

IT'S TIME TO END
HOMELESSNESS



ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME	03
ABOUT LAUNCH HOUSING	04
OUR IMPACT	06
HOW WE WILL END HOMELESSNESS	07
Our Theory of Change	07
Our Strategy	08
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND	10
Our COVID-19 response	10
Colin's story	12
Outreach and entry points	14
Our crisis services	18
Integrated responses	20
INTERVENTIONS THAT WORK	22
10 years of Common Ground	22
Families Supportive Housing	23
Private rental assistance	24
Addressing youth homelessness	26
ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY	29
HomeGround Real Estate	30
Advocacy and fundraising	31
Lived experience	32
Volunteers and material aid	34
Partners and supporters	36
DEMONSTRATING GLOBAL LEADERSHIP	38
FINANCIALS	40



Bevan Warner
Chief Executive Officer



Neil Chatfield
Board Chair

WELCOME

By Bevan Warner, Chief Executive Officer and Neil Chatfield, Board Chair

This has been a year like no other. The devastating impact of hard to control bushfires, closely followed by the fear and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic have pushed Victorians to the brink.

We learnt that our own health is intimately connected to the health of the person next to us and that everyone needs shelter. We witnessed an outpouring of empathy, as many people faced their own economic and housing insecurity for the first time. During the pandemic, the importance of a home was suddenly made stark for everyone.

The solutions to homelessness are simple: we need good quality affordable housing and appropriate support. Evidence shows it is more cost effective to solve homelessness than to make its experience less harsh.

When COVID-19 hit we put strategy into action, rapidly coordinating with other services to meet clients where they were. With financial support from government, and practical and in-kind support from partners - new and old - we hit the streets and moved people into safety.

We worked with hotels and motels as the only seven-day-a-week outreach service provider to move large numbers of people into emergency accommodation, keeping them and our community safe. A special thank you to everyone who helped make this possible. The generous financial support and volunteer-led material aid and food systems changed lives, reminding staff and clients that other people care.

Demonstrating the importance of a home - especially at this moment in time - is something we are desperate not to lose sight of. That is why we chronicled our hotels response in a soon-to-be-released documentary. This will contain interviews with staff and clients who have been housed in emergency accommodation through this period.

We conceived of long-term solutions and laid the foundations for a permanent reversal in rough sleeping in Melbourne, via a government promise of permanent housing for nearly 2,000 people.

That's not to minimise the work we did before COVID-19.

BUILDING ON STRONG FOUNDATIONS

In July we marked five years as Launch Housing. A process of reflection with staff and critical friends resulted in a renewed commitment to a more intentional Theory of Change and a new four-year strategy.

We want to make Melbourne a world leading city for ending homelessness, but we can't do it by ourselves. We will create opportunities for community involvement so everyone can see themselves in our work alongside our clients' remarkable resilience.



We have a plan and the team to do this, and with the right community support we can build back better.

We pay special thanks to Tony Dalton and Geoff Nicholson who stepped down from our Board of Directors this year, for their many years of dedicated and thoughtful service. We welcome Diane White who commenced her Directorship on 1 July 2020.

Homelessness need only be short and non-recurrent. As we fortify our resolve and renew our commitment to ending homelessness, we say thank you to our amazing supporters, staff and the many clients who enrich our lives.

Everybody deserves a home and it remains our job to make it happen.

ABOUT LAUNCH HOUSING

As Launch Housing turned five this year, we underwent a process of re-examination with staff, clients and critical friends: Did our mission still ring true? Was our purpose still relevant? Did we need to fundamentally change our focus?

This process reaffirmed a singular mission to end homelessness.

While there will always be trauma-fuelled entries into homelessness, some people are getting trapped because there isn't enough housing and support. We now have a strategy to reverse the rate of homelessness. It pushes us to create likely and unlikely alliances, galvanise the community

into action, and scale up homelessness supports and housing solutions we know work. It also elevates our focus on helping people with the most complex needs, leaving no one behind.

WHO WE ARE

Launch Housing is an independent Melbourne based community organisation passionately committed to ending homelessness.

From providing high quality housing to an innovative range of support, education and employment services, we bring solutions to homelessness under one roof for thousands at risk of - or experiencing - the crisis and trauma of homelessness.

With more than

400

staff

working across

14

locations in
metropolitan
Melbourne,

we combine direct action with
advocacy, research and innovation
to drive widespread change.



OUR MISSION:

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 this happen.

OUR VALUES:

Empowerment



Agility



Leadership



Courage



Fresh Thinking

OUR BOARD

Launch Housing is governed by a professional board of directors who volunteer their time. Our board members have public, private and community sector expertise in ASX-listed companies, law and commerce, design and construction, government and professional advisory services.



Neil Chatfield (Chair)



Wayne Read



Megan Fletcher



Jill Riseley



Pam White



Carolyn Gale



Prof. Ron Wakefield



Dominic Esposito



The Hon. Katharine Williams



Diane White



Tony Dalton



Geoff Nicholson

OUR FY2019-20 IMPACT

WHO WE'VE HELPED:



16,213

individual people assisted (unique clients).
Equivalent of 100+ of Melbourne's trams packed full.



6%

more clients, with many helped more intensively

64%

of our clients are between 25-54 years old.

COVID-19 IMPACT:

5X HIGHER

numbers of rough sleepers in Melbourne revealed through COVID-19 emergency accommodation needs compared to 2018 Street Count data.

11X INCREASE

in emergency accommodation spending year on year March to June 2020 (from \$612,247.62 to \$6,803,122.28)

123,177

nights of safety secured through COVID-19 emergency accommodation to June 30.

That's an average of 63 nights per client.



1,949

clients were assisted into emergency accommodation.*

From 16 March to 30 June 2020.

851

clients were assisted from 16 March to 15 September.

51%

more clients seen per week by outreach teams from April-June 2020, compared to average numbers pre-COVID-19 with minimal increase in overall staff numbers.

*Including all those supported by Launch Housing and those who went on to Project Greenlight after initial assistance.

DECREASED PERMANENT HOUSING EXITS:

68%

of clients could not access community and public housing due to stock shortages.



The lack of exit options is entrenching people in a cycle of homelessness.

LAUNCH HOUSING STAFF:

451

Launch Housing employees as at 30 June 2020 (up 9% from 30 June 2019).

50%+

of employees have been at Launch Housing for more than two years.



OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

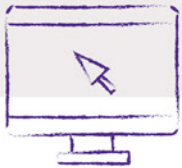
Our Theory of Change describes how we will end homelessness.

By mobilising the wider community in service delivery, we will create the knowledge and conditions for homelessness to be solved instead of being seen as an intractable problem that has to be tolerated. Melbourne is one of the most liveable cities in the world, but not for everyone. Meanwhile, solutions to homelessness exist. Other cities are doing better getting people out of homelessness into safe and secure housing at a faster rate than people entering homelessness for the first time. We can be a world leading city ending homelessness and reach our goal of Melbourne Zero: Everyone housed, Zero homelessness.

IF we infuse our high-quality service delivery with strategic alliances, mobilise a community response and influence change towards a more inclusive society...

THEN we can change lives by ensuring there is an adequate supply of housing to give people homes...

SO we can end homelessness in Melbourne and others will follow our lead.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

launchhousing.org.au/strategy-now-and-beyond

PROBLEM

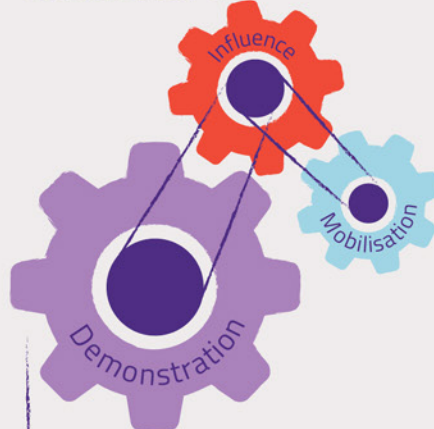
What is happening now

There is a housing crisis that is leading to a rise in homelessness in Melbourne.



ENERGY

What we can do

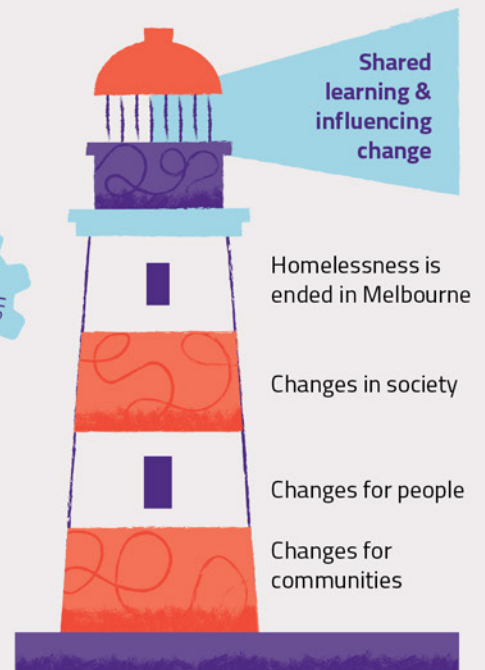


Collaboration and collective impact

- Accessing housing
- Retaining housing
- Preventing homelessness

SOLUTION

Imagine what we can achieve together



OUR STRATEGY 2020-24

Launch Housing has a four-year strategy to reverse the rate of homelessness.

This strategy calls on us to act intentionally, step by step, to make real change happen. We will publish an annual Impact Report to focus attention and to help government and the community be 'the change we want to see'. When our 12 Impact Measures move in the right direction, we will start to end homelessness.

This will take stubborn determination and a collective impact approach, but we can't afford to wait and let the situation get worse.

CRITICAL FRIENDS

Launch Housing consulted 22 'critical friends' to test ideas and discern new thinking. Thank you to those of you who fed into the process, including leading thinkers from business, government, academia, the housing and homelessness sector, and allied health organisations.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS



SCALE UP INTERVENTIONS THAT WORK TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS.

We should try new things but we must scale up initiatives that we know already work.



LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND, DELIVERING HOUSING SOLUTIONS OTHERS WON'T.

We will provide housing with social connection and supports that the 'for sale' private developer market won't build.



BRING GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TO REVERSE THE RATE OF HOMELESSNESS.

We will look globally to act locally. We'll publish a Capital Cities Index to track progress on ending rough sleeping in Melbourne, compared to other leading cities worldwide.



ENERGISE STAFF, CLIENTS AND THE COMMUNITY TO TAKE ACTION.

We must convince everyone that homelessness is not OK, that it is not inevitable and that it can be fixed. We need to smash the stigma that people choose homelessness.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1

Recurring homelessness reduces through proactive responses to trauma.

2

More Education First Youth Foyers are available to young people.

3

Private rental properties are viable for people on very low incomes.

4

House all people sleeping rough in Melbourne.

5

More and better permanent supportive housing is built.

6

A world class, health and homelessness hub is established.

7

Deliver a Melbourne Zero Project that counts and reports on street homelessness.

8

Build out a Melbourne Alliance to End Homelessness, a sought after trusted network of lived experience, invested leaders and influencers.

9

Galvanise people and groups to take practical action.

10

Elevate ending homelessness as key to Melbourne's most liveable city status.



WATCH OUR STRATEGY 2020-24 EXPLAINER VIDEO

Read the full strategy, including the list of priority actions and our impact measures at: launchhousing.org.au/strategy-now-and-beyond



LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

OUR COVID-19 RESPONSE

From 16 March to 30 June 2020, Launch Housing assisted 1949* people into COVID-19 hotel and motel emergency accommodation.

This equates to an average 76 nights of safety per person who had nowhere safe to self-isolate during this unprecedented and indiscriminate public health emergency. Launch Housing rapidly modified services and team structures to ensure we reached whoever we could, wherever they were. From a collective sector effort, almost overnight rough sleeping on our streets effectively ceased.

“We have these people in our grasp and a never before opportunity to make a permanent dent in the rising rate of homelessness in Melbourne.”

– **Bevan Warner**, Launch Housing Chief Executive

Victoria's homelessness workers' contribution to the emergency response has been vital – notable in the very low rates of COVID-19 contracted amongst those experiencing homelessness.



Nurses Jennifer Adams and Sara Aberdeen, employed through Star Health, offer COVID-19 tests to residents at our Southbank Crisis Accommodation Site.

AT A GLANCE:

5X HIGHER

numbers of rough sleepers in Melbourne revealed through volume of COVID-19 emergency accommodation needs (March to June 2020) compared to 2018 Street Count data.



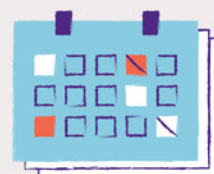
123,177

nights of safety secured through COVID-19 emergency accommodation through to 30 June 2020.

51% MORE

clients seen per week by outreach teams from April-June 2020, compared to average numbers from start of FY19-20, with minimal increase to overall staff numbers.

Only seven-day-a-week mobile outreach service still operating throughout much of the health crisis.



*Including all those supported by Launch Housing and those that went on to Project Greenlight after initial assistance.

OUR RESPONSE WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Hotel accommodation is a stopgap, not a forever home and was never designed to accommodate people with complex needs for the long-term. Current occupants will need more suitable housing, with the necessary day-to-day amenities that are only available in a home or supported living.

We commend the Victorian Government for providing one of the most rapid and sustained responses for people experiencing homelessness in Australia. With a green light to do what was needed and with more funding for the Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) and the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) used to fund emergency stays in hotels, we were able to provide more intensive and sustained support to people throughout the pandemic. Additionally, with DHHS funding we:

- Partnered to operate a new 43-bed COVID-19 Isolation and Recovery Facility (CIRF)
- Assisted in setting up the Homelessness Hotels Emergency Accommodation Response Teams (HEART), and are one of five providers
- Embedded specialist homelessness support across 20 hotels as part of the HEART response

Launch Housing also invested its own funds for additional pandemic-related costs (including cleaning and maintenance) to support the Hotels Emergency Response.

“We now need to get the Federal Government to take the expert economic advice and to turbocharge the recovery with more social housing, so the homes get built to avoid future instances of homelessness.”

– **Bevan Warner**, Launch Housing Chief Executive
quoted in The Age 27 July 2020

“Sleeping on the streets is no good. It’s a very cold, debilitating experience ...

In one way being here [hotel emergency accommodation], it’s sort of given me the ability to rethink my life and try to reorient my life.”

– **Chris**



Chris is a client who was housed in temporary hotel accommodation in Melbourne CBD.

Spend on Emergency Accommodation from March to June 2020:

\$1,785,531



Pre-COVID-19

(July 1st 2019 - March 15th 2020)

\$6,803,122



During COVID-19

70%

of all Victorians booked into emergency accommodation were supported by Launch Housing, based on an estimate of 4000 Victorians accommodated overall.

Source: the Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020.



THE NEED TO HOUSE EVERYONE HAS NEVER BEEN CLEARER OR MORE URGENT.

The Launch Housing-commissioned Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020 estimates that 33,000 rough sleepers and others across Australia were accommodated in hotels and motels from March to September 2020.

This stark figure is reflective of the national climb in homelessness which grew by 14% — to around 290,000 Australians — in the four years to 2018-19.

Australia's homelessness rate is predicted to surge as short-term coronavirus income and housing protections end.

We need **housing fast** to ensure the efforts of our clients and workers is not wasted and people don't have to go back to living on the street.



SEARCH

Search 'Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020' on launchhousing.org.au.

COLIN'S STORY

In early 2020, Colin Johnstone experienced homelessness for the first time. He slept rough in the Sidney Myer Music Bowl or sometimes along the Yarra River, up towards the MCG or near the Botanic Gardens and occasionally behind Federation Square. This was where Bolton Clarke nurse, Mel Tyson and Launch Housing Rough Sleepers Initiative outreach worker, Carmel O'Reilly met him in March in the early days of the pandemic.

"[They] just explained to me that you're going to be housed in a hotel. It brought a tear ... knowing someone actually cares," he said.

Within a few short hours, they had him housed in an inner-city serviced apartment. There was relief but then it became an anxious wait for Colin, who worried about where he would go when the temporary COVID-19 hotels response ended.

"On the street, you don't even feel like you belong in society any more. You lose your self-esteem pretty fast."

With support from Launch Housing's Private Rental Assistance Program, Colin is now living in his own one-bedroom rental apartment on Flinders Street.

"It's a small space ... but I've organised it to suit me. Makes me feel like I've ticked one major thing off the list. Makes you feel like you can progress again."

Colin is now re-training as a cleaner and is also making longer-term plans to help others on the streets. Walking through the city near his rental apartment the other day someone called out to ask for some money.

"I said to him, 'I'd rather grab a coffee with you and have a chat'. I just ... for some reason, I feel this is what I need to do. Now I've been through homelessness, I feel it's my destiny to do this. It's weird," he said.

"It's about having the right person to help you, as I had when Mel and Carmel found me at the back of Federation Square."

"There's just so many little gaps in the system but then you've got all these fantastic things too and people who do care."

Now Colin, who was profiled in a series of Age articles, is featuring in a documentary capturing Launch Housing's pandemic response.

"When [film-maker] Will sent me a clip, I was listening to me, another gentleman and a lady talk about sleeping rough and it brought a tear to my eye again. I wasn't worried or scared on the streets but I'm glad I'm not there now and it makes me feel sad for those who are."

Below: Colin Johnstone at his temporary Melbourne CBD accommodation. Photo courtesy of The Age photographer Scott McNaughton.



OUTREACH AND ENTRY POINTS

Launch Housing's outreach and entry point teams are the first point of contact for many people experiencing homelessness. Through 2020, Launch Housing adapted these services to provide support where there was greatest need.



Embedded support workers Callum and Sarah in a Melbourne city hotel.

We increased the number of outreach workers who were directly reaching out to people on the street and were the only seven-day-a-week outreach service operating continuously through the initial crisis and the first lockdown. The number of clients we saw increased significantly as we worked to get as many people into accommodation as possible. A key change for our workers was actually having access to more and better quality accommodation and housing options for clients.

"Prior to COVID-19 I would say I was just a cog in a broken system. It is actually really nice to be able to offer clients suitable options. Now is the first time we've been able to have rough sleepers in a place where we can support them."

– Sarah Williams, embedded hotel worker.

*This represents 295 more than FY2018-19. Clients assisted by entry points have been decreasing over the last couple of financial years as we have increased outreach support. This trend was interrupted by COVID-19 in March 2020.

AT A GLANCE:



95%

increase in clients seen by outreach teams in FY2019-20 compared to FY2018-19 (756 clients).

79%

of all emergency accommodation spending from entire financial year, spent from March to June 2020.



10,989*

clients seen at our entry points through FY 2019-20.



537%

increase in outreach clients seen in March to June period, compared to FY2018-19 to FY2019-20.

\$2772

increase in average financial support per person year on year, March to June for clients who received financial assistance for emergency accommodation. The average amount has jumped so significantly due to our ability to assist clients on an ongoing basis through COVID-19.

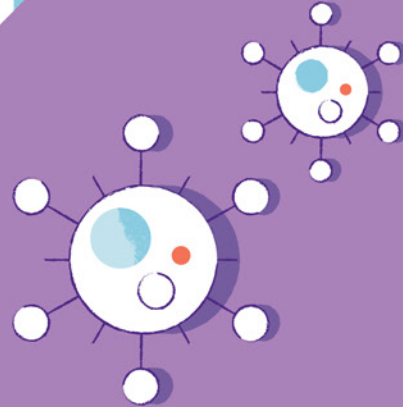
ASSESSMENTS REVEAL CONCERNING TRENDS

The hotels emergency response has enabled us to gather data and identify homelessness trends at a scale that was not possible pre-pandemic.

Launch Housing utilises the Vulnerability Index Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), an evidence-based pre-screening triage tool that assesses the health and social needs of clients. This then helps to identify the degree and complexity of their support needs.

The majority of clients in hotels are not new to us, with an average history of eight years since their first contact with Launch Housing.

The data underscores a lack of suitable and affordable housing for people to move into, especially for those exposed to the trauma of long-term homelessness. No one should have to spend years churning in and out of homelessness. We now have the opportunity to build back better from this pandemic. With the ability to provide longer term support to people currently housed in emergency accommodation, we are making headway on changing the trajectory of people's lives. We need more and better accommodation to help more people to exit homelessness for good.



COVID-19 IMPACTS ON ENTRY POINTS

To ensure our critical entry point services remained open we rapidly adjusted the way we worked:

- We switched 90% of our service delivery to phone only.
- We provided 163% (or \$934) more client financial assistance as people were supported into accommodation.
- On-site hygiene protocols increased, including a concierge to screen for symptoms, provision of masks for clients and increased touchpoint surface cleaning.

CLIENTS' EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS BEFORE HOTELS

8 YEARS

average history with Launch Housing

50

instances of support

50%

of clients highly vulnerable (identified via VI-SPDAT)



MEETING CLIENTS WHERE THEY ARE

Our Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) teams assist clients from our walk-in entry points as well as outposts where people are likely to need support.

Our workers provide assistance from the Melbourne Magistrates Court, Neighbourhood Justice Centre, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Thorne Harbour Health Services and the North Richmond Medically Supervised Injecting Room (MSIR).

The North Richmond MSIR is our newest outpost. Our workers there have found many people who struggle to access—and have limited knowledge of—available services. Through COVID-19 there was significant demand for assistance from MSIR service users who had compromised health and were at greater risk of being severely impacted by COVID-19.

MORE SUPPORT, BETTER OUTCOMES

With increased periods of support made possible through longer stays in hotel accommodation, we have been able to connect people with services they may have needed for a long time but were previously unable to access.



OUR PARTNER SERVICES

Thank you to our partners cohealth, St Vincent's Hospital, The Alfred Hospital, Royal Melbourne Hospital and The Living Room. These partner services make possible sustained, specialised, flexible and responsive client support.

FLOW-ON IMPACT OF CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

People who experience homelessness often deal with an array of health and wellbeing issues which can worsen with prolonged homelessness. A project between Launch Housing and an inner city hospital showed that emergency department presentations and ambulance use were significantly higher for people experiencing chronic homelessness.



Emergency department presentations through 2013-2017

9.1

presentations per client experiencing homelessness

1.8

presentations per all other clients

Ambulance usage through 2013-2017



4.6

ambulance arrivals per client experiencing homelessness

1.6

ambulance arrivals per all other clients

A 2013 report by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute AHURI 2013 found

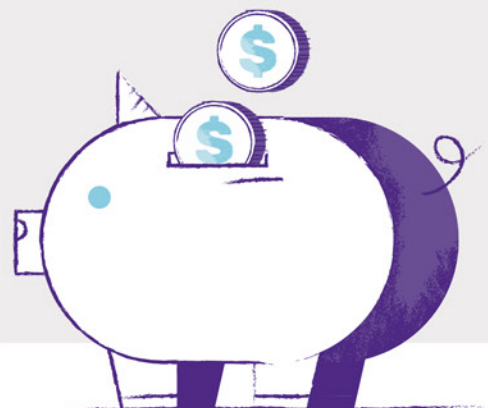
POTENTIAL ANNUAL GOVERNMENT SAVINGS OF BETWEEN

\$14,712

AND

\$44,137

per client per year for single men with specialist support and accommodation.



OUR ONGOING CRISIS SERVICE

Launch Housing's four crisis accommodation sites address the varying needs of people experiencing homelessness across Melbourne.

We aim to give those in crisis of all backgrounds—individuals, families, people of all genders—the care, time and rest they need to recover from their experience of homelessness. Our four crisis sites are located in Dandenong, East St Kilda, Southbank and South Melbourne.

“In the world of crisis and COVID-19 restrictions, where things change hourly, the resilience, strength and adaptability of our teams have shown no limits.”

– **Andrew Koehrer**, Launch Housing Southbank.

Through FY 2019-20 at our crisis sites:

- We supported 1,433 individuals and families for an average of 3.1 months.
- We saw 239 fewer clients through FY2019-20 as we implemented social distancing and hygiene protocols to ensure the safety of all residents and staff through COVID-19.
- Though we supported fewer people, we provided 1.5 weeks' more support for existing clients to June 2020.
- Across the four sites, the major reasons for seeking support were the overwhelming lack of affordable housing and family violence.

CRITICAL SUPPORT WINDOW

For the period they stay with us in crisis accommodation, clients not only have a guaranteed place to rest their head but expert support on hand to assist with any ongoing barriers to their wellbeing, including mental health and alcohol and other drugs concerns.

Specially designed on-site programs offer clients the opportunity to engage as part of a community working through some of their biggest challenges. Clients can access employment, financial counselling and healthcare supports, all while keeping connected with a Launch Housing worker for ongoing support to help achieve their goals.

Our Southbank site has an award-winning on-site alcohol and other drugs (AOD) program. Created to care for people in a respectful way, it focuses on prevention and harm reduction. During COVID-19 the AOD team opened for referrals for clients in emergency accommodation and have provided case management support to 16 clients referred through the Rough Sleepers Initiative Outreach Team. The AOD team also provided assertive outreach support to a number of motels, offering sterile injecting equipment and brief interventions, including around overdose prevention.



99 PEOPLE

people supported by AOD team FY 2019-20

53 fewer than last year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

11

lives saved by administering Naloxone, a drug treatment which temporarily reverses opioid overdoses.



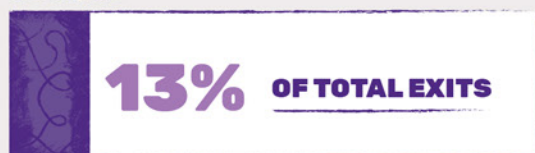
WHAT NEXT AFTER CRISIS?

The daily challenge of finding housing options for our clients highlights the critical housing juncture we are at now, unless more social and affordable housing is urgently provided. Our clients have met personal milestones while supported in emergency hotels accommodation, but this work can be quickly undone and the reality is that many risk a return to homelessness.

Over the last four years, we have only recorded a 1% increase in the number of our crisis clients able to transition into safe and sustainable accommodation. This sadly demonstrates the reality that the majority of our crisis clients do not move into safe and affordable housing after their crisis stay due to a critical shortage of quality affordable housing options in the market.

Safe and affordable tenancies secured after crisis:

2017/18



71 out of 536 exits from crisis

2018/19



68 out of 489 exits from crisis

2019/20



56 out of 383 exits from crisis



LAUNCH HOUSING CORE DATA REVEALS CONCERNING TREND IN HOUSING EXITS

Over July 2019-June 2020:

ONLY 32%

of exits from transitional housing were into genuinely affordable social housing (public and community housing), on par with the previous 12 months.

20%

of people who left transitional housing moved into another transitional property.

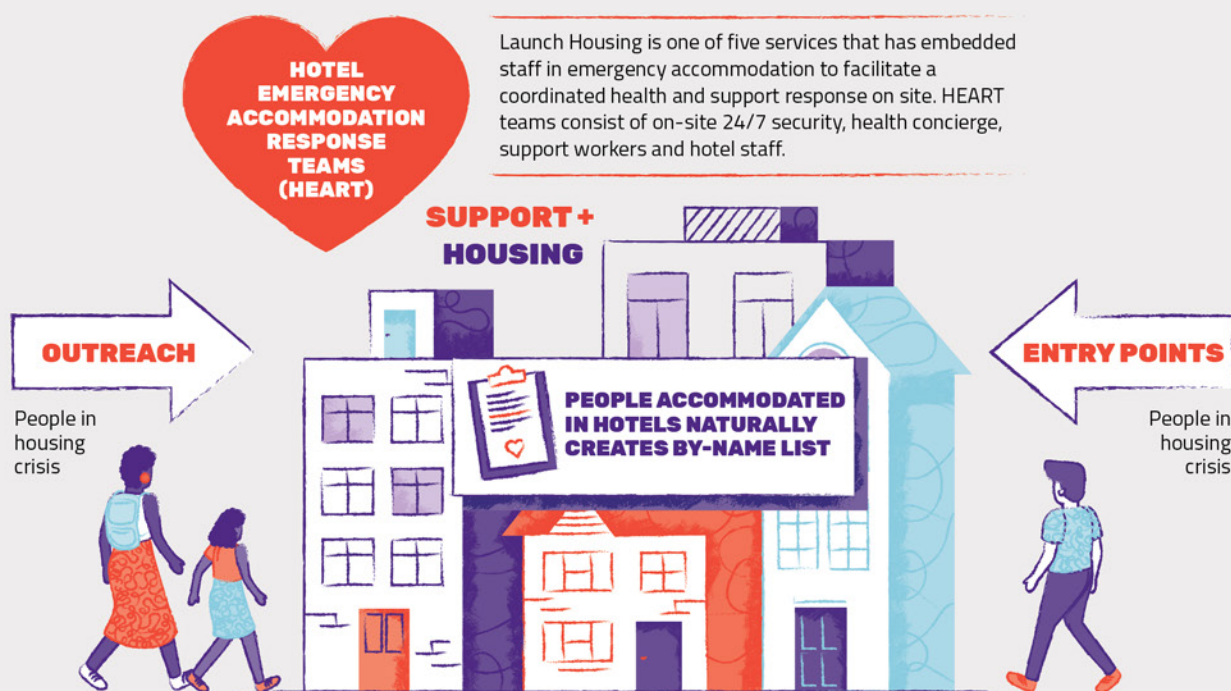


Exits into long-term housing have fallen by

20%

HOW INTEGRATED RESPONSES CAN SOLVE HOMELESSNESS

Our COVID-19 response demonstrated how with collaboration and political will we CAN get to zero homelessness. The emergency response has enabled services to accommodate everyone who needs shelter. An assumption that homelessness is inevitable has historically prevented effective change but the rapid response since March 2020 shows change is possible through collaboration, partnerships and alliances—all key elements of our Strategy 2020-24.



A By-Name List is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in a community. It includes a robust set of data and supports coordinated access and prioritisation at a household level. It also provides information about homelessness rates at a system level.

Through the hotel emergency response, we have been able to connect with the majority of people sleeping rough in Melbourne, getting to know them by name. This has effectively created a By-Name List. By-Name Lists provide the critical data necessary to achieve Functional Zero.

ENABLED AND SUPPORTED BY THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT:

Additional Housing Establishment Funds (HEF) to extend emergency accommodation until April 2021

1,100 leased properties from the private rental market for 18 months

Exits to private rental for up to 150 households

Support packages to assist people with complex needs

Access to social housing units under the 1000 Homes initiative

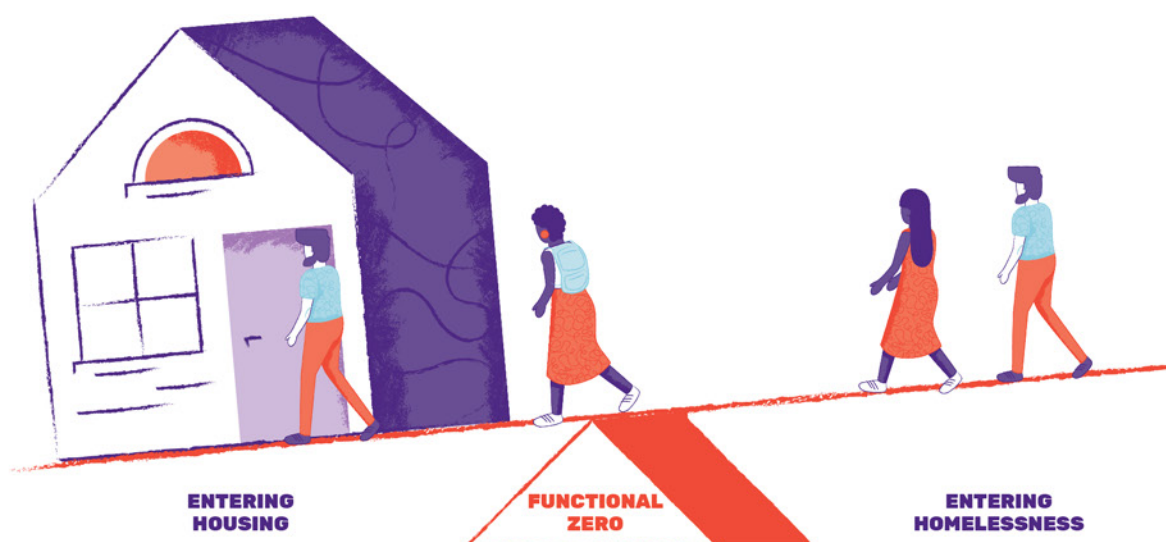
CBD HOTEL TASKFORCE:

Launch Housing joined other Victorian homelessness and allied service providers in collaboration with DHHS to develop a CBD Hotel Taskforce to coordinate the provision of accommodation and support through COVID-19.

WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL ZERO?

If the number of people entering safe and secure housing exceeds the number of people entering into—or already experiencing—homelessness, then we reach Functional Zero. This is how you end homelessness.

Functional Zero can start with localised steps to ending homelessness through local service collaboration, building on local knowledge and local partnerships to develop models which can be shared and replicated across multiple geographic locations and with different cohorts of those experiencing homelessness.



FUNCTIONAL ZERO VIA LOCAL COUNCILS

In the City of Port Phillip a group of foundational stakeholders, including Launch Housing are engaging at both a service delivery and a governance level to create the Port Phillip Zero project. This brings together a range of traditional and non-traditional partners, including local homelessness, health and AOD services, as well as local businesses and philanthropists. As the data lead for this project, we were proud to learn it is now officially only the third outside of North America to achieve a Quality By-Name List certification.

Meanwhile, there's promise of this approach expanding elsewhere. Thirteen Local Government Councils in Victoria, representing 2 million residents have signalled their support for the Functional Zero approach, announcing a 'unified

voice to tackle homelessness' through their Regional Local Government Homelessness & Social Housing Charter 2020. One of Launch Housing's clients was credited with 'moving every person in the room and inspiring 13 Councils to collectively come together to dream up a shared agenda to unite for more social housing to end homelessness'.

A measurable and visible reduction in street homelessness in Melbourne is achievable and would bolster a sense of pride in our city as a global leader for liveability. **Melbourne Zero** could be the catch cry of our post pandemic 'new normal'.

All we need now is more suitable and affordable housing. We can—and should—build back better to a post-homelessness world.



INTERVENTIONS THAT WORK

SCALING UP WHAT WORKS TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

It is time to 'scale up and out' what we know works to prevent experiences of homelessness and the harm it brings. We also want to challenge the too-common practice of developing more pilots and small-scale projects.

Our new strategy sets the stage for confidently expanding successful interventions like Education First Youth Foyers and Common Grounds. We will continue to work closely with philanthropy to drive innovation and prove success to government, bringing method to how we understand successful interventions and being purposeful in how we expand more and better options for our clients.

10 YEARS OF ELIZABETH STREET COMMON GROUND

In 2020 Elizabeth Street Common Ground (ESCG) commenced its 10th anniversary year. Over the past decade, ESCG has provided permanent supportive housing for people who've experienced homelessness and need ongoing wellbeing and mental health care. It's a place where people are valued and supported to reach their goals.

ESCG residents often manage a legacy of intersecting vulnerabilities, including chronic health conditions, mental ill health, disabilities, substance use and trauma.

An independent evaluation of **Common Ground Brisbane** showed that although the cost of providing the housing and support was about \$35,000 per annum per person, this represented a cost avoidance to government of almost \$15,000 per person per year. This was achieved by reducing homelessness and decreasing emergency room visits and rates of hospitalisation.

A 2020 analysis of ESCG administrative data found that of those who commenced their tenancy after 2013:

78%

of residents had sustained their tenancy 12 months or more.

59%

remained in place after 2 years.

While some have lost their tenancy due to anti-social behaviour (17%); in the past 6 years

47%

of those who have exited, moved into community housing.

Whilst there is still more to learn as we continue to evolve the Common Ground model of permanent supportive housing, we can only help more people in this manner by building more Common Grounds.

INTERVENING AT THE RIGHT TIME

There are varying ways people can enter into an experience of homelessness. Job loss or the inability to pay rent can leave someone without safe accommodation and exposed to the traumas that come with homelessness.

Our Private Rental Assistance Program, Tenancy and Drug Court Programs are specially designed to help people avoid homelessness. The programs provide support, including bond payment, rent in advance, or rent in arrears to prevent evictions. While this work is critical to homelessness prevention, throughout 2020 our PRAP and PRAP Plus teams have witnessed the effect of economic uncertainty on the availability of cheaper properties, with many people transitioning into lower rent options due to income instability and financial stress. This is leaving fewer options for our clients.

Anglicare Australia's Rental Affordability Snapshot 2020 found that across Australia, only 1.5% of properties were affordable to a single person on JobSeeker payments who also received the Coronavirus Supplement.



PRIVATE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

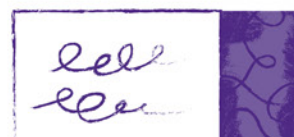
Throughout 2020 many households have found themselves on the brink of homelessness.

The Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) has been able to support people affected by the pandemic who were struggling to maintain their tenancies. From November 2019 the Launch Housing program was made ongoing and will continue to receive funding from DHHS. PRAP was able to hire four new staff members and a new PRAP Plus program started to provide greater support services for people in private rental.

During COVID-19 PRAP adapted its services to operate via a phone service. This has provided assistance to people negotiating rental reductions with real estate agents and covering rent arrears to get people back on track with their tenancies. Demand has increased for both services. However, whereas historically we have provided more support for establishing tenancies, this year we are supporting more people to maintain an existing tenancy. Prior to COVID-19 we were assisting on average 146.5 households per month. From April to June 2020 we assisted on average 298 households per month.

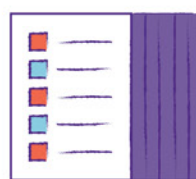
936

enquiries on new phone line from April to June.



76

calls a week on average from April to June 2020.



39

people on intensive support waitlist.



Rent arrears assistance increased by

196%

and rent in advance increased by

31%

comparing pre-COVID-19 to April to June 2020.

Through FY2019-20:

- Tenancies maintained: 758 – 60% more tenancies year on year
- Tenancies secured: 1495 – 40% more tenancies year on year
- Total clients 2092 – 32% increase in clients supported year on year
- 65% of clients now have settled tenancies with support from PRAP Plus.

DRUG COURT HOUSING AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

Exiting jail can be a major risk factor to housing stability but evidence has shown that the provision of stable housing and support can lead to reduced recidivism.

The Launch Housing Drug Court Housing Support (DCHS) Program is a collaborative partnership with the Magistrate's Court of Victoria - Drug Court Program. The Drug Court administers an order called a Drug Treatment Order (DTO) and is a post-sentence program focusing on the rehabilitation and treatment of offenders who have an alcohol or other drug issue. Launch Housing's Drug Court Housing Support Program provides ongoing housing support and pathways into affordable and sustainable long-term housing options for participants.

In late 2019, Launch Housing secured a new tender with Drug Court Victoria (DCV) to deliver a revised Drug Court Housing and Support Program. This revised program provides an integrated approach to help people who have engaged with the Drug Court to establish and sustain tenancies and transition to independent living within the community.

The support model includes five highly skilled individuals consisting of a coordinator, head lease tenancy worker and three housing outreach support workers. This multi-disciplinary program provides high quality support to help clients maintain stable housing for the duration of their Drug Treatment Order and beyond.

The structure of 'one team' comprising multiple disciplines has improved tenancy outcomes and leads to improved communication and achievement of wellbeing goals. Already, the team has assisted 42 people to end their experience of homelessness across 33 properties and supported 338 individuals into short term motel and rooming house accommodation, providing them with an opportunity to end their experience of homelessness and cycle of housing breakdowns.

INADEQUATE AMOUNT OF MUCH-NEEDED SOCIAL HOUSING

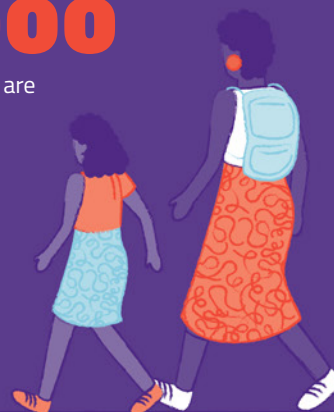
Social housing is an intervention that works, there's just not enough of it. The lack of suitable and affordable housing in Victoria is one of the biggest challenges we face in ending homelessness. More than 80,000 adults and children are estimated to be on Victoria's Housing Register, the state's housing waiting list, which was growing daily even before the pandemic.

The Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020 finds that decades of belt-tightening have seen Australia's social housing supply effectively halved since the 1990s. In the decade to 2016, the national shortfall of private rental properties affordable for low income tenants grew by 54%.

More than

80,000

adults and children are estimated to be on Victoria's Housing Register



ADDRESSING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Experiencing homelessness is overwhelming, scary and stressful, especially for children.

Research shows an early experience of homelessness can be a significant contributor to future experiences of homelessness and severely impacts young people's potential to thrive. For the thousands of Victorian 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. Estimates show that every time a child changes school, they effectively fall three to six months behind their peers. Rapid support to house young people and keep them in school is vital to preventing any long-term impact from their experience of homelessness. That's why one of our Strategic Impact Indicator measures focuses on keeping kids in school with housing and specialised support.

EDUCATION PATHWAYS PROGRAM

The Education Pathways Program (EPP) is an innovative specialist early intervention program provided at Launch Housing's South Melbourne site that supports children in crisis accommodation.

The program helps some of the most vulnerable children in our community to find security, stability and support at a time when their lives feel unpredictable and unsafe. The program is designed to reduce lost learning time for children, develop partnerships with schools and help parents navigate the education system. The parents EPP have worked with express a great sense of relief and comfort knowing their kids are catching up on lost learning time while they are provided with the space and time to work toward securing a permanent home.

A recent evaluation found that the EPP was highly effective in ensuring that children are linked to schools as quickly as possible. A total of 187 children received support from the EPP over a 3-year period; 159 of these children were not enrolled when first contacted by the EPP. After working with the EPP 79% of these children were enrolled at primary school.

Throughout the pandemic all services have moved online with our assertive outreach provided in 15-minute slots via telehealth. COVID-19 has highlighted the digital divide. None of the 50 children the EPP worked with had stable internet connections or devices to join their classmates with remote

learning. Our generous philanthropic funders allowed the EPP to repurpose funding to purchase 50 devices with internet connection, allowing children to engage with education from home and also attend group work and social connection opportunities so they weren't doubly disadvantaged during lockdowns.

Through FY 2019-20:

50

children supported

81%

enrolled in school

80%

of children who accessed the service were diagnosed with a learning disability, and able to receive assistance for this.

7

children secured access to lifelong NDIS support through our teams' advocacy.

TAMARA'S STORY

Tamara connected with Launch Housing in 2019 at one of the most difficult periods of her life; experiencing homelessness with her two sons.

"I was trying to keep the kids in school as much as I could, which made it hard ... because we didn't know where we were going to be sleeping the night before."



After meeting with our South Melbourne families team, Tamara's sons engaged with Launch Housing's Education Pathways Program where they were supported to transition to new schools once they had found their long-term housing. One of her children was also diagnosed with a learning disability for which he is now able to receive treatment.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROVIDED TO CHILDREN DURING COVID-19

50

iPads/laptops with internet connection

100+

activity packs were delivered to children during lockdown



Books and learning activities were purchased and provided to children under five, in order to build a home library and encourage literacy while in lockdown

Taxi vouchers were provided for those children who are deemed 'at risk' and need to attend school



Food vouchers and material aid purchased and dropped to families during the pandemic



EDUCATION FIRST YOUTH FOYERS

Education First Youth Foyers (EFYF) are an effective way of improving outcomes for young people through long term accommodation and school engagement.

According to a 2019 KPMG Economic Evaluation commissioned by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the model delivers an approximate \$10 million net benefit over 20 years compared to transitional housing services. This includes government savings in avoided employment and housing support payments, reduced emergency department presentations, fewer hospital admissions and reduced offenses—plus increased earnings for the young people.

Launch Housing operates two EFYFs based at Holmesglen Institute's Glen Waverley campus and the Kangan Institute in Broadmeadows. Throughout FY2019-20 students quickly adapted to "iso-life" as their education and wellbeing programs shifted online. The students continued their 'something for something' in new and creative ways. Something for Something is a part of the Foyer approach where students share a talent, skill or give back to the Foyer community in exchange for an agreed upon benefit.

Through lockdown Foyer students made COVID-19 self-care packs with home-made sanitiser, hosted cooking classes for their fellow students (one student blew everyone away with their lesson in pierogi making!) and took on dress-ups and make up challenges to keep the Iso-blues away.

ACROSS OUR FOYERS IN 2019-20:



100

young people engaged in education, up 16% from FY2018-19

91

students engaged in employment activities



74

students in paid employment, up 31% from FY2018-19

50%

of Broadmeadows students



65%

of Glen Waverley students

who transitioned out, moved to private rental



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Our Strategic Aim #4 highlights the need to activate and energise staff, clients and the community to action, to demand more of government and the private sector.

Community stigma surrounding people experiencing homelessness often inhibits effective large scale action and policy change. Our 2020 perceptions survey revealed a majority of people didn't undertake any practical actions on the issue of homelessness despite having a high level of empathy and appetite for change. We know people care, we just need to do more to create real opportunities for people to support us in our mission. We can't end homelessness alone.

We are grateful to our creative, generous and tireless supporters who are working to end homelessness in a variety of ways; through making generous donations, volunteering, advocating as a part of our lived experience program, signing petitions and even as landlords leasing their properties through our social enterprise, HomeGround Real Estate. It is with your support that we are able to make a real impact in our community.

OVERWHELMING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

While Launch Housing receives much of its funding from government, diversifying our funding types and sources means more freedom to direct money where it is needed most.

This includes enabling innovative projects and organisational infrastructure so we can scale up, help more people and effect widespread change.

Thank you to our Launch Housing community which has really stepped up its support this past year right throughout the pandemic.

\$73,167

raised through our 2019 Festive Appeal

\$109,456

raised through our dedicated regular givers through FY2019-20

\$251,999

raised through our 2020 Tax Appeal

\$150,000

raised through our Emergency Appeal directly in response to COVID-19



48%

increase from FY2018-19

OUR COMMUNITY OF SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS LANDLORDS

HomeGround Real Estate is a not-for-profit real estate agency operated by Launch Housing in Melbourne.

It provides professional property management services to landlords and tenants while reinvesting any profits back into the community to help those without a home. The model has expanded to Sydney and Canberra, bringing with it the same opportunity for landlords to do good with their management fees while receiving premium property management services. During COVID-19 we adapted to the restrictions and working from home without a hiccup. Our service level didn't falter; in fact, the team banded together and our landlord community showed up so we didn't just survive but we grew in this time.

“HomeGround has made everything effortless. From the day I first called, things have been smooth and efficient... I couldn't be happier.”

Talia



37

new properties listed
FY 2019-20 (up 17%
in total properties
from last year)

**Our total community
of landlords is now**

148

people. 21% more than
FY 2018-19.

OUR PROPERTIES UNDER MANAGEMENT

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

Below market: Tenants pay 10% or more below market rent.

Social: Tenants pay no more than 30% of their income.

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

57

Rooming houses

98

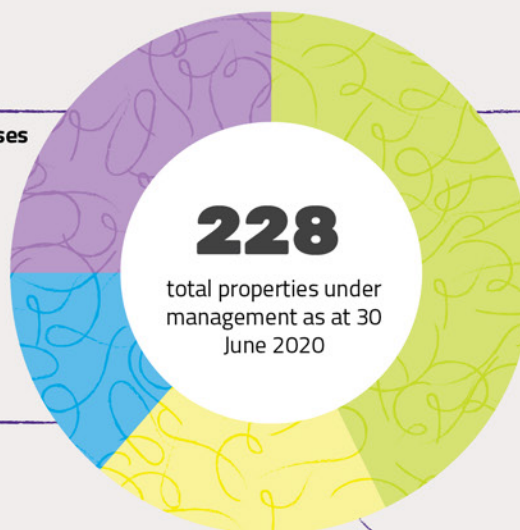
Full market

31

Social

42

Below market



CHANGING THE HOMELESSNESS NARRATIVE THROUGH ADVOCACY

Launch Housing strives to increase empathy towards people experiencing homelessness, eradicate stigma and encourage people to commit to action to end homelessness. Launch Housing's campaigns and advocacy involves community engagement activations both online and through public events to bring people along on our mission to end homelessness.



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

In March this year we launched a campaign calling on our community to sign a petition urging governments to spend more on social housing to ensure those supported through the pandemic would have long-term homes. We were blown away by the support of the Melbourne community:

8,197 PEOPLE

signed a petition calling for permanent homes for people in emergency accommodation.



MELBURNIANS WANT AN END TO HOMELESSNESS

We commissioned polling in July 2020, conducted by Forethought and their partner agency Pure Logic. The survey found Melburnians had a high level of empathy for people experiencing homelessness and that COVID-19 made solving homelessness an issue with personal relevance.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Encouragingly,

76%

believed 'homelessness could happen to anyone'.

58%

believe that ending homelessness in Melbourne is possible.

2/3

agreed that the rates of homelessness impact the safety of all Melburnians.

The vast majority of Melburnians said it is the government's responsibility to solve homelessness.

80%+

said the government should be doing more.



SEARCH

Find the full "Public Perceptions of Homelessness" research at launchhousing.org.au

VALUING THE EXPERTISE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

Launch Housing is committed to embedding the voice of lived experience throughout our services, policy, advocacy and organisational planning. People with lived experience of homelessness have valuable knowledge, insights and expertise and are the experts in talking about the individual and collective impacts of policies and systems. Putting a 'face' to homelessness and showing that it is not a lifestyle choice or a personality flaw is crucial to ending the stigma that makes homelessness tolerable.



20+

LAUNCH HOUSING ENGAGEMENTS:

including workshop contributions to Launch Housing Strategy 2020-24 and Theory of Change, speeches, staffing interviews and inductions, and blog writing.

11

EXTERNAL SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND CONSULTS:

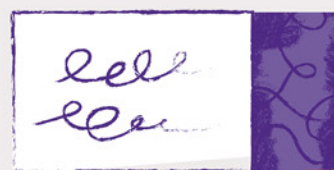
including at City of Port Phillip Local Traders Forum, Yarra City Council Liquor Forum, City of Monash Forum, Regional Response to Homelessness (13 LGAs attended), Department of Justice and Community Safety - Public Drunkenness.



5

MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS:

including a live interview with the panel on ABC TV's The Drum and The Age interviews on emergency accommodation through COVID-19.



These lived experience engagements help raise public awareness of homelessness, amplify the voices of people experiencing homelessness, and generate the cultural and social change needed to end homelessness.

MEET GWEN

Gwen is one of our longest term members of the Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).

Coming to Launch Housing, Gwen was able to secure a transitional property for herself and her son. "Getting transitional housing helped me stabilise. Up until that point I had lost so much confidence in myself. Once I was housed, I could finally think about what I wanted to do, which was to study for a Bachelor of Social Work. I was offered a place at RMIT, around the same time that I successfully applied to the LEAG!"

"I never thought that my negative experience could turn into a positive. I never thought that using services would come in handy for my career, and my professional development!"



Looking at how her life has changed during the time she's been lending her lived experience expertise, Gwen says she's developed so many skills. This has included working in an office setting, as part of a team and applying her lived experience to a wide variety of tasks and projects. In her personal life, Gwen is more self-confident and her mental health is much improved. As someone about to embark on a career in the homelessness sector, her time with Launch Housing has been personally meaningful: it's been about improving outcomes for clients and knowing that she is contributing to the mission of ending homelessness.



VOLUNTEERS AND MATERIAL AID

Through FY2019-20 our community has met us in a time of need. From our dedicated volunteers to an influx of material aid donations, including face masks and ongoing meal deliveries, thank you to everyone who supported our clients and staff during this time.

MATERIAL AID DONATIONS

In particular, thank you to St Mary's House of Welcome and RACV for their meals deliveries from March.

This is a service we did not offer before the pandemic but one that was made possible by the generosity of our community. With this support, clients at our crisis services and those supported in hotel emergency accommodation had access to nutritious meals during lockdown.

Thank you also to the generosity of Tzu Chi Buddhist Foundation, Simba Global, TOM Melbourne, Masks for Mates, The Ark/Thread Group and HoMie—as well as many individual community members—for all the PPE they provided to our clients and staff.



OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS PROVIDED:

11,000+

meals

10,400

face masks

500

warm blankets



VOLUNTEERS

Across FY2019-20:

3,365

hours of volunteer time
generously donated.

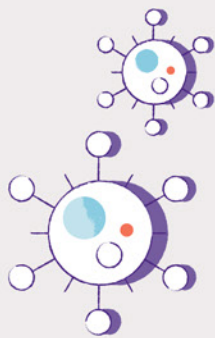


27 MORE

volunteers (77 total across 10 sites)
than FY2018-19.

COVID-19 IMPACT:

Due to lockdown restrictions, we put much of our volunteering on hold from March, downsizing to



3

volunteers at

3

sites for

A TOTAL OF

115

volunteer hours.

We hope to restart our growing program once restrictions fully ease.

The talent and specialised skills of our volunteers are varied and invaluable to our staff and clients. Our volunteers currently undertake the following roles: Art Group Facilitator, Communal Meal Support/ Nutritionist, Duty Support, Food Bank Collector, Financial Advisor, Gardener, Massage Therapist, Pet Therapy, Yoga Group Facilitator, Festive Communal Meal coordinators, Mentor, Personal Trainer, Tutor, Material Aid Support, Nature Therapy.

Our Launch Housing Board of Directors also offer their time freely, for which we are grateful.

We also benefit from skilled volunteers who offer their support via the NAB Immersion Program.



Volunteers Alissa and Hannah packing essential care packs.

MEET ALISSA MATERIAL AID SUPPORT VOLUNTEER

I started volunteering in May 2020 as there were some changes to my work due to COVID-19.

I work as a sonographer currently in a private clinic. I have been working in radiology for 15 years specialising in ultrasound for the last 11 years. I really look forward to my volunteer days with Launch Housing and continuing this development of skills and work-life balance. I love coming back each week working with our coordinator, Aurelia and the other wonderful volunteer Hannah. Expanding my knowledge of the work that Launch Housing does and the needs of the homelessness support services is important to me.

We are building on the local material aid and support, and watching the team grow holds a lot of pride in my heart.

I am excited to see where we can take the material aid. The work that Launch Housing does is paramount and vast. There are 14 different sites all providing various types of support and services. Continual support of Launch Housing is vital for the benefit of the community.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

We can't end homelessness alone. Thank you to our generous and engaged trusts and foundations, named and anonymous, who have enabled us to reach more people to deliver the life-saving support and homes they need and deserve.

Over the last financial year, more than \$3.7 million in philanthropic income and donations (excluding capital funds) was raised to support the people who access our services (\$1.1 more than FY2018-19). Our philanthropic support allows us to provide comprehensive services to suit the broad needs of our clients and demonstrates where this could be covered by further government support in the future.

- Australian Communities Foundation and subfunds including the Clare Murphy Fund, Juno Fund, Reve Fund, Sally Browne Fund, Story Street Fund and Vanraay Family Fund
- Barr Family Foundation
- Beck Family Foundation
- Bowness Family Foundation
- Brian & Virginia McNamee Foundation
- Chrysalis Foundation
- Donald Fraser of the Donald Fraser Family Fund at the APS Foundation
- Erdi Foundation
- Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust
- Gandel Philanthropy
- Goldsmith Family Foundation
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation and Charitable Fund Accounts including the Jill Chapman Fund and Jones Family Fund
- Maddocks Foundation
- Orloff Family Charitable Trust
- Perpetual Foundation – The Hutchinson Endowment
- REIV Charitable Foundation
- Ross Trust
- Rowe Family Foundation
- Sunrise Foundation
- The Frank Montagnese Family Foundation
- The Gething-Sambrook Family Foundation
- The Gray Family Charitable Trust
- The Jack & Ethel Goldin Foundation
- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- The Marian and E.H. Flack Trust
- The Peter and Ann Robinson Foundation
- The Shine On Foundation
- The William Angliss Charitable Fund



CORPORATE PARTNERS

We've had tremendous support from the entire business community in the wake of COVID-19. Thank you to everyone who has supported us, in particular the following key shared value partners.

These organisations have provided skilled volunteering, unlocked employment pathways, enabled cause-related marketing campaigns, promoted workplace giving, provided pro bono support and generously given financial and material aid donations. Together we're also galvanising our community into action, challenging stigma and reaching wider audiences to inspire action.

- REA Group
- EnergyAustralia
- Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre
- National Australia Bank
- Impact Investment Group
- Society Melbourne
- Social Bums
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Rotary Club of Melbourne
- Amcor
- RACV Community Foundation



Owen Wilson, REA Group CEO

"The National Rapid Rehousing Fund we created with Launch Housing was developed to provide women and children at risk of homelessness with safe, secure and affordable housing. Since launching in 2015, the Fund has provided financial assistance to 4,311 individuals, funding items such as essential furniture, white goods, bond payments and advance payments.

"Homelessness in Australia is getting worse, not better – in a country as prosperous as ours, this is simply unacceptable. Working with an industry leader like Launch Housing has allowed REA to help in some small way to try to prevent people from entering the cycle of homelessness."

– Owen Wilson, REA Group CEO



DEMONSTRATING GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

BRINGING GLOBAL LEADERSHIP TO REVERSE THE RATE OF HOMELESSNESS

Our Strategic Aim #3 about bringing global leadership to reverse the rate of homelessness urges us to do more and draw on best practice and evidence worldwide.

Melbourne is a proudly progressive and liveable city. But while we wave this flag on the global stage, the same level of liveability isn't accessible to all Melburnians. Contrasting the identity of a progressive and liveable city with the unacceptable reality of street homelessness, is a centrepiece of Launch Housing's Strategy 2020-

24. It is our aim to mobilise our capital city pride and international standing, by engaging local leaders through a Melbourne Alliance to apply the best global examples locally. The confronting experience of COVID-19 shows that the new 'normal' for all these cities should be one free from the gross inequality of homelessness.



RESEARCH CRITICAL TO PROGRESS



With the launch of our signature piece of research the Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020, inspired by Crisis UK's Homelessness Monitor England, we continue in the spirit of Alan Jordan, a key founder of one of our predecessor organisations, Hanover Welfare Services.

Alan Jordan was a social worker and pioneer in changing perceptions on homelessness, using his ground-breaking research to advocate for people throughout the 1960s. The latest edition of the Monitor charts the scale and the changing nature of homelessness with a special focus on COVID-19's impact.

SHARING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

In 2019, Homelessness Australia recruited participants for a training course on Housing First Practice held by the Housing First Europe Hub.

Our Coordinator, Inner South Outreach's Rosie Dodd was chosen to take part in three training sessions in Europe. Rosie commenced work with three other Australians on building a Housing First training package relevant to an Australian context with the first sessions to be rolled out in early 2021. This knowledge and work is being used to develop capacity across the sector in Housing First practice and is a great example of how global knowledge can be implemented and built upon at home.

Rosie is the Coordinator of Melbourne Street to Home (MS2H), a local housing first program which aims to get people off the street directly into housing alongside providing intensive outreach support. Reflecting on her work and learning, Rosie says:



Rosie Dodd, Inner South Outreach Coordinator, with Australian colleagues in Liverpool, England.

“It was so refreshing to hear that the challenges we face are universal. Some countries have more progressive systems or are further along in their development of housing first, but I returned from Liverpool immensely proud of the work not only my team does but of Launch Housing generally.”

The people MS2H support have often had extensive service histories and it takes time to build trust. We recognise the importance of providing these individuals with choice and control in the support relationship. One participant moved into his home in October 2019 and reflected this represented the longest period he had spent out of custody and the longest period of stable housing for 29 years.

The Australian Homelessness Monitor 2020 presents three major findings:

- Rising street homelessness has crossed a threshold and is now high priority policy challenge.
- While extraordinary, the official COVID-19 response will only benefit a minority in the long term from permanent housing secured through the process.
- Australian governments have continued to ignore or downplay the fundamental failings of our housing system and the need for greater official engagement and investment.

FINANCIALS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DURING THE OUTLIER FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2020 LAUNCH HOUSING FACED EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES FUELED BY VOLATILITY AND UNCERTAINTY DUE TO THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY.

The global health crisis led to an economic downturn and higher numbers of people seeking homelessness services. At the same time this crisis provided a brief moment where 'doing something' about homelessness will form part of public health and economic recovery planning, alongside investment of some magnitude in more social housing. Launch Housing has been at the forefront of this response in Melbourne, utilising government funding for emergency housing whilst fronting our own unbudgeted funds to provide the required wrap-around supports for our clients and staff relief.

WE OVERSPENT TO GROW OUR STAFF NUMBERS BUT WERE ABLE TO MEET CLIENT NEEDS.

During the period March – June 2020, Launch Housing placed more than 1,300 people in emergency accommodation (which grew to a cumulative of approximately 2,800 by October 2020). Funding from the state government enabled us to house clients in hotel emergency accommodation for thousands of nights' worth of safety and security. We had significant increases in full time equivalent staff during FY2019-20. This staffing growth went beyond the funding available but met the need for a surge workforce and performance improvement in the wake of the unanticipated COVID-19 crisis, with some of this staff attributed to new programs. As the only 7-day provider operating as an essential service for people experiencing homelessness during this crisis, we supported staff on the ground with much-needed relief to keep shifts up in the wake of unprecedented demand.

OUR NET RESULT WAS A SURPLUS, IN AN UNUSUAL YEAR WITH ONE-OFF EXPENSES AND REVENUES.

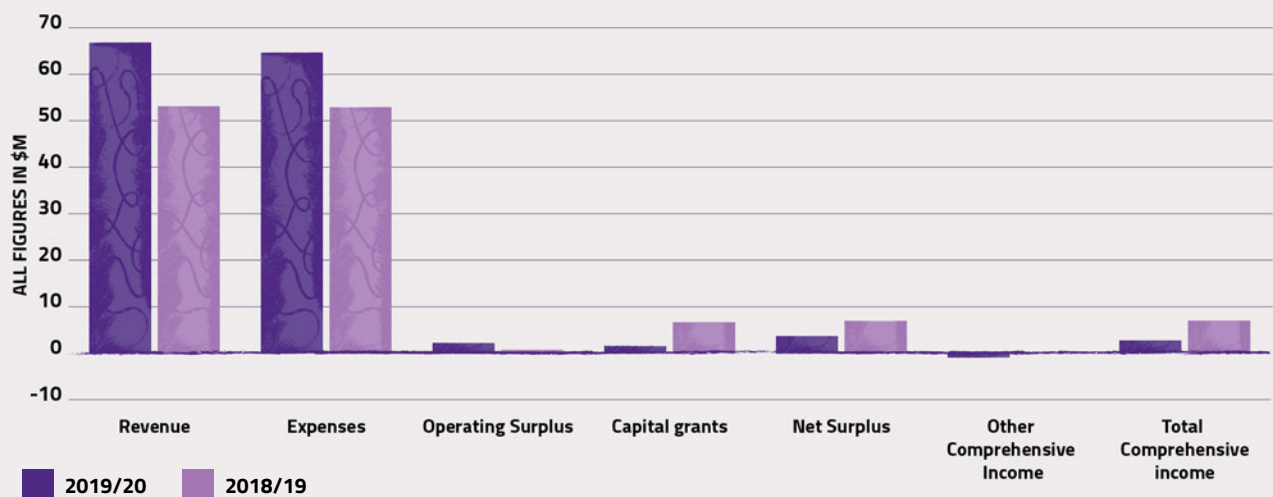
We ended the year with a \$2.2 million operating surplus before capital grants and a Net Surplus (including capital grants) of \$3.7 million (2019: \$6.9 million). Launch Housing delivered a Total Comprehensive Income for the year of \$2.7 million (2019: \$7.0 million).

There were a number of non-recurring factors that impacted the FY2019-20 results. Although salaries as a proportion of expenditure has reduced from 58% to 53%, in actual terms employee expenses were 12% higher in part due to the increase in full time equivalents. Interest income was lower and we incurred considerable costs on account of COVID-19. We received around \$2.6 million of JobKeeper and enjoyed support from the philanthropic community and donors. Had the JobKeeper income not been received, Launch Housing would have incurred an operating deficit for the year.

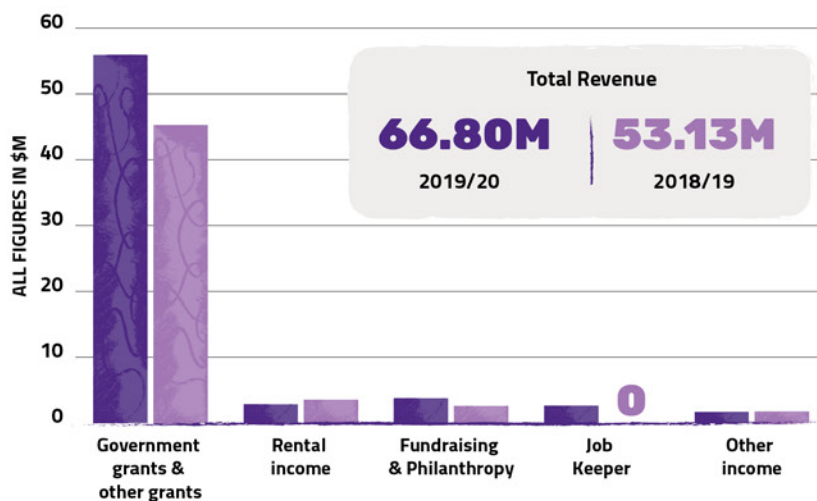


2019-20 AT A GLANCE

The operating surplus for the year was \$2.18 million. The results were influenced by a number of one-off factors including a surge in workforce due to COVID-19, unfunded COVID-19 costs and receipt of JobKeeper income



REVENUE WAS HIGHER BY \$13.67M IN FY 2019-20



Higher government grant and other grants revenue in FY 2019-20 was mainly due to an increase in government grants for placing clients in emergency accommodation. The increase in revenue (excluding these increases) was around 8%.

Legend: 2019/20 (Dark Blue), 2018/19 (Light Blue)

2019-20 AT A GLANCE CONTINUED...

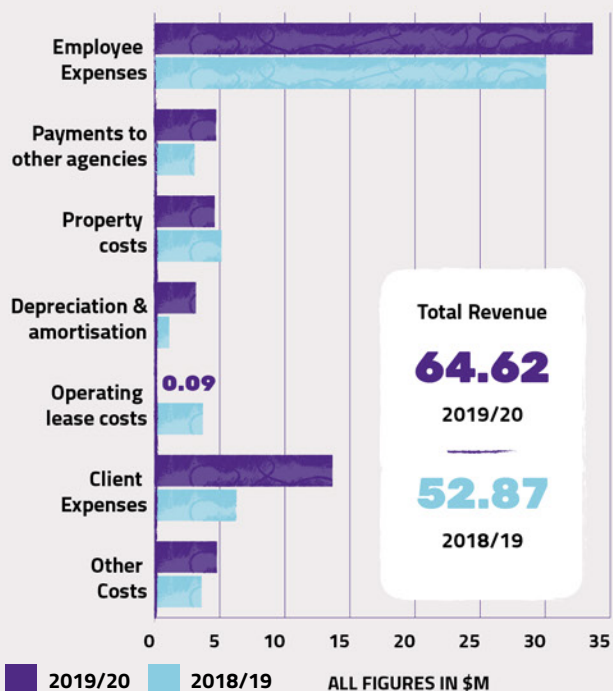
REVENUE HAS GROWN YEAR ON YEAR OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS



COST INCREASED BY

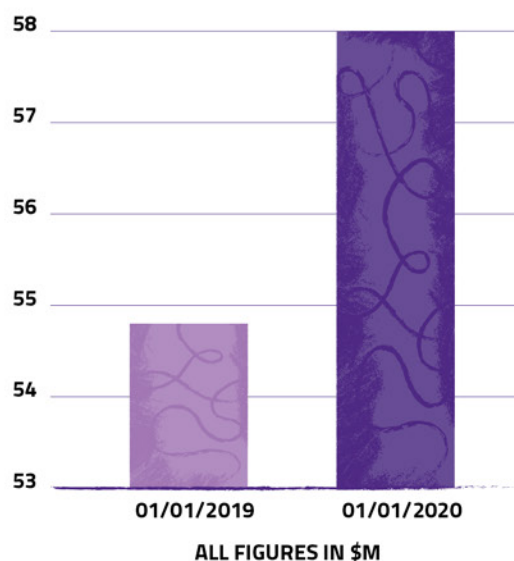
\$11.75M

IN 2019/20



Employee expenses rose by 12% during FY2019-20 due to the surge in workforce due to COVID-19, new contracts and wage increases. The increase in client expenses in FY 2019-20 was due to costs of placing clients in emergency accommodation due to the COVID-19 crisis. The additional costs were only partially offset by an increase in government grants.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH JUNE 2020 REMAINS STRONG



The balance sheet of Launch Housing continues to be strong. Total equity increased by \$3.22 million during FY2019-20.

We adopted the new standards relating to leasing for the first time in FY 2019-20. This has resulted in changes to the way lease costs have been presented, resulting in year on year variations in depreciation and amortization costs, and operating lease costs. More information can be obtained in our audited statutory accounts which can be accessed on [acnc.gov.au](https://www.acnc.gov.au).



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If you are in crisis call

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