

Launch
HOUSING

IT'S TIME TO END
HOMELESSNESS



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2018-19**

WELCOME

By Launch Housing LEAG members

Welcome to Launch Housing's 2018-19 Annual Report from the Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).

For us, Launch Housing's mission to end homelessness cannot be achieved without valuable insight and guidance from people with a lived experience of homelessness.

Each member of the LEAG's experience of homelessness is very personal to them. Each of us chose to join the LEAG, to advocate alongside Launch Housing and within the organisation, because we genuinely believe in its mission, as well as its commitment to hearing the voices of those they work for and with.

THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT ARE THE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCES OF LAUNCH HOUSING'S CLIENTS AND STAFF, FROM THEIR OWN PERSPECTIVE. WE BELIEVE THIS IS ONE SMALL BUT IMPORTANT WAY TO FURTHER INCORPORATE THE VOICES OF THOSE WHO ARE IMPACTED MOST.

We know homelessness in Australia is getting worse. We are proud to work in and on the system alongside Launch Housing – changing the homelessness sector with impactful, client-centred work, advocacy and innovation. Over the past year, we have broken down barriers, assisted in improving provision of services for people with differing needs, and developed greater knowledge in providing safety and support for clients.

We need to bring more compassion and humanity to solving this problem. To achieve this, we need to include those who have a lived experience of homelessness.

The Launch Housing Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) is made up of members broadly representative of the people Launch Housing work with. This includes people from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and LGBTIQ communities, parents, survivors of family violence and women over 55 years, the country's fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness.



LEAG WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Influencing Launch Housing

- Participated in staff interviews, inductions, all staff meetings and business planning
- Reviewed feedback and complaints system to ensure continuous service improvement
- Reviewed and provided feedback on service delivery training documents
- Involved in developing draft Launch Housing Strategy 2020–24
- Consulted on Crisis Accommodation Report
- Provided input towards an updated Consumer Participation Strategy

Changing perceptions

- Authored articles for Parity Magazine and spoke at Council for Homeless Persons engagements
- Participated in interviews with ABC Radio National, ABC Melbourne and the ABC's 7.30, as well as The Guardian Australia

Systems change

- Involved in research for the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System
- Participated in Yarra City Council draft Homelessness Strategy
- Participated in Southern Homeless Services Network (SHSN) Consumer Participation Working Group and Rooming House Summit

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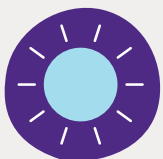
ABOUT LAUNCH HOUSING

Launch Housing is a community organisation passionately committed to ending homelessness through direct action.

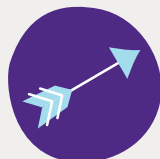
We provide high-quality housing, support, education and employment services to thousands of people across 14 sites in metropolitan Melbourne.

We also continuously adapt and trial new, scalable approaches and research in the pursuit of widespread change.

OUR VALUES



Empowerment



Agility



Leadership



Courage



Fresh thinking



OUR MISSION IS TO END HOMELESSNESS

OUR VISION

WE BELIEVE HOUSING
IS A BASIC HUMAN
RIGHT THAT AFFORDS
PEOPLE DIGNITY.

EVERYONE HAS A
RIGHT TO A HOME
AND IT'S OUR JOB TO
MAKE THAT HAPPEN.



OUR WORK

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

- New assertive outreach teams in Frankston and Dandenong supported 61 people with funding from Victoria's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan.
- Six people moved into the first of our tiny homes in the western suburbs through the Harris Transportable Housing project.
- Our Employment Program placed 22 people into employment compared to two in April–June 2018 (its inaugural year).
- Launch Housing trained staff to administer naloxone, a drug used to reverse the effects of opioids and prevent overdose. It was subsequently used to save 10 lives.
- Around 1500 households secured or maintained private rentals through our Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP), about 300 more than in 2017–18.

We provided hundreds of housing solutions for clients from the many properties we own and manage, including:

- 299 long-term community housing tenancies, 11 more than last year
- 95 head-leased* tenancies, 15 fewer than last year
- 560 transitional housing properties, 13 more than last year
- 80 Education First Youth Foyer studios, equal to last year.

* A head lease is a lease taken out by Launch Housing. These properties are sub-let to eligible clients, and the tenancies are managed by Launch Housing.



412

employees as at 30 June 2019.

Launch Housing values a flexible workplace. Of the 412 total employees, 148 were full time, 210 were part time and 54 were casuals.

OUR CLIENTS



16,284

individual people were assisted.

This was 4.2% (or 692) more people than last year, which is nearly 60 additional people supported every month.

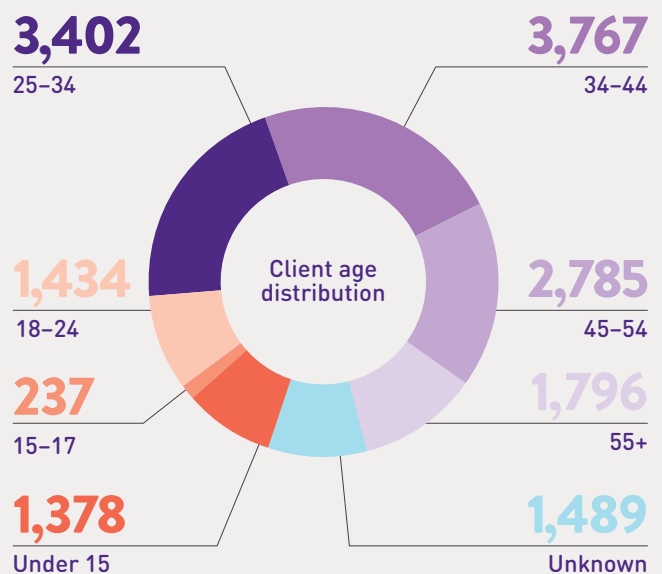


19,085

clients supported by distinct organisational area.

One client can be supported by different areas of the organisation over a 12-month period.

Client age distribution:



IMMEDIATE SERVICES

PEER SUPPORT

By Joal Presincula, Peer Support Worker at Southbank

I am proud to work for an organisation who sees the value in peer support.

Peer support is a new feat in homelessness and I think Launch Housing is carving the path towards best practice on the homelessness sector landscape.

What is a peer support worker?
I am somebody who uses my lived experience of homelessness to help shape the sector and better the lives of those currently living without a home, those living in trauma and society's most vulnerable.

I am proud to work for an organisation who sees the value in the lived experience workforce, sees peer support as a profession and values the consumer voice enough to build a program to support people in a different and meaningful way.

Over the past year, we have shaped the peer support worker role to be one that is consistent, supportive,

recreational and flexible enough to meet our consumers where they're at.

Our program offers a peer-led relationship that provides residents a safe space to be as they are. We listen without judgement, offer recreation in a way that underpins our values to connect, and foster engagement through conversation and coffee.

We have learned to be adaptive and respond to the needs of our residents at Southbank, as they arise. If something about the program doesn't work, we rethink it, adapt it, reshape it and create something that does work.

There is always a constant flow of different people, faces and personalities at Southbank, so a timetable that worked a month ago

may not work for the current residents. We must shift as our clients shift.

Our program must encompass empathy and build rapport in a way that generates a sense of hope among our residents, while also contributing to our overarching goal of ending homelessness.

I enjoy connecting with people and building meaningful relationships with our residents. Becoming a peer support worker has allowed me to use my lived experience of homelessness to build rapport with clients.

Being a consistent face for somebody who has had many inconsistencies is vital for building connection and trust. That is the core of peer support.

OUR CRISIS SITES ACCOMMODATED:

9

families for an average length of 6 months each in South Melbourne.

58

clients for an average length of 10 weeks each in Dandenong.

136

clients for an average length of 5 weeks each in East St Kilda.

277

clients for an average length of 7 weeks each in Southbank.

MY LIVED EXPERIENCE OF HOMELESSNESS HAS ALLOWED ME TO BUILD RAPPORT WITH CLIENTS.



MELBOURNE STREET TO HOME

By Rosie Dodd, Coordinator, Inner South Outreach

ENGAGING HARD-TO-REACH CLIENTS

Melbourne Street to Home (MS2H) is a partnership between Launch Housing, the Salvation Army and Bolton Clarke. MS2H utilises a Housing First* approach and explicitly targets the most vulnerable people sleeping rough, which is understood to mean those at risk of premature death.

We have a focus on addressing people's health needs within a holistic case management model. We use an assertive outreach approach to meet people in their own environment and engage with those hardest to reach.

MS2H provides people with intensive support before they access housing,

which in the last financial year took, on average, 10 months for each client that had a successful housing outcome.

We continue to support them for up to 12 months after housing has been secured. In the Launch Housing MS2H team, there are three case managers and one Bolton Clarke nurse.

* The Housing First model prescribes safe and permanent housing as the first priority for people experiencing homelessness.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS MS2H HAS RECENTLY SUPPORTED CLIENTS

Bob[^] was referred to MS2H after rough sleeping around the CBD for approximately seven years. Previously very reluctant to engage with services, he wasn't receiving Centrelink payments and survived off the goodwill of members of the public.

Our Bolton Clarke nurse started engaging with Bob at his sleep site and, over a few months, developed rapport to the point where he was accepting of attending Centrelink, opening up a bank account and exploring housing options.

In February 2019, he moved into a transitional property and has really flourished, building connections in the community, and is now actively engaged in planning for his future. With the support of our nurse, Bob is also now receiving treatment for a previously untreated health condition.

He has joined a local men's group, has linked in with the Launch Housing Employment Program, has rediscovered a love of cooking and is catching up on years of missed TV and movies.

John[^], who had been known to MS2H for many years, re-engaged when his housing placements were at risk or ended.

John's current case manager has engaged with him since December 2018 and, by being very persistent and assertive, has built strong rapport. Being sensitive to the family's culture and intergenerational trauma has meant that a lot of the work has involved assisting, John, who is a father, in his connections to family members and using a family systems approach.

By fostering this rapport, the case manager has also focused on assisting John to build trust in external services, allowing the family to receive the support they need. The combination of perseverance and practical assistance paid off recently when John was assisted to attend multiple dental appointments over a number of weeks, with the end result that he's got teeth for the first time since 1985.

[^] Names have been changed.



people supported by MS2H through 2018–19.

IMMEDIATE SERVICES

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS PROGRAM

By **Rosie Camilleri**, Coordinator Alcohol and Other Drug and Wellbeing Program, Southbank Crisis Accommodation

PROVIDING SUPPORT IN A DIGNIFIED WAY

Launch Housing Southbank has an alcohol and other drugs (AOD) program embedded at our crisis accommodation service, making it incredibly accessible for our clients.

The AOD service is for people experiencing homelessness who are really unwell. Its focus is on prevention and harm reduction. It's been created to care for people in a dignified way. The AOD program is voluntary for clients, so it changes the dynamic of the therapeutic relationship, resulting in great outcomes for clients.

As a team, we give clients information and support in a variety of ways. We visit clients in their rooms regularly to provide information about drugs and offer a safe space so they can feel comfortable and ask questions.

While this is a voluntary service, occasionally we directly reach out to clients we identify as needing extra support, such as women who are pregnant and experiencing homelessness.

You need to be non-judgemental as an AOD worker and understand the impact of trauma. There's a high percentage of people with problematic substance use and significant trauma, so it's important to focus on harm reduction. We offer dignity to people that are not treated with dignity in society. Everyone deserves a good quality life. Everyone deserves a home.

152

clients were supported by Launch Housing's AOD team through 2018–19.

114

clients were trained in and provided with a naloxone kit.

57

clients were referred to external AOD treatment, detox and rehab.

Victoria had the highest number of Specialist Homelessness Service clients with a problematic drug and/or alcohol use issue receiving assistance in 2017–18 (AIHW 2018).

OVERDOSE PREVENTION SAVES LIVES

According to latest figures, 1,171 people in Australia died from opioid related overdose in 2017.

Launch Housing recently implemented naloxone training across the entire organisation.

Naloxone is a life-saving drug that is administered when someone is experiencing an overdose. It blocks opioid drugs, such as heroin and methadone from attaching to opioid receptors in the brain.

Naloxone training has been provided for all Launch Housing client services staff, and many non-client-facing staff, and will be provided for future staff in the coming year. The training is important for all staff, whether they work with clients or not.

10

lives have been saved by administering naloxone across Launch Housing since March 2019.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

By Di Morton, Team Leader, Launch Housing East St Kilda (LHESK)

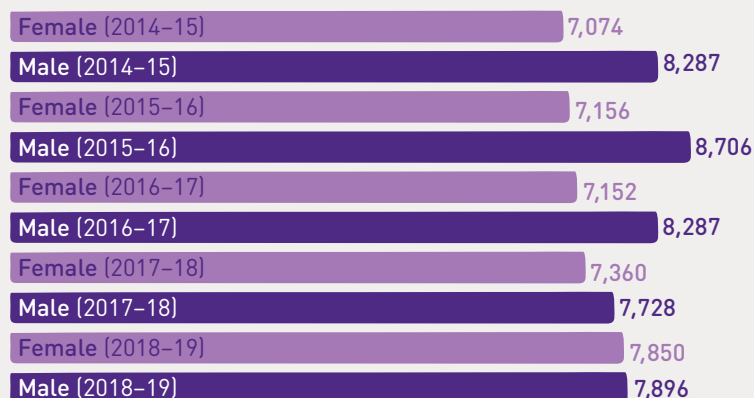
CREATING POSITIVE FUTURES

Women supporting women is brilliant. The Launch Housing East St Kilda (LHESK) crisis accommodation site is a great relief for many who come here.

We are one of the few female-only services in Victoria and our work with the women who are referred here is crucial. We can identify and refer women to specific supports which ultimately assist them to gain stable accommodation.

Through their time at LHESK, women have the opportunity to address some of their major concerns and to work towards a plan for a more stable future. This includes things like planning for reunification with children, gaining support for addiction as well as addressing mental health concerns.

The number of women Launch Housing supports is increasing, reflecting an alarming rise in women experiencing homelessness. We now support a similar ratio of women to men.



Launch Housing East St Kilda staff

WOMEN'S RAPID REHOUSING PROGRAM

In 2018-19, the Women's Rapid Rehousing Program supported:

145 households across 180 instances of support, including:

151 women

97 dependent children

Of these, the program enabled 125 instances of support to establish new tenancies and 55 instances of support to successfully maintain their current tenancies.

IMMEDIATE SERVICES

INTAKE WORKER: DAY IN THE LIFE

By **Adrian Skiba**, Senior IAP Worker, Collingwood

Our Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) workers are the first people you're likely to encounter if you're at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

It should be easy to describe what 'a day in the life' of an IAP worker would be, given that we do this job day in and day out, however, while every day is the same it is also very different, all at the same time.

Our day starts before 9am, making sure the service is ready to open, and it often finishes after 5pm. A crisis is not conscious of 'business hours'.

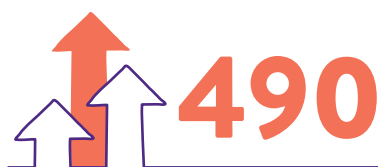
From there, the typical 'morning rush' begins, with the first people presenting to our service. They then wait until they're able to see a worker who can start to assess their needs, source emergency accommodation and make referrals where needed.

As a team, we're mindful that whether it's the first time, the second, or sometimes the 10th time that we're seeing someone, these people are in a crisis and are often under a lot of pressure and stress as a result.

The challenges that arise from this are often compounded by the fact that we have little funding and housing options to offer people.

The fact of the matter is that successive state and federal governments have ignored some of the most marginalised people in our community, to a point where 'the system' is at breaking point and we simply don't have the power to give everyone a home.

In 2018-19 we provided:



more instances of client support through our three IAP sites in comparison to 2017-18.



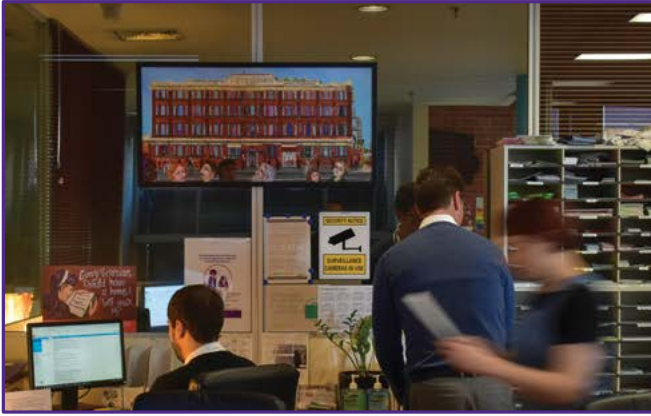
instances of support (the most) were provided from Collingwood.



on average was spent per client from Housing Emergency Fund (HEF).



was spent on Launch Housing's IAP services in 2018-19.



Our IAP staff support people in a crisis.

We provide a welcoming space and practical assistance to people who are trying to navigate the housing system in a time of crisis.

We believe that the success of our program can't be measured with statistics, but rather by the individual outcomes we're able to achieve with people.

**IF WE COULD GIVE EVERYONE
A HOUSE, MORE IMPORTANTLY
A HOME, TOMORROW, WE WOULD.**

This might be as small as providing information that empowers someone to make a positive life decision, or as big as helping someone on their pathway to permanent and affordable housing.

We know that it's extremely difficult to secure housing. However, if you've accessed our service, we hope we've been able to support you along that journey and, in some small way, made your experience less agonising.

For us it's 'another day in the life of an IAP worker', but for you, it's likely one of the most challenging days of your life.

IAP is the first step for our clients who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. These services are offered at Launch Housing's Collingwood, St Kilda, Dandenong and Cheltenham sites. IAP provides housing information and assistance to individuals and families in a housing crisis.

COULD YOU SURVIVE ON NEWSTART?

74% of the clients
who came through our
3 entry points were either
on Newstart Allowance or
Disability Support Pension.



ONLY 2

properties listed for rent across Australia
were affordable to a single person on Newstart,
according to Anglicare's Rental Affordability
Snapshot 2019.

REFORMING THE SYSTEM

HOUSING IS GOOD MENTAL HEALTHCARE

By Dr Andrew Hollows, General Manager, Research and Service Sector Reform

In Victoria, there is an urgent need for appropriate housing to improve the mental healthcare of people experiencing homelessness.

We believe stable housing is vital for the prevention of and recovery from mental ill-health. With a Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System underway, we have been drawing on extensive practice experience and insights from staff and clients to advocate for change.

Our mental health and housing systems must unite and work better to protect people experiencing mental illness and homelessness.

In January 2019, we submitted recommendations to the Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission. Then, later in the year, we lodged a submission and launched a social media campaign to coincide with public hearings across the state.

We also urged the Commission to recognise and privilege the experience, expertise and voice of consumers and prioritise the specific issues of high-needs groups in Victoria.

Our campaign also highlighted the importance of a safe, stable home for people experiencing a mental illness.

The campaign featured people with an experience of homelessness and mental illness, including Akemi, as well as our frontline staff. Akemi was interviewed live on ABC 774 Melbourne as part of the campaign.

You can view our campaign at launchhousing.org.au/thecommission and our submission at launchhousing.org.au/housing-is-good-mental-healthcare.

We called for the Commission to recommend:

- 1** More preventive programs to sustain private rental when someone has a mental health episode.
- 2** More permanent supportive housing so people with a mental illness can recover.
- 3** More step-down programs that support timely transition to housing when exiting hospital.



50%

or 2,023 of our clients were experiencing mental illness, according to a census of our data over May to June 2019.



500+

people are discharged from acute mental healthcare into rooming houses, motels and other forms of homelessness in Victoria each year (CHP website, 2019).

MEET AKEMI

By Akemi*, Elizabeth Street Common Ground resident

Before I was homeless, I had a mental illness... it's only taken 22 years to be medicated in the right way.

About seven years ago, I had to make a decision about my job or seeing my mum get treated for cancer. One of my colleagues had an illness which wasn't good for mum doing chemotherapy.

I moved into an abandoned warehouse in Preston. I spent 18 months in that warehouse. The almost three years I spent homeless; it changes you forever. You never feel safe again. You never feel secure having a home again.

The majority of times, homelessness is because someone's been dealt a bad hand. Especially, if you've got a chronic mental illness.

The things we don't talk about with mental health are the bills and maintaining your house. Mental health makes life difficult to manage.

Maintaining a job is almost impossible if you've got a mental illness. Homelessness and mental health are swept under the rug because they're too difficult to deal with.

With my story, I had no choice, I could see my mother as she was potentially dying or keep my job. Homelessness is just a click away. It can happen to anyone.

**Akemi is my street artist name. It came from a comic book, where Akemi was an organising principle trying to help artists become who they were. I founded the street art collective called The Ninja.*

ABOUT ELIZABETH STREET COMMON GROUND

Elizabeth Street Common Ground, where Akemi lives, provides permanent, affordable, high-quality housing to 65 people with complex needs who have been chronically homeless, many for more than 10 years.

An additional 66 apartments exist for low income workers and students. Next year Launch Housing will celebrate Elizabeth Street Common Ground's 10 years of operation.

**WHEN PEOPLE WALK
PAST AND SEE YOU
HOMELESS... THEY
LOOK DOWN ON YOU,
AS IF YOU HAVE FAILED
SOMEHOW. THAT'S NOT
ALWAYS THE CASE.**



REFORMING THE SYSTEM

FUNCTIONAL ZERO

By George Hatvani, Manager, Service Development

COLLECTING DATA FOR REAL CHANGE

Functional Zero is a new initiative currently working to end rough sleeping in Melbourne's Port Phillip region.

The approach, which has been successfully adopted in Adelaide and other countries including the United States, involves developing a list of people sleeping rough in a particular area, and the housing options available.

This 'by-name' list is checked off on a daily basis to understand what the needs of people sleeping rough are and work towards getting them housed.

The inflow and outflow of people sleeping rough and staying in various types of housing is also tracked so, when housing becomes available, we can quickly act to give someone rough sleeping a place to stay.

The goal is to achieve Functional Zero, a point where there are no more people experiencing homelessness than there are services, housing and beds available to them. This ensures anyone who experiences homelessness does so only briefly, is rehoused successfully, and is unlikely to return to homelessness.

With our partners in the City of Port Phillip, we recently helped deliver the first successful pilot in Victoria.

This approach does not end homelessness on its own. It is a data-driven, outcomes-focused approach which maximises accountability and effectiveness of the service system.

It brings key people and organisations* together around a common objective to highlight the scale of the problem and the gaps that remain in addressing it, to focus advocacy efforts on the very real needs of the people we are trying to house.

Following the pilot in Port Phillip, Launch Housing, as part of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, is leading a Melbourne-wide collective impact push to implement the Functional Zero approach to end homelessness for people sleeping rough in Melbourne.



* Key partners are Sacred Heart Mission, Star Health, St Kilda Community Housing, Housing First and the City of Port Phillip.

NEW SUPPORT

By Emma Murray, Coordinator, Rough Sleepers Initiative

OUTREACH EXPANDS TO SOUTHERN MELBOURNE

In August 2018, Launch Housing was successful in securing funding from the Victorian Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan for new assertive outreach teams in Melbourne's southern metropolitan region.

I was excited by the opportunity and challenge to take on the role of coordinator for these brand new teams in February 2019, to provide a service that was severely lacking in this region. We are now fully staffed and I currently manage 12 staff across the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Frankston and City of Geelong.

The Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) and Supportive Housing Team work in partnership across the three municipalities to provide support that moves with the client from rough sleeping to long-term housing. Both teams are doing amazing work in each area.

We have built great networks with various departments of local council, VicPol, Monash Health Psychiatry Services and AOD services, Centre of Multicultural Youth, Community support Frankston, Salvo's and WAYYS to name a few.

Our multi-disciplinary team is really working and achieving brilliant outcomes in areas that were desperately in need of interconnected services.

We are finding collaboration really does work and enables us to meet the varying complex needs of clients. I see this as a strong way forward for our sector.

While my teams face new challenges daily, they are often brilliant opportunities to learn and develop our service. We're getting creative and providing healing and support to people who have not had access to necessary services, simply because they were previously unavailable.

One man we approached was sleeping in a tent for six months and hadn't had a shower in all that time. Since our team connected with him, he has been able to take care of his hygiene, he's received mental health treatment and is more deeply engaging with the team. Outcomes like this are why we come to work each day.

Homelessness rates are outpacing population growth specifically in south eastern areas of Melbourne including Dandenong, Casey North and Casey South (AHURI, 2019).

Frankston supported:

33

Clients for a period of up to 8 weeks

103

Referrals responded to

Outcomes for clients: 1 Office of Housing, 3 private rental, numerous rooming house and caravan parks.

Dandenong supported:

28

Clients for a period of up to 8 weeks

95

Referrals responded to

Outcomes for clients: 4 private rentals, 7 crisis accommodation, numerous rooming house and caravan parks.

A RECENT REPORT FOUND DANDENONG HAD A HOMELESSNESS RATE IN THE TOP NATIONAL DECILE AND MELBOURNE'S HIGHEST RATE OF OVERCROWDING.

(AHURI, 2019.)

INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

TINY HOMES

By Darren Bayley, Property and Tenancy Manager

VACANT GOVERNMENT LAND A GAME-CHANGER

The Harris Transportable Housing Project is a very special project that brings an innovative approach to addressing homelessness in Victoria.

We're creating 57 tiny homes for people experiencing homelessness and currently are rolling this project out in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

The project is a partnership between Launch Housing and philanthropists Geoff and Brad Harris of Harris Capital with funding from the Victorian Property Fund. It uses land owned by VicRoads which has been provided on a peppercorn rent.

The selection of the right tenants is vitally important to ensure that we can create a vibrant, supportive local community within the wider community of Maribyrnong. I have done considerable networking with local services which is really important to ensure they are aware of what Launch Housing is doing and how we can work together to support our tenants.

Many of our tenants have traumatic lived experiences and it is imperative that they are supported to sustain their recovery and growth.

So far we have six tenants in the first six homes, and it's had an amazing impact on them. It's been really great to see what stable, permanent housing can bring to their lives. To see the transformation that's occurred in some of these people, even in just a couple of months, has been amazing.

These 57 homes are a great start, however we need governments at all levels to unlock more underused or vacant land, so a whole lot more of this housing can be built across Victoria.

To learn more, visit launchhousing.org.au/harris-transportable-housing-project

195ha

of government land is sitting empty across Greater Melbourne.

\$13k+

government savings per person per year, if those experiencing chronic homelessness had access to secure, long-term housing and relevant support services¹.

~25k+

people are without a home on any given night in Victoria, and around 1,100 of them are sleeping rough².

The pet friendly units already house three dogs at our first block. Pictured: Zeus.



¹ Project 30,000: Producing Social and Affordable Housing on Government Land, Transforming Housing, Melbourne School of Design, The University of Melbourne.

² Evaluation of the Brisbane Common Ground project, 2015

MEET DEBORAH

By Deborah, Tiny Home Tenant

I've been homeless since I was 13. I went to school one Wednesday morning, 28th July 1982, and the last thing my mum ever said to me was: 'Bye sweetie, have a nice day', and I never went home again.

The orphanage was the longest place I ever lived and that was four-and-a-half years.

I left that place a mess and I left with no support. I was always searching for somewhere that's homey, where I can have a garden, where I can have a dog. I wanted somewhere safe.

In April, I moved into one of the homes in the Harris Transportable Housing Project, and I feel like someone took me from, basically hell, and put me on this cloud of puffy niceness.

I get to stay here for as long as I need to, and that's just incredible. I'm really proud of my home. They've given us beautiful stuff, it's just phenomenal.

This home is a really big gift, so I'm going to take care of it. I've created a garden out the front and I've put nice things up around the house. I've really tried to make it look attractive and pretty.

I'm learning here how to be stable. I'm learning how to take Zeus for walks every day and not be afraid of neighbours, and not be afraid people are going to judge me.

For the first time in a long time I'm in a stable environment, so things can only get better.

Once I get myself stabilised, I can look at becoming a peer support worker, or working in a women's shelter, or helping people who have been through trauma. That's my goal in life, to help people. This place gives me hope.

I'VE LEARNT THAT YOU'VE GOT TO ASK FOR HELP. IF IT WASN'T FOR THE WORKERS AT LAUNCH HOUSING WHO CAME INTO MY LIFE, I WOULDN'T BE SITTING HERE NOW.



INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

PRIVATE RENTAL SECURITY

By Rachel Evans, Coordinator, Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP)

PRIVATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE HELPS MANY ON THE BRINK OF HOMELESSNESS

In May, we were delighted when the Victorian Government committed to refund our Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) for two years.

Many of our clients are seeking support as a result of family violence, health issues or unemployment and are just clinging on at the bottom end of the rental market.

We help people to find or keep a safe and secure roof over their heads, by providing education about the rental market, empowering clients through the housing search process, and providing practical support for things like rental applications.

Finally, we provide financial support, such as helping cover the cost of rent in advance, bond or moving costs. Along with providing financial support, we work with teams across Launch Housing and provide targeted information and support directly to clients.

We have found it useful to work in tandem with support workers to offer the specific expertise we have as a PRAP team and it is useful for our PRAP workers to hone their focus onto a client's individual rental concerns.

It's a wonderful feeling to know that we can help people break and prevent the cycle of homelessness.

THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN LITERALLY LIFE-CHANGING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO USE IT. WE PROVIDE A STOPGAP FOR THOSE ON THE BRINK OF HOMELESSNESS.



\$2.27m

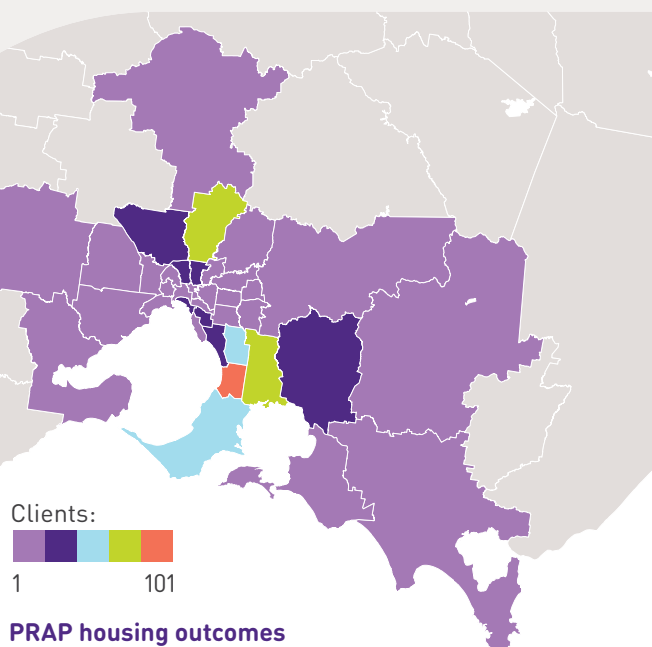
spent for 1,586 clients to save and secure tenancies

473 HOUSEHOLDS MAINTAINED

in private rentals

1,067 HOUSEHOLDS SECURED

in private rentals



A portrait of Maya, a woman with short, reddish-brown hair styled in a bun. She is wearing teal-rimmed glasses, a nose ring, and large green cactus-shaped earrings. She is wearing a black and gold patterned zip-up jacket over a maroon long-sleeved shirt. The background is a solid purple color.

MEET MAYA

By Maya, mother and Private Rental Assistance Program [PRAP] recipient

PRIVATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GAVE ME AND MY DAUGHTER SAFETY, STABILITY

Last year, when my young daughter and myself were forced to leave our home in a hurry due to family violence, I received financial support from PRAP to help cover the cost of rent, bond and removalists.

The feeling of having a safe and secure place to call home is impossible to put into words. It's beyond articulation. I've got safety, stability and security that I otherwise wouldn't have had.

HOUSING IS A PRIMAL NEED, AND ESPECIALLY AS A PARENT, YOU WANT TO PROVIDE A SAFE HOME FOR YOUR CHILD.

Because I was without a home and had no fixed address, no other homelessness or housing services were able to help me.

I was close to sleeping in my car. I was caught in a loop and that was overwhelmingly depressing. It really challenged my mental health. But the PRAP program gave me the foundation I needed to start again.

INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

HOMEGROUND REAL ESTATE

By Simone Curley, Manager of HomeGround Real Estate

I was thrilled to join HomeGround Real Estate (HGRE) in November 2018. Since then, I have focused on establishing HGRE as a true social enterprise and improving our brand through increased customer service for private landlords.

Our team is set up and excited to grow the number of properties under management, which will lead to increased revenue to help Launch Housing fulfil its mission to end homelessness.

All of the profits that HomeGround Real Estate in Melbourne makes go back into Launch Housing. So when landlords choose HomeGround Real Estate, they make their choice count.

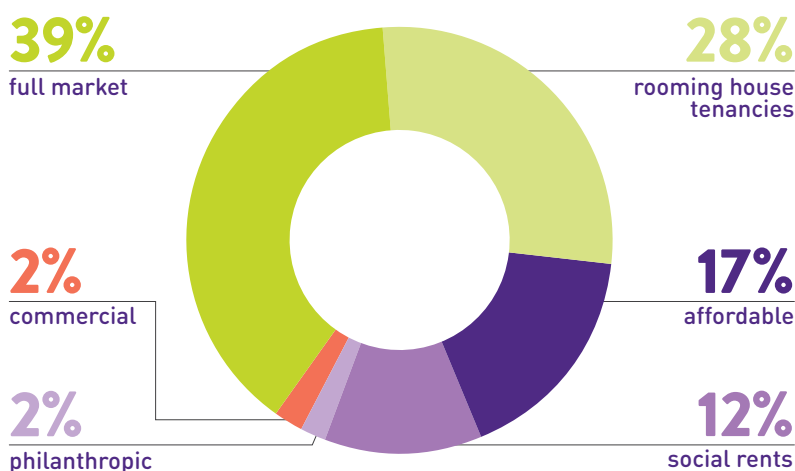
They're giving back to the community by letting us manage their property and helping Launch Housing make a real difference to the lives of people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, right here in Melbourne.

In May 2019, we were excited to see HomeGround Real Estate open in Canberra, with profits going towards Community Housing Canberra to support people in the region experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



properties, an 8% increase from last year

Properties managed by HGRE in 2018-19:



Definitions:

Full market

Properties leased at full market rent, where the property management fees get reinvested into Launch Housing.

Rooming houses

A building where one or more rooms are available to rent, and four or more people in total can occupy those rooms.

Affordable

Tenants pay 10% or more below market rent

Social

Tenants pay no more than 30% of their income.

Philanthropic

Properties that have been donated to HomeGround Real Estate on a peppercorn lease.

A portrait of Felicity, a woman with short, curly brown hair, smiling. She is wearing an orange button-down shirt and large, colorful circular earrings. The background is a solid purple color.

MEET FELICITY

By Felicity, HomeGround Real Estate landlord

HOMEGROUND REAL ESTATE CARES ABOUT MY TENANTS

Homelessness is a huge issue in this country, and there's an incredible lack of affordable housing, which is why I feel passionately about HomeGround Real Estate.

I've leased two properties through HomeGround Real Estate – one at below market rent and one at market rent – and I feel reassured they really care about my tenants and our community.

I feel really confident in the way HomeGround Real Estate staff operate. They're very professional, and they take a really humane approach. But mostly, it's just an ordinary real estate agent. They tick all the boxes. They're looking after my asset, but they're also looking after the tenants.

**IT MAKES ME FEEL
CONFIDENT THAT THERE
ARE SOME HUMANE
PEOPLE IN REAL ESTATE,
WHO WANT TO DO SOME
POSITIVE THINGS.**

INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

EDUCATION FIRST YOUTH FOYERS

By Claire Coxon, Group Manager, Youth Transitions

DISCOVERING THEIR HIDDEN POTENTIAL

Through the last financial year, Education First Youth Foyers in Broadmeadows and Glen Waverley have had a significant impact on the lives of the young people who have come through our doors.

We know the experience of homelessness severely impacts on young people's potential to thrive. Our Foyers offer young people experiencing homelessness up to two years of student accommodation, with opportunities to pursue education and training aligned with their goals. These opportunities expand their capability to build a sustainable livelihood.

To help them see and understand the broad skills they have developed through their homelessness journey, and how these can be translated into jobs or education, it's amazing.

This year, Launch Housing and the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) presented findings from a five-year longitudinal study of the three Victorian Foyers. The study, conducted by BSL researchers, looked at the outcomes of the 162 Foyer students who exited between September 2013 and July 2017, making them eligible for a 12-month post-exit survey. The evaluation finds that the model substantively improves young people's education, employment, housing, and health and wellbeing outcomes.

**I AM LUCKY TO WORK
IN AN EXTREMELY
REWARDING ROLE
WHERE WORKING WITH
SUCH A GREAT GROUP
OF PEOPLE GIVES ME
HOPE THAT WE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
AROUND YOUTH
HOMELESSNESS.**

**SEEING YOUNG PEOPLE
MAKE THE MOST OF
THE OPPORTUNITIES
PROVIDED TO THEM
IS UNBELIEVABLE.**



KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2019 EDUCATION FIRST YOUTH FOYERS EVALUATION

The Education First Youth Foyer model delivers approximately an additional \$10 million in net benefits over a 20-year time frame.

Foyer participants showed strong improvement in their educational qualifications. The percentage who had completed Year 12, a Certificate III or higher increased from 42% at entry to 67% at exit and continued to increase to 75% a year after exit.

The percentage of participants living in their own place (renting or owning) increased from 7% at entry to 43% at exit, and further to 51% one year after exit. Almost all were in private accommodation, with a small number in public housing.

Second, the percentage of participants living in crisis accommodation, in detention or treatment centres, or sleeping rough fell from 32% at entry to 3% at exit, sustained a year after exit at 2%.

IN 2018–19:



\$4.08m

was spent on programs and students



84

students engaged in education



145

students engaged with employment activities



60%

of students were in paid employment

INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

EDUCATION PATHWAYS PROGRAM

By Violet Kolar, Lead Researcher, Research and Service Sector Reform

HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE AT SCHOOL

For the thousands of school children who experience homelessness, the risk of school disengagement and learning problems is high, putting them at an even greater risk of employment difficulties and homelessness in adulthood.

Our Education Pathways Program (EPP) in the southern metropolitan region of Melbourne is helping break this cycle. At the time of engagement with the EPP, children and parents are in crisis, without safe and permanent housing. Many are traumatised because of family violence.

The practical support provided by the EPP in terms of the children's education, and physically getting them to school, is hugely beneficial for parents. They say it immediately reduces the excessive stress and worry that overwhelmed them as a result of their homelessness.

Daily routine, stability and safety helped the children settle, reconnect with school and thrive on learning.

An evaluation of the EPP I worked on in June found it to be an innovative, high-quality program, committed to ensuring that children are linked to schools as quickly as possible.

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD FINN* DESCRIBES HIMSELF LIKE THIS: "I'M PROUD. I'M A LEARNER NOW. I CAN WRITE WORDS I COULDN'T AND I TRY HARD NOW. I AM A GREAT RUNNER AND I'M GOOD AT CLIMBING TREES. I MADE JESS LAUGH SO HARD HE CRIED. AND I'M KIND. YEAH, I THINK I AM KIND."

The evaluation report included quotes from teachers, parents and the children themselves on their progress after contact with the EPP.

These positive outcomes would not have been possible without the very strong partnership between Launch Housing's EPP and the local primary school. Staff from the EPP and the local primary school are passionately committed to ensuring that the young students have a strong sense of belonging and connection.

To read the full evaluation report, visit launchhousing.org.au/education-pathways-program-an-extraordinary-program-supporting-children-experiencing-homelessness

* Name and some details changed to maintain anonymity.

In 2019 we released an evaluation of the EPP.

It found that between October 2015 and June 2018:



* When they first came into contact with the program.

^ Worryingly, these children were typically many years behind their peers.

GRADE 5 TEACHER'S MESSAGE TO EPP:

"Hi EPP,

I am Paul's* Grade 5 teacher this year and I am just keeping you updated on his progress in the classroom this semester.

He has socially been a delight and works well with pretty much anyone in the grade. He has settled in very well and has made some great new friends who are also great role models for working in the classroom.

He definitely is making a great deal of progress and with his consistent work, is improving and building on his skills quickly.

I hope I've managed to give you a clear picture of Paul this year. What a great kid."

* Name and some details changed to maintain anonymity.

**ALL IN ALL,
HE HAS BEEN
A GREAT KID
TO HAVE IN THE
CLASS SO FAR
THIS YEAR.**

CEO WELCOME

By **Bevan Warner**, Chief Executive Officer



The experiences of clients and staff presented in this report demonstrate the impact Launch Housing is making, and reminds us that we can put a stop to homelessness if we work intentionally with the community.

Homelessness is not an identity. It is an experience that can befall anyone. The social safety nets to prevent it have eroded and, as house prices and rent stress rise, the cornerstone of a good life – a safe, secure and affordable home – is increasingly unattainable for many.

We know that, at times, life events and rent stress, will result in some people being without shelter, but we believe these instances should be rare, brief, and should only ever happen once.

Launch Housing values creative partnerships that produce real solutions which can be taken to scale.

We advocate for the policy change we know is needed by drawing on the expertise of our 412 staff and placing the experience of our more than 16,000 clients at the forefront of our work.

In the last year we delivered the first six of 57 award-winning tiny homes on underused government land, providing a rapid and cost-effective response for individuals with chronic experiences of homelessness. We continued our work with philanthropic partners to break generational disadvantage by stabilising housing for children and young people so that their education can continue through our Education Pathways Program and Education First Youth Foyers.

We have always championed harm minimisation alongside a health response to addiction. Witnessing record increases in accidental opioid overdoses among Victorians, we offered naloxone training to all staff, saving 10 lives since March 2019.

In response to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System our clients have led our advocacy, engaging the community and decision makers with the fundamental concept of housing as good mental healthcare.

I AM PROUD TO WORK WITH A TEAM OF DEDICATED AND COMPASSIONATE PROFESSIONALS WHO, IN THE FACE OF A DYSFUNCTIONAL HOUSING MARKET, ASSIST ACUTELY VULNERABLE PEOPLE TO GET OR KEEP ONE OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS OF A GOOD LIFE - A HOME.

Against rising social inequity, it is our job to empower the people we work for, to develop strong partnerships and to engage the community in the change necessary to end homelessness. That is what we will continue to do.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bevan Warner". The script is fluid and cursive.

Bevan Warner
Chief Executive Officer

OUR BOARD

By Neil Chatfield, Board Chair

Launch Housing is governed by a professional board of directors. Our board members have public, private and community sector expertise from a range of areas.

Launch Housing has an ambitious agenda to end homelessness. We need the community to understand that solutions exist and that homelessness is not an inevitable feature of a modern economy or a natural part of society that must be tolerated.

THE ACCOUNTS FROM CLIENTS AND STAFF IN THIS REPORT HIGHLIGHT OUR VALUES IN ACTION. WE EMPOWER PEOPLE WE WORK WITH, INCUBATE FRESH IDEAS, AND LEAD WITH COURAGE.

I want to thank our expert staff and generous volunteers. Together with our partners, we will keep refining our services to prevent homelessness from occurring and to deliver new housing solutions to end the experience of people living without a home.

Launch Housing is assisted by a skills based Board that I am proud to lead. I pay special thanks to Dimity Reed AM and Geoff Nicholson who stepped down during the year, for their many years of energetic, dedicated and thoughtful service.



Neil Chatfield
Board Chair

Our board comprises

Wayne Read, Katharine Williams, Professor Ron Wakefield, Megan Fletcher, Professor Tony Dalton, Neil Chatfield, Jill Riseley, and Dominic Esposito. *Not pictured: Carolyn Gale, Pam White and Geoff Nicholson.*



FINANCIALS

By Ching Gee, Chief Financial Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Launch Housing grew its operations, investing in land and properties and commissioning some new services.

Margins remain thin, with costs expected to outgrow revenues, necessitating careful planning and renegotiation of some funding agreements.

Several housing projects began to take shape:

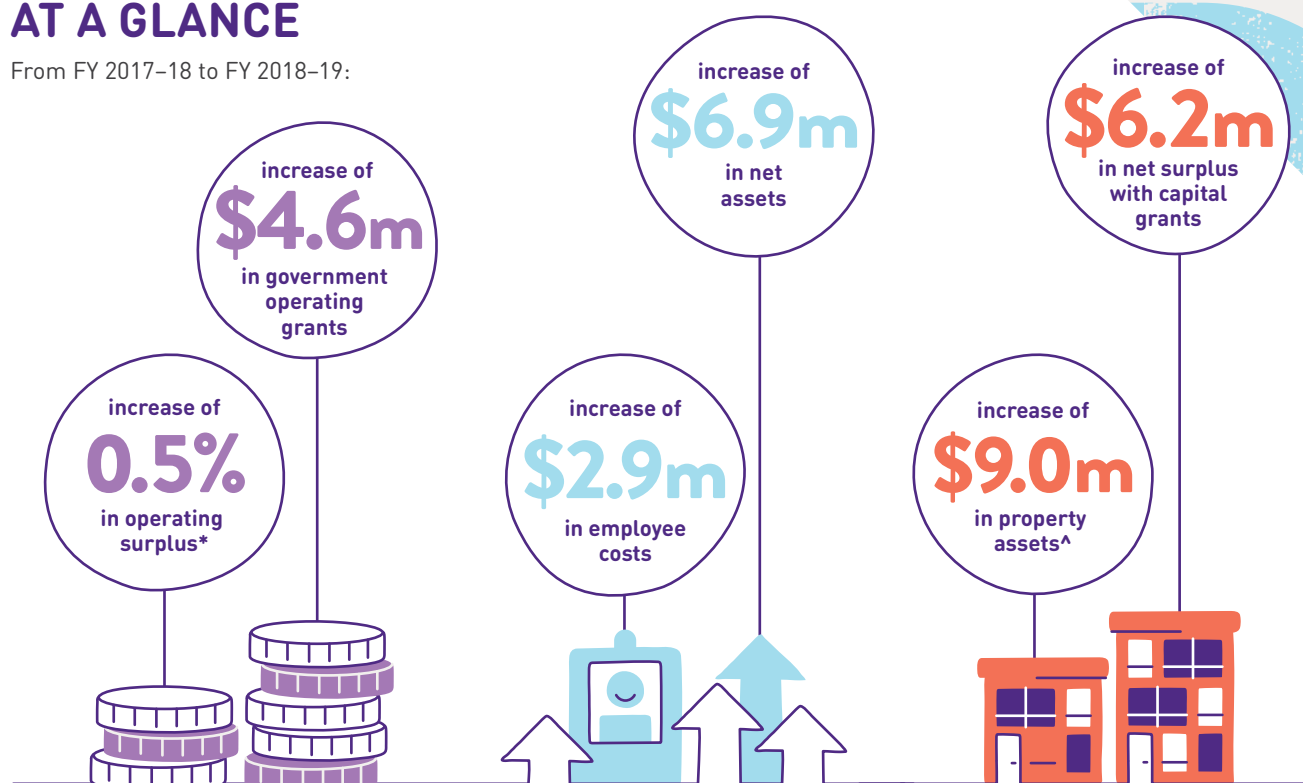
- The first six clients moved into the first of fifty-seven Harris Transportable Housing units, to be completed next financial year.

- A parcel of land was purchased in Dandenong to house up to sixty women and two hundred children in our Families Supportive Housing project.
- A Housing Supply Strategy was created to establish a pathway for more investment in different types of housing for our clients.

Fundraising increased and we received funding through Victoria's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan to establish two new assertive outreach teams in Frankston and Dandenong, which have already supported 61 people. These teams operate in an area where homelessness is getting worse and the need is different than inner Melbourne.

AT A GLANCE

From FY 2017–18 to FY 2018–19:



* up from the prior year deficit of 4.3%.

^ including building works-in-progress

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

For the year ended 30 June 2019, Launch Housing delivered a net surplus (including capital grants) of \$6.9 million, compared to \$0.7 million in 2018, and a total comprehensive income for the year, of \$7.0 million (2018: \$1.4 million).

Total Income (including capital grants) was \$62.3 million (2018: \$52.6 million), an increase of \$9.7 million (18%). Total Operating Expenditures was \$55.4 million (2018: \$51.9M), an increase of \$3.5M (7%).

- **Government operating grants** increased by 11%, from \$41.2 million in 2018 to \$45.8 million in 2019, due to increased program activities, including the establishment of new assertive outreach teams in Frankston and Dandenong as part of Victoria's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan.
- **Rental income** increased by 6% from \$5.7 million in 2018 to \$6.1 million in 2019, mainly due to owning and managing more housing stock.
- **Government and philanthropic capital grants** increased by 130% from \$2.9 million in 2018 to \$6.7 million in 2019 for the purchase of land for a permanent supportive housing project, building the tiny homes for the Harris Transportable Housing project, and the purchase and refurbishment of four apartments and three family homes with monies gifted for this purpose.

- **Employee expenditure** increased by 10%, from \$27.9 million in 2018 to \$30.8 million in 2019, mainly due to the continued increase in the salary base as per the Fair Work Australia ruling and National Wage Case that is sector-wide. We also added additional staff to meet increased program activities and better serve our clients.
- **Expenditures directly supporting our clients** increased from \$6.1 million in 2018 to \$6.2 million in 2019. The majority (60%) was spent to provide accommodation and 27% assisted with the establishment of tenancies.
- **Property costs** increased by 7%, from \$8.3 million in 2018 to \$8.8 million in 2019, due to increased repair and maintenance costs for a larger housing portfolio.
- **Consultancy, professional fees, marketing and fundraising expenses** increased by 10% from \$1.58 million to \$1.74 million. Launch Housing utilises consultants, contractors and professional services firms, as required, to assist with capacity building, business transformation and governance of major projects.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Launch Housing's cash balance was \$15.9 million, a 24% decrease from the prior year balance of \$20.9 million due to land purchased for a supportive housing project in Dandenong, the part building of 57 tiny homes under the Harris Transportable Housing project, and the purchase and refurbishment of four apartments and three family homes with monies gifted for this purpose.

Non-current assets increased by 19% in 2019, from \$52 million to \$62 million, due to the investment in additional housing stock and purchase of land. The first stage of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system implementation was completed and capitalised. Launch Housing's investment portfolio increased from \$6.3 million in 2018 to \$6.7 million in 2019. The investment portfolio is managed by JBWere and is 100% liquid through investment in market-tradable assets.

Total liabilities decreased by 6%, from \$28.4 million in 2018 to \$26.6 million in 2019, due to usage of capital funds received in advance in 2018 for major housing projects.

Launch Housing's net asset position increased by 15%, from \$47.9 million in 2018 to \$54.8 million in 2019.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the Year Ended 30 June 2019

	2019 (\$'000s)	2018 (\$'000s)
Revenue and other income		
Operational revenue	55,072	48,926
Other revenue	600	798
Total revenue	55,672	49,724
Expenditure		
Client costs	6,220	6,106
Consultancy and other professional fees	1,584	1,147
Depreciation and amortisation expense	1,119	1,073
Employee benefits expense	30,048	27,159
Finance costs	275	243
Impairment loss on revaluation	14	506
Marketing and fundraising expenses	152	437
Motor vehicle and travel expenses	367	361
Operating lease expenses	3,694	3,471
Other staff costs	745	741
Payments to other agencies	5,607	5,219
Office and property costs	5,120	4,791
Other expenses	466	623
Total operating expenditure	55,411	51,877
Operating Surplus / (Loss) for year	261	-2,153
Capital Grant income	6,651	2,897
Net Surplus	6,912	744
Other comprehensive income/(loss)		
Items that will not be reclassified to profit and loss		
Change in fair value of financial assets - Asset revaluation reserve	29	639
Change in fair value of financial assets - General reserve	45	0
Change in fair value of financial assets - Acquisition reserve	0	-30
Other comprehensive income/(loss)	74	609
Total comprehensive income	6,986	1,353

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2019

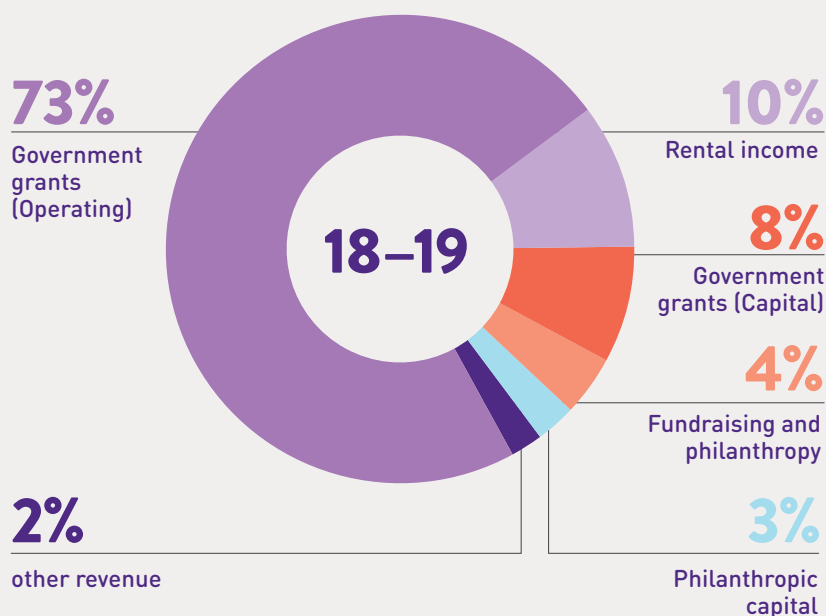
	2019 (\$'000s)	2018 (\$'000s)
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	15,932	20,865
Receivables	1,365	519
Other Assets	2,000	2,706
Total current assets	19,297	24,089
Non-current assets		
Other financial assets	6,657	6,334
Intangible assets	1,325	727
Property, plant and equipment	54,135	45,098
Total non-current assets	62,117	52,159
Total assets	81,414	76,248
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Payables	5,174	4,349
Borrowings	4,061	3,968
Provisions	2,731	2,714
Other liabilities	13,453	16,380
Total current liabilities	25,419	27,411
Non-current liabilities		
Borrowings	844	718
Provisions	349	258
Total non-current liabilities	1,193	976
Total liabilities	26,612	28,387
NET ASSETS	54,802	47,861
Equity		
Reserves	43,597	37,580
Retained earnings	11,205	10,281
Total equity	54,802	47,861

REVENUES

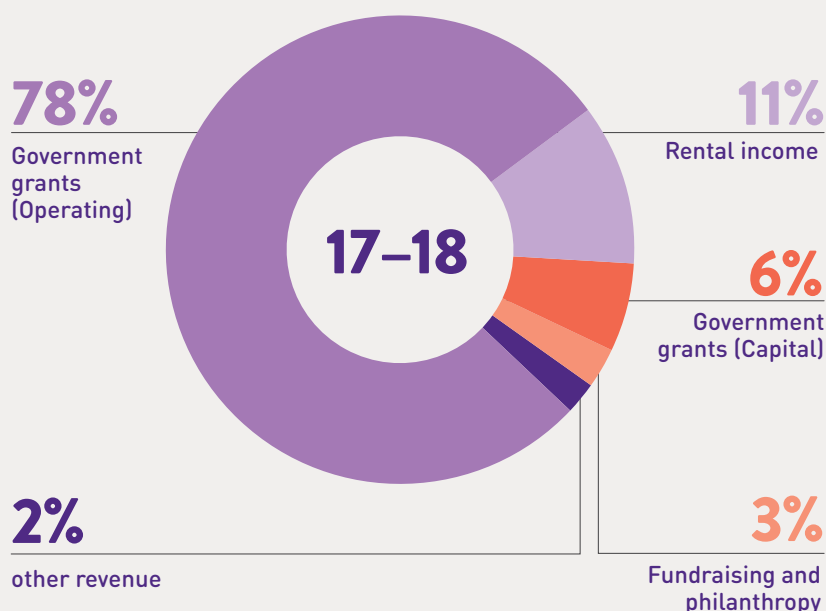
Total income (including capital grants) was \$62.3 million in FY 2018–19, an 18% increase from \$52.6 million in FY 2017–18.

With six units of the Harris Transportable Housing project completed and tenanted by clients, and the purchase and refurbishment of four apartments and three family homes, this has created a new category of income called Philanthropic Capital. The financial year ending 30 June 2019 also saw successful tendering for the Rough Sleepers Initiative programs, establishing two new assertive outreach teams in Frankston and Dandenong to help people sleeping rough in these municipalities.

Revenue 2018–2019:



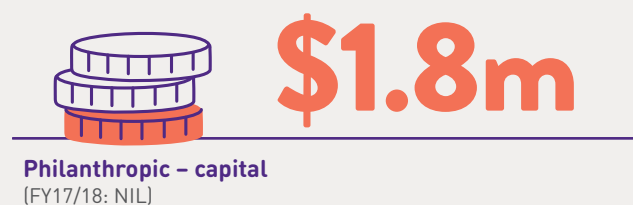
Revenue 2017–2018:



FUNDRAISING INCOME

Over the last financial year, more than \$2.6 million in philanthropic income and donations was raised to support the people who access our services.

An additional \$1.8 million of philanthropic capital was raised to invest in housing projects. Additionally, we received substantial pro-bono and gifts-in-kind support from corporate partners and the community. We hope to continue to grow our donations to give reliability and sustainability to programs and clients moving forward.

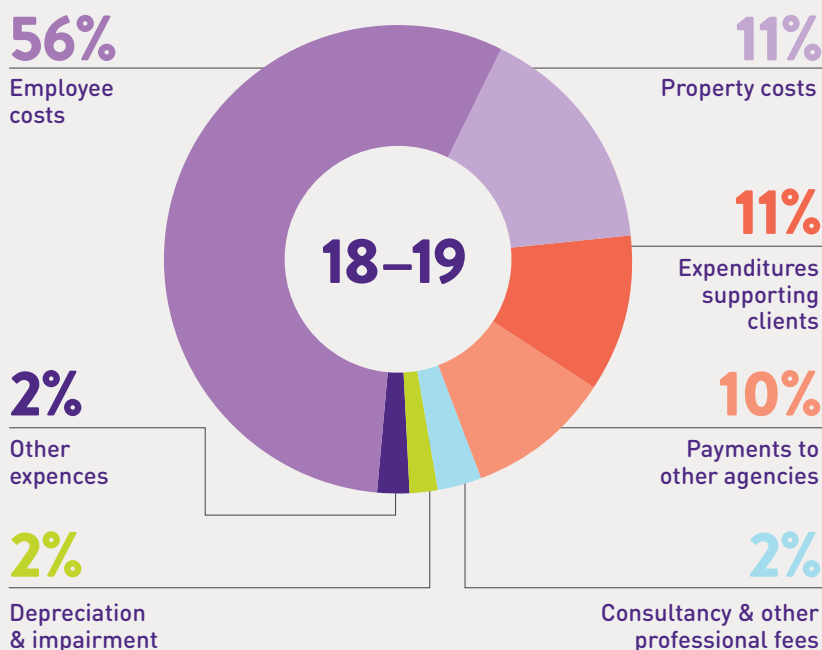


EXPENDITURES

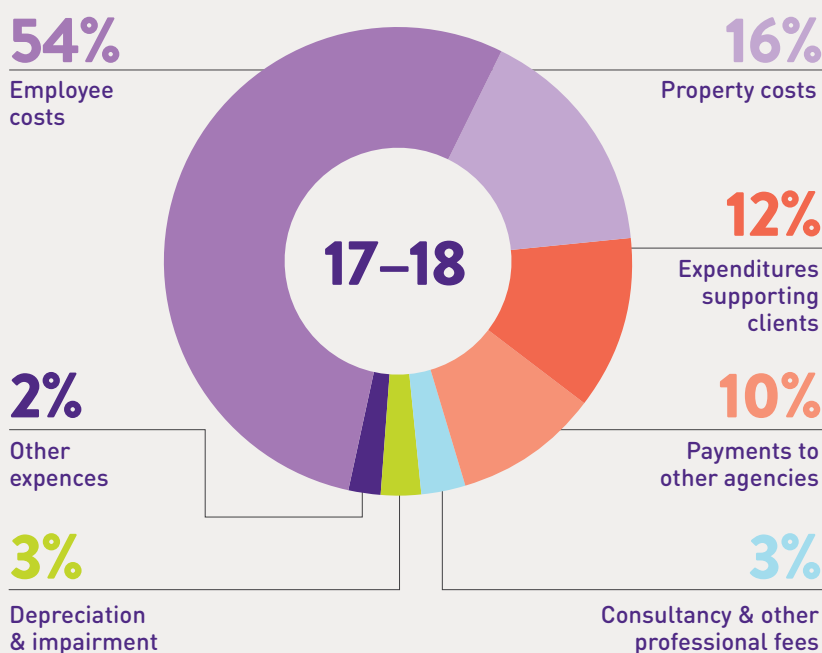
Total operating expenditure to deliver specialist homelessness services was \$55.4 million (2018: \$51.9 million), an increase of 7%.

Employee expenditure increased by 10%, from \$27.9 million in 2018 to \$30.8 million in 2019, mainly due to the continued increase in the salary base as per the Fair Work Australia ruling and National Wage Case that is sector wide, plus additional staff were hired to meet increased program activities and client needs.

Expenditures 2018–2019:



Expenditures 2017–2018:



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We can't end homelessness alone. But we can work toward that mission, thanks to the generous support of those who share our values and vision: our more than 50 active volunteers, our generous and engaged donors, and the partnerships with many businesses and community organisations that continue to support our work.

We also sincerely thank the people we work with who have shared their stories in the media and through Launch Housing channels. Every contribution makes a huge difference to the lives of people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

- The Shine On Foundation
- The William Angliss Charitable Fund (Victoria)
- The Gray Family Charitable Trust
- The Goldsmith Family Foundation
- The Gething-Sambrook Family Foundation
- The Ross Trust
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Brian and Virginia McNamee Foundation
- Bell Charitable Fund
- B B & A Miller Foundation
- Bowness Family Foundation
- Maddocks Foundation

PRIVATE SUPPORTERS

- Erica and Andy Smith
- Jenny Schwartz
- Ron Brownless
- Brad and Geoff Harris (Harris Capital)
- Suzanne Gray
- Daniel and Katherine Rechtman

CORPORATE PARTNERS

- EnergyAustralia
- James Buy Sell
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Maddocks
- Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
- National Australia Bank
- REA Group
- Ridge Properties Limited
- Rotary Club of Melbourne
- Society Melbourne

GOVERNMENT

- Bayside City Council
- Darebin City Council
- City of Maribyrnong
- City of Melbourne
- City of Port Phillip
- City of Stonnington
- City of Yarra
- Court Services Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Department of Human Services (Commonwealth)
- Department of Justice
- Department of Social Services
- VicRoads



active volunteers share our values and mission to end homelessness

CONTACT US

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E info@launchhousing.org.au

www.launchhousing.org.au

@LaunchHousing



If you are in crisis call

1800 825 955