

# Homelessness Australia

## Annual Report 2022-23



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# CEO and Chair report

## The 2022–23 period saw many important changes and new opportunities for Homelessness Australia (HA).

Soon after taking the reins in May 2022, the new Government recommitted, , to developing a 10-year National Housing and Homelessness Plan. This was very welcome news, and followed many years of advocacy calling for a national plan to end homelessness.

During Homelessness Week 2022, HA published its first call to action for the national plan, [A Plan to End Homelessness](#) outlining the topline strategies needed to halve homelessness in five years and end it in ten.

Following Homelessness Week, HA delivered another successful National Homelessness Conference in partnership with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), attended by more than 1,000 delegates, including over 800 in-person attendees in Canberra.

In 2022, HA also set out to deepen the scope of its work by using the financial reserves to employ a CEO.

While the organisation has punched well above its weight without funding or staffing since being defunded in 2015, the Board was determined to seize the opportunity represented by the National Housing and Homelessness Plan to encourage the Federal Government to develop a strategic national agenda to end homelessness.

Kate Colvin started in the CEO role in November 2022, following her previous role as Deputy CEO of the Victorian homelessness

peak body, Council to Homeless Persons, and spokesperson for the national housing campaign, Everybody's Home.

Initially, the focus for the CEO was preventing the Government's planned \$65 million cut to the homelessness sector from discontinuing funding for the costs of the Equal Remuneration Order. After a sustained campaign effort and great engagement from the sector and campaign partners, the Australian Services Union, we welcomed the continuation of this funding in March 2023.

The CEO has continued to represent HA and argue the case for action to end homelessness at Senate Committees, via direct lobbying of elected representatives and Government officials, and in a steady stream of media stories and published opinion pieces.

Throughout the year, HA worked closely with housing peak bodies to encourage the Federal Parliament to strengthen and pass the Housing Australia Future Fund legislation, and actively supported the ACOSS-led campaign to increase the adequacy of income support.

The Housing First Train The Trainer program continued to build throughout 2022–23, with training delivered to hundreds of homelessness and allied sector workers, and the development of a National Webinar Series by the Housing First Trainers

Many thanks to Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation for generously supporting this program and to Council to Homeless Persons and the National Trainers for providing valuable in-kind support.

Having a CEO has enabled HA to increase the presence in the community and the sector. Throughout 2022–23, HA connected strongly with the homelessness sector, including through presentations at sector conferences, hosting sector events, and publishing a regular bulletin to inform and engage the homelessness sector in advocacy to end homelessness.

The 2022–23 period has also seen HA develop its organisational capacity, with the development of a new Business Plan for 2023 to 2024, updated Board policies, and a grant from Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation to support HA’s advocacy work.

A big thank you to Council to Homeless Persons for continuing to provide back-end support and an office space to HA. Heartfelt thanks to Stewart Grieve and Marc Eastmure of Johnson Winter Slattery for the highest quality legal advice and extensive assistance this year.

And thank you also to HA’s previous Chair, Jenny Smith, and previous Deputy Chair, Katherine McKernan, whose tireless work drove HA’s activities over the years in which the organisation had no staff—including those described in this Annual Report—to November 2022.



**Kate Colvin, HA CEO**



**Frances Crimmins, HA Chair**



# 1 Advocacy to end homelessness

Throughout 2022-23, HA worked tirelessly to make ending homelessness part of the national conversation.

During Homelessness Week 2022, HA launched A Plan to End Homelessness in Parliament House, Canberra, and met with Parliamentarians across the house to discuss the ambition and reforms needed in the National Housing and Homelessness Plan to halve homelessness by 2027 and end homelessness by 2032.



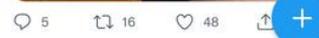
Jenny Smith (former Chair, HA) talking about A Plan to End Homelessness on Channel10 News



Kate Colvin (CEO, HA), Wendy Hayhurst (CEO, National Community Housing Industry Association), Jenny Smith (former Chair, HA) with Minister for Indigenous Affairs, The Hon. Linda Burney discussing A Plan to End Homelessness



As I said, the ambition of the Albanese Government is to match the energy, expertise and effort of the incredible people already working to reduce homelessness.

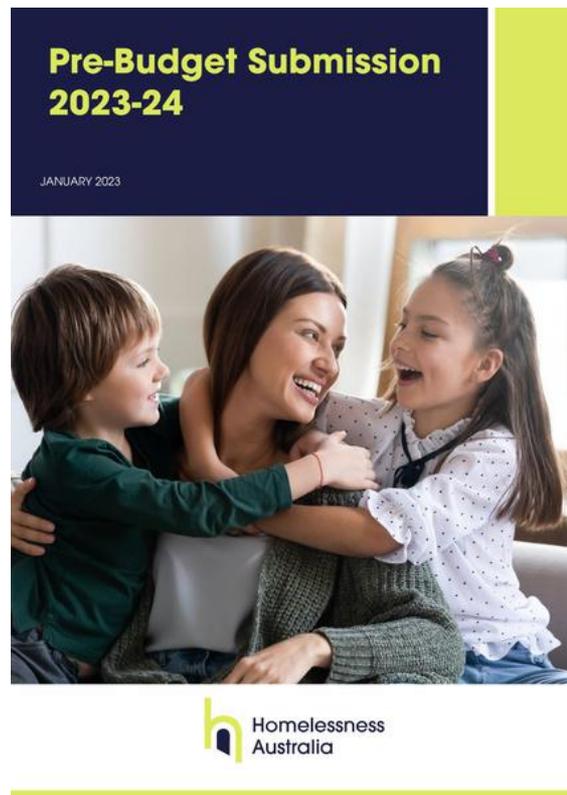
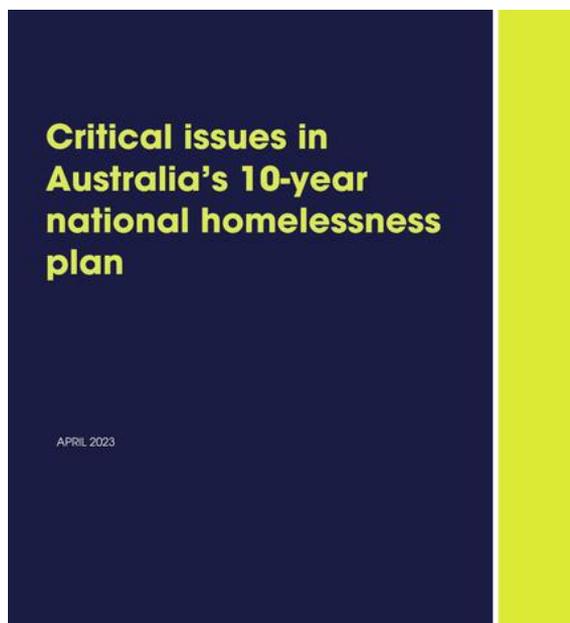


Housing and Homelessness Minister, The Hon. Julie Collins MP joining the launch of Homelessness Week

HA continued the push for the National Housing and Homelessness Plan to be ambitious and drive transformational change to end homelessness with the publication in April 2023 of Critical Issues in Australia's 10-Year National Homelessness Plan, a report directed to the Federal Government to outline the critical reforms needed in the plan. This report underscored a series of discussions with ministerial officers and public servants across family violence, youth, Indigenous affairs, treasury, women's affairs, and housing and homelessness about the need for action to prevent homelessness.

HA has also advocated for immediate increases in funding for homelessness services, with the publication in January 2023 of its Pre-Budget Submission 2023-24, and continued media focus on increasing demand for homelessness support.

HA has driven the conversation forward about the need for an action plan to address child and youth homelessness, and to address the specific issues faced by First Nations Australians.



**RN breakfast, 28 June 2023: Call to close the homelessness gap for First Nations people**



**ABC AM, 4 May 2023: Advocates say homelessness is dramatically increasing**

## 2 Homelessness funding saved

**HA won a hard-fought campaign to save \$65 million in homelessness sector funding originally resourced to help meet the costs of the Equal Remuneration Order.**

After first raising concerns with the Minister for Housing and Homelessness and in the media after the funding was missing from the October 2022 Budget, HA continued to press the Government to restore the missing funding.

Countless meetings with MPs across Parliament, and targeted media stories, increased the pressure for action.

### Alarm over budget gap in homeless help

**EXCLUSIVE**

SARAH ISON

Peak homelessness groups have issued a warning over an apparent multimillion-dollar black hole in the budget meant to cover wages in the sector and say certainty must be given or hundreds of staff will walk.

Homelessness Australia said it was shocked that last week's budget did not include a critical \$56m in funding equal to the wages of 560 workers, part of a wage supplement for homelessness services delivered to the states through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. But that funding doesn't extend past next June.

Homelessness Australia chair Jenny Smith said the same level of service could not be provided without the funding. "The best case scenario right now is serious uncertainty and major disruption to services. Most employees start looking for another job at least six months prior to a contract ending – and so workers will start moving on after Christmas," she said.

Australians face acute cost-of-living pressures coupled with soaring house prices and rents, up by 37 per cent and 26 per cent respectively since 2019.

Ms Smith said providers were already facing severe staff shortages and expected to reduce service capacity in the New Year.

"Services will have to ask employees to have blind faith their jobs will exist after July when there's just no guarantee that will be the case," she said.

"The worst case scenario is that these jobs disappear, and that doesn't bear thinking about."

Figures show that in 2020-21 there was an average of more than 300 requests for homelessness services per day that could not be met, which resulted in a total of about 114,000 unassisted requests over the year. This group includes women and children fleeing violence as well as other people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

Housing and Homelessness Minister Julie Collins said the government was seeking an extension of the agreement "to support the transition to a new housing agenda".

The Australian, 31 October 2022



**Senator David Pocock asking a question in Parliament, 9 March 2023**



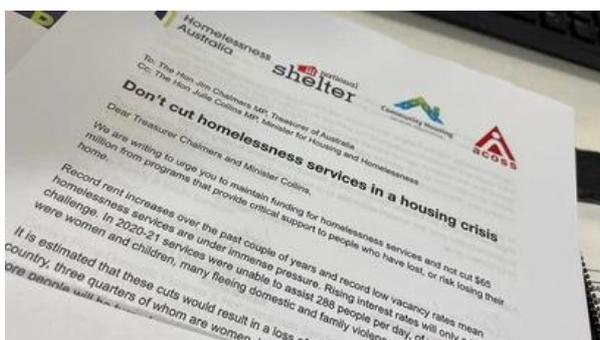
**ABC TV, 7 March 2023: Kate Colvin (CEO, HA) discussing Equal Remuneration Order funding**

The Australian Services Union joined the call to save Equal Remuneration Order funding, adding to the campaign momentum in the media and exerting important pressure within the Australian Labor Party.

The homelessness and community sector rose to the call to action, speaking to their MPs, generating media, and refusing to accept a cut to homelessness services in the midst of a housing crisis.

More than 200 organisations signed the joint letter to the Treasurer and Housing and Homelessness Minister.

Ultimately, on 24 March 2023 the Government reversed the planned cut, reinstating \$67.5 million in funding for homelessness services for 2023–24.



# 3

## Successful campaign to increase income support

Having enough income to afford rent is critical for people to avoid or escape homelessness, so HA has actively supported the campaign to #RaisetheRate.

HA was very pleased to see increases in income support payments in the May 2023 Budget, after highlighting the inadequacy of youth allowance to enable young people to afford rent.



Cassandra Goldie (CEO, ACOSS), Vicky Sutton (CEO, Melbourne City Mission), Shorna Moore (Head of Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations, Melbourne City Mission), and Lorna Robinson (youth advocate) at the Youth Homelessness Matters Day press conference calling for increased income support

### Homelessness Australia calls for increased support for young people in federal budget

By Henry Selwick  
Posted Wed 19 Apr 2023 at 12:10pm, updated Wed 19 Apr 2023 at 12:40pm



There are calls for an increase in youth allowance as young people struggle with cost of living pressures. (AAP Dean Lewins)

ABC News, 19 April 2023: [Homelessness Australia calls for increased support for young people in federal budget](#)

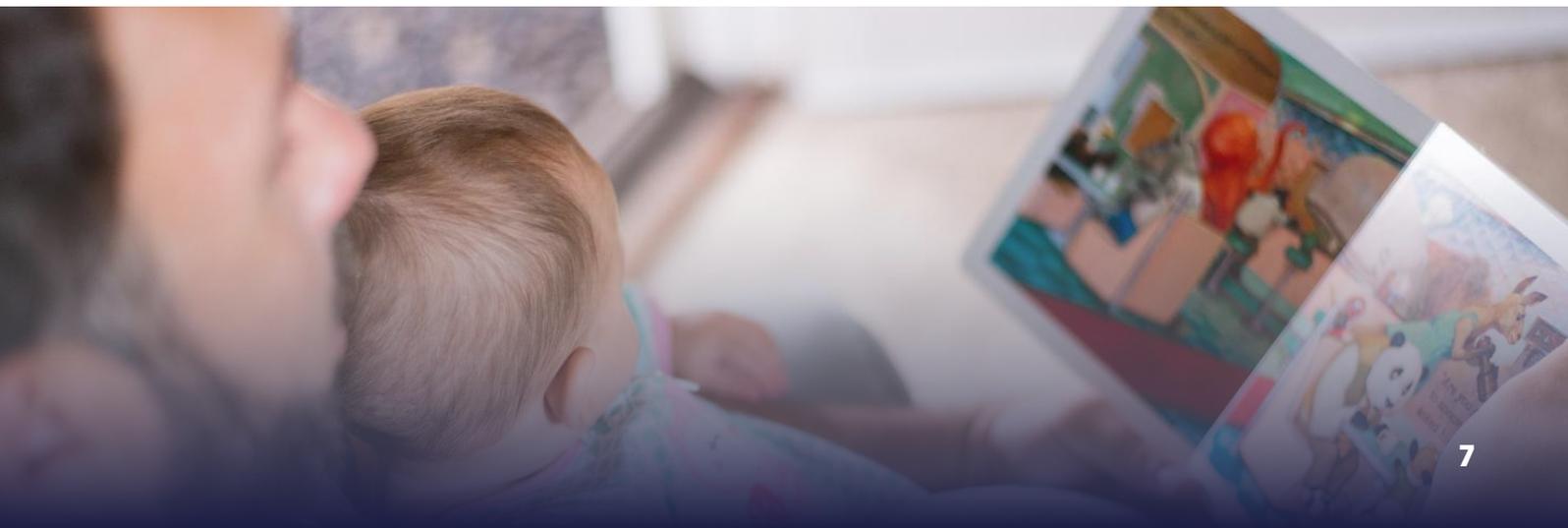
### Surging rents pushing youth to the streets

Breakfast Wed 19 Apr 2023 at 8:20am



Surging rents pushing youth to the streets. (ABC News)

ABC RN, 19 April 2023: [Surging rents pushing youth to the streets](#)



## Winning the argument for more social housing

**HA has been at the forefront of advocacy for the social housing needed to end homelessness over many years.**

In 2022–23, this involved actively supporting the Everybody's Home campaign, chaired by HA CEO, Kate Colvin, a series of media stories highlighting the need for more social housing, and supporting the strengthening and passage of the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) and related legislation.

HA housing stories focused on the need for social housing for groups at highest risk of homelessness, including women and children fleeing violence, First Nations Australians, and people unable to keep up with the cost of rising rents.

HA's [submission](#) and evidence to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee Inquiry into the HAFF Bill 2023 and related bills called for:

- stronger measures in the legislative package to ensure funding levels for social housing meet demand
- for homelessness expertise to be explicitly included in the housing and homelessness policy architecture being established by the legislation.

NEWS & VIEWS

**Only 3 per cent of women fleeing family violence receive the long term housing they need**



HA worked closely in the media to lobby MPs with peak body allies, Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA), National Shelter, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association, and with the broader group in the National Affordable Housing Alliance to encourage Parliament to strengthen and pass the bill.



**Kate Colvin (CEO, HA) and Hal Pawson (Professor Housing Research and Policy and Associate Director, UNSW) giving evidence to the Senate Committee**



**National Affordable Housing Alliance members and Senators supporting the passage of the HAFF Legislation. Pictured: Mike Zorbas (Property Council of Australia), Charles Northcote (BlueCHP Limited), Senator Tammy Tyrell, Matt Linden (Industry Super), Kate Colvin (HA), Senator David Pocock, Maiy Azize (Everybody's Home), Nick Proud (Power Housing), Toby O'Connor (SVDP National Council), Wendy Hayhurst (CHIA)**

## National Homelessness Conference

**In August 2022, HA again partnered with AHURI to deliver a successful National Homelessness Conference.**

Attended by 1,050 delegates in-person and online, and including 85 presenters across 22 sessions, the conference explored contemporary issues in homelessness, best practice responses, and the policy changes needed to end homelessness.

The conference included discussions on:

- Ending homelessness for Indigenous Australians
- Learnings from Covid homelessness programs
- The Scottish Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan
- Homelessness resulting from the climate crisis
- Housing First
- Domestic and family violence
- Learnings from people with lived experience
- Homelessness and mental health



**Jenny Smith (former Chair, HA) welcoming participants to the conference**



# 6

## Maintaining the urgency of action to end homelessness

HA has maintained a significant media profile to ensure there is pressure on Australian Governments to act to address homelessness.

Stories have focused on the impact of the rental crisis on homelessness, on the needs of women and children fleeing violence, First Nations Australians, the need for higher income support for young people, and the need for the national plan to have a strong ambition.

### Cost of living crisis will mean 'Christmas in a tent' for some families

By Savannah Meecham - Digital Chief of Staff | 12:00pm Dec 23, 2022



Nine News, 23 December 2022: Cost of living crisis will mean 'Christmas in a tent' for some families

### Homelessness services plead for more funding as costs and demand spiral

Broadcast Thu 9 Feb 2023 at 8:25am

ABC RN Breakfast, 9 February 2023: Homelessness services plead for more funding as costs and demand spiral



ABC TV, 14 February 2023: VIDEO: Homelessness Australia calls on Govt to continue affordable housing funding

### Australia sees 5 percent increase in homelessness

By Alexandra Humphries  
Broadcast Wed 22 Mar 2023 at 12:00pm



ABC The World Today, 22 March 2023: Australia sees 5 percent increase in homelessness

Youth homelessness on the rise: The fight for increased welfare payments

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DEBORAH KNIGHT



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**2GB**  
SYDNEY

**2GB, 19 April 2023: Youth homelessness on the rise: The fight for increased welfare payments**

**The Guardian**  
A decade of making a difference

We are still on a path to widening inequality when it comes to housing. The budget doesn't change that  
*Kate Colvin*

The fault lines in our housing market are now so deep that only fundamental change will halt country's slide into social desperation



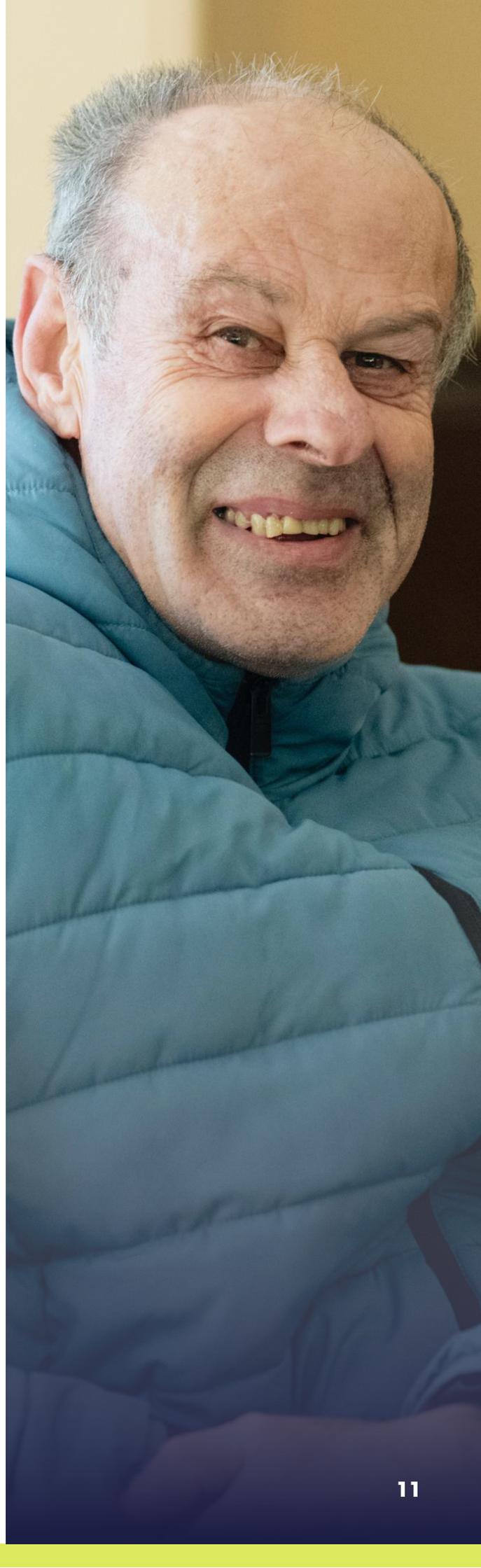
■ We need government intervention to deliver enough public housing and community housing for at least one in ten households. Photograph: Asanka Ratnayake/Getty Images

While this budget provides some relief from the worst rental crisis in living memory, the underlying causes of our housing strife remain and will only get worse without fundamental reform.

The increase in jobSeeker, youth allowance, and commonwealth rent assistance, and other income support measures for single parents and over 55s are welcome measures that will ease some of the strain.

But the fault lines in our housing market have become so deep, and the number of Australians plunging over the financial cliff into homelessness so numerous, that it is time for a fundamental shift, not just incremental change.

**The Guardian, 10 May 2023: We are still on a path to widening inequality when it comes to housing. The budget doesn't change that**



## Engaging the homelessness sector and critical allies

**Having a staff member has enabled HA to host events to inform and engage the homelessness sector, and to build connections with critical allies.**

In 2022–23, HA hosted events on:

- Preventing homelessness cuts to inform the sector about the Equal Remuneration Order cuts to homelessness services
- Gender, age and culture: Understanding difference to end homelessness with Council to Homeless Persons
- Homelessness Policy Forum: Census Homelessness Deep Dive with guest speakers from the Australian Bureau of Statistics

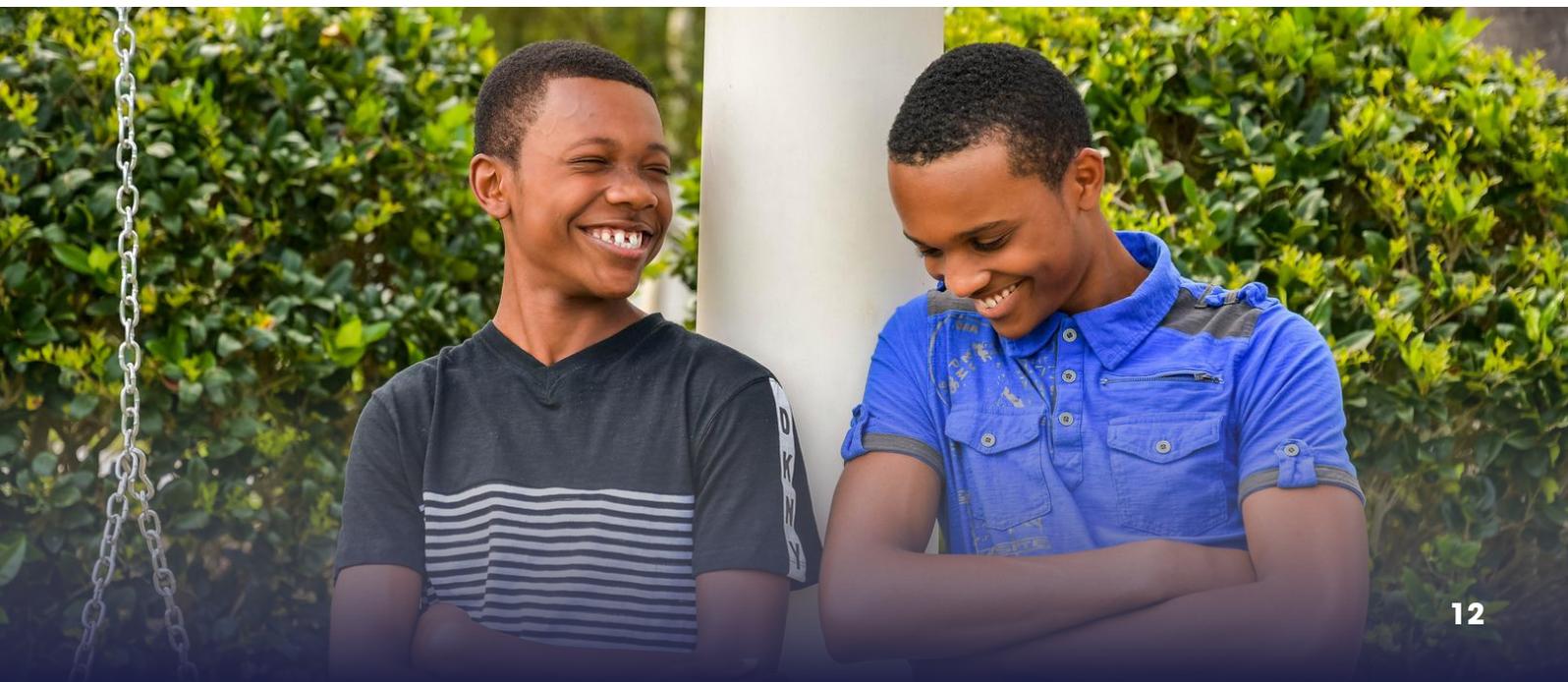
HA's CEO, Kate Colvin, gave presentations at the:

- Australian Institute for Super Trustees Conference
- Launch of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association with peak body colleagues
- Homestretch Conference
- Child and Youth Homelessness Conference

The periodic e-bulletin 'Homelessness News' and regular website updates have kept the sector informed about policy developments in homelessness, and supported the sector to engage effectively in shared action to influence Government.



**Launch of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (NATSIHA). Pictured: Rob McFarlane (NATSIHA), Wendy Hayhurst (CHIA), Emma Greenhalgh (National Shelter), Kate Colvin (HA), Ivan Simon (NATSIHA)**



## Housing First Train the Trainer and linkage with Housing First Europe continued to grow knowledge and capacity to deliver Housing First programs in Australia.

The Housing First Train the Trainer project is generously supported by the Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation and received significant in-kind support from Council to Homeless Persons and the National Trainers.

In 2022–23, 11 trainers were active in providing Housing First training, participating in the Housing First Community of Practice, and presenting on Housing First at the National Homelessness Conference.

During Homelessness Week 2022, the program launched an eight-week [National Housing First Webinar Series](#), delivered by the National Trainers, to provide in-depth information about each Housing First principle. These are now available as an enduring resource on the HA website.



Two active trainers were supported to attend Housing First Europe's inaugural Train The Trainer Symposium in Budapest in October 2022. The trainers participated in masterclasses to enhance their capabilities. They also contributed back to the Housing First Europe knowledge bank by presenting a masterclass on the work done establishing Housing First principles and training in Australia, and a harm-reduction masterclass to trainers undertaking the European Housing First Train the Trainer program.

In 2023, one trainer joined the Housing First training in Brussels and a new round of 12 trainers were recruited for round three of Train the Trainer, to commence in August 2023.



**Housing First Trainers Rosie Dodd and Leah Watkins delivering a masterclass at the Housing First Europe Train the Trainer Symposium in Budapest**

# Financial report

## **HOMELESSNESS AUSTRALIA LIMITED**

*Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2023*

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Interest income	8,938	318
Donations	937	153,916
Other	<u>3,110</u>	<u>-</u>
Total income	<u>12,985</u>	<u>154,233</u>
Less:		
<b>Expenses</b>		
Auditor's remuneration	2,500	-
Professional services	-	1,086
Management fees	20,000	20,000
Consultants	20,000	515
Annual Leave Provision	1,010	-
Depreciation	472	-
Employee Emoluments	105,109	-
Project Costs	1,810	-
Board expenses	1,683	-
Insurance	2,068	1,617
Telephone & internet	696	1,860
Other	<u>16,813</u>	<u>420</u>
	<u>172,161</u>	<u>25,498</u>
Operating (deficit)/profit for the year	(159,176)	128,735
Other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total comprehensive (deficit)/profit for the year	<u>(\$159,176)</u>	<u>\$128,735</u>

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and Auditor's Report.

[www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au](http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au)

Homelessness Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all of the lands on which we meet and work. We pay our respects to First Nations peoples and elders past, present and future. Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

