

Housing Connect Reform



The Housing Connect Reform commenced under Tasmania's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2 (2019-2023). The Reform will refine the existing Housing Connect model to more effectively respond to housing crisis and homelessness in Tasmania.

Project Update

In December 2019 the Housing Connect Reform Steering Committee approved a project approach of testing service delivery design through a series of Pilot programs. These pilots were to inform the development of an agreed service model.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this approach has changed. COVID-19, while presenting substantial challenges to the sector, has also identified opportunities to bring forward changes to areas of service delivery that were forecast for testing through the pilot project approach.

Examples include the way we approach outreach for rough sleepers, the use of brokerage for emergency accommodation, and the need for specialist support services (such as mental health) within the Housing Connect system. This builds on the extensive work completed by Brotherhood of St Laurence in the Housing Connect Review (2019) relating to all key elements of service delivery.

As we are already progressing changes to these areas of service delivery, the Reform Project will now prioritise the development of the revised Housing Connect service model. This will enable services to embed practice changes that align with the new model and highlight practice areas that will be impacted by change during the life of the project.

The Service Model will be developed by November 2020.

The corresponding funding re-allocation will then follow in December 2020. This will answer the key questions of who, what, where and how for the provision of service in the new model. This clarity will allow time to plan, develop and implement new elements of the service model in the transitional phase before July 2022.

A Practice Framework that expands on the summarised approach outlined in the Service Model will also be developed.

A Community of Practice will be formalised by February 2021. This will build on existing collaborative groups and will develop a shared approach to incorporating new ways of working into existing workforce practices.

A further key focus area will be to introduce Information Technology (IT) system changes to support the new service model. This development work will focus on three key project elements:

- An assessment tool that facilitates multiple application types tailored to individual housing needs.
- A client portal that facilitates remote access to information and services, including self-assessment and eligibility testing.
- A dynamic reporting tool to enable both responsive and scheduled reporting of service delivery outcomes and key performance indicators.

Progress on the project and its individual elements will be the focus of the next round of sector information sessions which will be held early in the second half of 2020.

Appointments

Specialist Homelessness Service Representatives

To strengthen the Governance arrangements for the Housing Connect Reform project, Specialist Homelessness Service representatives were selected to join all Governance groups, including: Reform Steering Committee, Operational Managers Group, and the Regional Managers Groups.

Following an EOI process, the following representatives were appointed to the Operational and Regional Managers groups:

- **Stephen Hill** (Launceston City Mission) SHS representative on OMG
- **Ros Atkinson** (YFCC) North-West representative on RMG
- **Ria Brink** (Karinya) Northern representative on RMG
- **Helen Hudson** (Hobart Women's Shelter) Southern representative on RMG

Part of these roles is to provide feedback to and seek input on the Reform from SHS in their respective regions.

Project Manager, Housing Connect Reform

Anna Balmforth (formerly Principal Planning Officer with the Department) has been successfully appointed to the role of Project Manager Housing Connect Reform. Anna formally commenced in this role in January 2020.

Consultants, Brotherhood of St Laurence

We continue to work with consultants Brotherhood of St Laurence to deliver key project elements including the Service Model, Practice Framework and formalising a Community of Practice.

Further Information

If you have any questions, feedback or suggestions relating to the Reform Project, please contact:

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