

Keynote speaker

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*From inequality to impact: Understanding housing challenges
and permanent supportive housing needs in SA*



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Understanding housing challenges and
permanent supportive housing needs in SA

Dr Katrina Raynor

Centre for Equitable Housing, October 2025

Welcome



SA HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CONTEXT



PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND HOUSING FIRST



CALCULATIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS

SA Housing Context

A system under pressure

85%

Adelaide home purchase prices

- Adelaide home prices have increased 85% since April 2020
- \$480k to \$850k

89%

Regional SA home purchase prices

- Regional home prices have increased 89% since April 2020
- \$270k to \$460k

52%

SA rental prices

- Adelaide median rent has increased 48% since April 2020
- \$325 to \$495

10%

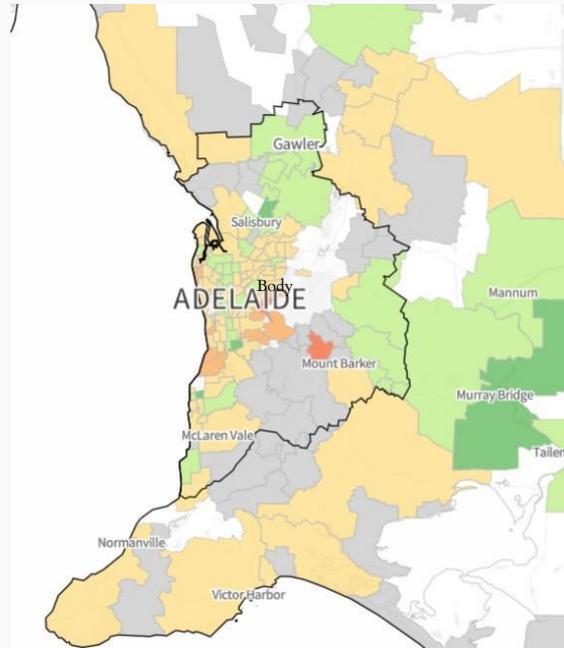
Decline in social housing stock

- In 2006, 51,000 social dwellings, (7.5%)
- By 2021, 46,600 social dwellings, (5.8%)
- Total social housing stock declined to 49,900 by 2023

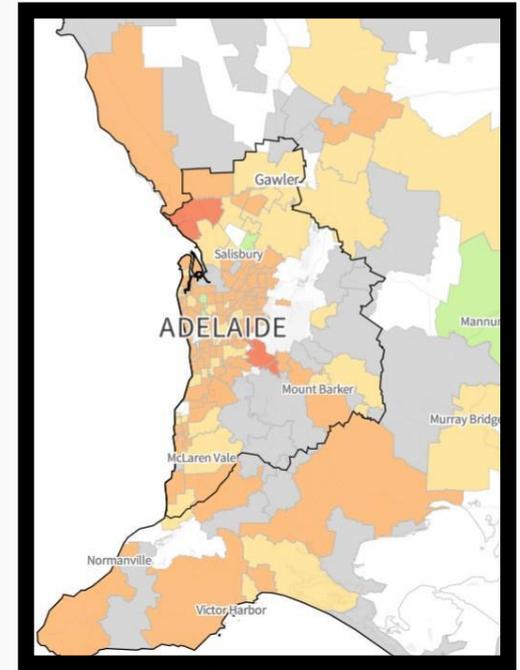
A changing rental market: 2020 to 2024



Q2, 2020



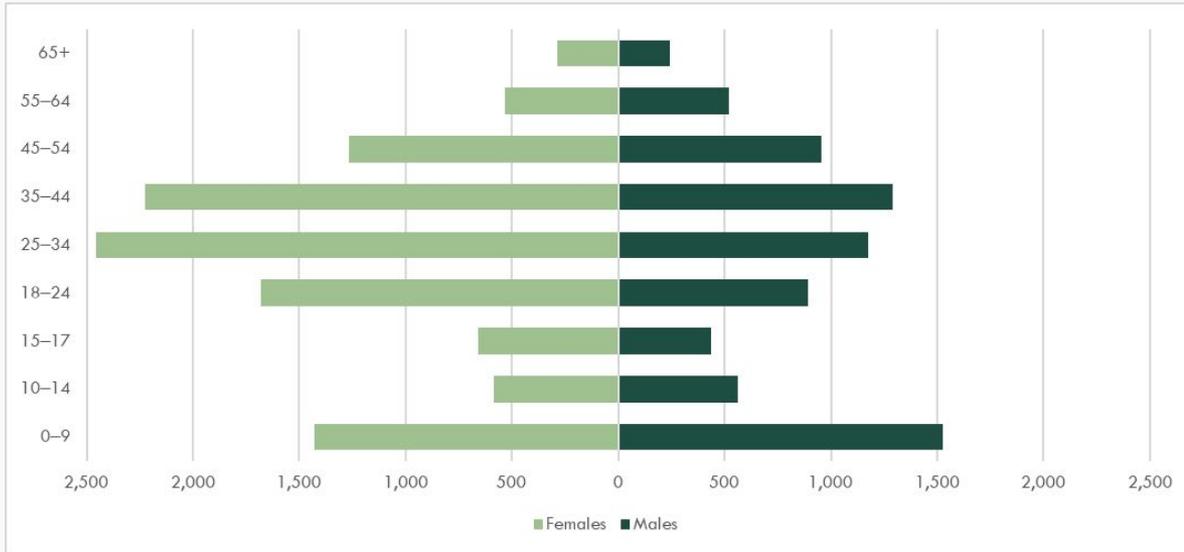
Q2, 2022



Q2, 2024

Who experiences homelessness?

SHS Clients, by age and gender, South Australia, 2023–24

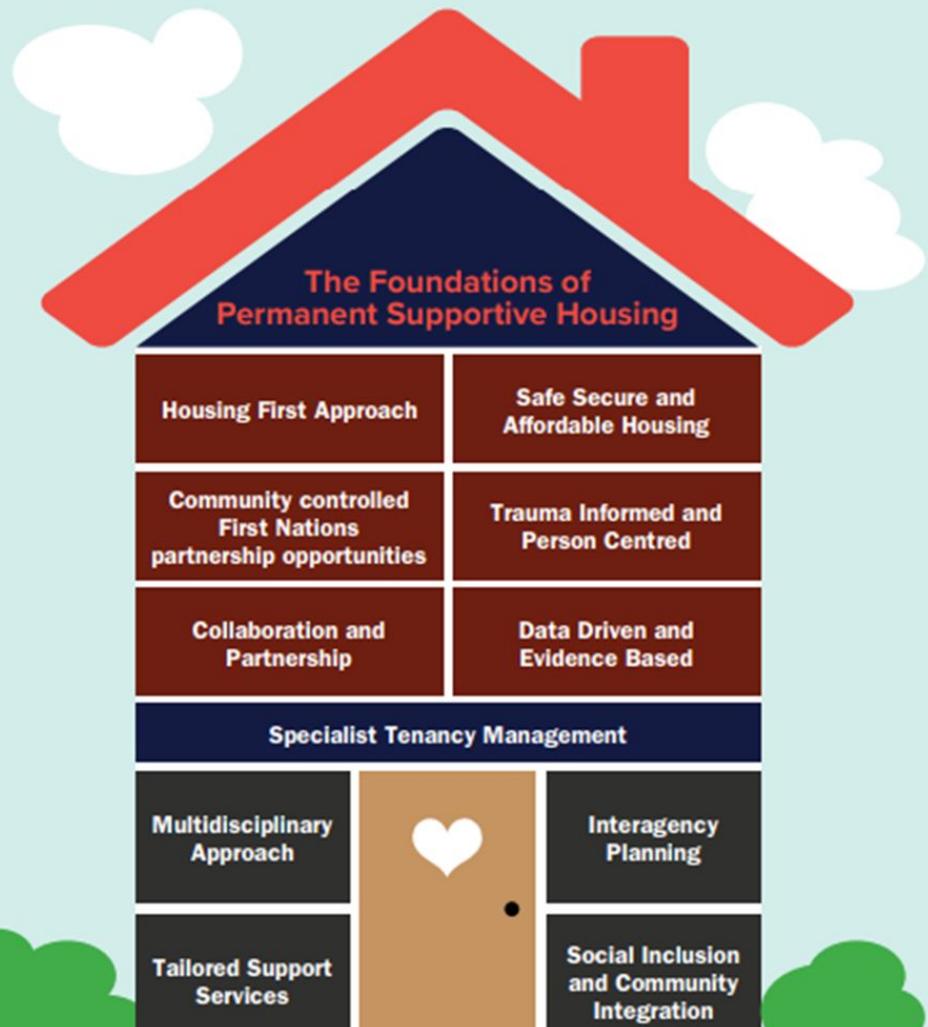


- Aboriginal people in SA are 7.7x more likely to present at Specialist Homelessness Services than the broader population
- 25% of the homeless population in Adelaide are aged 15 - 24 and almost a third are 25 - 44

“ABS homelessness figures have increased 11% but our figures indicate much higher.

The challenge we have as a homeless system is that we primarily measure sector capacity, as opposed to need.

Some people aren't able to get through to supports, or present to supports, or get to speak to someone. We don't capture that.”



The Foundations of Permanent Supportive Housing

Housing First Approach

Safe Secure and Affordable Housing

Community controlled First Nations partnership opportunities

Trauma Informed and Person Centred

Collaboration and Partnership

Data Driven and Evidence Based

Specialist Tenancy Management

Multidisciplinary Approach



Interagency Planning

Tailored Support Services

Social Inclusion and Community Integration

Housing First



Housing First approach

Starts as a philosophy that embeds principles into day-to-day practice, which may or may not be involved in a Housing First program.

Often used interchangeably with:

- Practice
- Philosophy
- Principles



Housing First program model

Addition of a high-fidelity Housing First service model into existing system, which comes with funded housing places and provides low caseloads and flexible timeframes.

Examples include:

- Journey to Social Inclusion (scattered site)
- Common Ground (single site)



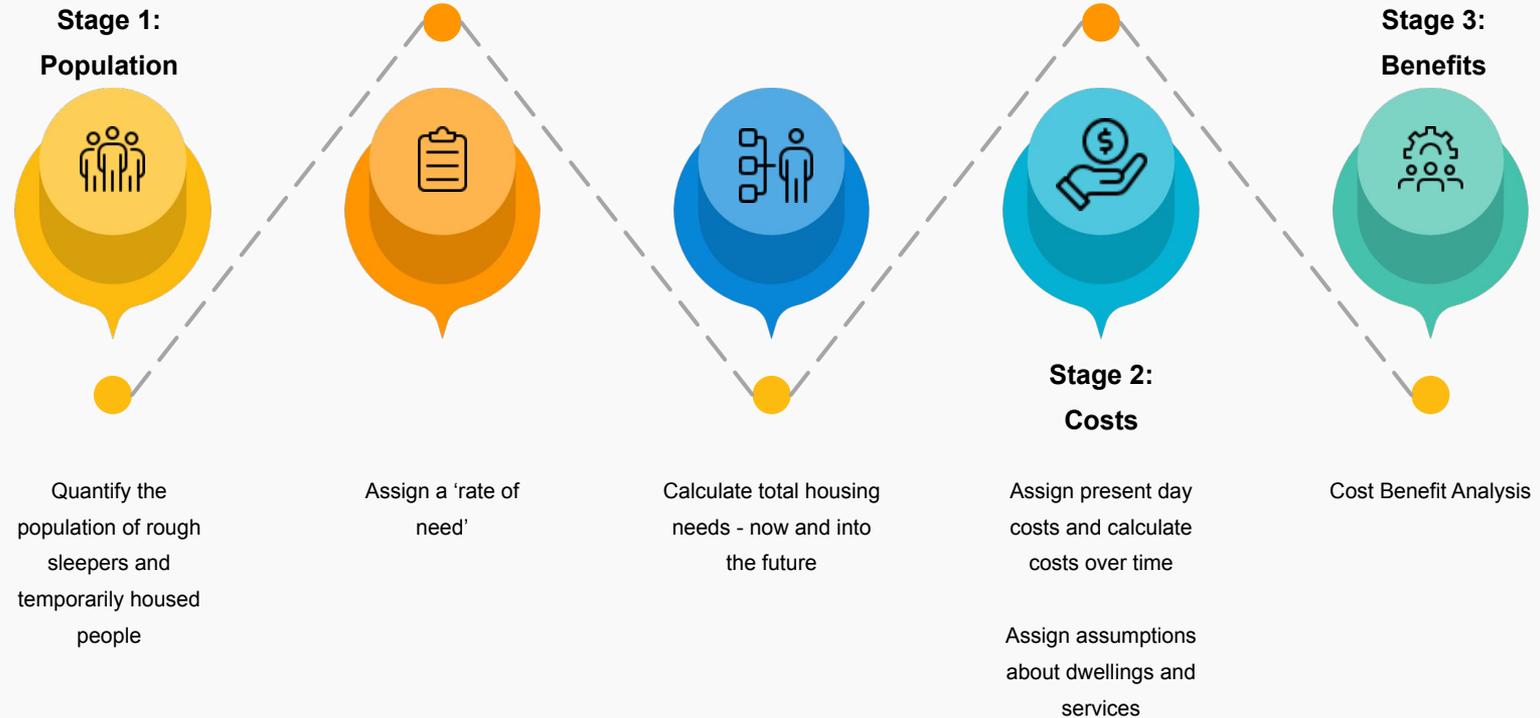
Housing First systems change

Alignment of whole system to prioritise housing people quickly and providing support as needed through cross-sector reform of existing service models.

Often used interchangeably with:

- Ending homelessness
- Advance to Zero
- Built for Zero
- The Finnish Housing First principle

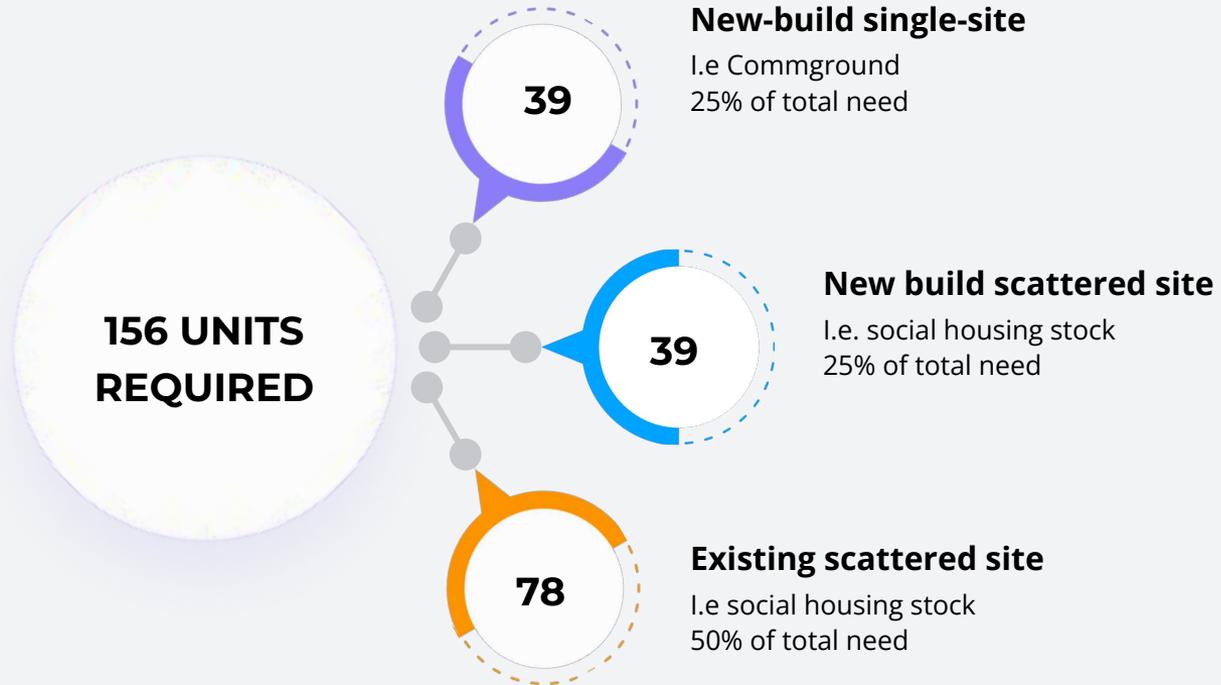
The Methodology



The population

Population	Count of homelessness	Rate of Need (Based on a 10+ acuity score in the VI-SPDAT)	Need for permanent supportive housing
Homeless Individuals at June 2025	231	64%	148
Homeless Individuals at June 2030	245	64%	156

Dwelling Need



The costing

Item	Cost estimate
Scattered site: 1 bedroom	\$238,500
Scattered site: 2 or 3 bedrooms	\$333,800
Single site	\$630,000
Annual operating costs (per person)	\$20,500
Annual service costs (per person)	\$19,000
Annual rent contributions (per person)	\$6,800

The Benefits

Other Benefits

Reduced justice interactions, improved community engagement, family re-unification

Resident well-being

One year of supportive housing is expected to improve life satisfaction by 0.335 WELLBYs per tenant



Housing Outcomes

Participants in Housing First programs are more likely to be in stable housing than those who received treatment as usual

Healthcare Usage

Participants experienced 37% fewer emergency department visits, 24% fewer hospitalisations, and 7 fewer days hospitalised

Benefits and costs	Total across program lifespan	Notes
Benefits to government		
Cost savings to government	\$66.1 million	Cost savings are 1.44 times service cost
Benefits to housed individuals		
Value of WELLBY (wellbeing-year) benefits	\$100.7 million	The dollar value of wellbeing benefits
Capital costs		
Capital cost of new builds	\$29.9 million	Cost of construction
Opportunity cost of being able to sell existing buildings	\$8.4 million	The value of existing buildings at the time of repurposing for PSH
Cost of replacing/refurbishing existing buildings	\$2.5 million	Cost of replacing or refurbishing existing buildings is incurred after 30 years
Cost offset from residual value of replaced/refurbished buildings	\$0.2 million	Cost offset is received after 60 years
Ongoing costs		
Service costs	\$45.9 million	
Operating costs	\$49.5 million	
Cost offset from tenant rent revenue	\$16.4 million	
Totals		
Total benefits	\$166.7 million	Government cost savings + WELLBY benefits
Total costs	\$119.7 million	
Benefit-cost ratio	1.41	

1

Costs 2025 - 2030

- Capital cost: \$36m
- Service costs: \$10m
- Net operating costs: \$7m

2

On-going costs

- Net annual operating and service costs: \$5m

3

Anticipated savings

- Govt cost savings of 1.44:1 for services
- Per annum savings of \$4m
- Annual subsidy once savings considered: \$1m



SUMMARY

- The net government commitment to build and operate 156 units of permanent supportive housing in inner-city Adelaide between 2025-2030 totals **\$52.8 million**
- The annual net operating and services subsidy needed to maintain the housing beyond this period is estimated to be **\$5.1 million.**

How to drive impact



Integrated Vertical Governance

Alignment across local, state and federal governments with consistent goals, funding and legal mechanisms

- Success: HAFF and Federal leadership on housing
- Gap: Funding vacuum for services



Advocacy Coalitions and Agenda Setting

Strong, cross-sector partnerships that share goals and sustain advocacy over time

- Success: the Alliance as a coalition. Strong government-sector partnerships
- Gap: Separation of BNL from other forms of homelessness



Shared data and understanding

Common definitions, evidence and language to build consensus and measure progress

- Success: PSH Needs analysis and costing exercise and PSH Framework
- Gap: Not for all of SA, access to costing data is complex

System Change

Support a Housing First systems change in South Australia.

Evaluate

Evaluate the nationwide need for Permanent Supportive Housing.

Measure

Maintain and expand By Name List record keeping.

Embed

Integrate PSH targets into broader state social housing goals.

Fund

Create a dedicated PSH funding mechanism for management, support, and maintenance.

Support

Fund wrap-around services and tenancy management for 78 existing social homes.

Build

Deliver 78 new PSH units in five years based on a pipeline of land.

The ask:
156 dwellings in 5 years





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