

# Delivering an integrated housing and homelessness response on the Gold Coast

## Snapshot of housing and homelessness on the Gold Coast

**1,403** People are homeless on any given night<sup>1</sup> in the Gold Coast Local Government Area (LGA).



**2,095** In June 2017, the private rental market had 2,095 vacant rental units, with a vacancy rate of 2%.



From June 2016-June 2017 the median weekly rent for a three-bedroom house increased 3.3% from \$460 to \$475 per week and for a three-bedroom townhouse increased 5.0% from \$400 to \$420 per week.



**392** homes

Under the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017 – 2027*, the department will invest \$110 million on the Gold Coast to build 392 new homes for vulnerable Queenslanders.

**\$9,159,539**



Allocated by the department to deliver 14 specialist homelessness services in the Gold Coast LGA in 2017-2018.



This includes \$1,600,787 funding to deliver services for women and children escaping domestic and family violence provided by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) will be held between 4 and 15 April. While thousands of people will come to the Gold Coast to enjoy the event, it is essential we plan for and manage the impacts on people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness, and vulnerable households.

The Department of Housing and Public Works has developed a targeted response by reviewing learnings from similar events, including the Victorian Homelessness Response for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games and the G20 in Brisbane. We have also worked closely with our community sector partners to ensure our response supports the local housing and homelessness service system and meets emerging needs.

We will adopt an integrated approach to deliver an effective housing and homelessness response. It will be based on consultation, integration and collaboration to ensure a positive legacy for the Gold Coast community. We will provide additional funding to identified key providers to expand their services.



In 2016, a range of organisations received funding to provide services on the Gold Coast, including:

- \$60,000 for the Gold Coast Homelessness Network to develop the 7CareConnect App to provide people with vital information on homelessness and support services in the lead-up to, and during the GC2018
- \$57,273 for Havafeed to expand facilities to improve access for homeless people to have a hot meal or shower
- \$281,818 for SecondBite to expand their community food collection and distribution program to deliver healthy meals for people in need.

In 2017, the department will deliver additional Dignity First and mobile homelessness service funding to further assist vulnerable people on the Gold Coast.

## Dignity First Fund

Dignity First aims to deliver innovative responses that help people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity.

<sup>1</sup> ABS 2011 Census



## An action-based approach

Every Queenslanders should have access to a safe, secure and affordable home that meets their needs and supports them to participate in the social and economic life of a vibrant and prosperous state.

We will work with other government agencies, local housing and homelessness service providers and key stakeholders to deliver a range of actions that provide people with the necessary support they need to secure and sustain housing.

Deliver a coordinated and collaborative response	Actions	Timeframe
<p>Lead a coordinated, whole-of-government response, across the housing and homelessness sectors, to support vulnerable households and people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sessions</li> <li>• Cross-agency committees</li> <li>• Emergency funding</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement</li> <li>• Transport options</li> <li>• Homelessness Protocol</li> <li>• Work with the Queensland Police Service</li> <li>• Training to over 19,000 people</li> </ul>	<p>Drive a coordinated service system response to reduce duplication and identify and respond to emerging issues quickly through a cross-agency committee.</p>	<p>From July 2017</p>
	<p>Work with the Department of Family and Community Services in New South Wales to establish a cross-border working group to ensure responses consider impacts on the broader service system.</p>	<p>From June 2017</p>
	<p>Implement a new approach through a single provider to manage and distribute emergency funding for crisis accommodation and other responses effectively and efficiently.</p>	<p>From September 2017</p>
	<p>Partner with Translink to deliver travel options which may include issuing pre-loaded go cards for people to access homelessness support services via public transport.</p>	<p>September 2017</p>
	<p>Implement a Homelessness Protocol for agencies and stakeholders coming into contact with people experiencing homelessness in public places, to ensure they provide respectful interactions, public places are shared by all and people are referred to appropriate services.</p>	<p>August 2017</p>
	<p>Support the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to divert homeless people from the criminal justice system, especially within the protective security zones around venues and celebration sites. This support will include training for key QPS officers, strengthening working relationships with the local service system, facilitating referrals to support services and establishing co-responder teams to respond to homelessness.</p>	<p>From August 2017</p>
	<p>Educate stakeholders about the use of additional QPS powers in protective security zones, individual rights and obligations and support services available to assist.</p>	<p>From October 2017</p>
	<p>Deliver online “Demystifying Homelessness” training to 15,000 Commonwealth Games volunteers, 4,000 security staff, and contractors to support positive interactions with people experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>From August 2017 to April 2018</p>

Support vulnerable renters	Actions	Timeframe
<p>Ensure vulnerable renters can secure and sustain affordable tenancies.</p> <p>Delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced housing support</li> <li>Engagement with the private rental sector</li> <li>Information and education for tenants</li> </ul>	<p>Deliver more housing support, including outreach services, through the Gold Coast Housing Service Centre, to assist people to access rental support services and products.</p>	<p>Ongoing to April 2018</p>
	<p>Build partnerships with landlords and real estate agents to ensure vulnerable renters receive appropriate support to sustain housing.</p>	<p>Ongoing to April 2018</p>
	<p>Work with Tenants Queensland to develop a new community education strategy to assist tenants make informed decisions and promote the Queensland Statewide Tenants' Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS).</p>	<p>Ongoing to April 2018</p>
	<p>Monitor the Gold Coast rental market, to identify rent increases, to ensure vulnerable renters receive support.</p> <p>Work with QSTARS to ensure vulnerable renters have access to free and independent advice and support.</p>	<p>Ongoing to April 2018</p> <p>Ongoing to April 2018</p>

Value and connect people experiencing homelessness	Actions	Timeframe
<p>Assist people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity and connect them to essential services.</p> <p>Delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better pathways to services</li> <li>Advance to Zero housing program</li> <li>Emergency accommodation</li> <li>Emergency response funds</li> <li>Extended service operating hours</li> <li>New mobile support service</li> <li>Engage with those in need</li> <li>Improved access to information</li> </ul>	<p>Provide additional resources to allow Tenants Queensland and QSTARS to respond to referrals from homelessness services on the Gold Coast.</p>	<p>Ongoing to April 2018</p>
	<p>Deliver an Advance to Zero outreach program to ensure those most vulnerable are rapidly housed and supported to sustain tenancies.</p>	<p>November 2017</p>
	<p>Provide access to short-term rental of a minimum of 420 bed nights on the Gold Coast and surrounding areas such as Logan, Brisbane and Ipswich, to assist homelessness services provide an emergency response.</p>	<p>August 2017</p>
	<p>Provide additional emergency response funds to service providers to assist a minimum of 200 households in crisis to sustain tenancies. The additional funds will be used to assist people with expenses such as relocation costs, utility charges, medical expenses and food. Service providers will also receive additional funding to extend their service offering through additional staff, funding for security at temporary accommodation sites or equipment.</p>	<p>From November 2017</p>
	<p>Extend the operating hours of key specialist homelessness services for a minimum of six weeks around the GC2018 period, to meet increase in demand. This will include appropriate resourcing for services to operate late at night, early mornings and at weekends.</p>	<p>March to April 2018</p>
	<p>Fund a new mobile support service to deliver additional services to homeless youth.</p>	<p>October 2017</p>
	<p>Utilise opportunities, such as Homeless Connect, to engage with people experiencing homelessness and vulnerable households to ensure responses meet their varied health, employment and support needs.</p>	<p>August 2017</p>
	<p>Expand the capacity of the Dignity First-funded 7CareConnect app to meet additional demand, provide users with real-time service delivery information during the GC2018 period and continue to promote it through housing and homelessness services, and social media.</p>	<p>From October 2017</p>



Provide participation opportunities	Actions	Timeframe
Provide opportunities for people experiencing homelessness, and vulnerable households, to participate in GC2018 activities.  Delivering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event information</li> </ul>	Inform social housing tenants of GC2018 activities including Festival 2018, activation sites and free events through tenant engagement activities.  Provide service providers with up-to-date event information to share with their clients.	Ongoing to April 2018  Ongoing to April 2018

Create a positive legacy	Actions	Timeframe
Create a positive housing and homelessness legacy that can drive and improve future service delivery.  Delivering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and affordable housing</li> <li>• Statewide Homelessness Protocol</li> <li>• Service delivery improvements</li> </ul>	Deliver a social and affordable housing legacy for the Gold Coast, in partnership with key stakeholders.  Utilise learnings as input into the development of a statewide Homelessness Protocol.  Identify improvements to service delivery.  Develop and distribute learnings for other major events in South East Queensland.  Contribute to the GC2018 evaluation process and report.	Post April 2018

**For more information**

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