in Bunbury.  A regional plan may support local place-based procurement processes.

• The geographic boundary for the plan is initially proposed to align with the State Government's South Metropolitan region, south of the Swan River, which includes the local governments of Cockburn, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Kwinana, Melville, Rockingham, Mandurah, Waroona, Murray, and Boddington. Many agencies are funded to deliver services across this region. The exact boundaries will be refined as part of the development of the plan.

• It is intended that any existing local action plans will inform the development of a regional plan, and where local plans do not yet exist, will inform their development. This is consistent with the recommended approach in the Strategies to End Homelessness.

• The overarching regional plan is intended to be a bridge between the whole of state frameworks and local plans. It will serve to strengthen local approaches, rather than duplicate, or compete with them.

**Project purpose**

• To develop an initial 3-year (2023 – 2025) regional homelessness plan with ten LGA's (Fremantle, East Fremantle, Cockburn, Melville, Kwinana, Rockingham, Mandurah, Waroona, Boddington & Murray), in the Department of Communities South Metro procurement boundaries, aligned with All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020 – 2030. The regional plan will also reflect relevant housing supply initiatives and plans within the region in recognition that housing supply is a key strategy towards ending homelessness.

# Project oversight and approach

**Project oversight**

• A partnership between Department of Communities and Imagined Futures has been established for the period of the project. The partnership is the client for the purposes of the project.

• Oversight of the project is via a steering committee consisting of :

    • Andrew Geddes, Regional Executive Director, South Metropolitan Service Delivery, Department of Communities

    • Michael Piu, Chair, Imagined Futures Housing and the Homelessness Strategic Working Group

    • Leigh Sinclair, Executive Officer, Imagined Futures and Project Manager

**Project Approach**

The project is resourced with 16 days consulting effort to:

• Provide a Snapshot to share insights gathered via consultations, information gathering and a desk top review

• Facilitate a workshop to explore the crossover of interests and opportunities at a regional level towards a simple regional plan.

The information gathered for this Snapshot includes:

• Consultation – with people who were available from those identified by the Steering Committee and with additional consultations from participant recommendations

• A brief desk top review and information from attendance at a range of forums held during the information gathering phase

The Snapshot seeks to inform the differing levels of awareness about what's happening across the region. It also recognises that the regional context is impacted by the wider context underpinning the homelessness and housing system and to inform different stakeholder roles and interests. Web links are provided for people to access more detail on aspects of interest.

A workshop, hosted by Imagined Futures, is being planned for March 2023. Invitees include a range of stakeholders working in the region. The WAAEH and Office of Homelessness will present updates on recent developments, including for a more integrated approach to ending homelessness. The workshop will work with stakeholders to explore opportunities and key directions for working collectively at a regional level to generate greater impact for people experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness and to achieve ending homelessness goals.

The aim is for a simple regional plan to foster alignment, generate clarity and guide key directions and actions.

'We all know we're in a homelessness and housing crisis but how can we work better together?" (stakeholder comment).

# In a nutshell - there's a lot going on...

Consultations and information gathering highlighted:

- Increases in people experiencing homelessness, including new groups of people experiencing homelessness for the first time and more people who are rough sleeping.

- Increasing cost of living pressures, including housing costs, and a severe lack of affordable housing.

- The effectiveness of specialist homelessness services - 9 in 10 people at risk of homelessness and receiving support were assisted to maintain housing.

- Growing unmet demand for services and supports, for interim and long-term accommodation, and for emergency accommodation for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

- Significant unmet need for preventative services and supports, especially for young people, people experiencing mental health issues and people experiencing financial hardship.

- Calls for policy underpinned by housing as a human right and recognition that homelessness is fundamentally a housing problem.

- A growing body of local, national and international evidence, expertise and practice demonstrating that homelessness is solvable and offering guidance to local efforts to successfully end homelessness.

- An expanded focus and significant funding commitments by National and State governments on homelessness and affordable housing including State Government commitments of more than $2.1 billion for social housing over the next four years; the single largest one-off investment into social housing in the State's history.

- A range of local initiatives, strategies, reports, policies, services and supports.

- A growing focus on collaboration and coordination across agencies and sectors, including recent developments for a more integrated approach by the WAAEH and Office of Homelessness linking with a new Ministerial Housing First Advisory Group (replacing several homeless working groups) and newly established local Rough Sleeper Coordination Groups.

- An increased emphasis on collective impact and developing whole of community approaches.

- Increased funding to improve the quality of data in the By Name List.

- Assertive outreach projects supporting people who are rough sleeping in 4 LGA's. Ongoing funding is a challenge which may be addressed by work towards the consolidation of multiple outreach services into a single service.

- A range of useful tools and information.

- Region wide goodwill and commitments including ending homelessness initiatives using Housing First (HF) and No Wrong Door approaches.

Despite these efforts the Ending Homelessness in Western Australia 2022 Report found that 'at the aggregate level at present, homelessness outcomes are not improving and there is a long way to go before we achieve WAAEH targets and the overall goal of ending homelessness in Western Australia' (p129).

# And opportunities for greater impact

There was wide agreement that there is an urgent need for more effective, integrated approaches. A range of opportunities were identified to build on successes and achieve greater impact through a collective regional focus to:

- Develop a clear, shared goal for the region with flexibility in how to achieve for local places.

- Strategically coordinate, collaborate and align with evidence-based approaches for systems change to end homelessness. Recent developments for a more integrated approach by the WAAEH and Office of Homelessness offer possibilities for strengthened local and regional coordination and efforts to end homelessness.

- Unlock and accelerate opportunities to increase affordable housing supply and access to long-term housing for people experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness.

- Develop a more comprehensive, shared regional picture of homelessness, land and housing availability, services and supports, gaps, unmet needs (including for crisis and interim accommodation) and what's in the pipeline (e.g. to increase affordable housing).

- More people focused services working in ways that recognise the barriers, complexities and intersectionality of issues faced by many people experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness.

- Leverage successful place-based initiatives and secure on-going support for effective initiatives that align with evidence-based ending homelessness approaches and the five pillars to end homelessness (see below).

- Utilise and enhance existing capacity and tools across the region.

- Build a community-wide movement for a more inclusive community where homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring.

# Five pillars to underpin ending homelessness

The Ending Homelessness in Western Australia 2022 Report (pp129-130) sets out five fundamental pillars to end homelessness in Western Australia identified by the WA Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH). These were also reflected in stakeholder contributions:

**1. Ensure adequate and affordable housing**:
- A supply of housing that meets the needs of those who need it.
- Having multiple pathways into permanent housing and multiple housing options including housing with support services that are all effective.

**2. Prevention:**
- A focus on prevention and early intervention.
- System, service and social responses that ensure people at risk of homelessness have the supports they need to prevent them entering homelessness.
- Improving the recognition of the health value of a home.

**3. A strong and coordinated response:**
- A 24/7 'no wrong door' system that delivers responsive action across different community and health support systems that are well coordinated and act quickly.

**4. Data, research and targets:**
- Improve data, the evidence base on what works, systems knowledge, and the accountability of the health and social support system to achieve the goals of the WAAEH Strategy.
- Build the evidence base around the health value of a home.
- Set clear targets and ensure delivery.

**5. Building community capacity:**
- Solutions sourced from those who have experienced homelessness.
- All sectors that support those experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage deepen their capacity to end homelessness in WA.
- Developing a broad public movement, inclusive of all members of the community who have the desire to end homelessness brings more people and resources to ensure success.



#EndHomelessnessWA

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# People experiencing homelessness

The [Ending Homelessness in Western Australia 2022 Report](#) (pp33-34) noted the **drivers of homelessness** in Western Australia as:

- Housing affordability
- Housing supply
- Poverty and unemployment
- Young people in custody and out-of-home care
- Physical and mental health and substance misuse
- Alcohol and drug use
- Domestic violence

These were affirmed as drivers of homelessness in the South Metropolitan region. Stakeholders from social services reported increases in people experiencing homelessness, including new groups of people entering homelessness and more people who are rough sleeping and experiencing housing stress. There were strong concerns that various external factors were contributing to increases in people experiencing homelessness across the region and that available responses were severely inadequate.

Key emerging themes from the lived experience of families in Kwinana / Rockingham participating in the [Sunshine project](#) and triangulated with service providers and the New Zealand 100 Families project highlighted:

- A severe lack of affordable housing.

- Growing housing stress with private rent increases, taking rents to more than 60% of household income (30% of household income is generally accepted as an affordable level). Flow on impacts such as increased food insecurity, being unable to afford health care costs and greater risk of being pushed out of current housing. The power imbalance between tenants and landlords is exacerbated in these circumstances and prevents tenants from asking landlords to fulfil their responsibilities such as for repairs and adequate amenities.

- Insufficient income and a worsening situation due to living expense increases. High heating and cooling costs are an issue with poor quality housing. Health issues are exacerbated when adequate heating and cooling isn't possible. Climate change impacts will worsen this situation.

The ending of the [National Rental Affordability Scheme](#) (NRAS) was another issue with [subsidised rentals coming to an end](#) for many tenants in the region. An example was shared of a pensioner tenant in the Peel region whose rent increased from $236 per week to $400 per week once the NRAS came to an end for their accommodation. The tenant was issued with a 60-day termination notice as the landlord didn't believe they could pay the increased rent. They are now living with family. Stakeholders knew of similar instances but where people didn't have alternative accommodation or support and would likely become homeless.



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# People experiencing homelessness

Groups of people in the region highlighted as experiencing homelessness and some targeted initiatives include:

- **Young people** (those with trauma issues, LGBTQIA+ and private rental affordability and inaccessibility). The Youth Affairs Council of WA Youth Homelessness Advisory Committee offers a platform for young people's voices in the housing and homelessness sector. The Mental Health Commission is also planning long-term housing and support for young people with mental health issues.
- **Aboriginal people** (an impact of colonisation is that disproportionate numbers of people who are rough sleeping and homeless are Aboriginal). There is increasing emphasis and support for Aboriginal-led responses for ending homelessness. For example, the Moorditch Mia Program and the Boorloo Bidee Mia low barrier, culturally supportive medium-term accommodation facilities and wrap around supports managed by Noongar Mia in partnership with Wungening Aboriginal Corporation.
- **Older women** (over 55) (contributing factors can include domestic violence and other trauma issues, illness, job loss, and the impacts of age discrimination, the gender pay gap, part-time or casual work throughout their lives, insufficient superannuation, financial elder abuse or scams). The North Fremantle My Home (which also featured in a collection of local and international housing first projects) and Wyn Carr House developments are providing new housing in the region for older women.
- People with mental health issues (compounded by barriers to accessing NDIS and issues with system blockages and impacts of unmet demand flowing to not-for-profit organisations that aren't resourced to assist ).
- **Families** (growing numbers of families are being locked out of private rental, a lot of services are not designed to support families e.g. with safe places). Families can be missed from rough sleeping data as they can be more mobile / are living in their car.
- **People exiting hospital, mental health facilities and prisons** (a lack of affordable housing can delay people's release and or compromise wellbeing on release).

Concerns were shared that the experience of homelessness Is associated with a much higher risk of mortality and reduced life expectancy / premature deaths and that there have been several deaths among people experiencing homelessness.

**Table 1** below provides indicative homelessness data for the region. Providing accurate and current data on the numbers of people experiencing homelessness is difficult due to the sometimes hidden and often transience of people experiencing homelessness. Limitations with data collection methods are another issue.

Table 1 outlines 2016 Census data from a map developed by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) for people experiencing rough sleeping and people experiencing homelessness by local government authority (LGA) area. Equivalent 2021 Census data will not be available until the first half of 2023. This will be out of date by the time it is available.

Table 1 also includes current data from the Zero Project By-Name List (BNL), including the numbers of people permanently housed. The Zero Project provides caveats for this data and stresses that it is only indicative information on rough sleeping and chronic homelessness and should not be treated as definitive 'numbers'.  BNL data is not available for the overall region and cannot be isolated to LGAs. The Fremantle BNL includes Perth and surrounds and was developed in 2016 as part of Ruah's 50 Lives 50 Homes Project. Data also varies from day to day as it is a 'live' database and users are constantly updating the list. The BNL relies on the voluntary capture of data by partner agencies. It is estimated that 90% of rough sleepers are captured on the BNL from the outreach work carried out by partnered funded homelessness agencies. Young people are suspected to be underrepresented on the BNL data. There are also limitations with the data on the number of people permanently housed.

The Census and BNL do not provide comparative data as the data is for different locations.

A recent report, Quantifying Australia's unmet housing need – A national snapshot, draws on data from the 2021 Census. The report provides a national snapshot with plans for a more detailed analysis and a finer geographic breakdown of data to be published separately. Key findings confirmed that households with low incomes face significant housing pressures across Australia. An estimated half a million low-income households, one in fifteen households, were not in appropriate housing on census night. These Australians were either experiencing homelessness, in overcrowded homes, or spending over 30 per cent of their income on rent.

# Regional homelessness data

## Table 1: Regional Homelessness Data

| People experiencing homelessness | 2016 Census | 2016 Census | Zero Project October 2022 | | Zero Project November 2022 | | Zero Project December 2022 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Region | Breakdown by LGA | By-Name List Areas | | By-Name List Areas | | By-Name List Areas | |
| People experiencing rough sleeping | 150 | Cockburn 12, Fremantle 51, Kwinana 13, Mandurah 54, Melville 0, Rockingham 12, Boddington 0, Murray 5, Waroona 3, East Fremantle 0 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 62 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 65 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 73 |
| | | | Fremantle / Perth | 344 | Fremantle / Perth | 358 | Fremantle / Perth | 343 |
| | | | Mandurah | 88 | Mandurah | 100 | Mandurah | 86 |
| | | | Total | 494 | Total | 523 | Total | 502 |
| People placed into permanent housing | | | Mandurah (0), Rockingham (2), Fremantle/Perth (8) | 10 | Mandurah (1), Rockingham (1), Fremantle/Perth (7) | 9 | Mandurah (15), Rockingham (3), Fremantle/Perth (14) | 32 |
| Total number of people experiencing homelessness - includes people temporarily housed. (NB Chronic homelessness only for the BNL) | 1,248 | Cockburn 307, Fremantle 330, Kwinana 85, Mandurah 200, Melville 112, Rockingham 131, Boddington 0, Murray 59, Waroona 16, East Fremantle 7 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 131 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 129 | Rockingham / Kwinana | 110 |
| | | | Fremantle / Perth | 792 | Fremantle / Perth | 794 | Fremantle / Perth | 733 |
| | | | Mandurah | 179 | Mandurah | 177 | Mandurah | 154 |
| | | | Total | 1,102 | Total | 1,100 | Total | 997 |
| Total population | 506,360 | | | | | | | |
| People experiencing rough sleeping per 10,000 population | 2.96 | Cockburn 1.15, Fremantle 17.65, Kwinana 3.34, Mandurah 6.68, Melville 0, Rockingham 0.96, Boddington 0, Murray 2.99, Waroona 4.15, East Fremantle 0 | People experiencing homelessness per 10,000 population | | Region 24.64 State 36.40 | | | |

# External forces

External forces are contributing to increases in the numbers of people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness, as well as people living in overcrowded accommodation and with family and friends in tents and garages. Compounding this is a significant lack of affordable housing to support people to exit from homelessness into long-term accommodation. People who have not previously been excluded from housing or experienced housing stress are also being impacted. Many families and friends who may have previously provided support to people are facing their own stresses.

**Increasing cost of living pressures and a significant lack of affordable housing**

Rising costs of living are impacting those on income support and low-income wage earners. This is expected to worsen in the current economic situation.

The 2022 Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot for Western Australia highlights the severe lack of affordable rental accommodation. Anglicare rental affordability data for the region showed the median weekly rental to be $460. There were no affordable properties for people on Jobseeker, and Youth Allowance in shared accommodation, and only 1 affordable property for people on Jobseeker with 2 children, and a single person on an Age Pension. The proportion of affordable properties for people on a minimum wage was 1% for a single parent with 2 children, 5% for a couple of one minimum wage and parenting payment, and 31% for a couple with 2 children where both earned a minimum wage.

A 2021 Heat Map Summary by Shelter WA on Homelessness and Housing Stress found that Mandurah, Fremantle, Baldivis, Rockingham, Kwinana were among the top 20 suburbs ranked by the highest numbers of people in rental stress (p10). Suburbs from the region (Mandurah, Rockingham, Kwinana, Fremantle, Cockburn and Baldivis) were also included in a list of 45 suburbs with the highest proportion of renters in rental stress (p11). The report provided more specific data for Mandurah, noting it has experienced some of the highest rent increases with 46% of renters in rental stress (5,927 out of 12,947 renters) paying more than 30% of their income on rent. Mandurah also had some of the highest number of people earning incomes below $650 (23%) and 21% of homeowners with a mortgage (3,195 out of 14,965 mortgage owners) in mortgage stress. 8% of all residential dwellings were unoccupied (3,620 out of 48,175).

The WACOSS Cost of Living 2022 report found significant financial pressure for model households including growth in expenditure, particularly for rental and transport costs.

A recent news article on the rent crisis showed Mandurah rent increases since the pandemic as among the top 10 in Australia, at 38.5%. The article provides an interactive tool on other suburbs and shows several other areas in the region experiencing rental stress.

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# External forces

**Housing market challenges**
The Housing Industry Forecasting Group August 2022 report noted the low level of supply relative to demand.  Established housing sales are exceeding new listings with the number of houses listed at the end of the June 2022 quarter approximately 42% lower than two years ago. This, with prolonged new build times and increased migration and returning residents, was found to be keeping the private rental market at record low vacancy rates leading to increased rent costs. Between June 2019 and June 2022, the Perth median weekly rent cost grew by 37.5% ($135). This has led to rental yields increasing at a faster pace than purchasing prices, making investment attractive and leading to increased prices. Combined with high interest rates many people are renting longer because they can't afford to buy.

Dwelling completions in 2021 were the lowest in the last 15 years. The forecast for annual WA dwelling commencements is that they will remain below the long-term average of 22,000 throughout 2022/23 at 17,000 – 18,000 before a modest increase in 2023/24 to 17,000 – 19,000. Compounding reasons were cited as skills and labour shortages in the residential construction industry and that this will not ease until a higher proportion of dwellings currently under construction are completed. Other constraints in residential development include materials shortages, price increases for materials and commercial and civil projects absorbing capacity in the construction industry.

Tourism recovery was also noted as impacting the private rental market with more investors leasing their properties on short-term letting sites such as Airbnb.

Other challenges included planning holds ups and blockages, including from NIMBY'ism.

**Social and affordable housing**
A single, comprehensive picture of current social and community housing is not available for the region. Table 2 below provides some data that was sourced via consultations and information gathering. There are also several initiatives underway and planned to increase social and affordable housing supply. Noting this will take time and will not meet all needs. A more comprehensive picture alongside better quality, real-time homelessness data would help build understanding and inform responses.

**Critiques of housing assistance measures**
Hal Pawson (AHURI) in a National Shelter Housing and Taxation session highlighted that significant funds are expended by the Australian government ($20.5b in 2021). The current approaches are critiqued in not providing a return to government. The analysis was that if directed to social housing, these funds could have provided 60,000 permanent affordable housing assets. Home ownership assistance measures were also critiqued for not assisting those who are excluded permanently from home ownership but tend to enable bigger, better or sooner access for those already on a path to home ownership.

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# Regional social housing data

Table 2 provides data shared by stakeholders and sourced via desk top research on social housing for the region. There is no current single data source or approach on existing and planned public, community and other affordable housing for the region including through agencies such as Development WA (e.g. for social housing developments at the Beaconsfield TAFE site and Davis Park), via spot purchases to increase public housing, by community housing providers and other social housing initiatives (My Home, St Pat's and Wyn Carr). The data below provides some stock numbers for public and community housing and a breakdown for community housing e.g. for boarding and lodging stock and properties in development.

*Table 2: Social housing data*

| Stock types and waiting lists | Non-profit stock # | State government stock # |
|---|---|---|
| Existing public housing – Long term individual stock (as at 31/8/22) – Total stock (occupied). Difference is stock under maintenance | | 6,206 (5,963) |
| Existing community housing – Long term individual stock - (Housing Choice 964, St Pat's 16 – includes shared housing accommodation and different sized stock / bedroom numbers) (as at 31/10/22) | 982 | |
| Existing community housing – Short to medium term - Lodging and Boarding House Accommodation – (St Pat's – 315-room capacity) (as at 31/1/23). Due to the current housing crisis and the realisaton that lodging may be the preferred housing of choice for some residents, time limits on stay have been removed for many properties. | 8 | |
| In development community housing – Long term stock - Properties in development (SHERP Round 1) (Housing Choice, Bethanie, Shire of Murray, Stellar Living, UnitingCare West & Community Housing) and St Pat's (including Orelia and My Home). St Pat's also has approval for another 28 long-term apartments in Fremantle (pending full funding) | 158 | |
| Community Housing – Long term - Spot purchase by Department of Communities and Housing Choice for Housing Choice Supportive Landlord partnership | 73 | |
| Public Housing Wait List for South Metro Preference Region – Wait turn (as at 31/8/22) | | 3,883 |
| Public Housing Wait List for South Metro Preference Region – Priority (as at 31/8/22) | | 905 |

Anecdotal information was shared of public housing and priority housing waiting lists increasing significantly since COVID with expectations of further demand as the private market situation worsens for many people. Spot purchases are underway to increase social housing stock (about 270 properties across WA in 2022/23) but will not address demand in the short term. A subsidy scheme by the State to help people remain in their current tenancy was suggested to recognise that Rent Assistance, even with indexation, is not keeping up with rent increases. It was noted that such a scheme has been provided by the State in the past. This was also a recommendation in the WACOSS Cost of Living 2022 report (p36). 14

# Services and supports

Several agencies provide services and supports across the region including:
- Entrypoint Perth (Centrecare) – providing streamlined assessment and referral services for metropolitan and regional Western Australia
- Housing First Assertive Outreach and Support Services – St Pat's, Ruah and Wungening are providing services in Perth (including Fremantle) and Mandurah. A Moorditj Mia service is also funded. It is being provided by Noongar Mia Mia, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and Ngalla Maya Aboriginal Corporation to support individuals and families sleeping rough across the Perth metropolitan area. A different approach is being applied in each area to ensure services are person-centred and place-based. Current market conditions are presenting challenges in securing permanent housing for people.
- Homelessness Engagement, Assessment and Response Team (HEART) - the primary outreach service for rough sleepers across Perth including south metropolitan suburbs (not Peel). HEART is led by St Pats in partnership with Uniting and Wungening.
- Other specialist homelessness services are operating under existing agreements to provide outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness including Street to Home Assertive Outreach and Housing Support (primarily provided by St Pat's in the South Metro region, with some housing support by Foundation Housing) and Crossroads providing alcohol and other drugs outreach to adult rough sleepers (St Pats).
- Crisis accommodation services such as for women and children escaping family and domestic violence. Refuges in Kwinana and Peel recently received funding for an additional six accommodation units to be built at each of the refuge sites.
- Welcoming and safe spaces for people who are street present – engagement hubs e.g St Pat's Day Centre, Salvation Army Rockingham
- Assertive outreach (Rockingham (St Pat's), Mandurah (St Pat's), Fremantle and Kwinana – contracts for services in development. The Department of Communities coordination team also works with some LGAs on rough sleeping hot spots (e.g. Rockingham).
- Early intervention, prevention and wrap around services such as private tenancy support (Anglicare and Ruah), family support (Communicare), financial counselling services, food and emergency relief services including free meals evening services, a library connect service (St Pat's and the City of Fremantle), mental health and alcohol and other drug services

Other initiatives include:
- Local government training of rangers, field officers and front-line staff, including in libraries and community centres, to be responsive and provide initial support and linkages for people experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness
- Local government service directories and referrals
- Working with the wider social service system to provide better pathways for people experiencing homelessness to access services and support a No Wrong Door approach
- A Household Energy Efficiency Scheme – to improve energy efficiency for households facing hardship. The scheme has helped some participants save $10 / day in reduced energy costs.

A 2021 Homeless Service System Alignment and Road Map report, by Collective IQ for the Department of Communities, provides a map of existing services that people in the south metropolitan region can access (p49). Mapped services are grouped to crisis intervention, transitional crisis intervention, transitional accommodation, early intervention and prevention and telephone referral and support services, crisis accommodation, meal and day support and supported accommodation.

Stakeholders consulted for this project reported growing unmet demand for homelessness and other social services, interim and long-term accommodation, emergency accommodation and supports for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Services are noticing new people presenting for support as well as people that haven't sought support for several years. Those seeking support include Aboriginal people, women (including younger, middle aged and older women), families with children, young people and older people. Increases in family and domestic violence were found to underpin many women's need for support. More referrals are also being made for support and accommodation for people with complex and intersecting needs. Many people's needs were not able to be met due to demands on services or services not supporting the diversity of issues people are experiencing.

# Specialist assistance, unmet needs and barriers

The Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report 2021/22 details the number and range of **people receiving assistance** in WA, the reasons for assistance and the outcomes achieved. The summary for WA found:

- 24,700 clients were assisted – 9% of the national Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) population (272,700 total clients)
- 41% of clients were homeless on first presentation, lower than the national rate (44%)
- 9 in 10 (91%) of clients at risk of homelessness were assisted to maintain housing
- 24% of clients who were homeless were assisted into housing

The main **reasons people sought assistance** were:
- Family and domestic violence (39% compared with 37% nationally)
- Financial difficulties (34% compared with 39% nationally)
- Housing affordability stress (24% compared with 31% nationally)

**Significant unmet need** remains for permanent supportive housing and services and supports. This includes:

- Significant unmet need for **preventative services and supports**, especially for young people, people experiencing mental health issues and people experiencing financial hardship.

- Several stakeholders stressed the need for **more supports to prevent people becoming homeless**.

- **Needs for interim responses to accessible and safe accommodation** and a **severe lack of low barrier crisis and transitional accommodation**

- **More accessible and responsive services**. The 100 Families and Sunshine projects both found a high burden on people in seeking support and gathering resources. This is exacerbated for families with intersecting needs who can experience services as working at cross-purposes and needing to manage multiple case managers, frequent office-based appointments, multiple assessments and continuing unmet needs. Families' feedback included that the solution to homelessness is not just knowing about housing or doing a course on how to be a better tenant – it is increasing the supply of affordable housing and creating conditions to provide people with a secure home. Challenges were identified with services being inundated by demand and constrained by models and contracts that lock them into delivering a set suite of activities against pre-determined outcomes with little scope to be responsive to changing needs and provide the level and nature of assistance needed.

- Gaps were identified in funding opportunities for smaller local services and groups who provide important support to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

**Other barriers** shared by stakeholders included:

- **Service accessibility barriers** (some services won't accept a referral without a fixed address and can be strict in supporting people from defined locations, people with co-morbidity issues can also face challenges of where they 'fit')

- High and growing levels of unmet need / **capacity for agencies to respond / accept referrals**

- The **distances between locations** that services are contracted to support

- **People's transience creating challenges in being provided a continuity of support**

- Accessing support to **meet requirements to receive NDIS** is a challenge for many people requiring psycho-social supports.

- Accessing support to **meet requirements to access My Aged Care** is challenging for many people.

A doubling of **St Pat's Emergency Relief** unmet needs between 2020/21 and 2021/22 were cited as indicators of growing housing stress and risks of homelessness. The **Fremantle Library Connect service** also reported significant increases in the proportion of people reporting financial and housing affordability stresses (97%) and presenting with a housing crisis issue. The **financial counselling network** also reported clients in the Metro Southwest region presenting with unstable accommodation issues, many of whom the network supported to avert or resolve their issues. Financial counsellors also supported public and community housing and private tenants experiencing financial hardship. 80% of those supported received annual household incomes less than $60,000.

# Housing is a human right and homelessness is a housing problem

Australia is a signatory to the **human right to adequate housing** enshrined in international law. This right (and other social rights) underpins approaches that seek for housing to be about people and not profit, for ending homelessness, and for people to have access to safe, sustainable housing and the services they need. The AAEH and WAAEH advocate for ending homelessness to be a minimum standard expected by the community, like community expectations and standards for health access (Anti-Poverty Forum 19/10/22). The Department of Communities Strategic Direction Statement 2022 – 2025 is underpinned by people's right to self-determination. It also recognises that home is more than a building; home is different for everyone, it should be safe and functional, and provide both physical and emotional security.

The Successful Public Policy in the Nordic Countries book presents social policy case studies, including a chapter on 'Housing First Combatting Long-Term Homelessness in Finland'. The key finding was that "the greatest success of the Finnish Housing First model is that it put on the national agenda the most excluded and vulnerable citizens and called for respect for their rights and basic needs in housing" (p509).

International research (US) on **Homelessness is a Housing Problem** finds that structural issues such as housing market conditions, including the cost and availability of rental housing, are key contributing factors of homelessness.

The recent Productivity Commission report on the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement also found that 'fundamentally homelessness is a result of not being able to afford housing' (p204). Australian research such as Repairing Australia's affordable housing crisis highlights that the shift in Federal government policy from increasing social housing to providing rent assistance has not been matched by an increase in the supply of affordable rentals for low-income households. Escalating real estate prices have forced more higher income earners into private rental, leading to a tightened rental market, rent increases and the squeezing out of lower-income tenants. This is compounded by reduced social housing (from 6% in 1996 to an estimated ~3% in 2021).

Proposed solutions include building more social and affordable housing, increasing rent assistance, stronger protections for tenants and reforming the tax system and housing and land use.

AHURI is currently undertaking research that will be available in early 2023, 'Towards an Australian Housing and Homelessness Strategy: understanding national approaches in contemporary policy'. The project aims to set out the different options for achieving cohesive, co-ordinated action in the Australia drawing on lessons from other national approaches in Australia and internationally.



HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

# Homelessness is a solvable systems problem

International evidence and experience shows that homelessness is a solvable systems problem.

Solving homelessness requires:

- More coordinated and aligned collaborative efforts at all levels
- Commitment to a shared aim for homelessness to be rare, brief, and non-recurring
- Place-based and person-centred responses
- Quality by-name, real-time data
- System-wide improvement focused responses
- Housing First approaches
- Targeting and expanding housing resources.

**International organisations** showing that homelessness is solvable include:

**Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH)** - IGH's mission is to support the growing global movement to end street homelessness. It shares successes and lessons from across the world.

**Community Solutions (CS)** - CS works with more than 80 cities and counties in the US. CS pioneered the Zero Homelessness approach and developed the by-name list and quality improvement techniques to end various types of homelessness. CS have generated a Built to Zero movement with:

- 105 communities participating in the movement
- 147,000+ individuals being housed since 2015 by Built for Zero communities
- 14 communities functionally ending homelessness for a population
- 64 communities gathering quality real-time data
- 42 communities achieving a measurable reduction in homelessness

CS have developed videos on their approach including Homelessness is a Solvable Systems Problem and Solving Homelessness with Built for Zero

Canadian Alliance to End homelessness (CAEH) - CAEH leads a national movement of individuals, organisations and communities working together to prevent and end homelessness in Canada. CAEH have adapted the CS Zero Homelessness approach to a Commonwealth country context. Several communities are driving sustained reductions in chronic homelessness and veteran homelessness. London Ontario has achieved and sustained functional zero. Much of the work of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) is based on the CAEH model.

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# A systems and governance approach

Research - such as a recent Demos article A new systems perspective to ending homelessness, shares findings on how a systems and governance approach to ending homelessness can provide a compass for the collective journey of navigating the complexities of homelessness and advancing the goal to end homelessness. The research found there was no definitive policy roadmap or governance model that can be designed in advance to ensure Housing First will achieve systems change.

The diagram shows three common elements to successfully deploy Housing First to end homelessness:

- **Providing directionality** – by setting and clarifying goals

- **Supporting capacity building** – by creating connections with stakeholders across different policy sectors or levels of government based on mutual goals

- **Fostering mutual learning** – by serving as a common infrastructure for shared learning and meaningful dialogue

Successful actions over the last 15 years have led Finland to be an international benchmark, supported by the emergence and development of Housing First-based networks and a network governance model.
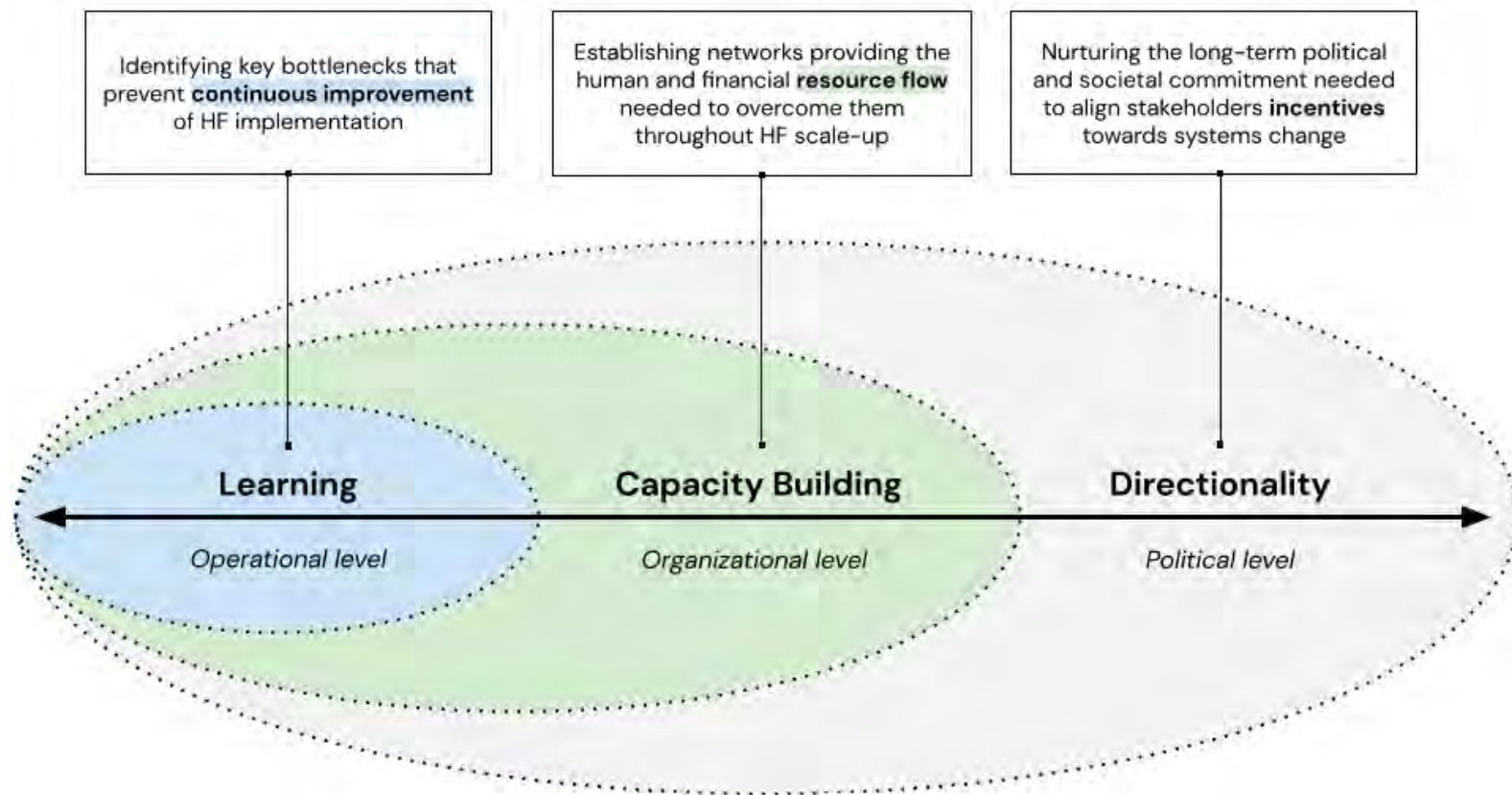
# Australian end homelessness alliances

**Australian Alliance to End Homelessness** **(AAEH) -** established in 2013, the AAEH is based on the Canadian national alliance. The AAEH launched its Advance to Zero campaign (AtoZ) with the Canadian Alliance at the recent inaugural Australian Zero Homelessness Summit 2022. The Summit received positive news coverage and support from a widening movement of individuals and agencies. The AtoZ Campaign utilises methodology (see below) that has been developed over many years by the various partners of the AAEH across Australia and the successful strategies of ending homelessness organisations around the world including Community Solutions International, the Institute of Global Homelessness, OrgCode and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness.

**Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness** **(WAAEH) -** a collective impact movement of individuals, businesses, peak bodies community service and community organisations to end homelessness in WA, taking a coordinated and collaborative approach and working with the AAEH and international organisations. The WAAEH developed a Strategy to end homelessness 2018 - 2028 with homelessness service providers, people experiencing homelessness, researchers and academics, service funders and members of the WA community. The Strategy provides a 10-year plan to end homelessness focusing on five priority areas:

- Housing - ensure adequate and affordable housing
- Prevention - focus on prevention and early intervention
- Strong and Coordinated Approach - no 'wrong-door system'
- Data, Research and Targets - improve data and research, and set clear targets
- Build Community Capacity - never about us, without us

The WAAEH coordinates regular Pulse Meetings for information sharing and showcasing ending homelessness practices, provides an evaluation framework, a dashboard for tracking progress on ending homelessness working with the UWA Centre for Social Impact, and manages the WA Zero Project (see below). The Ending Homelessness in Western Australia 2022 report provides a comprehensive analysis of homelessness in Western Australia, including Zero Project data (from 2012), an analysis of Western Australia's homelessness policy and service context, and an overview of a range of systems and service initiatives to end homelessness in Western Australia.

> **Ending homelessness** is described as meaning:
>
> (actions) preventing, reducing and resolving homelessness
>
> by making it
> - (outcomes) rare, brief, and a one-time occurrence.
> - (measured) using Functional Zero
>
> This description applies to all forms of homelessness, the AtoZ methodology just starts with rough sleeping.

# AAEH Advance to Zero approach



**A Shared Vision**

To end all homelessness in Australia, starting with rough sleeping, by ensuring that when it does occur it is rare, brief one-time.

**Four Approaches to Ending Homelessness**

| A Housing First approach. | A person-centered, strengths based approach. | An evidence based systems change approach. | A place-based Collective Impact approach to collaboration. |

**Eight Proven Solutions**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assertive Outreach | Continuous Improvement |
| Common Assessment | Data-Driven Prevention |
| A Real-Time By-Name List | Data-Informed System Advocacy |
| Coordinated Systems | More of the Right Housing & Support |

https://aaeh.org.au/atoz

# WA Zero Project

The WA Zero Project works collaboratively to reduce and ultimately end rough sleeping and chronic homelessness in local communities (currently metropolitan Perth and Fremantle, Rockingham / Kwinana, Mandurah, Geraldton and Bunbury). The project is contracted to provide Housing First Coordination in WA aligned with 10-year Strategy working with the Office of Homelessness. Management recently transferred from Ruah to the WAAEH. The project uses the Advance to Zero methodology which focuses on counting down then number of people experiencing rough sleeping and chronic homelessness with the aim of reaching 'functional zero' using a combination of quality real-time data and service coordination. The project includes:

- Management of **quality By Name Lists** for local communities to have live data to track people experiencing homelessness and drive evidence-based improvements.
- **Place based coordination** - Perth (including Fremantle), Mandurah, Rockingham (and Kwinana) **Improvement Teams** working to shared community goals to end homelessness in the CBD's of Mandurah, Rockingham and Kwinana by 2025. Teams also coordinated shared goal and time-limited localised projects e.g. ID clinics, Homelessness Week events.
- **Grassroots Working Groups** in Mandurah and Rockingham / Kwinana and the Collaborative Homelessness Action Group (CHAG) for Perth Zero – providing the opportunity for local people to work together on case coordination and to coordinate resources, support and housing working off the By Name List.
- **Housing First training courses** for services to transform their work and adopt best practice approaches.

The project is exploring the scope for current forums to be more combined and / or more coordinated. It is also encouraging the increased use of the VI-SPDAT tool (a pre-screening tool to better understand the housing and support needs of individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness) for agencies to provide more accurate needs data. The use of the tool is currently below 50% in the region and reported as largely due to organisations lacking the time / capacity to administer the tool (it takes approximately an hour to complete) and many people finding it intrusive. The AAEH is currently working to improve the tool.

Stakeholders representing LGAs and services strongly valued the Zero Project and saw scope to be more involved and support Improvement Teams and Grassroots Working Groups where they exist.

Current limitations included a lack of resourcing for services to support By Name-List data collection and to develop more coordinated and integrated approaches, including more localised data.

# Australian affordable housing alliances

National Affordable Housing Alliance  - The National Affordable Housing Alliance (Alliance) formed in 2020 as a cross-sectoral alliance to tackle homelessness and increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Australia. It comprises Australia's peak property, building, community housing, social services, union and industry superannuation groups.

The Alliance's core members include:
- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Council of Social Service
- Community Housing Industry Association
- Industry Super Australia
- Homelessness Australia
- Housing Industry Association
- Master Builders Australia
- National Shelter
- Property Council of Australia

Everybody's Home Campaign  - A national campaign to fix the housing crisis, launched in 2018 by a coalition of housing, homelessness and welfare organisations across Australia to achieve change for everybody to have a safe and decent place to live.

# National context

**There have been significant recent developments in the national context towards ending homelessness and housing reform:**

**National Housing and Homelessness Plan** - In August 2022, the Albanese Government announced a [commitment to deliver a housing reform agenda](#), including a new National Housing and Homelessness Plan. A key goal will be to identify ways to improve outcomes for Australians at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness as well as to increase the supply of social and affordable housing working with state and territory governments.

A key component of the agenda is the $10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund. The fund aims to deliver 30,000 social and affordable homes within its first five years. This was increased to 55,000 homes in the October 2022 Federal budget. The Fund also provides for acute housing needs including - $100 million for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children fleeing family and domestic violence, and older women on low incomes at risk of homelessness plus $30 million for specialist services for veterans who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

**National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (Agreement) -** The [Agreement](#) sets out the funding arrangements between the Commonwealth and State government and the mutual objectives for improving housing outcomes, including for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. Negotiations are pending for the next Agreement.

The findings from a review of the Agreement are provided in the September 2022 [Productivity Commission Report](#). Key recommendations are for governments to work together on a national reform agenda to make housing more affordable through measures to improve the affordability of the private rental market, target housing assistance to people in greatest need, remove constraints on new housing supply and for first home buyer grants to be redirected to programs and policies that will assist people at risk of homelessness.

[Critiques of the Commission's report](#) include that it relies too heavily on market forces to provide affordable housing (which haven't worked to date) and has neglected the broader benefits of social housing investment to deliver good-quality, well-managed homes that low-income earners can afford. Also, that the review's terms of reference [did not consider factors that compound the lack of access to affordable housing](#) (easy credit, negative gearing, capital gains tax discount) through driving real estate speculation, inflated prices and the inefficient use of housing and land. The reliance on planning reform is also critiqued as ignoring the broader dynamics of the housing system.

# State context: Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan

There have also been significant State efforts towards ending homelessness and increasing affordable housing.

The **State Government Strategy** – *All Paths Lead to a Home: 10-year Strategy on Homelessness 2020 – 2030* sets out a policy approach to ending homelessness through evidence-based models of housing and support.

**Vision**: Everyone has a safe place to call home and is supported to achieve stable and independent lives.

**Outcomes**:
- Improving Aboriginal wellbeing
- Providing safe, secure, and stable homes
- Preventing homelessness
- Strengthening and coordinating our responses and impact

**Principles**:
- Ending homelessness is everyone's responsibility
- People are at the heart of our responses
- There is a No Wrong Door approach to service delivery
- The right solutions are delivered in the right places by the right people
- We do what we know works
- We hold ourselves accountable for achieving outcomes

**Priorities**:
- A Housing First approach
- A No Wrong Door approach
- A whole-of-community approach
- Place-based responses
- Rough sleeping

**Reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people** within the homelessness population is a central theme throughout the Strategy. This recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are significantly overrepresented in the homelessness population. The 2016 census data showed 29% of people experiencing homelessness in Western Australia identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander alongside representing only 3.1 percent of the total population of Western Australia.

The Strategy uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics definition of homelessness.

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The Strategy is supported by a Homelessness Action Plan 2020 – 2025. The Plan outlines 58 actions aligned to the Strategy focus areas with responsibility for the actions spread across several government agencies (Communities, Health, Education, Mental Health, Justice, Police), community services and peak bodies. The outcomes include the four outcomes in the Strategy and:
- Building a No Wrong Door system
- Low-barrier responses
- Ending rough sleeping
- Innovation through creating and enabling procurement and delivery mechanisms to enable change

Actions also focus around:
- Improving Aboriginal well-being
- Providing safe, secure and stable homes
- Preventing homelessness
- Strengthening and coordinating responses and impact

# Strategy - role for local government

**The role for local government** is set out in the Strategy (p19):
- Making information on local services and supports available and accessible.
- Ensuring Rangers and front-line staff are informed and supported to interact with people experiencing homelessness and, where appropriate, refer them to local services.
- Working with Police to support and refer people experiencing homelessness to local services and supports.
- Coordinating volunteer and charity groups through a place-based approach that better meets the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- Utilising land and assets to create places that are inclusive and can support vulnerable people.

Some local governments within the region presented submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry (see below). These local government confirmed their support for this role. Some local governments in the region have gone beyond this role e.g. to enable, and sometimes fund, assertive outreach to respond to pressing needs while seeking ongoing government funding. Concerns were shared about being expected to go beyond the role in the Strategy to meet gaps and provide ongoing services.

Planning levers were identified as having potential to be more effectively used to support ending homelessness outcomes.
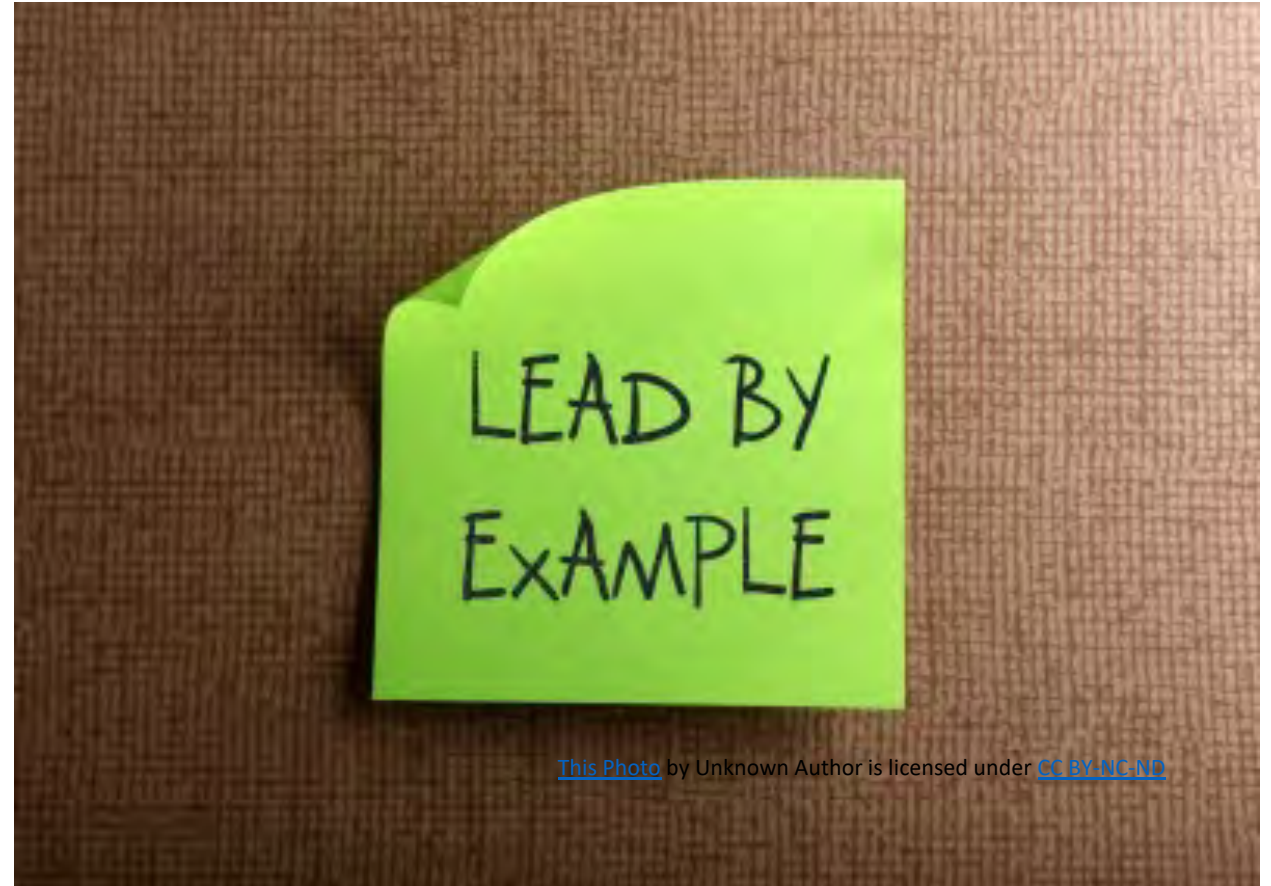


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# Parliamentary Inquiry into homelessness services

On 17 November 2021, the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations (Committee) resolved to hold an Inquiry into the financial administration of homelessness services in Western Australia. The Committee is considering:
(1) the current funding and delivery of services
(2) 'All Paths Lead to a Home', Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030
(3) existing data systems and how data informs service delivery
(4) any other related matter.

The Inquiry has received 45 public submissions and held 28 hearings (as at 14 December 2022). Many organisations and individuals working in the South Metropolitan region have provided input via submissions and hearings.

The Department of Communities (Communities) submission provided some data to the Inquiry on homelessness funding and initiatives:
- Over the period 2019–20 to 2024–25, the Communities budget includes $810 million in spending and asset investment on general and specialist homelessness services that aim to promote wellbeing and independence for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- In 2021–22 Communities budgeted to spend $151 million on services and accommodation—recurrent, grant and capital funding—to support people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.
- As part of the 2021-22 budget there was also an additional boost to social housing funding of $875 million, including a further $750 million in new funding through the Social Housing Investment Fund. This increases the State Government's total commitment to more than $2.1 billion for social housing over the next four years. This is the single largest one-off investment into social housing in the State's history.
- In recognition that homelessness is a cross agency issue, in 2021–22, the Mental Health Commission's expenditure on homelessness services totalled over $21.9 million. The Department of Health (Health) has also recently announced $4.4 million over two years for a medical respite centre, one of the aims of which is to link people with community and social supports and relevant organisations to assist people out of homelessness. Other initiatives and homelessness services in Health include the establishment of the Royal Perth Homelessness Team, the Street Doctor, the Homeless Healthcare Street Health program, the Homeless Healthcare Transitions Clinic and the Homeless Healthcare Metropolitan Syphilis Response project.
- As the lead agency responsible for homelessness in Western Australia, Communities is leading a collaborative response across all levels of government and the community services sector to drive the implementation of key actions and initiatives to respond to homelessness. pp2-3

# State initiatives in support of the Strategy

There are several notable State initiatives in support of the Strategy:

**First Minister for Homelessness -** In December 2021, the Hon John Carey BA MLA was appointed as Minister of the newly created Homelessness portfolio. Minister Carey is also the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Lands.

**Supporting Communities Forum Implementation of the Homelessness Strategy Working Group -** A Supporting Communities Forum Homelessness Strategy Working Group was established to support implementation of the Strategy. The group's last meeting was on 7 December 2022 and is being replaced by a new Ministerial Advisory Group.

**Housing First Homelessness Advisory Group -** The Minister for Homelessness and the Department of Communities is establishing an advisory group to progress the implementation of the 10-year strategy and a Housing First approach across the homelessness system. The Advisory Group will provide regular and practical advice to the Minister for Homelessness to identify reform ideas, progress implementation of housing first approaches and remove barriers to access in the existing system. The Advisory Group will be made up of around 12 people and include a diverse representation from across Western Australia.  The Advisory Group will be chaired by the Minister for Homelessness (or his delegated representative) and meet four times a year. This may vary depending on availability, emerging issues or at the request of the Minister. The first meeting will occur early in 2023. The Advisory Group will also include an inter-agency working group.

**Office of Homelessness -** The Office of Homelessness was established to provide a dedicated focus to homelessness and to work with others to take a systems approach to progress priorities under the 10-year Strategy.

Current focus areas include:
- Working with the WAAEH and Ruah on the By Name List and supporting a transfer of contract for Housing First Coordination to the AAEH.
- Leading the current Homelessness Commissioning Plan - a commissioning planning and system design process. Consultations commenced in October 2022. The plan will align with the 10-year Strategy and Western Australia's State Commissioning Strategy for community services. The Plan will be underpinned by the following principles:
  - A community and person-centred approach focused on outcomes.
  - A sustainable system.
  - Inclusive services - focus on Aboriginal outcomes and partnerships.
  - Well-led, supported and transparent system.

The Plan will include wider system mapping, sector engagement (including local government), and system and service design. An aim is for 5-year minimum contracts, to replace the 127 current homelessness service contracts due to end in 2024, supported by coordinated, across government quality standards and reporting.

# State homelessness initiatives

Several accommodation and service initiatives have been funded in support of the Strategy:

**Common Ground Program** - Funding ($73.5 million) to provide two facilities in Perth and Mandurah ($28.1 million for a 50-bed facility) to provide permanent, supportive housing and wrap-around support services to people who have been chronically homeless, sleeping rough or on low incomes, to help with complex needs and for people to maintain their tenancy.

**Spot purchasing by Department of Communities and Supportive Landlord partnership** - A partnership, building on the success of a pilot in Bunbury, is being developed with Housing Choices to deliver property and tenancy management through a Supportive Landlord Model for 100 social homes. Priority will be provided to people who have experienced prolonged homelessness. 100 homes, including an additional 50 properties being spot purchased by the Department of Communities, will be provided between Perth, Peel and Bunbury as part of a $20.7 million investment to support people sleeping rough or experiencing homelessness.

**Supported low-barrier accommodation**  - The Boorloo Bidee Mia and Koort Boodja facilities have been developed to offer culturally supportive medium-term accommodation to people who have experienced long-term homelessness and provide individualised, wrap-around supports that promote a healing environment and support people to transition into permanent, stable living arrangements. Wungening and Noongar Mia Mia have been engaged to deliver services and support residents of Boorloo Bidee Mia. Uniting has been engaged to deliver services and supports to residents of Koort Boodja.

**Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation -** Funds ($77.3 million) to establish new facilities in Kununurra, Geraldton and Perth to provide safe, culturally appropriate, affordable accommodation for Aboriginal people who travel to regional centres to access services or for business, cultural or family reasons. Existing facilities are in Broome, Derby and Kalgoorlie.

**Short and medium term supported accommodation through St Barts** – Funding ($2.3 million) for a partnership with St Barts, through their Future Homes and Brown Street Homelessness Accommodation facilities to expand the availability of homeless accommodation in Perth by up to 18 new beds and offer specialised case management and wraparound supports.  The service will operate using a coordinated referral process based on the successful Boorloo Bidee Mia facility, which continues to operate at capacity to accommodate and support people with very complex needs who have been rough sleeping.

**Purchase of Murray Hotel for supported accommodation services** - Communities purchased the former Murray Hotel for $5.15 million to support people sleeping rough. A community housing organisation will be appointed to manage the site through a tender process that commenced in January 2023.

# State homelessness initiatives

**Housing First Homelessness Initiative** (HFHI) - provides funding to community service organisations to provide support and case management, coordination, accommodation and evaluation to connect individuals and families who are rough sleeping with permanent housing and flexible and tailored supports. The program is being provided in the Perth metropolitan area (including Rockingham/Mandurah), Bunbury and Geraldton through consortiums of community services. St Pat's is the lead for region. The initiative incudes four program components:

- **Housing First Support Services** (HFSS) – multidisciplinary teams to deliver assertive outreach, case management partnership and collaboration and to secure suitable accommodation and put appropriate supports in place to help people maintain accommodation.
- **Housing First Coordinator** – provides overall support and coordination of the HFHI across the identified locations. Includes training on the VI-SPDAT tool (Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool) and Housing First principles. The contract recently transferred from Ruah to the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness.
- **Finding Home Program** – the housing and accommodation component, working with the HFSS and Coordinator to provide suitable accommodation options. The initial approach was to provide private rental subsidies to unlock suitable housing options. There are significant challenges in securing private rental accommodation with the current very tight vacancy rate (less than 1%). Communities are developing a place-based approach for the Finding Home Program.
- An independent **Monitoring and Evaluation framework** (in development).

**Homelessness Engagement, Assessment and Response Team (HEART)** - A multi-agency, collaborative partnership between Communities, St Patrick's Community Support Centre (St Pat's), Wungening and Uniting WA has been funded to provide rapid, flexible outreach and intensive supports primarily for people who are chronic rough sleepers across the Perth central business district and broader metropolitan area. An expanded HEART program supports the Safe Perth City Initiative, a partnership between Communities, WA Police and the City of Perth to provide seven day a week dedicated outreach services through security patrols that focus on community engagement and safety.

**Online Homelessness Services Portal** – being developed by Infoxchange, in partnership with Anglicare WA, the Innovation Unit and Anthologie, to help provide a No Wrong Door approach and reduce barriers for people accessing services.

# Other State strategies and housing initiatives

**Other State Government strategies**

Other State Government strategies complement and sit alongside the 10-year Strategy:

- Western Australian Housing Strategy 2020 - 2030
- Better Choices, Better Lives WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015 – 2025 (Plan Update 2018)
- Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow State Infrastructure Strategy 2022
- Sustainable Health Review 2018
- Path to Safety: Western Australia's Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020 – 2030
- At Risk Youth Strategy 2022-2027

**Housing Diversity Pipeline -** The Housing Diversity Pipeline has released blocks of unused State government land for development including a minimum 20% social housing ratio across the total development. This includes proposals being sought for land released in East Street, East Fremantle.

**Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP)** - The SHERP grants program (now closed) has provided $92.8 million for new and upgraded community housing for new housing construction projects and refurbishment works. Several grants were approved for the South Metropolitan region.

An increase to Keystart property price limits to up to $560,000 to ensures Keystart customers retain choice of affordable home and new build options when looking to purchase a property.

# Local government and community sector initiatives

Several other local government and community services initiatives were identified beyond those already mentioned:

- The **Local Government Homelessness Knowledge Hub** - developed by Shelter WA with funding from Lotterywest. The Hub is an online toolkit providing resources and training materials to help build the capacity of local authorities to respond to and address homelessness.
- The **20 Lives 20 Homes** - a St Pat's project, in partnership with Ruah and Foundation Housing, with philanthropic funding and support from the City of Fremantle and State Government to provide a Housing First approach as a pathway for vulnerable people experiencing homelessness into sustainable housing.
- **Wyn Carr House** – a development by Uniting WA, in partnership with Housing all Australians, the WA state government and  donors, to develop a 12-bed facility to support women over 55 experiencing or at risk of homelessness with transitional accommodation for up to 12 months.
- **My Home** – a partnership of My Home Australasia and St Pat's to create 18 new prefabricated, architecturally designed homes in North Fremantle to support older women experiencing homelessness to have long-term housing. Other My Home projects are being explored to accommodate disadvantaged people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- New **community shower facilities** in Mandurah to provide a safe space for homeless people to have a warm shower and get changed on a regular basis.
- The **People of Peel Study** confirmed housing availability and affordability as a major challenge for the Peel region and a need for population driven services, supported by a skilled local workforce.
- The **Peel Away the Mask III report**, action plan and online dashboard was released by the Peel Community Development Group in October 2022 to provide the health and community sector and stakeholders with a resource to advocate for services and infrastructure that will have the strongest impact for residents of the region. This includes increased crisis accommodation and accommodation solutions in the short-term for the region.
- **Housing the Community workshops in Kwinana and Rockingham** in June 2022 to develop a local Housing Plan to improve housing in Kwinana and Rockingham. Workshop input included that there is a lack of escalation pathways for people experiencing homelessness and in housing stress, the urgent need to increase affordable housing stock and a need to address limited funding and resources. Iain Shields, Manager, Home Hub can be contacted for a copy of the Plan (e - iain.shields@hyggecommunitylife.org.au).
- A **workshop with local community services** in the Cities of Kwinana and Rockingham to help create smoother processes for people to access services.
- **Local government community building and access and inclusion initiatives** were seen as important to strengthen community connections and combat NIMBY'ism. Stakeholders identified that there could also be more scope to leverage local government community building efforts and links with schools, medical centres and front-line local government workers to provide more effective support to people experiencing hardship including those at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.
- A project led by researchers at Notre Dame University, building on UK and US research, to develop **communication on social housing** and how to speak with different groups to generate increased community support.
- **Promoting YIMBY over NIMBY** –  for example a Say 'yes in my backyard' to end homelessness opinion piece in The West Australian by Ruah's Louise Ardagh and Debra Zanella. The Imagined Housing project, led by St Pat's, with support from the Imagined Futures network included local government partners.
- The 'Street to Street' sculptural installation **using art to give voice to people with lived experience of housing insecurity and homelessness**.
- An **Anti-Poverty week community forum** on homelessness in Fremantle resulting in community members committing to support ending homelessness.
- Library Connect Fremantle – a St Pats initiative in partnership with City of Fremantle supporting people who are experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness.
- **City of Fremantle Assertive Outreach** – The City received a recent State grant for mental health assertive outreach worker (0.6FTE). Delivery will be outsourced to an external provider.

The **Ending Homelessness in Western Australia 2022 Report** (pp93-128) provides a detailed overview of system and service initiatives to address homelessness in Western Australia that reflect the goals and principles of the WAAEH Strategy and the State Government Homelessness Strategy highlighting those with strong collaboration, a focus on Housing First, wraparound support and prevention.

# Local strategies, supports and coordination

Table 3 outlines a range of local government strategies, reports, policies, services, supports, coordination and collaboration in the region that support ending homelessness and increased social and affordable housing.

*Table 3: Local government information, policies, strategy, plan, services, collaboration and coordination*

| Local government | Community Directory | Strategies & / or Plans | Policies & Practices | Services, funding & in-kind support, advocacy | Collaboration & coordination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City of Cockburn | Cockburn My Community Directory | Housing Affordability and Diversity Strategy | | | Imagined Futures – Housing & Homelessness Working Group<br><br>Local government Directors informal collaboration |
| City of Fremantle | Fremantle My Community Directory<br><br>Fremantle Emergency assistance<br><br>Key contacts to access help | Homelessness Action Plan 2021 – 2024 | Voluntary Goodwill Service Provider Policy<br><br>Awareness building & training – staff (Rangers, Community Safety Team)<br><br>Awareness building-community<br><br>Grant to meet Building Permit Fee for My Home project<br><br>Bonus provisions in planning scheme | Recent grant for mental health assertive outreach worker (0.6FTE). Will outsource to external provider.<br><br>Community engagement – Library Connect service (partnership with St Pat's)<br><br>Fremantle Community Legal Centre<br><br>Links to Homeless Healthcare and Community Safety Teams<br><br>Your Home: A Guide to Housing Options for People over 55<br><br>General advocacy<br><br>Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry | Imagined Futures – Housing & Homelessness Working Group<br><br>Building local relationships, partnerships and networks (strongest with St Pat's)<br><br>Local government Directors informal collaboration |

# Local strategies, supports and coordination

**Table 3: Local government information, policies, strategy, plan, services, collaboration and coordination**

| Local government | Community Directory | Strategies & / or Plans | Policies & Practices | Services, funding & in-kind support, advocacy | Collaboration & coordination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City of Kwinana | Homeless, at-risk and disadvantaged people support information – City of Kwinana | | **Homelessness Policy** **Awareness building – staff and community** | Community well-being team – recent re-structure and moving to assertive outreach via contract with external provider | **Rockingham / Kwinana Homelessness Interagency Network (Co-Chair) - exploring purpose and alignment with other forums** **Zero Project – Grassroots Working Group & Kwinana, Mandurah, Rockingham Improvement Team** **Building local relationships, partnerships and networks (strongest with St Pat's)** **WALGA – CIRG (Garry Fisher)** |
| City of Mandurah | | Homelessness & Street Presence Strategy 2021-2023 Aligned to State 10-year Strategy - overseen by Core Project Team and four reference groups, facilitation - network group Active Ageing Plan 2013 - 2017 | Working groups – Housing and Accom, Support Systems, Safety and Security, Systemic Change, Advocacy Multi-agency Street Presence Intervention Team Assertive Outreach Trial project Homelessness Shower Service Investigate 'tiny homes', micro housing and granny flats | Assertive Outreach delivered by St Pat's, funded via a re-purposed grant from WA Police. Ends in 2023. Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry Hosting housing workshops in 2023 | Peel Homelessness and Street Present Network Interagency Group WALGA – CIRG (Jude Thomas) Local government Directors informal collaboration |

# Local strategies, supports and coordination

*Table 3: Local government information, policies, strategy, plan, services, collaboration and coordination*

| Local government | Community Directory | Strategies & / or Plans | Policies & Practices | Services, funding & in-kind support, advocacy | Collaboration & coordination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **City of Melville** | Melville My Community Directory<br><br>Emergency relief services<br><br>Nowhere to Live? Need a Meal? Flyer | Local Housing Strategy 2018<br><br>Plans for next Disability Access and Inclusion Plan  The next Plan may be expanded to broader Access and Inclusion including for people experiencing homelessness<br><br>Age Friendly Melville Plan 2022 - 2026<br><br>Directions from Young People Youth Strategy 2022 - 2025 | Response to People experiencing Homelessness Policy 2021<br><br>Awareness building & informal training – staff (Rangers, Cultural Services - facilities staff, Community Safety Team, Environmental Health Team (hoarding))<br><br>Community awareness building – e.g. Reimagining Home Forum | Financial counselling service<br><br>Social Justice Advocate provides support and links to services (including St Pat's outreach service) on a case by case basis (only able to provide minimal focus alongside other portfolios)<br><br>Informal use of library by people experiencing homelessness (and supportive response by library)<br><br>Age Friendly Melville Assistance<br><br>Housing Decisions Toolkit for Older People | Imagined Futures – Housing & Homelessness Working Group<br><br>WALGA – CIRG (Gail Bowman)<br><br>Local government Directors informal collaboration |

# Local strategies, supports and coordination

*Table 3: Local government information, policies, strategy, plan, services, collaboration and coordination*

| Local government | Community Directory | Strategies & / or Plans | Policies & Practices | Services, funding & in-kind support, advocacy | Collaboration & coordination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City of Rockingham | Community Support Services Directory<br><br>Support for people experiencing homelessness – City of Rockingham | Community Safety and Support Services Strategy 2022-2027 includes strategies for homelessness and vulnerability. | Strategic and statutory planning and partnerships role (understanding need, facilitating collaboration, information and awareness, support data gathering, community development)<br><br>Awareness building & training – staff (Rangers, Smartwatch Team – mental health first aid, plans for St Pat's outreach team to help build knowledge and capacity | City funded Assertive Outreach ($450K over 3 years) – delivered by St Pat's<br><br>Community grants including for crisis support and in-kind support (venues, catering)<br><br>Submission to Homeless Service Inquiry | Rockingham / Kwinana Homelessness Interagency Network (Co-Chair) - exploring purpose and alignment with other forums<br><br>Zero Project – Grassroots Working Group & Kwinana, Mandurah, Rockingham Improvement Team<br><br>WALGA – CIRG (Michael Holland)<br><br>Local government Directors informal collaboration |

# Local strategies, supports and coordination

*Table 3: Local government information, policies, strategy, plan, services, collaboration and coordination*

| Local government | Community Directory | Strategies & / or Plans | Policies & Practices | Services, funding & in-kind support, advocacy | Collaboration & coordination |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shire of Boddington | | | | | |
| Shire of Murray | | | | Project with Dwellingup Community Village to build 12 new seniors houses. | |
| Shire of Waroona | | | | | |
| Town of East Fremantle | Local support service information | | | | |

# Collaboration and coordination

- Several stakeholders noted the enormous goodwill, passion and connections across agencies and sectors and the strong willingness to collaborate to achieve positive outcomes for the region. Limitations were expressed that actions were not always aligned, or systems change focused.

- Stakeholders reported a growing emphasis on collaboration and coordination across the region (see Table 3 above). Some cross regional connections were seen as strong but not in all areas. Similarly, some strong connections across sectors and agencies were noted, but that these don't exist in all areas. Forums such as District Leadership Groups and working groups, Zero Project Improvement Teams, the Peel Community Development Group and the Mandurah Group of Six Cross were noted as forums that may be leveraged for more effective collaboration and coordination. The informal local government Directors meetings may also offer opportunities towards a greater regional focus.

- The strong collaboration between the community sector (including with ACCOs), local government, government agencies and the Minister for Homelessness and strong encouragement of cross-agency partnerships was seen as very positive.

- The increased government investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation capacity building and service delivery was strongly supported.

- Positive results were being seen from collaboration with police in local programs and services and WA Police involvement in Homelessness forums.  A stronger involvement in coordination and case conferencing by Housing Authority staff was also very positive where it is happening.

- Person-centred supports provided by services such as the Street Doctor were also found to be very positive.

- Strong benefits were noted for areas where the Zero Project was operating and providing a clearer picture on current needs and coordinating  service responses via case conferencing and improvement initiatives. This was also attributed to the involvement of local services, local government and Housing representatives. Efforts are being hampered by a lack of lower barrier crisis and temporary accommodation and social housing or other suitable Housing First options.

- A lack of clarity on who is driving affordable housing solutions at local levels and better communications on the progress and timing for planned initiatives (e.g. SHERP and Common Ground) were identified as an issue by some stakeholders.

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# Opportunities – more strategic alignment, collaboration and coordination

Opportunities were identified to build more alignment across the region supported by strategic, systems change focused leadership and action:

- To more strategically coordinate, collaborate and align with evidence-based and systems approaches to ending homelessness (including shared definitions).

- To develop a clear, shared regional goal and directions, with flexibility for responsive place-based initiatives.

- For strong, coordinated leadership to harness respective roles across agencies and sectors and to support strategic approaches and responses to meeting gaps and needs.

- To streamline and align actions, practice and service delivery with roles and responsibilities across sectors and better coordinate for collective impact.

- For increased partnerships between state and local government and services to bring collective resources and strengths to a more joined up and coordinated response.

- More people focused services working in ways that recognise the barriers, complexities and intersectionality of issues faced by many people experiencing homelessness that help reduce the impost on individuals needing support. Enabling tools were suggested towards improving efforts such as a spatial map across the region of services and supports involved in people's journeys.

- To align social and community housing priorities with wider ending homelessness and Housing First approaches.

- To work together to highlight and elevate relevant issues for action by others e.g. climate change impacts.

# Opportunities – increase affordable housing, housing access and security

Stakeholders shared a range of opportunities to increase affordable housing and housing access and maintain existing tenancies:

- **Unlock and accelerate opportunities to increase affordable housing supply** and explore what various stakeholders can do to strengthen their role and advocate for regional plans to increase available vacant land for affordable housing, and to increase affordable housing stock (public, community and private).

- **Increase low barrier crisis accommodation** in the region (with appropriate funding and staffing levels) and meet gaps where there is currently no crisis accommodation. This would help support people to stay in places where they are connected.

- **Develop 'pop up' medium term housing options with support** (like an interim Common Ground) to bridge the gap until state and federal government housing investments are delivered. Explore converting existing suitable infrastructure temporarily for housing purposes (e.g., former hotels, backpackers, hospitals etc) such as with recent examples in NSW and VIC.

- **Explore land and property utilisation opportunities and develop joined up data at the local level.** Undertake audits across local government, charities, and government agencies (e.g. Main Roads, Water Corporation) to identify potential property and land (including road reserves not needed for 15 – 20 years) and explore partnerships to leverage land holdings for increased social housing and to bring vacant stock back online for example, old hostel facilities that are non-compliant and need funding to be operational.

- **Expand social and affordable housing supply** through increased roles for community housing, joint ventures e.g. local or State government land and philanthropic and not-for-profit partnerships such as with My Home in North Fremantle and with emerging Super Housing Partnerships increasing investment in the build to rent market.

- The Peel Development Commission are exploring a **Design Charette idea** with stakeholders to help be prepared for possible government funding and investment in social and affordable housing. The project seeks to bring together the expertise of local WA architects, urban designed, planners and industry partners to identify suitable land for social and affordable housing and undertake initial site designs. This work will ultimately support the industry to plan and ready themselves for future funding opportunities e.g.SHERP. The project builds on a Shelter WA Design Charette project undertaken in 2020.

- More **strategic urban planning and streamlined policies in LGA's** for example to make it easier and less bureaucratic to make structural changes, increase ancillary dwellings, encourage multigenerational dwellings and **rezoning of buildings** that may offer residential accommodation options.

- **Explore incentives for developers to increase social housing** e.g. consider exceeding local height limits if a social benefit can be demonstrated and or require developers to provide funding towards social benefit.

- State and local government **incentives to ratepayers and businesses to increase stock**.

- **Promote ancillary dwellings** such as granny flats and tiny homes (Tiny House Pilot in Bunbury). There may be opportunities to support other issues such as an ageing population and people wanting support to age in place. Ancillary dwellings were also suggested as a potential option on large public housing blocks.

- Explore **housing utilisation incentives** such as for downsizing and the potential for more shared housing options – e.g. for older women experiencing changed circumstances that remaining in their housing.

- **Improve turnaround of vacant public housing properties**, particularly those with low maintenance requirements.

- **Maintain tenancies** as a key preventative measure, supported by strengthened **tenancy protections** including an end to evictions without just cause.

- **Encourage supportive landlords** (explore subsidies to enable). Identify vacant stock. Encourage Air BnB and vacant properties to be made available even if for short term rental.

- **Extend the eligibility for Bond assistance** to shared housing. An example was provided of a person with disability seeking assistance to move into a room in a shared house.  Bond assistance was declined as it was for shared housing which resulted in the person not being  able to access the accommodation.

- A **supportive landlord approach** and practical measures such as improving the language in letters to tenants to be more accessible and less intimidating.

# Opportunities – a comprehensive, shared picture

Several stakeholders emphasised the importance of a comprehensive picture and opportunities to:

- Develop a more comprehensive, shared regional picture of homelessness, land and housing availability, services and supports including gaps, unmet needs (including for crisis and interim accommodation) and what's in the pipeline (e.g. to increase affordable housing)

- Support more localised Zero Project and By Name Lists (BNL) and improved collection and data sharing tools.

- Implement BNL across all LGAs. Noting not everyone wants to be on a by Name List but it was seen as the best current time and person-centred tool. Also, that the Perth and Fremantle BNL are combined (and people can move fluidly between Fremantle and Perth so it can be hard to be specific on location data for Fremantle).

- Develop local data collection (via Rangers and Front-Line staff) where Advance to Zero is not operational / to complement. The Joondalup, Wanneroo and Stirling Ending Homelessness Working Group are developing a tool  that may be able to be shared and adapted.

- Develop consent protocols for local data collection (the Zero Project has examples)

# Opportunities – place-based initiatives

A range of opportunities were identified for place-based initiatives:

- Leverage successful place-based initiatives and build on existing collective impact place-based responses such as the Imagined Futures Davis Park project.

- Increase population and needs based services e.g. for crisis accommodation within the region.

- Secure on-going support for effective initiatives that align with evidence-based ending homelessness approaches e.g. assertive outreach, Housing First, No Wrong Door and whole of government approaches as advocated by the WAAEH and to recent the Parliamentary Inquiry e.g. by Professor Lisa Wood (pp20-22).

- Strengthen efforts to identify and address hidden homelessness.

- Develop more seamless, people focused service delivery, including the removal of restrictions posed by artificial boundaries and a strengthened No Wrong Door approach that reduces imposts on service users.

- Provide more early intervention and prevention supports including for the prevention of public and private tenancy terminations.

- Prevent eviction (often into homelessness) at all costs. Suggestions included:

  - Linking with / referring to support services earlier – e.g. by the Department of Housing and real estate agents before issues escalate.

  - Developing broader understanding of underlying issues impacting a tenancy (mental health, alcohol and other drug use, family and domestic violence, cultural obligations, financial hardship) and have more responsive, person-centred, strengths based approaches.

  - More relational working. People are often scared and powerless and need understanding and support. Noting that this requires resourcing to address constraints on services supported by a shift in mindset of funding to ensure that social housing - particularly for cohorts with complex challenges - comes with funding for intensive support and housing management to recognise that keeping people in housing can sometimes mean greater operational costs, liability for damages, unpaid rent, security issues and the like and requires a more intense support approach.

- Ensure culturally appropriate Housing First and other service approaches.

- Local government providing people with information to link with financial counselling e.g. for those who seek a rates reduction

# Opportunities - capacity building and tools

Several opportunities were identified for **capacity building** and resource sharing:

- Capacity building of frontline staff in local government and strengthening referral options and relationships (where not already in place)
- Training such as cultural awareness and trauma informed practice for working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Providing a tenant advocacy toolkit for services to more effectively support tenants and help offset unmet demand for services
- Mapping available resources, supports, services and initiatives and developing visual map/s – to show what's happening where (current Homelessness Commissioning planning includes place-based focus and systems mapping and may contribute to this)
- Drawing on available tools and resources, and adapting them where relevant
- Working in partnership on improvement projects (starting small and build momentum from learnings)
- Fostering action learning and collaborative sharing

A range of useful **tools and information** were identified:

**WAAEH Knowledge Hub** – providing links to evaluation materials, a homelessness dashboard, co-design tools, advance to zero materials, Housing First materials, By-Name list Data, local Homelessness Actions Plans, research and resources, high impact projects, school resources and videos.

**Local Government Homelessness Knowledge Hub** - an online toolkit, developed by Shelter WA with funding from Lotterywest, to provide resources and training materials to help build the capacity of local authorities to respond to and address homelessness. The Hub includes examples of policies, strategies, plans and case studies and advocacy resources.

**IGH Resource Hub** - connecting researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to one another, to ideas, and to effective practice from around the world.

**Community Solutions** **(US) -** including resources for various roles people can play in a whole-of-community approach.

**Centre for Homelessness Impact** (UK) - providing tools and resources to support evidence-led results in ending homelessness.

**Systems mapping tools** also exist to support collective efforts such as Wicked Lab's online tool to map and visualise a solution ecosystem.

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# Opportunities – a movement for community inclusion

There was broad agreement on the need for a community-wide movement for a more inclusive community. Several opportunities were identified to support this:

- Build a community-wide movement to foster inclusion, building on existing initiatives at local levels and by organisations such as the WAAEH

- Include people with lived experience of housing insecurity and / or homelessness and elevate the voices of people with lived experience and service users

- Get local businesses and resident's groups on board

- Acknowledge concerns that community members can hold around safety and dispel myths and breakdown barriers

- Create opportunities for community input and involvement in design and solutions, including for government tenders and consultations

- Encourage community network responses to support individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness

- Explore Citizen Summits for more active community generated solutions

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# Next steps

A workshop, hosted by Imagined Futures, is being planned for March 2023. Invitees include a range of stakeholders working in the region.

The WAAEH and Office of Homelessness will present updates on recent developments, including for a more integrated approach to ending homelessness.

The workshop will work with stakeholders to explore opportunities and key directions for working collectively at a regional level to generate greater impact for people experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness and to achieve ending homelessness goals.

The aim is for a simple regional plan to foster alignment, generate clarity and guide key directions and actions.

# Contributors

The following stakeholders contributed to the project between September and December 2022:

| Stakeholder | Role | Organisation |
|---|---|---|
| Kerriann Larsen | Meal Connect Coordinator, WA | Australian Red Cross |
| Leah Watkins | Manager Tenant Engagement & Capacity Building | Housing Choices Western Australia |
| Jacqui Herring | Executive Director | Office of Homelesness |
| Bek Slavin | Acting Manager Community Development | City of Fremantle |
| Traci Cascioli & Michael Piu | Chief Operations Officer & Chief Executive Officer | St Patrick's Community Support Centre |
| Ainsley Jones | Senior Community Impact and Training Officer (Zero Project) | Ruah Community Services |
| Sue Nickisson & Wintana Reda | Family Safety Services Lead & Alliance Manager | Communicare – Family Support Network |
| Nick Mathieson & Michelle Peter | Housing Coordinator South West Metro & Peel & Service Manager Rockingham & Kwinana | Anglicare WA |
| Kayleigh Ellis | Community Development Coordinator - People | City of Melville |
| Aaron Spice | Community Development Officer (Community Support Services) | City of Rockingham |
| Lucy Molloy | Community Partnerships Specialist | City of Kwinana |
| Sally Farnham | Regional Manager, South Metropolitan Region, Housing | Department of Communities |
| Warren Phillips | Senior Development Manager | Development WA |
| Celia Dufall | Financial Counselling Network / Emergency Relief and Food Access Service | Anglicare WA |
| Shae Garwood | Manager, Research, Advocacy & Prevention | Anglicare WA |
| Tim Hartland and Jude Thomas | Executive Manager, Community Services & Director, Place & Community | City of Mandurah |
| Joni Sercombe | Innovation Design Manager (Sunshine Project Lead) | Anglicare WA |
|  |  |  |

# Sources

Various desktop sources informed this snapshot web (links are included throughout the document). Other information was sourced through attendance at the following meetings and forums:

- Imagined Futures – Housing and Homelessness Working Group meeting (30/8/2022)

- Office of Homelessness – Homelessness Commissioning Introduction – Sector Co-working (14/10/2022)

- National Shelter – Sector Briefing: Productivity Commission Review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (17/10/2022)

- St Pat's in partnership with Fremantle Shipping News - Anti-Poverty Week Community Forum (19/10/2022)

- Office of Homelessness – Homelessness Commissioning Co-working – Outreach session (26/10/2022)

- Rockingham / Kwinana District Leadership Group meeting (9/11/2022)

- National Shelter – Housing and taxation in Australia – efficiency, effectiveness and equity (23/11/2022)

- Mandurah Group of Six Meeting (9/12/2022)

# Contact

**Leigh Sinclair**
Executive Officer   **Imagined Futures**
**M:** +61 430 507 778   **P:** (08) 6372 4800 (ext. 4804)
**A:** 12 Queen Victoria St, Fremantle WA 6160

Website | Facebook | LinkedIn | Instagram