

# THE QUEENSLAND HOUSING STRATEGY 2017–2027

## PROGRESS SNAPSHOT – JULY 2020

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017–2027* is transforming the way housing assistance is delivered, driving key reforms and targeted investment to support urban renewal, generate new jobs, provide affordable housing and drive innovative housing design that responds to contemporary housing needs.

### Our objective

Every Queenslanders has access to a safe, secure and affordable home that meets their needs and enables participation in the social and economic life of our prosperous state.

### Our progress at a glance

Contracts awarded for commencement of **1,949 new social homes**, supporting **1,800 construction industry fulltime equivalent jobs**.

We are **Partnering for Impact** with non-government service providers to reduce homelessness by improving our joint, local responses across the state, including through better service integration and improvements to the way we work and are structured to deliver better outcomes. We are **Partnering for Growth** with the community housing sector to increase the supply of community and affordable housing in Queensland, through modern program investment and funding arrangements. So far, 923 new social and affordable dwellings have been approved, supported by over \$75 million of government investment.

Delivered new protections for consumers living in a range of accommodation settings through changes to legislation, and funded new information and advisory services.

Received over 137,000 responses during the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation process providing community feedback about their renting experiences in Queensland and how it can be improved.

Acted quickly to implement regulatory and financial measures to help the residential rental sector manage the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on residential leases to keep Queensland's renting households in their homes and rental income coming in for property investors.

Announced *A Better Renting Future Reform Roadmap* outlining a two-staged approach to improve renting in Queensland and received over 15,000 survey responses and written submissions providing feedback on Stage 1 reform options outlined in a Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement.

Commenced our **Service Delivery Transformation** through implementing a new Customer Connect front-of-house approach to improve customer experience, implementing a new Customer Management system to better capture people's needs and support enhanced and integrated service responses, redesigning our Fortitude Valley and Ipswich Housing Service Centres, opening the Toowoomba Housing Hub and recently co-locating the Hub with the Toowoomba and South West Housing Service Centre and improving mobile and online services.

Launched and commenced implementation of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019–2023*.



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## Growth

The Growth pillar is helping to boost the supply of affordable homes in new and renewed neighbourhoods and communities, while providing more jobs for Queenslanders.

### Housing Construction Jobs Program

Awarded contracts for 1,949 new social and 316 affordable homes under the Housing Construction Jobs Program, as at 30 June 2020. The program encourages partnerships with the private sector and community housing providers to deliver jobs, drive local economic growth and secure better community outcomes.

### Partnering for Growth

Launched in November 2018 to unlock previous investment into the community housing sector to increase the supply of community and affordable housing and develop new person centred and flexible housing responses.

The first growth plan with Brisbane Housing Company, a \$222 million plan, will yield 682 units of accommodation of which 172 will be for social and affordable housing with State investment of \$28 million. Further growth plans will deliver 241 units of social and affordable accommodation across the Bowen, Cairns, Logan, Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg, Bribie Island and Ripley regions.

Extended Community Rent Scheme funding, enabling more than 1,700 properties to continue to be available to people in housing need.

### Planning policy

Partnered with the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning to develop a new Housing Supply and Diversity State Planning Policy.

### Livable Housing Design

**Exceeded the 50% target** of newly constructed social housing dwellings meeting the Livable Housing Design guidelines gold or platinum standards.

### Solar on Public Housing

Delivered a trial to place solar panels on **more than 800 public housing homes** and government buildings in Lockhart River, Cairns and Rockhampton, in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

### Build to Rent

Progressing the expression of interest process for the Build to Rent pilot project with Queensland Treasury selecting proponents to deliver up to three Build to Rent market developments providing long term rental housing with a dedicated component targeted to low to moderate income key worker households.



## Prosperity

Through the Prosperity pillar we are enabling economic independence and participation by providing pathways to housing opportunities that respond to individual choices and needs.

### Private housing products

Launched a suite of flexible private rental market assistance packages:

- Helping Hand Headlease assists people experiencing domestic and family violence or people living with a mental health condition, to build a rental history.
- Rental Security Subsidy offers short-term assistance to reduce rental payments for Queenslanders experiencing hardship.
- RentConnect enhancements, No Interest Loans, Regional Discretionary Fund and Bond Loan Plus.
- Skillsets for Successful Tenancies — Dollars and Sense, state-wide rollout commenced in January 2019, provides training to help people successfully find and maintain a private rental property.

### Closing the Gap

Delivered 338 social housing dwellings in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to meet Queensland's commitment under the National Partnership on Remote Housing 2016–18.

Worked with Mick Gooda, First Nations Advisor to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

Launched and commenced implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019–2023. The plan creates a shared vision and approach to improving housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Commenced delivery of the \$40 million remote capital program and reached agreement with the Commonwealth on a further \$105 million capital funding for remote and discrete communities.

### NRL Cowboys House Girls Campus

**Opened in Townsville in January 2019** providing 50 places of accommodation for female secondary students from remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to complete their secondary education, which may include school-based traineeships.

### Youth to Work policy

Announced in March 2018, the policy removes barriers for young people growing up in public housing to take up employment opportunities and realise the benefits of economic participation, without penalising their family.



The Connections pillar is helping people to sustain their tenancies and prevent more people from becoming homeless. The service system will be easier to navigate and support integration with other homelessness, housing and human services.

## Partnering for Impact

Launched in March 2018, locked in five-year funding for Specialist Homelessness Services, and established a Compact with the Sector committing to work together to deliver on our shared vision to reduce homelessness. QShelter has delivered The Deck, an online resource for supporting good practice. We are also delivering further improvements, including through COVID-19 responses, to better support people experiencing homelessness into longer term housing solutions, supported by Partnering for Growth.

## Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response - Integrating Services

With the commitment to better integrate service delivery at the state and local levels, we began delivery of the Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response – Integrating Services initiative in nine locations. Place-Based Response Teams work with funded outreach providers to proactively identify and engage people experiencing homelessness and link them to the housing and support services they need. Funded Care Coordination Facilitators increase capability of local care coordination groups to deliver integrated housing with support to people with complex needs.

## Dignity First

Invested a total of \$12.4 million in five Dignity First Fund funding rounds to support new and innovative initiatives to prevent and reduce homelessness and assist people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity.

## Next Step Home—Women on Parole

Launched in January 2018, providing coordinated housing and support for women on parole to reduce their risk of homelessness.

## Partnering for Growth

Modernising community housing program settings to promote housing sustainment for vulnerable households, streamlined reporting for providers and allowing providers to grow their social housing portfolios.

## YouthCONNECT

Launched in 2018, this program delivers sustainable housing and wraparound support for young people leaving state-based care. YouthCONNECT is operating in Townsville, Logan and Ipswich.

## Sure Steps family coaching

Funded a two-year extension to the pilot being delivered by YFS Ltd. This voluntary program for families in public housing in Logan combines advice and support services with a focus on sustaining tenancies.

## Youth Foyers

Expanded the Logan Youth Foyer from 22 to 40 self-contained units, providing secure and affordable housing for young people, with additional support services to enhance their independence and enable them to engage in education, training or employment.

Construction of the Gold Coast Youth Foyer commenced in March 2020 and is scheduled to be complete in July 2021.

## Domestic and family violence shelters

Completed construction of shelters for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence in **Cherbourg, Pormpuraaw, Coen, Roma, Redlands, Caboolture and Coomera**. Commenced construction of additional new crisis shelters for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence in **Woorabinda** and the **Gold Coast**.

## Customer experience

During the first two stages of our Service Delivery Transformation, we have:

- Commenced designing Housing Service Centres for a better customer experience, with Fortitude Valley and Ipswich Housing Service Centres completed.
- Opened the Toowoomba Housing Hub in August 2018, an integrated service model for access to housing and homelessness services.
- Introduced new mobile technology in Housing Service Centres.
- On 15 June 2020, the co-located Toowoomba and South West Housing Service Centre and the Toowoomba Housing Hub opened as a one stop shop to assist people in need to access housing and homelessness services all in one place.
- Launched new online services, Housing Assist QLD and Tenant Assist QLD.
- Implemented a new Customer Connect front-of-house service approach and technology solution across all Housing Service Centres to improve the customer experience.
- Introduced new technology systems and simplified processes to ensure a more responsive, person-centred service, including a new Customer Management system to better capture people's needs.
- Launched the Queensland Housing Services Finder tool, providing online information about housing assistance delivered or funded by the department.

## TenantConnect

Launched in November 2018, to support and empower social housing tenants to participate for social, cultural and economic life. The program is supported by the website: [www.qld.gov.au/tenantconnect](http://www.qld.gov.au/tenantconnect).



Through the Confidence pillar we are enhancing the safety and dignity of all Queenslanders by creating a fair and contemporary housing system that provides a diverse range of housing options.

## Industry regulation

Changes to legislation were delivered to provide better protection for consumers, including amendments to:

- The *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002* and a new Residential Services Regulation. Changes include reporting the death of a resident, and introduction of a 'serious incident register' to ensure service operators manage matters to protect residents effectively.
- The *Retirement Villages Act 1999*, and a new Retirement Villages Regulation which introduced a range of safeguards for retirement village residents including new village comparison documentation, and requirements to ensure residents receive their exit entitlement payment in 18 months.
- The *Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003*, and a new Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Regulation with new protections for residents including improved precontractual disclosure processes, park level dispute resolution and emergency plans.

A new Queensland Retirement Villages and Parks Advisory Service program was funded **from 1 October 2018 to 30 June 2023** to deliver specialist legal information and advice to people living in manufactured homes and retirement villages.

The Queensland Resident Operated Retirement Village Support Service was funded and established to provide assistance to resident-operated retirement villages with advice about matters including compliance and consideration of alternative corporate structures and help to transition to another structure if the operator wishes to do so.

## Right Where You Live

The Right Where You Live program, funded to provide information and support to help consumers understand new consumer protections.

## Renting reform

The Queensland Government announced its response to community feedback received through the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation in A Better Renting Future Reform Roadmap outlining a two-staged approach to improve renting in Queensland.

In late 2019, the Queensland Government released a Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement outlining Stage 1 Better Renting Future reform options for community

and sector feedback. Over 15,000 survey responses and written submissions were received providing valuable feedback to ensure Queensland's residential tenancy laws protect tenants and property investors and support housing stability in the rental market.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had broad reaching impacts on Queensland renting households and property investors. The Queensland Government acted quickly in April 2020 to implement regulatory measures to support the residential rental sector manage the impacts of COVID-19 on residential leases. These measures include key elements of the proposed Stage 1 Better Renting Futures reforms, which will be monitored and evaluated to inform future decisions.

## Looking ahead

We will continue to build on the key platforms and partnering approaches established since the launch of the Queensland Housing Strategy, including:

- Delivering a further 473 social and affordable housing dwellings through the Housing Construction Jobs Program, with 2,972 new constructions planned by June 2022, to meet demand for social and affordable housing
- Continuing our Service Delivery Transformation including enhancing pathway planning for all customers across the state, enhancing the service offer for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence, enhancing our service partnerships across the sector and improved technology and digital service channels.
- Continue to unlock investment and increase supply through Partnering for Growth.
- Continuing to build partnerships and strengthen homelessness services through Partnering for Impact.
- Investing in state-wide housing and homelessness network support and place-based service integration.
- Continue to implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019–2023 including establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing body, finalising community led Local Housing Plans, and progressing home ownership in remote communities.
- Delivering new and enhanced services for young people, women and children experiencing domestic and family violence and older Queenslanders.
- Helping people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity through delivery of further funding rounds of the Dignity First Fund.
- Examining better ways to resolve housing consumer disputes.