

Youth Homelessness Info Paper

Nous Group and End Street Sleeping Collaboration

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Introduction

This paper was jointly developed by End Street Sleeping Collaboration (ESSC)¹ and Nous Group² to provide an overview Young People experiencing homelessness, the moral and economic arguments for addressing this issue and examples of projects to reduce Youth homelessness.

Key findings are that:

- Over a third of people who are homeless in Australia are under 24 years of age. Of these, 15,900 were under 12 in the last census
- The earlier someone becomes homeless, the more likely they are to be homeless later in life, and the more complex their homelessness.
- There is a strong moral and economic case for reducing and/or ending homelessness for young people
- There are many evidence-based programs already in place to stop Young People becoming homeless and to help them exit homelessness, but more focus on and resourcing of this issue is needed. It is important that a range of programs, including “turning off the taps” through to helping people exit homelessness, are utilised.

The authors recognise that there are many questions still requiring further analysis in future papers such as the relative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of different approaches in reducing homelessness for Young People.

Terminology definitions

The following definitions will be referred to throughout the report:

- Children: Under 12 years.
- Youth: 12 to 24 years inclusive.
- Youth on the By-Name List: 16 to 24 years (for privacy/consent those under 16 are excluded).
- Young People: People 24 years and under.

Authors

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¹ For more information about the role of ESSC in addressing Youth homelessness see appendix 1.

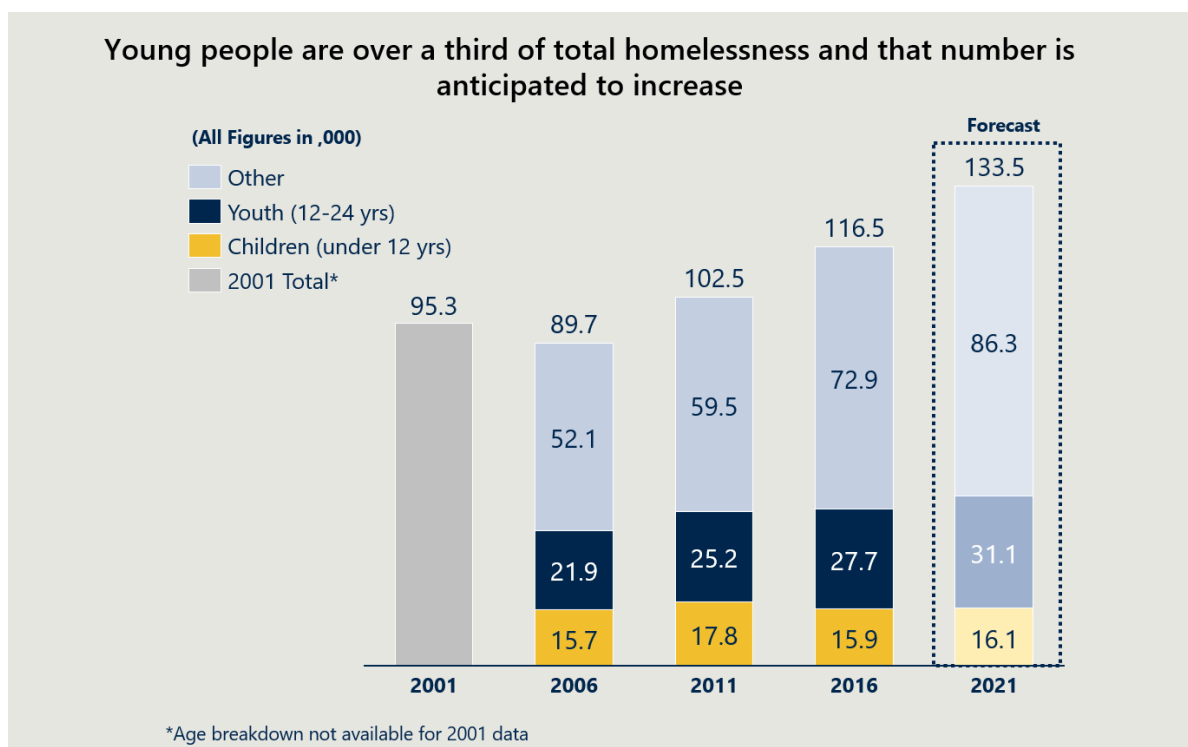
² www.nousgroup.com

Far too many Young People in Australia are homeless

Almost 43,000 children and Youths were classified as homeless in the last census (2016). Young People accounted for 37% of the total homeless population. Within the 43,000, 15,900 were children (under 12) and 27,700 were Youths (aged between 12 and 24).³

Based on the growth rate since 2006, the number of people 24 and under experiencing homelessness is forecast to grow to over 47,000 by 2021, accounting for 35% of the homeless population.⁴

Figure 1 | The growth of Young People experiencing homelessness in Australia⁵



Living conditions

Compared to other homeless demographics, the living conditions for Young People experiencing homelessness varies significantly. They are much more likely to live in crowded dwellings or couch surf between households:⁶

- 59% live in severely crowded dwellings.
- 18% live in supported housing.
- 10% live in temporary households.

³ ABS Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016

⁴ Nous Group analysis – straight line projection from 2006 to 2016, extrapolated to 2021.

⁵ ABS Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016; Nous Group Analysis (Forecast 2021 Figures).

⁶ Homelessness NSW, Youth homelessness in Australia, <https://homelessnessnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Youth-homelessness-in-Australia-.pdf>. Note, this is based on 2016 ABS Census Data.

- 9% live in boarding houses.
- 3% are sleeping rough.

Many Young People who are homeless are part of a family and can often be a parent with young children.

Youth Homelessness on End Street Sleeping Collaboration's (ESSC) By-Name List

Further insights into this segment can be provided by the ESSC By-Name List (BNL). This is a shared system that collects information about people experiencing homelessness throughout NSW. Youth are currently underrepresented on the BNL due to limited engagement capability. However, the BNL still has a powerful sample that provides valuable insights into the experiences of homelessness amongst Youth, and how this compares to older age groups (25-39 and 40-64)⁷.

Key insights from the BNL include:

- Youth are most likely to couch surf and least likely to access emergency accommodation. 21% of Youth experiencing homelessness indicated they were couch surfing compared to only 8% for those 25-39.
- There is a strong connection between being in out-of-home care and homelessness. The BNL data shows a key driver to experiencing homelessness at a young age is being in foster care, out of home care and/or institutional care.
 - 26% of people on the BNL indicated they have been in foster care/out of home care or institutional care as a child.
 - One in three Young People leaving out-of-home care experience homelessness within 12 months of leaving.⁸

More details can be found in Appendix 1.1.

⁷ ESSC has a focus on collecting information on people experiencing primary & secondary homelessness, which may also impact on sample size given identified living conditions above.

⁸ J McDowall, CREATE Report Card 2009 Transitioning from Care: Tracking Progress, p. 57, CREATE Foundation, 2009.

Being homeless as a young person is a key indicator of later homelessness and other negative social outcomes

The earlier someone becomes homeless, the more likely they are to be homeless later in life. A national study commissioned by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) shows that on average, 28.9% of those experiencing homelessness had their first experience of homelessness before the age of 18 (Table 1).⁹ The same study found that 84% of people who experienced homelessness before the age of 12 became homeless again later in their life.

Table 1 | First experiences of homelessness of current people experiencing homelessness

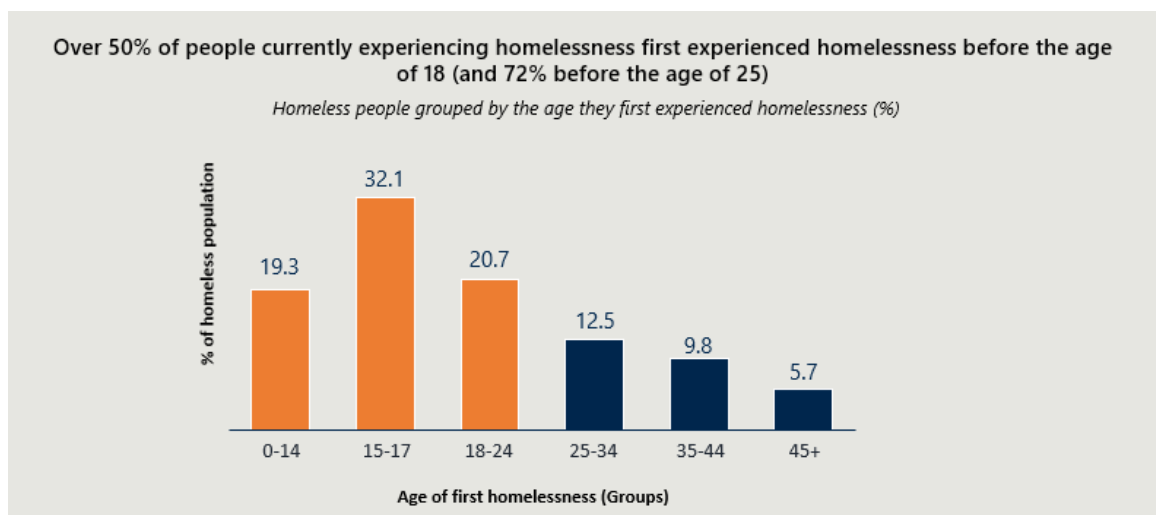
| How many of those experiencing homelessness first experienced homelessness before the age of 18, by type of 'current' homelessness | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of Homelessness | First homeless experience under 18 |
| Primary (streets, car, cave makeshift dwelling) | 36.9% |
| Secondary (Temporarily living in crisis accommodation, or with family and friends, or a hotel/motel because nowhere to go) | 30.9% |
| Tertiary (Boarding Houses) | 19% |
| Average | 28.93% |

Another nation-wide study found that 50% of adults experiencing homelessness first experienced homelessness before they were 18, and 75% before they turned 25.¹⁰ Figure 2 below, from the same data, shows that 50.4% of people experiencing homelessness first experienced homelessness before the age of 18. This data, similar to the AHURI findings, demonstrates that experiencing homelessness as a young person is correlated with a higher likelihood of becoming homeless in the future.

⁹ P Flatau et al., Lifetime and intergenerational experiences of homelessness in Australia, p. 128, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2013.

¹⁰ R Scutella et al., Wave 1 Findings, Journeys Home Research Report No. 1, p. 21, The University of Melbourne, 2012.

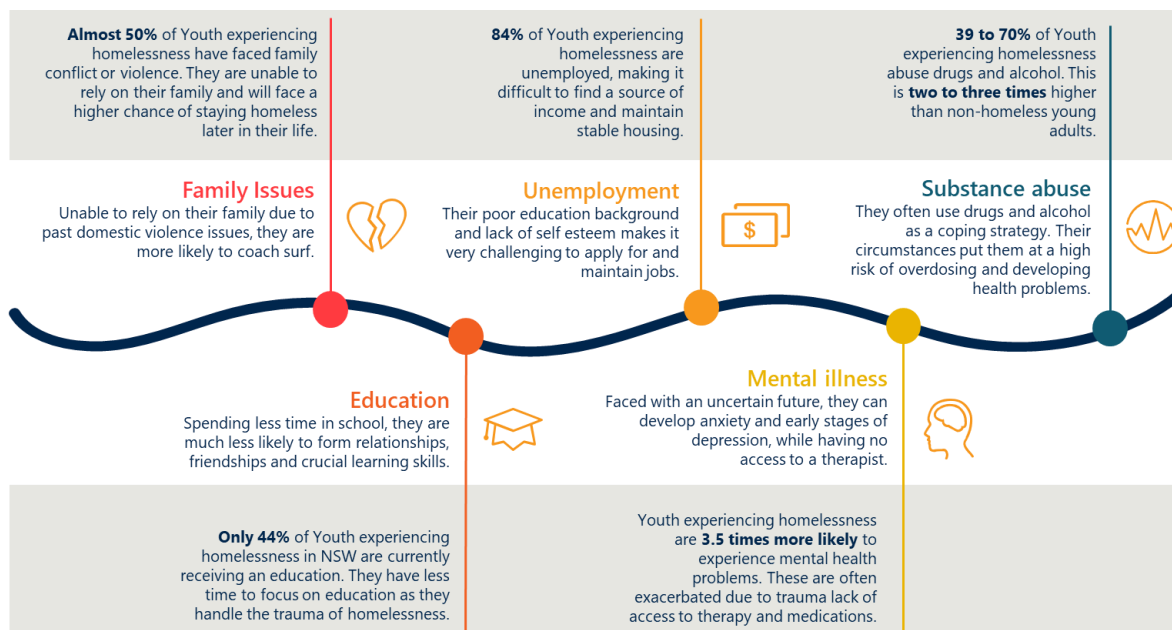
Figure 2 | People experiencing homelessness grouped by the age they first faced homelessness¹¹



Why Young People are more likely to experience homelessness and other negative social outcomes in the future

Figure 3 follows the hurdles Young People experiencing homelessness can face, which will increase the chance of them staying homeless in the future.

Figure 3 | Difficulties facing Young People experiencing homelessness¹²

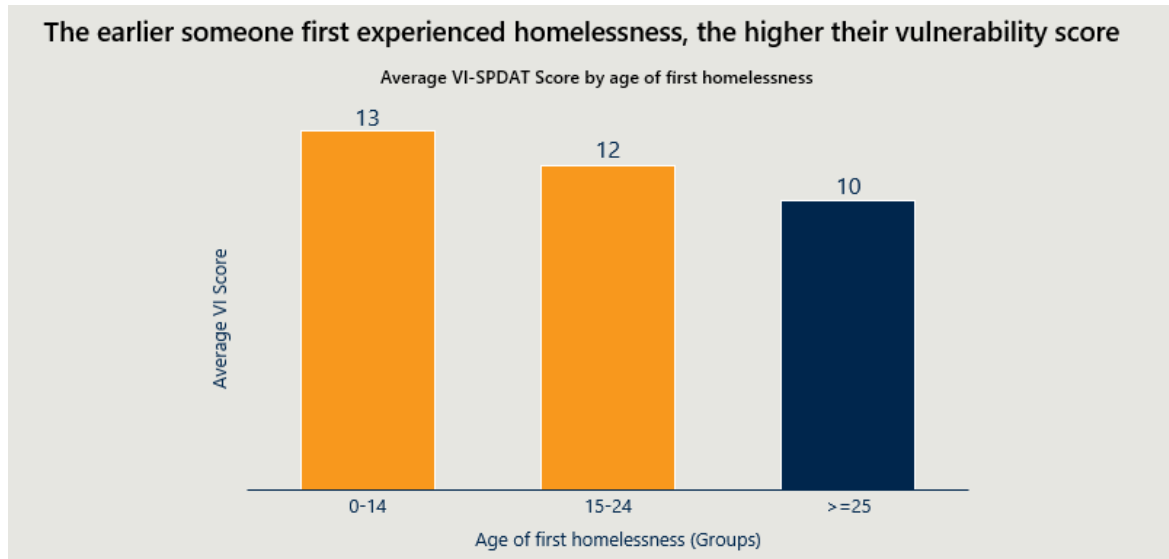


¹¹ R Scutella et al., Wave 1 Findings, Journeys Home Research Report No. 1, p. 21, The University of Melbourne, 2012; Nous Group Analysis

¹² Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019; D Mackenzie & C Chamberlain, Youth Homelessness in Australia, p. 28, Counting the homeless, 2006; Youth mental health and homelessness report, p. 13, Mission Australia, 2017; P Flatau et al., The Cost of Youth Homelessness in Australia Study Snapshot Report 1, p. 4, University of Western Australia Centre for Social Impact, 2015; R Gomez, S Thompson & A Barczyk, Factors Associated with Substance Use Among Homeless Young Adults, p. 24, Substance Abuse, 2010.

Data from the BNL (Figure 4) supports the above as it indicates that the earlier someone experiences homelessness the greater their housing and support needs and the higher their vulnerability.¹³

Figure 4 | BNL data showing the vulnerability, housing and support needs of homeless people based by the age they were first homeless



According to the BNL, those who first experienced homelessness as a Youth were 1.4 times more likely to experience tri-morbidity (the overlap of three morbidity factors: physical health, mental health, and substance use, that contribute to the likelihood of early mortality) when compared to those who first experienced homelessness when aged 25 or older.

¹³ This is indicated by a higher VI-SPDAT score (Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool), which is a screening tool used by practitioners within and across services to coordinate support for people who are currently experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness. More information on the VI-SPDAT and its use in Australia can be found on the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness' web site.

There are both moral and economic arguments for addressing Youth homelessness

Moral Case

Young People do not choose to be homeless. Despite their lack of choice, they will bear the consequences of homelessness for the rest of their lives. These Young People will face discrimination and trauma that will severely hinder their chance of living in a stable household.

Most of the core mental and emotional development of an individual occurs while they are young. Young People experiencing homelessness are heavily disadvantaged in this regard, as they deal with the severity and trauma of their situation, which may stunt their cognitive development. This makes them one of the most vulnerable groups and is a likely major contributor to a cycle of poverty and homelessness.

Based on 2016 Census data from the ABS, Nous forecasts it is likely that more than 47,000 Young People will experience homelessness in Australia in 2022. As this number continues to increase it is imperative that the Youth homelessness crisis is addressed.

Economic case

Youth homelessness has a significant economic cost. The Australian government spends an estimated \$20,300 per person per year (totalling ~\$630 million per year) on Young People experiencing homelessness, relative to similar aged people who are securely and stably housed.

Table 3 | The costs of Youth homelessness

| Service | Total Cost |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Justice | \$9363 ¹⁴ |
| Health | \$8505 ¹⁵ |
| Specialist Homelessness Services | \$2418 ¹⁶ |
| Cost of Youth homelessness | ~ \$20,300 per person per year |
| Youth experiencing homelessness in Australia | 31,100 people¹⁷ |
| Total cost of Youth homelessness in Australia | ~ \$630 million per year |

**There are other additional costs like child protection and employment that are not covered in this table.*

This calculation is based solely on an annual cost. Given the lifetime impacts of Youth homelessness such as the increased likelihood of Young People experiencing homelessness again in the future, costs to government agencies are likely to extend over the lifetime of many of these Young People. A study commissioned as part of the National Homelessness Research Agenda calculated that housing, health,

¹⁴ P Flatau et al., The Cost of Youth Homelessness in Australia, p. 3, ARC Linkage, 2016

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ ABS Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 (Table_2.2)

community services and criminal justice costs can amount to \$1 million to \$5 million over the life course of a single person experiencing homelessness.¹⁸

These figures highlight that reducing Youth homelessness will have significant cost savings for the government.

Responses to reduce Youth homelessness

There are a range of programs designed to reduce homelessness for Young People. Table 4 provides an overview of existing programs (see Appendix 1.3 for further information on specific programs).

Table 4 | An overview of programs that aim to reduce Youth homelessness

| Programs | Stage of life (years) | Description |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Early family intervention programs | 0 - 5 | Targeting and supporting at-risk families to reduce family conflict and long-term likelihood of family breakdown e.g., government programs relating to family violence programs. |
| Reconnect Programs | 0 - 18 | The reconnect program seeks to intervene with families and Young People to stabilise and improve their housing situation and their engagement with their family, employment, and their community. |
| Education Programs | 6 - 17 | Education programs to provide financial or other support to enable Youth experiencing homelessness to stay in education. This includes mentoring, grants, and access to support services. |
| Employment Programs | 15 - 25 | Partnering with corporates and organisations to provide employment opportunities, training, and job readiness for older Youth. Youth experiencing homelessness commonly struggle to obtain employment due to their lack of education, exposure to opportunities, work experience, and social stigma. |
| Rapid rehousing for people at risk of becoming homeless | 0 - 25 | Ensuring accommodation is available quickly to prevent people becoming homeless or ensure they are rehoused as quickly as possible. |

¹⁸ E Baldry et al., Lifecourse institutional costs of homelessness for vulnerable groups, p. 6, University of New South Wales, 2012

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foyer and similar accommodation plus support programs | 10 - 25 | Generally targeting Young People who have become homeless. Foyer programs provide stable accommodation for up to two years for Young People. During this time Foyers provide mentoring, coaching and access to opportunities to enable participants to lead fulfilling, independent and productive lives. |
| Financial Assistance | 15 - 25 | These programs can be used to provide financial support to Young People experiencing homelessness and provide them with an opportunity to obtain stable housing. |

A range of specific programs from Australia and internationally are set out in the appendices.

Conclusion

Youth homelessness is a significant problem in Australia and is growing rapidly. Experiencing homelessness at a young age places a significant burden on the individual and significantly reduces their lifetime chances of a stable life with education and employment. We know from a range of sources that becoming homeless as a young person not only drastically increases the risk of homelessness later in life, but increases the complexity of that homelessness, making it harder to exit. There are a range of different programs available to reduce Youth homelessness. Addressing Youth homelessness is key to lasting reductions in the overall number of people who experience homelessness.

At this point it is difficult to estimate how much extra funding should be allocated and to what programs as more research is required. Therefore, more focus on programs to reduce homelessness in Young People - trialling and evaluation of the different programs, plus likely additional funding of the most effective and cost-effective programs - will be necessary to address this important issue.

Appendix

1.1 The work of ESSC

The End Street Sleeping Collaboration (ESSC) is a joint commitment between the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH), NSW State Government and major NSW NGOs, private sector organisations and peak bodies. ESSC's aim is to halve street sleeping across NSW by 2025 and end it by 2030. The initiative demonstrates the effectiveness of cross-sector 'collaboration' in addressing complex social issues.

ESSC's BNL is a centralised system that collects the stories of people entering (and exiting) homelessness. Currently, there are over 300 frontline service providers have been trained in the systems use and over 2,600 individuals added into the system.

ESSC's BNL is the tool through which the sector can utilise IGH's proven methodology to reduce homelessness and associated impacts by:

- Providing frontline caseworkers with a platform to collect and share real-time multi-issue case histories of individuals experiencing homelessness. This enables multiple services/agencies to access 'individual stories' to deliver support that is timely, coordinated and collaborative.
- Providing governments and NGOs with invaluable data for evaluating and developing relevant systems and policies (i.e., health, social services, justice, housing, and care) to bring about systems change and measurable reductions in the numbers of those experiencing homelessness.

1.2 ESSC's Youth Approach

ESSC works in partnership with Yfoundations, the NSW peak body that represents Young People experiencing or at risk of homelessness and the services that provide direct support to those Young People. It has been a priority of the Collaboration since its inception to create an approach to reduce Youth homelessness, as it is a vital part of 'reducing the number of people both entering and experiencing chronic homelessness. ESSC's approach focuses on individuals aged 16-24 who are experiencing homelessness and includes:

- Offering a digital version of the *VI-SPDAT for Young People* on ESSC's BNL.
- Collaborating with Yfoundations and their fifty-member organisations to establish action plans, governance structures, and case coordination meetings across NSW.
- Using the BNL and collaborative structures to connect Youth with appropriate services and assist them in finding suitable and sustainable housing.

1.3 Youth Homelessness on ESSC's BNL

Table 5 | Last known housing situation (housing status) by age group

| Age Groups | Youth (16-24) | | 25-39 | | 40-64 | | Total | |
|----------------|---------------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|
| Housing Status | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |

| Age Groups | Youth (16-24) | | 25-39 | | 40-64 | | Total | |
|----------------|---------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|-------------|------|
| Couch surfing | 21 | 0.21 | 36 | 0.08 | 32 | 0.04 | 89 | 0.07 |
| Housing | 3 | 0.03 | 12 | 0.03 | 47 | 0.06 | 62 | 0.05 |
| Rough sleeping | 29 | 0.28 | 151 | 0.33 | 270 | 0.35 | 450 | 0.34 |
| Shelter/TA | 49 | 0.48 | 255 | 0.56 | 428 | 0.55 | 732 | 0.55 |
| Total | 102 | | 452 | | 777 | | 1331 | |

Excluded those aged above 64, those who did not give their age, and those who did not give their housing status. All data is self-reported as part of a VI-SPDAT assessment. Data collected between 17/11/2019 and 22/02/2022, N=1331.

Table 6 | Health & wellbeing by age of first homelessness

Tri-morbidity represents the overlap of physical health, mental health, and substance use conditions, that disproportionately impact adults experiencing homelessness. Research has shown that adults experiencing homelessness often experience tri-morbidity a factor that increases the risk of early mortality¹⁹.

| Age of first homelessness (groups) | 0-14 | | 15-24 | | >=25 | | Total | |
|------------------------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| Tri-morbidity factors | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Mental health | | | | | | | | |
| No | 12 | 0.06 | 27 | 0.08 | 63 | 0.12 | 102 | 0.09 |
| Yes | 199 | 0.94 | 333 | 0.93 | 480 | 0.88 | 1012 | 0.91 |
| Total | 211 | | 360 | | 543 | | 1114 | |
| Physical health | | | | | | | | |
| No | 36 | 0.17 | 66 | 0.18 | 134 | 0.24 | 236 | 0.21 |
| Yes | 182 | 0.83 | 297 | 0.82 | 432 | 0.76 | 911 | 0.79 |
| Total | 218 | | 363 | | 566 | | 1147 | |
| Substance use | | | | | | | | |
| No | 25 | 0.11 | 72 | 0.19 | 197 | 0.33 | 294 | 0.25 |
| Yes | 198 | 0.89 | 316 | 0.81 | 392 | 0.67 | 906 | 0.76 |
| Total | 223 | | 388 | | 589 | | 1200 | |

¹⁹ Vickery et al., Trends in Tri-morbidity Among Adults Experiencing Homelessness in Minnesota, 2000–2018, Medical Care, Volume 59 - Issue - p S220-S227, 2021

| Age of first homelessness (groups) | 0-14 | | 15-24 | | >=25 | | Total | |
|------------------------------------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|-------------|------|
| Tri-morbidity | | | | | | | | |
| No | 65 | 0.31 | 134 | 0.39 | 304 | 0.55 | 503 | 0.45 |
| Yes | 147 | 0.69 | 214 | 0.61 | 253 | 0.45 | 614 | 0.55 |
| Total | 212 | | 348 | | 557 | | 1117 | |

Excludes those who did not give their age of first homelessness and those who declined questions relating to each factor. All data is self-reported as part of a VI-SPDAT assessment. Data collected between 17/11/2019 and 03/03/2022.

1.4 VI-SPDAT score

An individual's vulnerability, housing and support needs are measured on ESSC's BNL via the use of VI-SPDAT. The VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool) is a screening tool used by practitioners within and across services to coordinate support for people who are currently experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness. The greater the VI-SPDAT Score (VI), the more vulnerable the individual and the greater the individuals' housing and support needs are. Scores of 10 or more are considered high and indicate that an individual is highly likely to be vulnerable and needs intensive support to exit homelessness.

1.5 Examples of programs provided by government and non-government entities

Table 7 | NSW Government programs that aim to reduce homelessness

| Government Programs | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Programs | Description | Source |
| Together Home | A NSW government program that aims to transition people onto a trajectory away from the homelessness. The latest \$57m investment includes funding for 250 additional housing and support packages, as well as funding that will contribute to the construction of 100 new social housing dwellings for Together Home participants. | Together Home Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Other services provided by the government | <p>Link2home – state-wide homelessness information and referral telephone service.</p> <p>Ask Izzy – search tool to help people who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness to find shelter, food, health, and other critical support services.</p> <p>Connect 100 - provides clients with housing upfront and then support services to help them sustain a tenancy. Aims to assist 100</p> | <p>Our homelessness programs Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au)</p> <p>Rent Choice Youth Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au)</p> |

Government Programs

people, at any given time, live affordably in their community of origin.

Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) – funding to non-government organisations to provide integrated support and accommodation for unaccompanied children and Young People aged 12 to 15 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Assertive outreach - patrols taking place in over 50 Local Government Areas. Housing staff, specialist caseworkers and health professionals conduct patrols, proactively engage with people experiencing street homelessness, and provide a pathway to stable long-term housing.

[Homeless Youth Assistance Program - Research and evaluation | Family & Community Services \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
[Assertive outreach | Family & Community Services \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Table 8 | Programs run by non-government organisations that support people experiencing homelessness

Note: Most of the programs are funded by the government but delivered through the NGOs mentioned.

Specific programs run by organisations

| Programs | Stage of life (years) | Description | Source |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Youth Homelessness Support St Vincent de Paul Society | 16 - 25 | The program supports Young People who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness to find safe and secure independent living. It aims to remove barriers for Youth by offering needs-based services or references to local community organisations. This includes access to crisis accommodation, employment services, mental health support and budgeting. | Youth homelessness support - St Vincent de Paul Society - Good Works (vinnies.org.au) |
| Youth Homelessness Service Mission Australia | 16 - 25 | Mission Australia offers early intervention and prevention programs for Young People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Those under the age of 25 have access to services such as case management and ongoing support to sustain their housing over the long-term. Those under the age of 21 also have access to emergency, transitional and supported accommodation. | Homelessness (missionaustralia.com.au) Northern Sydney Youth Homelessness Service (missionaustralia.com.au) |
| Oasis Youth Support Network The Salvation Army | 16 - 24 | Based in Sydney, the Network provides 24-hour emergency accommodation (including 4 meals, recreational programs, and access to appropriate services) for 13 Young People each night aged 16 to 21 years. The Network also offers transitional accommodation for Young People aged 16 to 24 years. | Transitional Accommodation Salvos Oasis (salvationarmy.org.au) |
| Youth Homeless Services Wesley Mission | 12 - 25 | Wesley Mission provides a range of programs to help Young People facing homelessness or other hardships. This is primarily done through their | Centres - Wesley Mission |

Specific programs run by organisations

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | centres, and includes accommodation support, mental health, mentoring and support, relationships, and school and jobs. | |
| Way2Home Operator: Neami National Funded by: Housing NSW and City of Sydney | n/a | Way2Home partners with health services, and other community services to address the complex needs of people who are homeless. Using a housing first approach, the program focuses on helping clients access and sustain long-term supported housing solutions. This is done through wrap-around functions such as assistance and case management. (Not specific for Youth but does assist Youth). | Way2Home Neami National |
| Yfoundations | n/a | Yfoundations is the NSW peak body representing Children and Young People at risk of and experiencing homelessness, as well as the services that provide direct support to them. Yfoundations provides research & policy papers, information, and reports on Youth homelessness. | Home - Yfoundations |
| Services for Young People Family Spirit | 15 - 25 | Family Spirit is a partnership between CatholicCare Sydney and Marist180. It supports Young People who are in out of home care and helps those leaving care make a positive transition to living independently. This includes assistance with transitional and long-term accommodation, casework, outreach and brokerage services, and skills. | Helping Young People Family Spirit Sydney |
| Jewish House | n/a | Jewish House can provide accommodation for up to 100 people per night with nowhere else to sleep. This can be arranged by contacting their social services team via phone or email. (Not specific for Youth but does assist Youth). | Jewish House : Get Help |
| Sydney Youth Homelessness Hub (SYHH) Operator: Launchpad Youth Community Inc, The Noffs Foundation, and Weave Youth & Community Services. Funded by: City of Sydney | 16 - 25 | The SYHH aims to support Young People who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness in the City of Sydney LGA. The program provides prevention, early intervention, accommodation, rapid re-housing, and intensive responses to help Young People exit homelessness or sustain functioning living arrangements. | Inner City Sydney Homelessness Prevention and Support Service for Young People (operating as Sydney Youth Homelessness Hub) Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) Sydney Youth Homelessness Hub – Launchpad Youth Community |
| Premier’s Youth Initiative (PYI) | 5 - 18 | A support service for Young People leaving statutory out-of-home care, designed to permanently divert them from the homelessness service system. It involves providing Young People | Premier’s Youth Initiative Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |

Specific programs run by organisations

with personal advice, mentoring, transitional support, and accommodation.

1.6 Early intervention government programs that deal with family conflict

As stated in the report, 50% of Youths experiencing homelessness have experienced family conflict and violence. By addressing family conflict and violence issues, Young People are given more stable households. Thus, reducing the chance that they become homeless.

Table 9 | Example government programs run to address family violence

| Family Conflict and Violence Programs (NSW Government) | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program | Description | Source |
| Premier's Priority to Reduce Domestic Violence Reoffending | The NSW government has invested more than \$431 million over 4 years to deliver initiatives that would decrease the number of domestic violence reoffenders by 25% by 2023. This includes working with offenders to improve victim safety. | Premier's Priority to Reduce Domestic Violence Reoffending Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services program (IDFVS) | This program provides women and their children with the emotional and practical support they need to recover from domestic and family violence. This includes safety plans, prosecution, therapeutic support for Children and other services. | Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services Program Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) | The program supports woman and their children from becoming homeless or having to move away from their support systems by removing the perpetrator from the family home (in cooperation with NSW police). This includes a range of support, such as safety planning, home security, managing finances, support for Children and legal aid. | Staying Home Leaving Violence Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Other services provided by the government | NSW Domestic Violence Line – open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the line provides counselling, information, and referral to other services for domestic violence victims. | NSW Domestic Violence Line |

Table 10 | Example non-government programs run to address family violence

| Family Conflict and Violence Programs (Non-Government) | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Program | Description | Source |

Family Conflict and Violence Programs (Non-Government)

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RISE NSW <i>Good Shepherd</i> | The program assists parents and carers who are facing challenges that are impacting on their child's education, safety, health, and wellbeing. Support workers provide individual case management of Children and Young People, and workshops to schools. | RISE NSW – Good Shepherd |
| Create Foundation | The foundation is the national consumer body representing the voices of Children and Young People with an out-of-home care experience. They provide resources, groups and events that helps those up to the age of 25 achieve their full potential. | Who We Are - CREATE Foundation |
| Relationships Australia NSW | Relationships Australia NSW provides support to families and individuals to enhance their relationships to foster personal and social wellbeing. Services provided at their centres include family conflict counselling, domestic violence support and education programs. | Relationships Australia NSW – Counselling and Mental Health Services (relationshipsnsw.org.au) |

1.7 Government financial assistance programs

These programs can be used to provide financial support to people experiencing homelessness and provide them with an opportunity to seek stable housing.

Table 11 | Example financial assistance programs provided by the government

| Financial Assistance Programs (Government) | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Program | What stage of life | Description | Source |
| Rent Choice Youth | 16 - 24 | A program targeted at Young People aged 16 to 24 years to help them find and pay for a place to live for up to 3 years | Rent Choice Youth Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Rent Choice Start Safely | n/a | The subsidy serves as short to medium-term financial support for people escaping domestic or family violence. It helps secure private rental accommodation, so they do not have to return to the violent situation. The subsidy will be paid for three months to a maximum of 36 months and is calculated according to your income. | Rent Choice Start Safely Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
| Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA) | 15 - 25 | A one-off payment of up to \$1500 per person to help Young People leaving care achieve their care goals. | Financial support to help you become more independent Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |

Financial Assistance Programs (Government)

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aftercare Allowance | 15 - 25 | A need based fortnightly allowance up to a maximum of \$240 to help care leavers secure stable, affordable accommodation. | Guidelines for the provision of assistance after leaving out-of-home care Family & Community Services (nsw.gov.au) |
|----------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

1.8 Example case studies for particular initiatives

Table 12 lists effective and unique initiatives run by organisations outside of Australia that seek to reduce homelessness and whether they are implementable in Australia.

It is important to note that some international programs address homelessness in different ways, as other countries can have different definitions of homelessness.

For example, the United States (US) government considers that homelessness is when a person: “lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence, and if they sleep in a shelter designated for temporary living accommodations or in places not designated for human habitation.”²⁰ This excludes couch surfing from the definition of homelessness in the US.

Table 12 | Summary of unique initiatives run to reduce homelessness

| Case studies for unique initiatives | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (US NFP Organisation) | | | | |
| Context | Approach | Results | Considerations | Implementation |
| The Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY) is a service provider to Youth experiencing homelessness aged 12 to 20 years. Their programs aim to stabilise Young People’s lives, meet their immediate needs, and provide them with a safe, supportive environment, and a path to self-sufficiency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly outreach to provide supplies and information about NPHY’s services to Youth experiencing homelessness. Licensed social care workers to provide professional help and case management. 100+ safe place locations including drop-in centres, emergency shelters and transitional housing. Partnerships with local convenience stores, libraries, fire station and the regional bus | NPHY has been able to service hundreds of Youths through their core outreach programs. | NPHY has taken an innovative approach of using existing community infrastructure, such as the local bus service and fire station, to provide safe spaces to Youth needing immediate help. They serve as advocates for Youth experiencing homelessness and work extensively at a systems-level with the community to address the Youth | Existing community infrastructure can be used create safe spaces for Youth experiencing homelessness. It will be low-cost compared to building new housing, and widely implementable. However, this strategy will require community partnerships, broader consultations, and research to determine its feasibility. |

²⁰ <https://law-hawaii.libguides.com/c.php?g=421172&p=2875672#>

Case studies for unique initiatives

service to serve as a safe space to those needing immediate help.

homelessness problem.

A Place 4 Me initiative (US Private and Public Collaboration)

| Context | Approach | Results | Considerations | Implementation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The A Place 4 Me initiative is a private-public collaboration targeted at those aged 15 to 24 years who are experiencing homelessness and housing instability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brought together diverse partners, including young adults who experienced homelessness, to envision an ideal system of support for Youth experiencing homelessness. Developed a comprehensive plan that focused on Youth leaving the foster care system. Leveraged two national models: the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (child welfare reform) and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (improve homeless services). | As part of A Way Home America's 100 Day Challenge, A Place 4 Me managed to house 105 Youth in 100 days. The initiative, created in 2016, is still ongoing. | The success of the A Place 4 Me initiative is attributed to forming a realistic plan, finding the right partners, and understanding the importance of relationships to Young People. It was formed in consultation with Young People and ensured that those exiting foster care had a comprehensive housing plan. | There is work to do and will require joint effort from the private and public sector to agree on a plan of action to end Youth homelessness. Further research is needed to identify the right partners and understand current gaps in the system, with consultation from Youth experiencing homelessness. |

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (Canadian Government & NFP Organisation)

| Context | Approach | Results | Considerations | Implementation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (GVCEH) has launched a new social enterprise model that provides housing, services, and job opportunities for up to 30 unhoused | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth-led project and was developed over the span of 3 years in partnership with the city council and BC Housing. As part of the Youth housing initiative, residents run the building and can design their own | <p>The project allows Youth to seek reform through their own research and experiences. This promotes local activism.</p> <p>Two weeks into the project, some of the Youths are already helping</p> | GVCEH has worked extensively with the city council, BC Housing, and external experts to design the project. As a Youth-led initiative, there is a focus on resident experience and empowering them with the skills, | In NSW, there exists Youth-only accommodation. There is potential for deeper integration of existing services and promotion of Youth-led initiatives. However, more research is needed to determine if it promotes more |

Case studies for unique initiatives

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Youth living in Greater Victoria.</p> | <p>space. This builds a sense of community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff on-premises have a connection to homelessness and expertise in a resident's field of interest. • Wrap-around services are provided on a person-by-person basis. | <p>others. This included setting up 10 emergency weather response shelter beds in the cafeteria for elderly people sleeping in the park. According to the Director, the project looks optimistic so far.</p> | <p>services, and activism to succeed.</p> | <p>positive social outcomes for Youth experiencing homelessness.</p> |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|

The Hey Neighbour Development (Canadian Private and NFP Organisations)

| Context | Approach | Results | Considerations | Implementation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>The Hey Neighbour development is a collaboration between the GVCEH and Aryze Developments. It aims to build 30 modified shipping containers to house homeless residents in Canada. These residents are most often Youth that have aged out of social care.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tiny-home village is built out of shipping containers and is designed to temporarily house people in need. • Staff will work with each resident to create a tailor-made transition plan into permanent housing. This includes health, financial and employment needs. • The site will be staffed 24/7 and have security guards to create a safe space. | <p>The community responded positively to the Tiny Home Village. Residents feel like they are welcomed, safe and in an environment that is structured and emotionally sound. Some residents are in the process of transitioning into permanent housing.</p> | <p>The success of the development was reliant on community support and council approval. They also had to source private land to house the converted shipping containers. Resident well-being and needs were considered throughout the process.</p> | <p>Possible however, finding available private land and building appropriate tiny homes is a hurdle. Further research into the cost-benefits of this approach is needed.</p> |

Housing First (Finland Government Initiative)

| Context | Approach | Results | Considerations | Implementation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>In 2007, Finland adopted a Housing First approach. This involved providing a homeless person a permanent home, before delivering individually tailored support services and assistance. It was different from their prior approach, where</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assumption is that providing the homeless with a home empowers them to start solving their own problems. • The renter holds the lease and must pay the rent themselves. They can access social assistance and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in homelessness in the targeted region. • More affordable housing exists¹ • Cost savings of up to 15,000 euros per long-term homeless person housed. | <p>To be implemented, there needs to be co-ordinated action across all levels of society. This would require planning and resource allocations, including research on how to better utilise the existing social benefit system and increase supply of</p> | <p>NSW has the social benefit infrastructure, and commitment from the government to end homelessness. However, there needs to be co-ordinated action to address the cost of living and availability of</p> |

Case studies for unique initiatives

a homeless person had to go through various support services and solve their underlying problems.

housing allowance programs if needed.

- As a national rollout, there was a co-ordinated effort across all levels of government, companies, organisations, and the property sector to improve utilisation of the existing social benefits system, increase affordable housing supply, and humanise the life of the homeless.

affordable housing. However, the value generated goes beyond housing individual people experiencing homelessness.

affordable housing in the state. This systemic hurdle requires further research.



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