



# All Paths Lead to a Home

Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is the Strategy?

*All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness* (the Strategy) is a whole-of-community plan, setting the direction for all levels of government, business and the community sector in responding to and preventing homelessness in Western Australia.

It provides an overarching strategic framework that guides investment, identifies new ways of working, introduces innovation and seeks to improve service systems so that they can better respond to the needs of individuals.

The Strategy takes a long-term approach, recognising it will take many years of continued focus and effort to achieve better outcomes for those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

### 2. Why do we need a Strategy?

Homelessness is a complex issue faced by our community. On Census night in 2016 there were an estimated 9,005 people who were homeless in Western Australia – sleeping rough, couch surfing or living in boarding houses, supported accommodation for the homeless or severely overcrowded accommodation.

People experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness can face multiple difficulties and often require access to a wide range of supports and services. The complexity of the issue means that it cannot be solved by one agency or organisation working alone.

The Strategy sets us on a pathway to work differently and allows us to integrate and align our efforts towards a common goal.

Furthermore, the new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, which came into effect on 1 July 2018, requires as a condition of ongoing funding that Western Australia has a State Homelessness Strategy.

### 3. How was the Strategy developed?

The Strategy has been guided by the Supporting Communities Forum, which supports the directions of Western Australian Government reform to deliver better outcomes for Western Australians. The Supporting Communities Forum provided an important source of validation and oversight of the Strategy through its remit of working with the community services sector.

In July 2018, the Department of Communities commenced the development of the Strategy in partnership with the community services sector, peak bodies, Aboriginal organisations and state government agencies through the Supporting Communities Forum Homelessness Working Group.





The Working Group was co-chaired by Michelle Andrews, Director General of the Department of Communities, and Debra Zanella, Chief Executive Officer of Ruah Community Services. Members of the group represented a diverse range of government agencies and community sector organisations, including:

- Department of Health
- Mental Health Commission
- Department of Justice
- Department of Education
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Finance
- Landgate
- WA Local Government Association
- Shelter WA
- Youth Affairs Council of WA
- Wungening Aboriginal Corporation
- Moorditj Koort
- St Patrick's Community Support Centre
- National Disability Services
- Centre for Social Impact, UWA

#### 4. What was the consultation process for the development of the Strategy?

The Strategy has been informed by extensive consultation.

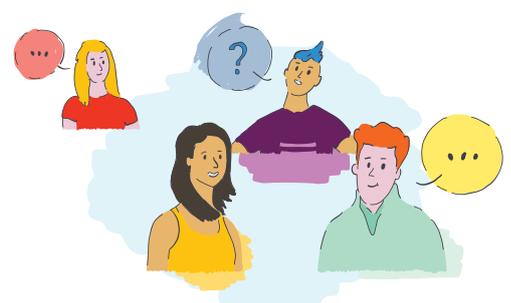
In September and October 2018, 15 public consultation sessions were held throughout metropolitan and regional Western Australia. Over 300 people participated in the sessions, representing a diverse range of stakeholders. Consultation reports, including an overall summary report outlining the consultation process and key findings, is available [here](#).

An online survey was also available throughout November and December 2018, with 276 responses received from state government agencies, local government, people working in service delivery, interested members of the community and those with lived experience of homelessness.

These processes resulted in the development of a Directions Paper, which outlined proposed reform directions and sought feedback. The Directions Paper was released in March 2019, with over 50 submissions received during the six weeks it was open for public comment. Some organisations agreed to have their submission published. These can be found [here](#).

Hearing and elevating the voices of people with lived experience has also been a priority throughout the development of the Strategy. Over 60 conversations and interviews were held with individuals about their personal experiences. Over 30 of these stories feature in a lived experience book ***When there's no place to call home***, which was launched by the Department of Communities during Homelessness Week 2019.

The Department of Communities also commissioned the University of Western Australia Centre for Social Impact to develop ***Homelessness in Western Australia: A review of the research and statistical evidence report***, which is an overview of rigorous expert research covering health, housing, justice and other relevant data.





## 5. What are the priorities for the Strategy?

The Strategy lays out a number of priorities:

- An immediate targeting of those who are most vulnerable – rough sleepers. Through collaborative and innovative responses that take a Housing First approach, there will be a sustained focus on providing people rough sleeping with access to safe, stable housing and tailored supports.
- Implementing a ‘No Wrong Door’ approach, ensuring that services are accessible, visible and coordinated, and people can get the support they need regardless of which service or agency they connect with.
- Collaborating and co-designing appropriate and flexible responses with people with lived experience, the community services sector, business and philanthropy, the community and other levels of government.
- Developing place-based responses that are informed by local needs, context and capacity to make sure the right responses are delivered in the right places.

## 6. What about other cohorts aside from rough sleepers?

Although rough sleeping will be a focus during the first five years, the Strategy recognises that developing tailored responses for a range of vulnerable cohorts must be a priority. This includes older people (especially older women), veterans, people with a disability, children leaving care, women and children affected by family and domestic violence, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Specific initiatives will be included in the Action Plans, with the flexibility to target new cohorts as they emerge.

## 7. How will the Strategy be implemented?

The Strategy will be implemented through two Action Plans that will move us towards our ten-year vision. These Action Plans will guide implementation and provide detail on how priority actions will progress, including who is responsible for delivering what and by when.

The Action Plans will support collaboration across government and the community services sector and help align activities across a number of strategies to maximise outcomes and effort.

A flexible and phased approach will ensure future Action Plans are responsive to outcomes achieved, new challenges and priorities, emerging evidence, innovation and opportunities.

The Supporting Communities Forum will continue to guide implementation of the Strategy and consider ways to strengthen ongoing engagement and partnerships.

## 8. When will the first Action Plan be released?

Action Plan 2020-2025 is currently under development with key agencies and community sector organisations.

It is anticipated that Action Plan 2020–2025 will be finalised in the first quarter of 2020.

## 9. How will progress be measured and evaluated?

An Outcomes Measurement Framework will be developed to make sure the Strategy is achieving its intended goals and to enable progress to be measured against outcomes. The framework will be co-designed with service providers, people with lived experience and government agencies.

Progress and outcomes will be reported on annually throughout the life of the Strategy. Reporting will be public facing to ensure further transparency and accountability.



## 10. What will the process be for the co-design and commissioning of new service models?

Effective implementation of the Strategy will require consideration of new and collaborative approaches to the commissioning and procurement of homelessness services.

Communities will be undertaking a commissioning approach to homelessness services, which will involve working with community service organisations to co-design collaborative, cooperative and community-centred approaches to homelessness that will lead to more effective service provisions and greater social impact. Further information about this process, including timelines and a description of activities to be undertaken, will be communicated to the sector as soon as possible.

## 11. What does the Strategy mean for existing homelessness services?

Existing homelessness services play a vital role in delivering support to vulnerable individuals, families and communities. It is the Department's intention that where existing services continue to meet an identified need and are being provided in accordance with contractual requirements, service providers will be offered an extension to their existing service agreements to enable Communities to undertake the co-design and commissioning process.

This will allow organisations to maintain continuity of service delivery while these activities are underway, as well as provide certainty for their employees and clients. A decision about the length of contract extensions will be finalised and communicated to the sector as soon as possible.

## 12. Is there funding attached to the Strategy?

Each year the Department of Communities spends approximately \$89 million dollars on specialist homelessness services that assist families, women and children affected by family and domestic violence, young people and single adults.

To support the delivery of the outcomes of the Strategy there will be funding for three new initiatives:

- **Housing First Homelessness Initiative**  
\$34.5m has been allocated to expand successful housing first approaches to addressing homelessness to new locations in Perth and regional Western Australia. This money will be spent on housing people using private rental subsidies with wraparound supports.
- **Online Homelessness Information Portal**  
\$2.3m has been allocated to develop and maintain an online portal that will improve the visibility and coordination of homelessness services.
- **Common Ground**  
\$35m has been allocated to construct two Common Ground facilities that will provide permanent supported housing to vulnerable rough sleepers.

To find out more about the 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness and to download or request a copy of the Strategy, please visit our website or email the Homelessness Strategy Team at the Department of Communities.

**Web:** [www.communities.wa.gov.au/homelessness-strategy](http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/homelessness-strategy)

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