

NATIONAL HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS AGREEMENT

Report against Queensland Bilateral Schedule E3

Reporting period 1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022

Overview

1. This Report, prepared by the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (the Department) to monitor progress under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA), fulfils the annual reporting requirements per clause 40 and Part 6 of Schedule E3 and brings together existing, non-financial reporting to reduce duplication of effort.
2. Reporting is generally limited to focus on the initiatives included in Schedule E3, many of which are well advanced or completed, and is therefore not a comprehensive report on housing and homelessness responses in Queensland.
3. Key developments in the Queensland Government housing and homelessness response since negotiation of Schedule E3 include: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023, released in May 2019; the Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund announced in March 2020; the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025, released in June 2021, including the Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative and Housing Investment Fund (HIF). The HIF was recently boosted to \$2 billion as part of the Queensland Housing Summit on 20 October 2022, with investment returns of \$130 million a year to support an increased target of 5,600 new social and affordable housing commencements across Queensland by 30 June 2027. This brings the Queensland Government's investment in social and affordable housing to a record \$3.9 billion.

Housing

4. The below table contains an update on the components of Queensland's publicly available housing strategy for the purposes of the NHHA, including the State Planning Policy (SPP), *Planning Act 2016*, *ShapingSEQ - South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017*, *State Infrastructure Plan* and the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* underpinned by the *Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020*. Notably some of these documents have expired / been replaced

Element of the housing strategy	Status
State Planning Policy	The SPP came into effect on 3 July 2017 and has remained in place throughout 2021–2022. The SPP is available online: https://dsdmipprd.blob.core.windows.net/general/spp-july-2017.pdf
Planning Act 2016	The <i>Planning Act 2016</i> (Qld) remained in place throughout 2021–2022 and is available online: https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-025
ShapingSEQ – South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017	Queensland's <i>ShapingSEQ – South East Queensland Regional Plan 2017</i> remained in place throughout 2021–2022. Progress reporting against this initiative is available online at: https://planning.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/planning-framework/plan-making/regional-planning/regional-planning-implementation-program
State Infrastructure Strategy	The Queensland Government released the <i>State Infrastructure Strategy 2022 (SIS)</i> to replace the March 2016 <i>State Infrastructure Plan</i> : https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/72103/state-infrastructure-strategy-2022.pdf The SIS sets the State's infrastructure objectives and priority actions for the next two

	<p>decades, with social and affordable housing addressed under its own chapter.</p> <p>Seven Regional Infrastructure Plans will be progressively developed to support implementation of the SIS.</p>
<i>Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027</i>	<p>The Queensland Government delivered the <i>Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017–2020</i> and continues to deliver the <i>Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025</i>, released in June 2021 (including the Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative (QHIGI)) that will deliver a strong, coordinated program of capital investment to increase housing across the State.</p> <p>The QHIGI will deliver new social housing homes, create jobs and benefit trades. It is further supported by the establishment of the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund (HIF) to provide annual returns to be invested in social housing. The HIF was recently boosted to \$2 billion as part of the Queensland Housing Summit on 20 October 2022, with investment returns of \$130 million a year to support an increased target of 5,600 new social and affordable housing commencements across Queensland by 30 June 2027. This brings the Queensland Government’s investment in social and affordable housing to a record \$3.9 billion.</p> <p>On 12 July 2022, the Queensland Auditor-General released the report, <i>Delivering social housing services</i> (the Report), which made eight recommendations for the Department. The Department has welcomed and accepted all eight recommendations of the Report, which acknowledges the challenges the housing system is experiencing. Work has commenced to deliver responses to these recommendations.</p>

Homelessness

- The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-27*, underpinned by the *Queensland Housing Strategy Action Plan 2017-2020*, and *Partnering for impact to reduce homelessness in Queensland*, form Queensland’s publicly available homelessness strategy that meets the requirements of s.15C of the *Federal Financial Relations Act 2009* (FFR Act). Notably, some of these documents have expired / been replaced.
- The table below provides a selection of key achievements for Queensland Government policies and programs targeting the homelessness priority cohorts.

Specialist Homelessness Services and non-specialist homelessness service

Women and children affected by family and domestic violence

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Building four new shelters in Charters Towers, Roma, Caboolture and the Gold Coast.	<p>Since 2018, a replacement shelter in Roma and new shelters in Caboolture and the Gold Coast have commenced operation. A second replacement shelter on the Gold Coast was completed in 2020-21.</p> <p>An appropriate site for the new shelter asset in Charters Towers was secured in late 2022 and planning and design will continue in 2022–23.</p>
Specialist Homelessness Services for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence	<p>Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) across Queensland continue to deliver temporary supported accommodation and other support services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In 2020–21, 8,716 people in Queensland identified domestic and family violence (DFV) as the main reason for seeking assistance from SHS. A further 12,910 people identified DFV as one of the reasons for seeking assistance.</p> <p>Specific services are provided to assist women and children experiencing DFV.</p>

	High Risk Teams (HRTs) commenced in three locations in 2017 and were expanded between 2018 and 2019 to a total of eight locations operating in Logan/Beenleigh, Mt Isa, Cherbourg, Brisbane, Ipswich, Cairns, Mackay and Caboolture. The HRTs are an integrated multi-agency approach involving police, corrections, health, education, housing, child safety and domestic violence services to provide safety responses to adults and their children who are at high risk of serious harm or death. Since 2017, HRTs have responded to over 6,000 referrals.
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Children and young people

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Building two new youth foyers and expanding the Logan Youth Foyer	The expansion of the Logan Youth Foyer was completed in June 2019, and the Gold Coast Youth Foyer was completed in June 2021, with onsite service delivery commencing in July 2021. Construction of a Townsville Youth Foyer is planned to commence in late 2022 and is forecast to be completed by late 2023.

Indigenous Australians

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Replacing shelters in Woorabinda, Pormpuraaw, and Cherbourg	Replacement shelters were completed in Cherbourg (2018-19), Pormpuraaw (2019) and Woorabinda (October 2020).
Rockhampton River to Home	A five-year funding agreement was executed for this service in June 2018 and housing outcomes are being delivered per the contract.

People experiencing repeat homelessness

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Common Ground Brisbane	A five-year homelessness funding agreement was executed for this service in June 2018 and housing outcomes are being delivered in accordance with the agreement.
Street to Home	Five-year homelessness funding agreements were executed in June 2018. All Street to Home services are operating and delivering housing outcomes in accordance with the agreements.

People exiting institutions and care into homelessness

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Accommodation and support for Queensland Drug and Alcohol Court	The initiative commenced in May 2018 with a non-government organisation to deliver the accommodation and support component of Queensland Drug and Alcohol Court program. The service is operating and delivering housing outcomes in accordance with the agreement to deliver SHS.

Homelessness Emergency Department Liaison	<p>The Homelessness Emergency Department Liaison Officer (HEDLO) initiative assists patients who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness to find appropriate accommodation on discharge from hospital emergency departments. The HEDLO contributes to preventing hospital re-admissions and engages patients in support services around mental health, substance use and disability.</p> <p>The HEDLO has seen a significant increase in activity over the past 12 months which appears to be partly attributable to impacts of people experiencing housing instability in an increasingly challenging rental market.</p>
Coordinated Housing and Support for women on parole at risk of homelessness	The Next Step Home Initiative commenced in 2018 in two pilot sites, South East Queensland and Townsville, delivering integrated housing and support for women exiting custody at risk of homelessness. An evaluation of the initiative was finalised in late 2020, with ongoing service delivery to continue.
Supported Independent Living Services for Young people under Child Protection Orders	Supported independent living services are being provided to young people aged 15 to under 18 years with moderate to high support needs who are transitioning to independent living. A total of 23 services are funded to deliver supported independent living services in Queensland.
Re-entry Support Services	<p>In 2021–22, Queensland Corrective Services deployed a statewide network of Re-entry Advisors and funded six non-government organisations to deliver dedicated Re-Entry Support, including practical assistance to apply for and secure post-release accommodation.</p> <p>Whilst COVID-19 continued to disrupt service delivery in correctional centres, 43,047 incidents of re-entry support were provided statewide in 2021-22, including 21,698 pre-release contacts and 21,349 post-release contacts.</p>
Transition Post Care Support	The Transition and Post Care Support program responds to the needs of young people with complex disability, mental health, and/or high risk behavioural needs who are at risk of homelessness as they transition from care. In 2021-22, 449 young people received support from the Transition and Post Care Support Program.

Older people

Element of the homelessness strategy	Status
Support vulnerable women, including older women at risk of homelessness, to access and sustain safe and secure housing and support services	<p>In February 2022, the Queensland Government announced a Housing Outcomes for Older Women initiative to contribute to greater housing and support responses for older women. This initiative was developed in collaboration with the Housing Older Women Movement, Sharing with Friends and Q Shelter. More information is available online: https://www.chde.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/housing-older-women</p> <p>The Queensland Government has also invested in the award-winning Better Together Housing model and it is currently operating in Mackay and the Sunshine Coast to assist older women who are finding it difficult to secure affordable housing in the private market.</p>

7. The table below provides a summary of progress against a selection of Queensland Government reform initiatives for homelessness.

Key deliverables

Selection of homelessness reform initiatives	Status
Development of a <i>Queensland Homelessness Compact</i> with the homelessness sector	Development of a Queensland Homelessness Compact Workplan 2018–2020 has been completed. A program of work was delivered that evolved to meet the emerging needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and the housing and homelessness sector, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Supporting innovative projects through the Dignity First Fund	Five rounds of funding totalling \$12.5M were completed between 2016 and 2020 supporting up to 43 projects per round. All Dignity First Funding contracts have expired, and Dignity First Funding has been fully expended. The Dignity First Fund was replaced by the Stay Connected fund in August 2022. More information about the Stay Connected Fund is available online: https://www.chde.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/stay-connected-fund

Selected reforms

Strengthening the service system

Selection of homelessness reform initiatives	Status
Developing a logic for investment	The Department partnered with Community Services Industry Alliance to co-design and test a new outcomes-focused way of working to better meet the needs for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. This has been completed and is being used to inform the development of a homelessness investment framework.
Enabling sector-led innovation and providing flexibility for responsive place-based solutions	<p>The Department is collaborating with housing and homelessness service providers and peak organisations to support integrated place-based and person-centred service delivery through the Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response (CHHR). This includes, under the <i>Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-25</i>, a commitment to enhance the CHHR in priority locations across the State (Action 6.4).</p> <p>Place-Based Response Teams and funded Care Coordination Facilitators are operational in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Gympie, Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Redlands, Logan and the Gold Coast and work with funded outreach providers to proactively identify and engage people experiencing homelessness and link them with housing and support services.</p> <p>Care Coordination Facilitators increase capability of local care coordination groups to deliver integrated housing with support for people with complex needs. These enhancements were leveraged to support delivery of measures in the COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund and continue to deliver outcomes in line with funded objectives.</p>

Expanding our capabilities

Selection of homelessness reform initiatives	Status
<p>Developing a shared research agenda</p> <p>Enabling the sector to showcase innovation and promote good practice</p>	<p>The Deck was launched in September 2019 at https://thedeck.org.au/ and provides a resource hub for Queensland's community housing and homelessness sector to access and share research, resources, good practice, jobs and events with colleagues across the state. The Deck supported communication to and between housing and homelessness service providers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Work is occurring through the <i>Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025</i> to equip the government and community sector workforce to develop the skills, practice and tools needed to deliver person-centred, coordinated, outcomes focused housing with support services; and to understand, identify and respond to the interdependency between mental health, homelessness and housing need.</p>

Responding to COVID-19 and increasing housing need

8. Although not represented in the Queensland Bilateral Schedule E3 to the NHHA, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing housing and homelessness need, and natural disasters has been a key focus of housing and homelessness service delivery in 2021–22.

Selection of initiatives supporting the response to COVID-19 and increasing housing need
<p>In 2021–22, the Queensland Government continued to respond to COVID-19 pandemic related impacts on the housing and homelessness sector. An Emergency Housing Assistance Request (EHAR) response was initiated in March 2020 and continued during lockdown periods where Queensland Health issued a public health directive. EHAR responses provide short-term accommodation to individuals and families requiring an immediate accommodation solution.</p> <p>During the COVID-19 EHAR which is now complete, the Department received more than 4,000 requests for assistance. Of these, the Department supported 59 per cent of households to obtain long-term accommodation in social housing or the private market, 28 per cent of households into alternative accommodation. Reconnection with family or friends or accessing other services occurred for 13 per cent of households.</p> <p>The Department continued to build on the transition from congregate (shared) accommodation settings successfully implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, reimagining its program model of support with its funded service providers. This model now includes over 300 semi self-contained accommodation places in inner-Brisbane where people are supported in immediate, transitional and longer-term accommodation, while accessing individually tailored supports such as integrated housing, health and other government and community support services.</p> <p>Through pathway planning, the Department works with services and individuals to transition people to longer term housing solutions with appropriate supports to sustain housing and improve whole-of-life outcomes. A new mobile support model is assisting people to maintain their tenancies whilst decreasing re-entry to homelessness, with 94 per cent of people assisted between January 2021 and 30 June 2022 able to sustain their tenancies.</p> <p>In late February 2022, a severe weather and flooding event in South-East Queensland caused widespread inundation and damage, displacing people who would not normally seek housing and homelessness assistance. In March 2022, the Queensland Government allocated enhanced emergency brokerage funding to 39 specialist homelessness services to assist people experiencing financial</p>

Selection of initiatives supporting the response to COVID-19 and increasing housing need

hardship during the 2022 South-East Queensland flood event. This enhanced funding supported people with urgent housing needs during the event, including the purchase of essential services, temporary emergency accommodation and to free up existing crisis accommodation.

An EHAR response was also initiated to provide short-term accommodation to individuals and families requiring an immediate accommodation solution due to the flooding event. In Gympie and surrounding areas, between March and November 2022, 81 households (including families and individuals) were supported with emergency housing assistance and of those, 70 households were assisted into longer-term accommodation, including social housing and private rentals.

In response to the impacts of COVID-19, the rising cost of living, and unprecedented challenges in housing affordability and the private rental market, the Queensland Government announced an Immediate Housing Response in June 2022. The package is backed by a \$16 million investment in services and supports to help families to secure or sustain a tenancy. The targeted response is helping families in high need areas across Queensland, prioritising First Nations peoples, people experiencing DFV, young people and older people. The package includes an expanded rental security subsidy for eligible Queensland families, additional emergency brokerage for short-term accommodation and funding toward additional support workers.

The package is being delivered alongside the Queensland Government's efforts to boost longer-term housing supply through its historic \$3.9 billion investment in social and affordable housing, and exploring other opportunities including prefabricated, factory-built homes to increase supply faster.