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INITIATIVE

SUPPORT LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT WORK IN ADDRESSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS ISSUES

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

The lack of affordable rental properties and affordable home ownership is causing significant social and economic impacts in Australia's cities and regions.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COMMUNITIES?

Homelessness and housing stress can profoundly affect the mental and physical health of individuals and families, as well as impact on their education and employment opportunities and their ability to participate fully in the community.

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

- Housing stress is impacting low and increasingly middle-income households.
- The ABS 2016 Census data shows that the rate of homelessness in Australia has increased 4.6 per cent over the last five years. The latest estimates reveal more than 116,000 people were experiencing homelessness in Australia on Census night.
- Despite increases in homelessness and lack of affordable housing, there is no national housing strategy or a national dialogue between the three levels of government on housing. National Housing and Homelessness Agreements are now determined between the Commonwealth and individual state/territory governments without direct engagement of local government.
- Local governments continue do some "heavy lifting" on affordable housing with their communities in a financially-constrained environment which is exacerbated by cost-shifting, rate-capping and rate concessions for community housing.
- Local governments play an important role in delivering affordable housing with their communities and operate within state-based planning legislation requirements and financial constraints. This includes the burden and timing of investment in infrastructure. However, they are often unfairly blamed for housing affordability problems especially land and housing supply.
- Communities experience homelessness and affordable housing issues in varying degrees and councils' respond to these issues where they can depending on their resources and priorities and using their local knowledge. For example, some councils respond by highlighting issues around overcrowding of dwellings, identifying the implications of Airbnb on housing stock, and facilitating housing for key workers, safe refuge accommodation and low income housing.
- Some councils choose to extend their involvement in housing beyond the traditional planning requirements for example by using excess council land or buildings for housing, engaging with the NGO housing and social services sector, hosting local housing forums or undertaking housing surveys.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROPOSES

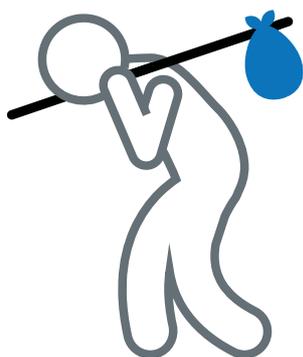
Support local government's current work in addressing affordable housing and homelessness issues by:

- Reinstating a national governance model to address affordable housing and homelessness, that includes local government.
- Acknowledging local government's role in housing with appropriate funding including for innovative partnership models on housing

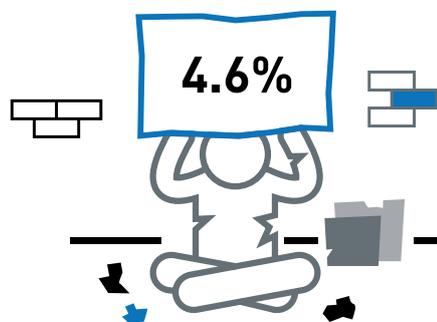
Homelessness is not a choice

Homelessness is one of the most potent examples of disadvantage in the community, and one of the most important markers of

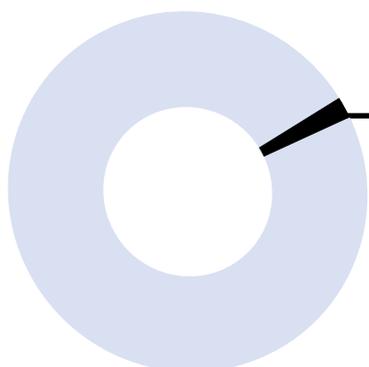
social exclusion



homelessness has increased



over the past **five years**



50 homeless persons for every **10,000**

More than **116,000** people were experiencing homelessness in Australia IN 2016