

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

Our vision

A NSW where no one is experiencing homelessness and no one is at risk of homelessness.

A NSW where there is affordable and safe housing for all with access to a range of community and support services.

Our purpose

To advocate and provide leadership on homelessness issues across NSW and to support effective service delivery to those who are experiencing homelessness, have experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.

Our values

We are guided by the principles of social justice and human rights.

We act with accountability, transparency and quality practice.

We encourage our members to participate in shaping our policies, conducting our advocacy and designing and delivering our services.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and respect elders, past and present and recognise the impacts of colonisation and dispossession on homelessness.

Our strategic goals for the next 3 years 2020 – 2023

Homelessness NSW is committed to working to halve homelessness in NSW by 2025.

Homelessness NSW's priority during is to focus on advocacy and campaigning that brings about a commitment to:

1. Resource programs and system responses that prevent homelessness such as no exits into homelessness

2. Resource programs and system responses that address homelessness such as supportive housing
3. Investing in and expanding available social housing supply
4. Increasing the availability of affordable housing
5. Prioritising prevention approaches and systemic change that addresses Aboriginal homelessness

In addition to this, we will also be focusing on supporting the delivery of:

- A homelessness sector that offers high quality services and delivers outcomes for clients
- An increased organisational capacity and profile
- Embedding lived expertise of homelessness as a core element of service provision

Our key strategies

- Partnership and collaboration
- Policy development and advocacy
- Evidence based research and analysis
- Sector support and organisational development
- Cultural safety for Aboriginal communities and workers in the sector
- Lived Expert participation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Member services and support
- Information and communications
- Resource development

The environment in which we operate

The 2016 census data has shown a 37% increase in homelessness in NSW from 2011 – 2016 with over 37,000 people experiencing homelessness in NSW on the night of the 2016 census. In 2018/2019 homelessness services supported 28% more clients than they were funded for. More people are unable to access crisis accommodation than access it. And, even if supported by a homelessness service 2 in 3 clients are still experiencing homelessness at the end of their support period. 30% of all homelessness service clients are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. (AIHW NSW Homelessness data 2018/19)

The increase in homelessness is caused by a lack of social and affordable housing in NSW. There are over 60,000 people on the social housing waiting list and the private rental market is increasingly unaffordable for people living on income support and on low incomes. Alongside this is increased community awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence for women and their children, an increasing prison population and significant reforms being undertaken in the disability and mental health areas all of which is in part contributing to the demand for homelessness services.

The economic impacts of the 2019/2020 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic are yet to be properly understood but modelling indicates that without continuation of adequate income support and investment in social housing then it is likely that there will be up to a further 16,000 people experiencing homelessness by June 2021.

Homelessness NSW has consistently advocated for large scale investment in social housing as the primary means of addressing homelessness. The organisation has also consistently advocated for a prevention approach to homelessness that includes adequate income support, an affordable private rental market and properly resourced support for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence and people leaving prison, out of home care and mental and other health services.

The 2014 Going Home Staying Home (GSH) service system reforms are still being felt and re-organisation and additional funding is needed for the Specialist Homelessness Services Program if the service system is to appropriately support people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. Homelessness NSW has focused on supporting the sector to deliver quality services whilst also addressing the issues that continue to be a barrier to this and will continue to prioritise this.

Homelessness NSW has consistently advocated for increased investment in the Specialist Homelessness Service Program and a review and re-organisation of the GSH reforms.

Homelessness NSW has and will continue to focus on a consultative and collaborative approach to preventing and addressing homelessness. It works in close partnership with Specialist Homelessness Services and has developed strong relationships with the community housing sector and a range of stakeholders in the health, justice, youth, local government and domestic and family violence sectors. Homelessness NSW is active in the national policy and advocacy environment through its support of Homelessness Australia. It will also continue to develop

deeper partnerships with the philanthropic and corporate sectors.

Homelessness NSW has not in the past adequately focused on addressing Aboriginal homelessness and will prioritise this both via review and improvement of its own practices but also via supporting the homelessness service system to improve its service delivery and support of Aboriginal communities.

Finally, it is essential that the needs, experiences and input from individuals who have experienced homelessness or have been at risk of homelessness is increased across the sector. Homelessness NSW has embedded the input of people with lived expertise of homelessness into all of its project work and is now seeking to expand this across the organisation and the sector more broadly.

Who we are

Homelessness NSW is a small not for profit peak organisation in NSW with approximately 130 member agencies, both large and small who provide a diversity of direct services to people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness across NSW.

We rely on Government funding assistance to meet the cost of the vast bulk of our services and activities. We are structured as a tax exempt charitable organisation and are reviewing options to better enable the organisation to move to a more sustainable financial position in the medium term via other sources of funding.

Homelessness NSW is company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of Management. This Board is comprised of nine persons elected by our membership. The Board is advised by a Policy Council, which can comprise up to 16 members, including Board members. The Board meets at least bi-monthly, whilst the Policy Council meets at least 3 times a year. Homelessness NSW also regularly undertakes consultations with members across NSW, including regional and rural areas to ensure that members views underlie the work of the organisation. Homelessness NSW distributes information widely and also seeks members and other views through extensive use of e-bulletins, email networks, our website and other instruments such as online surveys. Our organisation is a member of several Government advisory and consultative forums as well as being a participant in several not for profit sector peak networks.

Homelessness NSW has proven itself to be a leader in sector development and support for quality service provision. Consequently, the organisation has been able to build up its team in this area and now has a number of specialist staff overseeing the accreditation process, learning and development, addressing Aboriginal homelessness and the implementation of supportive housing programs.

Our Strategic Goals and the results we seek in the next three years and our strategies to achieve this

OVERALL GOAL: TO HALVE HOMELESSNESS BY 2025

Results	Deliverables	Targets
Preventing homelessness - resourcing of programs and system responses that prevent homelessness		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Increased understanding of the determinants of homelessness and effective prevention practice □ Increased number of members involved in prevention practice □ Increased number of programs, services and resources in other service systems focused on preventing homelessness and reporting outcomes around this □ Government policy and practice aligns with Homelessness NSW position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Research, resources and submissions made on the prevention of homelessness, with a particular focus on good practice approaches and priority such as older women, CALD communities and Aboriginal communities □ Regular dissemination of good practice and emerging research via social media, an e-bulletin & participation in public forums □ Build the capacity of the mainstream service system to prevent homelessness with a particular focus on social housing, NDIS, Health and Corrections □ Actively provide advice on the implementation of the NSW Homelessness Strategy to help ensure that the Strategy is meeting the agreed outcomes □ Consult with members/stakeholders on the impacts/benefits of the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and work collaboratively with Government around promoting and/or addressing the benefits/impacts □ Partner with non-traditional stakeholders (eg aged care sector, corporates) to support homelessness prevention good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NSW Government implements homelessness programs with whole of government outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes □ NSW Government adopting a 'no exits into homelessness' policy and monitors and resources this □ NSW Government agencies required to report on homelessness prevention outcomes □ Homelessness sector adequately resourced to undertake prevention work such as maintaining tenancies, supporting women and children experiencing domestic and family violence to maintain housing and supporting young people who are identified as at risk of homelessness

Addressing homelessness

- Resourcing of program and system responses that address homelessness
- Investing in and expanding social housing supply
- Increasing the availability of affordable housing

- Increased understanding of the linkages between homelessness and the lack of social and affordable housing
- Increased number of members involved in advocating for an increase in social and affordable housing
- Increased number of programs and resources that invest in social and affordable housing
- Increased investment in the Specialist Homelessness Program to reflect demand
- Government policy and practice aligns with Homelessness NSW position

- Continued implementation of social housing campaigns such as Everybody's Home in partnership with relevant stakeholders including Homelessness Australia, NCOSS and CHIA NSW
- Research and submissions made on the impact of the lack of social and affordable housing and related policies on homelessness
- Partnerships with key corporate and NGO stakeholders including the NSW Property Council on demonstrating the importance of investment in social housing
- Regular dissemination of good practice and emerging research via social media, an e-bulletin and participation in public forums
- Advocacy, research and implementation support provided for supportive housing initiatives such as Together Home

- NSW Government invests in expansion of social housing supply
- Federal Government invests in expansion of social housing supply
- NSW Government implements an affordable housing strategy with whole of government outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes
- Federal Government implements an affordable housing strategy with outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes
- Supportive housing is embedded as a resourced and systemic response to addressing homelessness and maintaining tenancies
- NSW and Federal Government increases investment in the Specialist Homelessness Service Program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Resources and practice support provided to relevant stakeholders on supporting people who have experienced or at risk of homelessness to maintain tenancies ❑ Research, submissions and advocacy undertaken on the economic impact of COVID-19 on the housing and homelessness service system ❑ Research, submissions and advocacy undertaken on the high demand experienced by homelessness services and solutions to managing this demand 	
A homelessness sector that offers high quality services and delivers outcomes for clients		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Service system gaps and structural barriers of the homelessness service system are addressed ❑ Homelessness sector is able to demonstrate client and service outcomes ❑ Coordinated industry and workforce development support that is valued by the sector ❑ Independent accredited quality system is implemented for the homelessness sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Actively provide advice on the necessary review and improvements required around the SHS Program to ensure that the homelessness service system is delivering high quality and effective services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness ❑ Consult with members and other relevant stakeholders during the review process on the impact/benefits of identified changes and work collaboratively with Government to ensure effective change ❑ Actively provide advice and work collaboratively with the sector to shift to an outcomes measurement approach to service delivery ❑ Biennial Homelessness NSW conference that showcases local, national and international good practice ❑ Regular dissemination of good practice and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ NSW Government adequately resources homelessness service system to provide outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and these outcomes are measured and reported on ❑ Federal Government adequately resources homelessness service system to provide outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and these outcomes are measured and reported on ❑ Homelessness services can measure their client outcomes and can demonstrate that they are addressing and preventing Homelessness ❑ Homelessness services achieve ASES accreditation by June 2024 ❑ Homelessness services are implementing the Redressing Aboriginal Homelessness

	<p>emerging research via forums, social media and an e-bulletin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Support the development of homelessness communities of practice including the Sydney Women’s Homeless Alliance & the Housing First CoPs □ Develop and implement the NSW Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy in collaboration with the SHS sector □ Support the sector on good practice implementation approaches to ASES □ Support the sector on implementing culturally safe service provision 	<p>Accord</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Homelessness NSW achieves ASES accreditation by June 2024 □ Homelessness NSW is implementing the Redressing Aboriginal Homelessness Accord
--	---	---

A homelessness service system that prioritises and addresses Aboriginal homelessness

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Increased understanding of the impacts of colonisation and dispossession on Aboriginal homelessness □ Increased number of members involved in advocating for addressing Aboriginal homelessness □ Increased number of programs and resources that invest in preventing and addressing Aboriginal homelessness □ Increased understanding and commitment to self-determination principles and investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations □ Service system gaps and structural barriers of the homelessness service system for Aboriginal communities are addressed □ Homelessness sector is able to demonstrate positive client and service outcomes for Aboriginal people □ Homelessness sector is a culturally safe place for Aboriginal workers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Develop and implement a campaign on raising community awareness of Aboriginal homelessness and solutions, in partnership with Aboriginal communities, members and other relevant stakeholders □ Consult with Aboriginal communities, members and other relevant stakeholders on the impact/benefits of identified systemic changes and work collaboratively with Government to ensure effective change □ Actively provide advice on the necessary review and improvements required around the SHS Program to ensure that the homelessness service system is delivering high quality and effective services to Aboriginal people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, in consultation with key stakeholders □ Ensure that the implementation of the NSW Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy prioritises culturally safe service delivery for all homelessness services and supports workforce learning and development in this area, including supporting the career development of Aboriginal workers in the sector □ Provide supports for Aboriginal workers including a Community of Practice, regionally based forums and structured individualized support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ NSW Government adequately resources homelessness service system recognising self determination principles to provide outcomes for Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness and these outcomes are measured and reported on □ Homelessness services can measure their client outcomes for Aboriginal people and can demonstrate that they are addressing and preventing Aboriginal homelessness □ Increase in the number of Aboriginal community controlled organisations in the homelessness sector □ Increase in opportunities for innovative sustainable responses to addressing Aboriginal homelessness □ Increase in Aboriginal workers in the homelessness sector, including in management positions |
|---|---|--|

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Government policy and practice aligns with Homelessness NSW position</p>		
--	--	--

An increased organisation capacity and profile		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Increased recognition of Homelessness NSW as a voice of influence ❑ Increased number and diversity of members ❑ Strengthened Board and governance structures ❑ Increased member input into our service activity <p>Growing levels of diversified, sustainable sources of revenue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Strong media and social media presence on homelessness and housing issues ❑ Transparent and respectful communication with members and other stakeholders regarding advocacy work ❑ Development of evidence base and reference to this when undertaking advocacy work ❑ Partnership approach to policy, project and campaign work that enables member participation ❑ Active participation at a national level via Homelessness Australia ❑ Twice yearly consultations with members across NSW that discuss reforms, service delivery and good practice ❑ Active engagement with members on improving service delivery of Homelessness NSW via member surveys and twice yearly consultation ❑ Review and reform of member structures and service ❑ Campaign to encourage membership of the organisation across the broader housing and community services sector ❑ Consolidation of Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy revenue, including additional responsibility in delivering SHS Learning and Development ❑ Joint planning undertaken with relevant peak organisations around improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Homelessness NSW is the peak of choice for services working to prevent and address homelessness ❑ Homelessness NSW is the NSW leader in the delivery of homelessness industry and workforce development ❑ Homelessness NSW has an identified source of non-government revenue

	<p>sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ An active Policy Council which is member led with input from individuals with lived expertise of homelessness □ Investigation and identification of options to diversify sources of revenue via the corporate and philanthropic sector 	
Embedding lived expertise as a core element of service provision		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Increased engagement of individuals with lived expertise of homelessness in our governance and service activity □ A client centred and human rights focus incorporated in our advocacy activities □ Increased lived expert engagement in SHS development of their own services □ Increased evidence available about quality client centred practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Develop and implement a model framework to include input by lived experts in all aspects of Homelessness NSW work □ Continue to include input from individuals with lived expertise of homelessness into all Homelessness NSW policy and research projects □ Support SHS services and Government to implement processes that include the input of lived experts in the development and implementation of service delivery and reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Lived expertise is embedded into every aspect of Homelessness NSW's management and operation □ Lived expertise is embedded into sector and Government service provision and policy development.