

We
are
All in this
Together

South Metropolitan Regional Homelessness and Housing Plan

Towards a collective approach



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Acknowledgments

This regional plan relates to the traditional lands of the Whadjuk and Binjareb people of the Noongar nation. Imagined Futures recognises the continuing connection of the Whadjuk and Binjareb people to land, waters, and culture, and pays deep respect to Elders past and present.

Imagined Futures sincerely thanks all those who shared their reflections, insights, suggestions and learning to inform the development of a regional plan with a shared goal of ending homelessness. Imagined Futures especially acknowledges the guidance and contributions of people with lived experience.

This was an ambitious project, the strength of which is the diverse range of people and information sources that contributed to the development of the plan. It is no easy task to synthesise this breadth of information, and as such Imagined Futures acknowledges the expert stewardship of Pauline Logan of Pauline Logan & Associates in undertaking this task.

Further, Imagined Futures recognises that funding for Pauline Logan & Associates' services was provided by the State Government through the Department of Communities.

Foreword



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We are proud to present the South Metropolitan Regional Homelessness and Housing Plan, which guides a whole-of-community approach toward improving outcomes for people experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing homelessness in the South Metropolitan Region.

As in other parts of the State and indeed Australia, the South Metropolitan Region of Western Australia is experiencing record low post-pandemic vacancy rates coupled with the challenges wrought by increasing inflation and cost of living. These pressures are disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable people in our community. In such difficult circumstances it is vital that all parts of the community rally together to identify and implement solutions. This strategy represents a practical tool to underpin collective efforts.

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The plan has been informed by consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, a desktop review and harnesses the insights of 48 people who participated in a workshop to develop the plan's framework. There is an overwhelming commitment from right across the region to working together to make any experience of homelessness a rare, brief, and one-time occurrence.

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.

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

- The aim was 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 was chosen 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.
- The presence of existing local action plans was acknowledged as was the importance of their content informing the development of a regional plan, and where local plans do not yet exist, to 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.

Purpose: To develop an initial 3-year (2023 – 2025) regional homelessness and housing 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.

Developing the plan

Department of Communities funding was used to engage consultant Pauline Logan, of Pauline Logan Consulting & Associates to:

- Produce a comprehensive snapshot of homeless and housing activities across the region. The snapshot was informed by consultations, information gathering and a desk top review.
- Facilitate a workshop to explore the crossover and interests and opportunities at a regional level to inform the development of a simple regional plan.

The snapshot was finalised in February 2023 and circulated with an invitation to attend the workshop to inform the development of the plan. In and of itself, this document is a useful resource for understanding the breadth of work being undertaken across all parts of the community to end homelessness. A copy of the snapshot can be found at imaginedfutures.org.au/snapshot-of-homelessness-and-housing-in-the-south-metropolitan-region/

The workshop, organised by Imagined Futures and hosted by the City of Rockingham, took place on 10 March 2023. Forty-eight people participated in the workshop representing a wide range of organisations as well as lived experience.

48 people participated... representing a wide range of organisations as well as lived experience.



Imagined Futures synthesised the findings from the snapshot and the workshop into a regional plan that presents a range of regional level activities grouped by the four overarching outcomes defined in the State Government's 10-year strategy:



**Improving
Aboriginal
wellbeing**



**Providing
safe, secure and
affordable housing**



**Preventing
homelessness**



**Strengthening and
coordinating our
responses and impact**

The plan

The development of this plan is intended to be a tool for facilitating a whole-of-community approach and a place-based response. It seeks to provide a bridge between the state-wide frameworks and local plans by identifying bodies of work that make sense to undertake at a regional level.

The plan captures several regional-level activities that if implemented will facilitate necessary advancements toward the shared goal of ending homelessness. The plan will be shared widely to build a common understanding and provide all stakeholders the opportunity to see where they may contribute.

The process by which the plan was developed was itself an opportunity to increase awareness of the incredibly dynamic operating space.

In particular, the three District Leadership Groups (Binjareb/Peel, Rockingham-Kwinana, Imagined Futures) will consider this plan, and identify areas of action that align with their priorities.

Goal: Through working together homelessness in the South Metropolitan Region becomes rare, brief, and a one-time occurrence.



Improving Aboriginal Wellbeing

Aboriginal people are overrepresented in the numbers of people experiencing homelessness. It is vital that the human services sector look for opportunities to foster local relationships as a basis for working toward strengthening the role of Aboriginal organisations and communities in designing and delivering culturally appropriate responses for Aboriginal people.

KEY DIRECTION 1.1

Prioritising inclusion of Aboriginal people and organisations in the implementation of this plan

ACTIVITY 1.1.1

Ensure Aboriginal people are included in a decision-making capacity in meetings, working groups and any community engagement activities.

WHO

District Leadership Groups (DLGs), working groups, and anyone running community engagement activities

TIMEFRAME

Ongoing



Providing safe, secure, and stable homes

The Housing First model is premised on having a diverse range of housing options available. There is a need to facilitate a wide range of housing choices to reflect the diverse array of housing needs.

KEY DIRECTION 2.1
Promoting availability of a range of housing options, consistent with the Housing First approach, that are innovative, flexible, suitable, affordable

<p>ACTIVITY 2.1.1</p> <p>Document comprehensive picture of housing needs and types in the South Metropolitan region by drawing from a wide range of existing data sources, including with the perspectives of people with lived experience and other local community members.</p>	<p>WHO</p> <p>Local Govt, Lived Experience, Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH), By Name List (BNL), Real Estate Institute of Western Australia (REIWA), Departments Commerce & Communities, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Community Housing, academics, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)</p>
	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <p>By end of financial year 2024</p>
	<p>OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH</p> <p>Start in a one Local Government Area (LGA) and one suburb – with a view to developing a consistent data set.</p>
<p>ACTIVITY 2.1.2</p> <p>Develop and communicate required policy and investment strategies across all levels of government, NGOs, and developers to meet identified needs.</p>	<p>WHO</p> <p>Lived Experience, Local government, NGO's, Department of Communities</p>
	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <p>As information from 2.1.1 becomes available.</p>



Preventing homelessness

Assist individuals and families in housing to remain housed by providing the right support at the right time. Support needs to be ongoing, and services should collaborate for the best outcomes, so that all tools available can be put to their best use.

KEY DIRECTION 3.1 Preventing homelessness

<p>ACTIVITY 3.1.1</p> <p>Convene a working group to consider developing a model for providing targeted wrap around support to families who have experienced FDV.</p>	<p>WHO</p> <p>Lucy Saw – seek expression of interest for other interested parties. Include Fremantle Rockingham Family Support Network (FRFSN) in discussions</p>
	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <p>6-12 months</p>
	<p>OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH</p> <p>The FRFSN currently operates across the upper part of the South Metro region. A tender for a Peel Coordinating Network has recently been issued.</p>
<p>ACTIVITY 3.1.2</p> <p>Undertake community education to prevent risks to loss of tenancy.</p>	<p>WHO</p> <p>Southern Communities Advocacy Legal and Education Service Inc. (SCALES), tenant advocates, Anglicare, City of Rockingham, Carers WA, Imagine Futures (IF) Invite Circle Green</p>
	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <p>6-12 months</p>
<p>ACTIVITY 3.1.3</p> <p>Educate private real estate agents re availability of supports for tenants at risk.</p>	<p>WHO</p> <p>SCALES, tenant advocates, Anglicare, City of Rockingham, Carers WA</p>
	<p>TIMEFRAME</p> <p>6-12 months</p>



Strengthening and coordinating our responses and impact

A recurring theme throughout consultations and the workshop was the need to strategically coordinate, collaborate and align with evidence-based approaches. Specific reference was made to ensuring the conditions that underpin successful collaboration are attended to, including:

- Understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Providing tangible mechanisms for building relationships, such as events
- Embedding the voice of lived experience
- Early intervention and prevention
- Transparency – ongoing sharing of data and information to enhance our collective ability to target efforts
- A whole of community approach

While there are several collaborative groups in varying stages of development, there is room to improve understanding of their roles, the linkages between them, and how their work is communicated more broadly.

KEY DIRECTION 4.1 Improving collaboration	
ACTIVITY 4.1.1 DLGs to use this Plan as a tool for guiding their efforts.	WHO DLGs
	TIMEFRAME As soon as possible and ongoing
	OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH DLGs have been allocated funding to support their capacity to deliver on local priorities.
ACTIVITY 4.1.2 The three DLGs to consider committing to coordinating on areas of common interests.	WHO DLGs
	TIMEFRAME As soon as possible
	OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH For regional level activities, DLGs may volunteer to take a lead role and share work with others.
ACTIVITY 4.1.3 Capture suite of collaborative groups and consider how to promote linkages between their bodies of work.	WHO WAAEH, Office of Homelessness, DLGs, Improvement Groups, Rough Sleeper Groups etc.
	TIMEFRAME Within 6 months

KEY DIRECTION 4.2 Promoting wrap around services	
ACTIVITY 4.2.1 Review current services, map what services do, and where.	<p>WHO Office of Homelessness –involve District Leadership Groups.</p> <p>Support organisations for data sharing: local government, Justice</p> <p>TIMEFRAME Over next 6 -12 months</p> <p>OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH IF can contribute region-wide mapping process. Refer to: Local governments (service maps of the area / Leadership meetings – Justice System. Youth Homelessness Advisory Council, Lived Experience.</p>
ACTIVITY 4.2.2 Develop a cross agency strategy to drive a wraparound approach to service delivery across the region, include any policy and resourcing requirements.	<p>WHO Service map, Youth Advisory Council and lived experience.</p> <p>TIMEFRAME 12-18 months</p>
ACTIVITY 4.2.3 Explore opportunities to implement and promote low threshold service models.	<p>WHO All</p> <p>TIMEFRAME Ongoing</p> <p>OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH Vinnies – Passages low threshold / low barrier model example.</p>

KEY DIRECTION 4.3

Capturing quality data

By-Name List (BNL)

ACTIVITY 4.3.1

Review who can input into the BNL to promote meeting of quality data standards

ACTIVITY 4.3.2

Review if we have quality data.

ACTIVITY 4.3.3

Do a membership and education drive.

ACTIVITY 4.3.4

Encourage BNL users to complete all data fields, including the Housing Needs Tab

WHO

By Name List Improvement team

TIMEFRAME

Immediate 6-month project

By House List

ACTIVITY 4.3.4

Explore opportunities to work with key stakeholders to build a common understanding of what housing stock is available, including houses that are offline and the reasons for this.

WHO

Community Housing Organisation, Department of Communities, LGA provider, St Pat's, Anglicare

TIMEFRAME

6 months to 5-year project

OPPORTUNITY/ APPROACH

How: Use BNL methodology – start with one LGA and a small action focused team.

KEY DIRECTION 4.4

Engaging the wider community

ACTIVITY 4.4.1

Promote broader community engagement by educating the community on causes of homelessness and solutions for ending it.

WHO

All

TIMEFRAME

Ongoing

Opportunities for future focus

Over the course of the workshop participants raised several observations about structural change that is needed to underpin efforts to end homelessness. While these recommendations are outside the remit of the initial three-year regional plan, a commitment was made to capture these themes. Those who have contributed to the plan can either seize opportunities to advance this work if the opportunity presents or refer to these points as a basis for communicating to decision makers.

Increase housing options

- Ensure that the mix of housing options includes:
 - Affordable rentals with long-term tenure
 - Public housing
 - Immediate (crisis) and medium-term housing options for those who need and choose it, including for families (women).
 - Low barrier/ low threshold models
- Explore alternative options.

Prevention

- Improve financial supports:
 - Raise the rate campaign – Job Seeker, Carer Payments, Carer Allowance, Concessions
- Consider the introduction of the WA Carer Card program based on the Victorian version.
- A greater focus on eviction prevention with flexible brokerage and links to community support.



Wrap around supports

- The need for more practical wrap around supports with additional funding to support this work.

Whole of Community approaches

- Explore whole of community approaches to maximising the assets that exist in the community such as the [Community Wealth model](#)

Flexible funding

- Reduce rigidity of funding and contracts – both on geography and services (i.e. homelessness and family domestic violence).
- Create a fund to support joined up ways of working.

