Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy 2020

From the Premier

Homelessness has no place in our society.

Like every Queenslander, it’s difficult for me to see anyone reduced to living in a park or a shelter, or families forced to live in cars, or homeless kids struggling to get to school without the safety, stability or opportunities of their classmates.

We needed to take a brand new approach to homelessness and form meaningful partnerships with people and organisations that can really make a difference.

The Queensland Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy is about helping people get back on their feet and putting them on the path to independent living.

As well as bricks and mortar programs, the Homelessness to Housing Strategy is an integrated and outcome-focused initiative that addresses the root causes of homelessness and gives needy Queenslanders the skills they need to ensure they don’t slip back into homelessness in the future.

Addressing homelessness is the responsibility of everyone in our society.

I urge all Queenslanders to get involved in ending homelessness and to ask themselves how they can be part of the solution.

Together, we can ensure that the state we love is home to all who live here.

Campbell Newman
Premier of Queensland

From the Minister

On any given night, at least 20,000 Queenslanders find themselves without a safe place to sleep, or are forced to endure inappropriate or crowded conditions just so they can have a roof over their head.

In a state of great opportunity like Queensland, this is unacceptable. Through the Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy, the Queensland Government is committed to a whole-of-government response, with significant support from the broader community.

The Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy is built around two pillars. The first will see a renewed emphasis on ‘bricks and mortar’ initiatives. The second involves an overhaul of service delivery models.

Reducing homelessness is about more than just building additional houses. There are a number of factors – unemployment, mental illness, domestic violence – that can lead to homelessness.

This Strategy is about recognising those factors, and tailoring individual responses to meet the challenges head on. This includes connecting vulnerable people with the support they need to put their lives back on track.

While government has a big role to play, reducing homelessness is something that requires the input of the whole community. That’s why the Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy provides opportunities for private sector and non-government involvement through the Queensland Homelessness Action Group.

In addition, we will work with local communities, local governments, philanthropic organisations and the private sector to develop and implement Community Homelessness Action Plans.

By working together, we can make a huge difference to the lives of Queenslanders in need.

Tim Mander
Minister for Housing and Public Works
Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy 2020

Homelessness in Queensland

The last Census in 2011 tells us 19,858 persons were homeless¹ in Queensland and, of these:

- 1,584 were sleeping rough, most in regional Queensland
- 27% were children under 18 years, including 3,400 children under 12 years usually accompanied by a parent/s
- about 40% were women
- about 40% were under 24 years of age
- about 1 in 4 was an Indigenous person
- almost 1 in 3 was identified as living in severely overcrowded premises.

The number of homeless Queenslanders continues to increase as the population grows. While there has been a decrease in the number of people sleeping rough (22% decrease) and couch surfing (13% decrease), young people and Indigenous Queenslanders continue to be most at risk of homelessness.

Homelessness-to-Housing reforms

The Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy builds on Queensland’s Implementation Plans for the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness 2009-13 and 2013-14, and implements additional reforms to reduce homelessness in Queensland.

The two goals by 2020 are:

- to halve the rate of homelessness in Queensland
- to provide real and sustainable pathways out of homelessness and develop independence rather than ongoing dependence on high-cost, government-funded crisis accommodation services.

To achieve these goals, the Strategy includes reforms to enhance, simplify and tailor homelessness and support services. Better integration of these services with longer term housing responses will result in a well coordinated and effective homelessness-to-housing system.

The Strategy also contains ‘bricks and mortar’ initiatives to increase the supply of accommodation to assist in the transition from homelessness to long-term housing.

¹ ABS statistical definition (September 2012): When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives, they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement: is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations. This includes, for example, people sleeping rough on the streets, living in cars, sleeping in lounge rooms of friends or family (couch-surfing), living temporarily in crisis accommodation or moving from one form of unstable accommodation to another.
Guiding principles

The Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy is underpinned by four principles:

- Homelessness support is transitional in nature – assisting people to move on to more stable housing.
- ‘Resilience not reliance’ – developing skills and strength rather than dependence on welfare.
- Genuine engagement and roles for everyone – all levels and sectors of government, business, the community and individuals working together to reduce homelessness.
- Value-for-money – capable and efficient service providers, working towards clearly defined and measurable outcomes.

Homelessness-to-Housing system

A whole-of-government response and developing strong partnerships with the non-government sector will deliver a re-vitalised, transitional, and outcomes-focused homelessness-to-housing service delivery system. This includes introducing or strengthening a range of initiatives, including:

- a triage approach to intake and assessment processes, involving coordinated homelessness, housing and other support and ancillary services
- early case management planning with clients, so these plans can accompany clients through the system and help link them to the necessary support services
- a housing first response to identify and provide the most appropriate housing in the first instance
- tailoring support services to clients’ specific needs and working with other services, such as health, child safety, family support, youth, and education and training, to build clients’ independence and resilience
- progressively transitioning clients to lower levels of support and housing subsidy and into private housing options, guided by case plans
- a capable and responsive homelessness services workforce that can assess, assist and refer clients to appropriate housing and ancillary services
- working in conjunction with the Queensland Government’s Housing 2020 Strategy to address regional and local planning, and improve private and social housing supply and affordability.
# Homelessness-to-Housing system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homelessness Client Group</th>
<th>Initial Assessment</th>
<th>Assistance Streaming</th>
<th>Initial Housing and Support Response</th>
<th>Longer Term Housing Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rough Sleepers</td>
<td>TRIAGE</td>
<td>Housing Response</td>
<td>Crisis Accommodation ***</td>
<td>- Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people leaving home under duress / couch surfing</td>
<td>Whole of Government Response</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Housing</td>
<td>- Social Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and children escaping domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Accommodation **</td>
<td>- Transition to lower level of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe overcrowding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Temporary Accommodation *</td>
<td>- Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharge from: Institutions, Hospital, State Care</td>
<td>Key Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>Long Term Housing - Social - Private</td>
<td>- Social Housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key Change
- Case Plan
- Better knowledge of clients and their progress through service system
- Critical to determine appropriate response early

### Non Housing Response
E.g. Health, Foster Care, Family Reunion

### Intensity of support key:
- *** = high
- ** = medium
- * = low
Homelessness-to-Housing Action Plan

The Action Plan below details a range of ‘bricks and mortar’ initiatives and support services, including some new and some expanded initiatives shown to be working to reduce homelessness. The initiatives will assist in delivering longer term housing solutions to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and assist people to sustain their tenancies once housed.

‘Bricks and mortar’ initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rough sleepers</td>
<td>Develop Supported Accommodation facilities and a model that would include on-site support tailored to individual circumstances and offered when it is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Continue the Street to Home assertive outreach model with linked accommodation and support, including some capacity for short-term accommodation to provide rapid responses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three additional Supported Accommodation facilities in Stage 1:
- Townsville 40 bed facility
- Redcliffe 20 bed facility
- Cairns 40 bed facility.

Provide additional dwellings to expand the Street to Home program.

Rough sleepers, youth
### ‘Bricks and mortar’ solutions cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Provide an additional 20 temporary Supported Accommodation dwellings.</td>
<td>Families, including women and children escaping domestic and family violence</td>
<td><strong>Increase temporary Supported Accommodation and targeted accommodation options</strong> from 2014-15, including additional places for families, women and children escaping domestic and family violence, and migrant families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **4** Provide additional dwellings for young people leaving youth detention and/or the child safety system. | Youth | **Expand the Youth Housing and Reintegration Service (YHARS)** from 2014-15 to provide additional head leased or subsidised housing to young people leaving the youth detention or the child safety systems in locations where there is known unmet housing demand.  

It is proposed to increase the service capacity in some existing services already supported to bridge known gaps in service delivery. Possible locations are Toowoomba, Inala, Hervey Bay/Maryborough, Townsville, Mt Isa and Rockhampton. |
| **5** Deliver two additional housing and employment programs to allow tenants to progress through training to full employment. | Families, youth | **Expand the Housing and Employment Program** currently operating in Ipswich to two further locations – Townsville and Rockhampton (dependent on the evaluation of the Ipswich pilot). |
| **6** Complete 10 joint venture projects with non-government organisations, with land contributions only from government. | All groups | **Develop joint ventures and partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs)** to deliver new housing and support initiatives, comprising government land only contributions and NGO capital and support contributions. A first joint venture will be completed by 2016. |
### Service delivery and housing support reforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7       | All groups   | **Establish a centralised triage priority intake and assessment process** to provide rapid and coordinated whole-of-government responses (links to the Housing Intake and Assessment Process).  
**Establish case management plans** for immediate and longer-term planning which follows clients through the system, supported by better integrated homelessness and housing data systems.  
**Develop a potential flexible funding pool** to assist with rapid response brokerage activities for emergency accommodation in certain circumstances (e.g. motel accommodation). |
| 8       | All groups   | **Develop a stronger role for a small number of the larger and broader (“wrap around”) service providers** from 2013, by engaging with existing ‘holistic’ providers to develop a one stop solution by better integrating housing and support services as a lead to the rest of the service system.  
**Realign specialist homelessness services** by 2015-16 to consolidate and reduce the number of service providers, and reduce service fragmentation.  
**Better integrate homelessness reforms with the non-government housing sector reforms** from 2013-14 by promoting the formation of partnerships between key housing providers and key support providers. |

Overhaul applicant intake, assessment and the case planning system and link with tenant management in Queensland.

Engage lead providers across the State to implement the Strategy, working with secondary organisations on the ground to reduce duplication and increase cost-effective use of resources.
Service delivery and housing support reforms *cont.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> Expand RentConnect to assist access to the private rental market by adding a further six RentConnect officers to achieve coverage of two officers per Housing Service Centre across 18 locations.</td>
<td>All groups</td>
<td><strong>Expand RentConnect</strong> from 2013-14 to address barriers to accessing the private rental market for many people who, with some assistance, can afford to access this market. RentConnect officers will assist eligible clients to secure and sustain housing in the private rental market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Partnerships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong> Expand the scope of the seven existing Homelessness Community Action Plans (HCAP) and deliver seven additional Plans.</td>
<td>All groups</td>
<td><strong>Extend Homelessness Community Action Plans (HCAP) and integrate with Regional Housing Plans</strong> Extend existing seven Homelessness Community Action Plans to achieve better engagement with business/philanthropic/local government interests and Regional Housing Plans, and extend to further Housing Service Centre locations from 2013-14. Conduct community workshops to establish new HCAPs and to broaden existing plans. Engage with the Homelessness Action Group (see 11 below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong> Establish a Homelessness Action Group.</td>
<td>All groups</td>
<td><strong>Establish a Homelessness Action Group</strong> in 2013-14 comprising leaders from business, industry, local government, academia, community groups, and the non-government sector. The group will help drive key reforms, monitor progress and leverage new sources of investment from benefactors such as banks, real estate, service clubs, trusts and foundations to address homelessness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>