



Launch Housing Strategic Plan 2020–26



IT'S TIME TO END HOMELESSNESS





Acknowledgement

We proudly acknowledge the First Peoples of Australia and recognise both their deep spiritual connection to Country, and their unique ability to care for it.

We acknowledge we live and work on land that was never ceded and pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging, who ensure the world's oldest living culture continues to grow and thrive.

First Peoples of Australia maintain that their sovereignty has never been ceded, and have long called for treaty. From time immemorial Aboriginal Victorians have practised their laws, customs and languages, and nurtured Country through their spiritual, cultural, material and economic connections to land, water and resources.

Through the strength, resilience and pride of Aboriginal Victorians, their cultures, communities and economies endure and continue to grow and thrive today. We acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal Victorians, their communities and cultures, and the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country.

A message from our leaders

We are excited to share our refreshed Strategic Plan 2020–26.

Not long after launching our Strategic Plan in 2020, Victoria and the world experienced a pandemic that had devastating consequences on our lives and livelihoods.

Never before had our health and our homes been so front of mind. And especially for Victorians, who experienced longer lockdowns than other states, the importance of a home was suddenly made stark. In response to this the Victorian Government announced a \$5.3bn investment in social housing.

Demonstrating the importance of a home and affordable housing, especially at this moment in time, is something we are desperate not to lose sight of.

That's why we have decided to refresh our strategy so that it is responsive to the new and rapidly changing world in which we now operate.

This is not a new Strategic Plan — our mission is, and continues to be, to end homelessness.

In this refreshed Strategic Plan, we continue to scale up interventions that work to prevent homelessness, deliver innovative housing solutions, be a global leader in homelessness solutions and inspire Victorians and partners to act to end homelessness.

There are also key additions.

First, our values — developed by our staff — are a new feature in this refreshed Strategic Plan. They underpin how we work with our clients, partners and each other, and are instrumental to the culture we want to grow at Launch Housing.

Second, this refreshed Strategic Plan clearly reflects our affordable housing aspirations. We know that both social and affordable housing are fundamental to solving Victoria's housing crisis. We're committed to ensuring diverse and affordable housing options are available for Victorians most in need of safe and secure housing

Finally, there is a greater focus on celebrating and supporting our people. We want to build an organisation that supports and inspires staff to thrive, and grow a diverse, talented and purpose-driven workforce.

We look forward to bringing this refreshed Strategic Plan to life, and we are excited to continue working with our clients, communities and partners to put an end to homelessness.

Bevan Warner
Bevan Warner
Chief Executive Officer

Adam Zaccaria
Adam Zaccaria
Board Chair

Our changing environment

The housing and homelessness system in Victoria is continuously evolving.

We need to be responsive to our rapidly changing environment, so that we can best meet the needs of those experiencing insecure housing and homelessness.

The following challenges and opportunities facing our sector are the most pressing and urgent. It is in this context that we have refreshed our strategic direction.

Housing supply has not kept pace with demand.

We know that the affordable housing crisis, compounded by the impacts of the pandemic, has put significant strain on many Victorians, and putting more people at risk of insecure housing or homelessness.

Victoria has the lowest proportion of social housing in Australia, at 3.0 per cent of all dwellings compared to the national average of 4.2 per cent.

Boosting supply so that it moves towards the national average and delivers housing solutions to those most in need is a priority for the sector.

Women experiencing family violence are the biggest group seeking homelessness services.

The staggering rates of family violence are now the leading cause of homelessness, particularly for women and children.

Access to housing and supports will allow women escaping family violence to find stability and foster a healthy family environment, creating new futures for children, who will be supported to stay in school and to reach their full potential.

In August 2022, Launch Housing in partnership with Uniting, donors and the Victorian Government, opened the doors of Viv's Place, an Australian first apartment building for at-risk women and children.

The project is based on a highly successful model in Broadway, New York which has created supportive communities in such apartment blocks for more than 30 years and supported thousands of people out of homelessness by giving them a solid base and other help.

There is an opportunity to share our learnings from Viv's Place and plan for more permanent supportive housing solutions.

There are now many people seeking social services for the first time.

People who never before needed assistance from services like ours are now entering the system as first time users.

The Victorian Council of Social Services, in its *Voices of Victoria Report*, shines light on those who have fallen into poverty and homelessness for the first time. The lack of affordable housing, compounded by high cost of living, insecure work or unemployment, and other factors such as family violence and health issues, are real and immediate stressors putting Victorians at risk of homelessness.

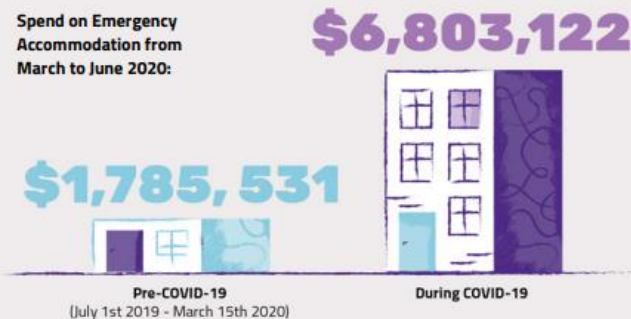
Social and affordable housing have never been a greater focus for government.

The Victorian Government's \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build presents an opportunity for Launch Housing to deliver more housing solutions for more clients.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government has flagged the creation of a \$10 billion housing fund, which aims to build 30,000 new social and affordable housing properties over the next five years.

The time is right to be ambitious and bold in our social and affordable housing ambitions.

Spend on Emergency Accommodation from March to June 2020:



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.

Launch Housing Strategic Plan 2020–26

OUR MISSION

To end homelessness.

OUR VISION

We believe housing is a basic human right that affords people dignity. Everyone has the right to a home and it is our job to make this happen.

OUR VALUES

Our values were developed by staff, for staff. They shape how we work and how we interact with each other, our clients and our communities. We are proud to be guided by the following values.



Empowering

We meet people where they are at; helping them to realise their strengths and how to build on them.



Adaptable

We are versatile and resourceful. We work from the best evidence to find fresh ways to inspire lasting change.



Courageous

We know where we stand and what we stand for. We're not afraid to speak up to achieve our mission.



Caring

We believe actions speak louder than words. We listen to the needs to others; treating everyone with respect and dignity.

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

Strategic Aim 1

Scale up interventions that work to end homelessness

Our priorities

- Build a unique model of service coordination across our client services.
- Re-think interventions in our crisis services.
- Scale up client-centred and trauma-informed care.
- Embed lived experience practices in our work

Strategic Aim 2

Leave no one behind, delivering housing solutions others won't

Our priorities

- Create more permanent supportive housing.
- Grow and target rental brokerage and support for low-income earners.
- Explore how we diversify our financing options to create more housing
- Expand our housing portfolio to cater for all our clients

Strategic Aim 3

Bring global leadership to reverse the rate of homelessness

Our priorities

- Re-imagine our advocacy approach to more effectively agitate for change.
- Incubate innovative and high impact pilot projects to bring them to scale.
- Increase Functional Zero programs across local government areas.
- Incubate a Melbourne Alliance to prove up solutions and test new ideas.

Strategic Aim 4

Energise clients and the community to take action

Our priorities

- Develop a consistent and coordinated approach to engaging key stakeholders.
- Kick-start a campaign that inspires Victorians to act to end homelessness.
- Reinvigorate our relationships with government.
- Nurture healthy partnerships with non-government partners.

Strategic Aim 5

Build an organisation that supports and inspires staff to thrive

Our priorities

- Find innovative ways to grow our workforce to meet the needs of the sector.
- Modernise our training and professional development pathways.
- Inspire diversity and inclusion at all levels of Launch Housing.
- Strengthen our First Nations focus and initiatives.
- Upgrade our systems and processes.

Strategic Aim 1

Scale up interventions that work to end homelessness

We need to increase the focus on delivering high-quality services and interventions that prevent people becoming homeless, support people to access appropriate housing and enable them to retain their housing.

Where people do experience homelessness, we will find ways to house people sleeping rough in Melbourne and for our crisis services to move away from an arbitrary length of stay and towards more “purposeful stays” with more intensive interventions and wrap-around support.

Valuing and meaningfully incorporating client feedback into the design and roll-out of our services will be crucial to delivering on this commitment.

Key success factors



Increase in number of high acuity clients with secure housing.



Increase in number and percentage of clients who have a positive transition into secure housing.

Our priorities

Our priorities to deliver on this strategic aim are:

- 1.1 Build a unique model of service coordination across our client services**
We will dial up our service coordination role across our services in line with Housing First principles. Launch Housing is uniquely placed to coordinate services across the continuum of care so that clients receive seamless, holistic support.
- 1.2 Re-think interventions in our crisis services**
We will work to provide more “purposeful stays” in our crisis services, including increased length of stay, more intensive interventions, wrap-around supports and connecting to more housing options and other services.
- 1.3 Scale up client-centred and trauma-informed care**
We will find tailored, person-centred approaches to our client services, so that we minimise the harm and trauma experienced by people journeying through the system. This includes strengthening the way we receive and respond to client feedback.
- 1.4 Embed lived experience practices in our work**
Using learnings from successful pilots, evaluations and feedback across our services, we will embed a more consistent approach to valuing and incorporating lived experience in the way we plan and deliver services.

Strategic Aim 2

Leave no one behind, delivering housing solutions others won't

We know that the affordable housing crisis is putting significant strain on many Victorians. The lack of safe, secure and affordable housing options means that more and more Victorians are becoming at risk of insecure housing or homelessness. Affordable rentals and pathways to home ownership are key parts of the solution, stopping people entering the specialist homelessness system.

For those who are experiencing homelessness, housing with support, and particularly permanent supportive housing is a key instrument to providing holistic, long-term outcomes for our clients.

We're committed to ensuring diverse and affordable housing options are available for people on very low incomes and Victorians most in need of safe and secure housing.

Key success factors



Increase the number of social housing dwellings owned or managed by Launch Housing.



Increase in the proportion of clients who received rent or bond payments with sustained housing.

Our priorities

Our priorities to deliver on this strategic aim are:

2.1 Create more permanent supportive housing options

Permanent supportive is a key part of ending homelessness in Victoria. It provides stable and secure housing options for people with complex needs who need more longer term support. We will plan for and develop more permanent supportive housing, with a focus on mental health and family violence.

2.2 Grow and target rental brokerage and support for low-income earners

We will continue to ensure private rental properties are viable for people on low incomes by expanding our PRAP and PRAP Plus services.

2.3 Explore how we diversify our financing options to create more housing

We will consider a wide range of financial instruments and ownership options to create more social and affordable housing that caters to the wide diversity of our clients.

2.4 Expand our housing portfolio to cater for all our clients

We will diversify our housing stock and include affordable housing options as a critical element to preventing homelessness.

Strategic Aim 3

Bring global leadership to reverse the rate of homelessness

Ending homelessness requires us to be bold and not accept the status quo. Our people work incredibly hard to find new and ground-breaking ways to break the cycle of homelessness.

We do this by adopting an intersectional approach to homelessness — and finding solutions to homelessness by also addressing barriers to education, employment, health and wellbeing, and social connections. We also actively engage with partners and local leaders to advocate for change at a community and societal level.

For the remainder of this four-year Strategic Plan, we will continue to drive this innovation mindset and thought leadership in Victoria, nationally and globally, and show that it's possible to reverse the rate of homelessness.

Key success factors



Increase in number and percentage of young people employed or enrolled in education following completion of the Foyer program.



Increase in the number of children participating in school or early childhood education.



Exits into housing exceed the number of people sleeping rough.

Our priorities

Our priorities to deliver on this strategic aim are:

- 3.1 Reimagine our advocacy approach to more effectively agitate for change**
To be a world leading city in ending homelessness, we need to shift hearts and minds of key policy and decision makers. We will re-think how we advocate to government and other key stakeholders to make our vision a reality.
- 3.2 Incubate innovative and high impact pilot projects to bring them to scale**
We will build our evidence base by evaluating and sharing outcomes from pilot projects such as Viv's Place, Youth Foyers, Accommodation-based Health Programs and the Education Pathways Program.
- 3.3 Increase Functional Zero programs across local government areas.**
By activating a Functional Zero approach, we will foster a coordinated response (using local By-Name Lists), to reduce homelessness focusing first on rough sleeping, and publicly compare our rate of rough sleeping with leading cities internationally.
- 3.4 Incubate a Melbourne Zero Network to prove up solutions and test new ideas**
We will mobilise our capital city pride and international outlook and engage local leaders through a Melbourne Zero Network to apply the best examples internationally to have local impact.

Strategic Aim 4

Energise clients and the community to take action

The stigma surrounding people experiencing homelessness can often contribute to the lack of effective action to end homelessness. At Launch Housing, we are focussed on eradicating this stigma and changing attitudes in our communities.

We want to change public perception of homelessness by building empathy, challenging stigmatisation and showing all faces of homelessness to create the environment for change.

We also know that we can't do this on our own. That's why we are so focussed on mobilising the community to take action, strengthening the way we work with likely and unlikely partners and advocating for policy change.

Key success factors



Increased acts of community engagement to end homelessness



Increase in value of support from the private sector and philanthropy



Increase the number of properties being managed by HomeGround Real Estate.

Our priorities

Our priorities to deliver on this strategic aim are:

- 4.1 Develop a consistent and coordinated approach to engaging key stakeholders**
We can't end homelessness on our own. We will ensure our approach to key stakeholders is consistent and aligned to our vision and strategic direction.
- 4.2 Kick-start a campaign that inspires Victorians to act to end homelessness**
We will mobilise a community response to change attitudes and empower communities to take action themselves to reduce rates of homelessness.
- 4.3 Reinvigorate our relationships with government**
We know that social and affordable housing is a priority for all levels of government. We will reinvigorate our partnerships with local, state and commonwealth government partners to advocate for real policy change.
- 4.4 Nurture healthy partnerships with non-government partners**
Healthy partnerships across the housing and homelessness sector are vital to ending homelessness. We will build relationships with the private sector, social enterprises and organisations in the planning and development sector to deliver on shared outcomes.

Strategic Aim 5

Build an organisation that supports and inspires staff to thrive

As an organisation, we need to ensure our ways of working are fit-for-purpose and sustainable. This means making sure our workforce has the capability and capacity to meet the needs of our clients, having a more nuanced and thoughtful approach to career pathways for our people, and ensuring our systems and tools support our work.

We are proud of having a highly diverse workforce. But there's more we can do to truly embed diversity and inclusion across the organisation and improve the visible representation of diversity, particularly at senior leadership levels.

Key success factors



Increase in staff engagement and participation in organisation-wide initiatives.



A healthy retention rate for our industry, across all levels of the organisation.

Our priorities

Our priorities to deliver on this strategic aim are:

- 5.1 Find innovative ways to grow our workforce to meet the needs of the sector**
Build out options for growing our workforce. Options to consider include developing a student program through university partnerships, creating a graduate placement program, and engaging with government-supported traineeship programs.
- 5.2 Modernise our training and professional development pathways**
Clear career development pathways can lead to greater experiences for staff and a way to retain great talent. We will build a more nuanced and thoughtful approach to professional development across the organisation.
- 5.3 Inspire diversity and inclusion at all levels of Launch Housing**
We will further embed diversity and inclusion in our organisational DNA and take proactive steps to ensure we represent the community we serve.
- 5.4 Strengthen our First Nations focus and initiatives**
Building on our Cultural Safety Plan, we will strengthen our First Nations self-determination activities across our services and within our organisation. We are committed to providing culturally appropriate support to our staff and clients.
- 5.5 Upgrade our systems and processes**
We will continue to improve our systems and processes to minimise administrative burden, support accurate data collection and analysis, and support strong management and governance.

Implementing our strategy

Our current Business Plan 2020–26 will continue to guide the implementation of our strategy.

While there may be high-level changes to our current Business Plan to reflect the refreshed strategy, the Business Plan and the cascading Portfolio Plans and Project Plans will continue to guide our work.

Our Business Plan groups our work into four key areas of focus:

1. Understanding our impact
2. Build external relationships and profile
3. Improving client outcomes
4. New ways of working internally

The four key areas of focus reflect the inter-dependencies and sequence of activities to successfully deliver on our strategy. This will continue under our refreshed Strategic Plan.

