



Moreland
City Council

Affordable Housing Action Plan

Annual Report 2020



Introduction

A lack of affordable, and safe, housing affects people's health and their life opportunities, and many of the homes in high housing stress contain children. Council research identifies a need for 7,000 new affordable homes by 2036.

As a successor to the Moreland Affordable Housing Strategy 2014-18, the Moreland Affordable Action Plan (AHAP) has 4 Focus Areas under which achievable and effective actions are identified for implementation by officers across Council. The Focus Areas are:

1. Facilitate the supply of affordable housing in new developments
2. Develop affordable housing on Council land
3. Advocate for effective policy and increased investment
4. Build community capacity to support people in housing crisis.

Focus Areas 1-3 look to take action to directly increase the provision of affordable housing in Moreland.

The actions under Focus Area 4 are about services for those who do not currently have secure housing

Council endorsed the AHAP in September 2019 and the report noted that achievements for 2019/20 would be reported to Council. This report highlights what has been achieved in the first full year of the AHAP.

Summary of 2019/20 activities and achievements

Focus Area 1 - Facilitate the supply of Affordable Housing

Lead Implementation Units: Strategic Planning & Urban Planning

Action 1.1: Facilitate affordable housing through voluntary s.173 agreements, promoting the trial of the Design Excellence Scorecard and in value capture from re-zonings.

Notable developments include:

- An agreement for delivery of 20% affordable housing on a rezoned site at 215-219 Albion St Brunswick.
- Moreland Design Excellence Scorecard (DES) trial widely promoted and updated in December 2019, with support for Homes for Homes contribution included.
- DES compliant developments include:
 - 6-8 Wilson Avenue Brunswick: 16 apartments, 100% affordable housing, managed by Common Equity Housing.
 - 2 medium-density developments in Coburg committed to a contribution to Homes for Homes.
- Wintringham Housing – redevelopment of Lyndall White House (formerly Irving Benson Court) Hudson St, Coburg for 49 units (14 new).

- Haven Home Safe-redevelopment of social housing at Glenlyon Road North Fitzroy into 22 disability apartments with a majority at Liveable Housing Platinum specification.

Action 1.2: Develop resources and support ongoing training for staff to facilitate affordable housing outcomes.

- 6 Officers attended specialised training opportunities in affordable housing.
- Affordable Housing Agreements Toolkit finalised for use by officers.
- Advisory group membership and significant contribution to a project led by the MAV and Community Housing Industry Association to create a suite of resources that provides all parties with an enhanced understanding of each other's operating constraints and business model when negotiating an affordable housing agreement.
- Officers attended in-house presentations by the University of Melbourne Affordable Housing Hallmark and the Homes for Homes initiative.

Action 1.3: Align the Moreland Planning Policy Framework to the State Planning Policy Framework to strengthen affordable housing objectives in the Moreland Planning Scheme.

At its August 2020 meeting Council endorsed the draft Municipal Planning Strategy and local policies which translate Council's Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) into the new Planning Policy Framework (PPF). This strengthens and streamlines Council's policy framework including policies that support an increase in affordable housing.

Action 1.4: Participate in the Inter Council Affordable Housing Group (ICAHG) to work with the State Government to further requirements for affordable housing to be provided by private development.

- Officers attended bimonthly meetings (5) of the Inter Council Affordable Housing Forum (name changed in December 2019).
- Moreland convened the 20 February 2020 meeting at the MAV offices. 40 local government housing-related officers attended. Moreland officers presented on the 2019 Affordable Housing Advisor Pilot (with Darebin Council) and facilitated a presentation and discussion with DHHS on new housing initiatives.

Focus Area 2 - Develop Affordable Housing on Council land

Lead Implementation Unit: Strategy and Research

2.1: Allocation land for a housing project

Site Assessment and Feasibility- Coordination of information provision from Council officers from Urban Planning, Finance, Property and Strategic Planning

2.2: Support the operations of Moreland Affordable Housing Ltd

- Memorandum of Understanding (4 Year \$753,000 funding agreement) agreed and signed.
- Advice and support for recruitment of Executive Officer.
- Knowledge transfer and coaching of Executive Officer (appointed April 2020).
- Negotiation and sign-off for Annual Activity Plans FY20 and FY21.

Focus Area 3 - Advocate for effective policy and increased investment

Lead Implementation Unit: Strategy and Research

3.1: Advocate to the State Government to include mandatory Affordable Housing contributions in the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP)

- Ministerial Advisory Committee into Affordable Housing Planning Mechanisms- facilitation and input to MAV submission and provision of information to Committee (October 2020)
- Co-authored letter to Minister for Planning signed by 23 Mayors calling for mandatory provisions (December 2019)
- Published on Moreland Website: "Supplying Homes in Moreland" - research about past and future supply of housing in Moreland. It presents a toolkit of options to ensure housing supply, including affordable housing supply, is able to meet forecast demand.

3.2: Lobby State and Federal government for a sustained increase in capital investment and use of surplus land for public and community housing

- Letters from Mayor to State Premier in March and July 2020 and letter to Federal Housing Minister (July 2020) supporting Everybody's Home campaign and calling for increased investment in affordable housing.
- Gronn Place redevelopment: Engagement through Brunswick West Community Consultative Committee and directly with DHHS and AV Jennings(developer).
- Gronn Place redevelopment: DHHS & AV Jennings briefing to council December 2019. Confirmation of 119 new social housing dwellings (60% of total dwellings).
- Submission to Victorian Parliament Inquiry into Homelessness.
- One MAV resolution prepared for May State Council (deferred due to COVID-19).

3.3: Encourage new social housing developments in Moreland

Officer engagement with social and affordable housing stakeholders including the Department and Health and Human Services, Community Housing Industry Association, Council to Homeless Persons, Development Victoria, Wintringham, Women's Property Initiatives, Community Housing Ltd, CoHousing Australia, Save Public Housing Collective, Homeless Persons Union of Victoria, Vincent Care, Housing First, Common Equity Ltd and Haven Home Safe.

3.4: Support the Moreland Housing Advisory Committee

The Committee met quarterly and discussed a quarterly update report on the AHAP as well as providing input and comment on housing policy.

Focus Area 4 – Build community capacity to support people in housing crisis

Lead Implementation Unit: Community Wellbeing

4.1: Provide information on services & resources to the community (including trader and community organisations)

- The Be Kind Moreland campaign has continued to share information on housing and homelessness support during COVID. This includes updates to our website, social media posts, fortnightly e-newsletters to service providers (654 subscribers) and a hardcopy newsletter to 34,000 households in Glenroy, Fawkner and Coburg.
- Trader engagement has been put on hold during COVID but will resume when possible to ensure relevant information is shared with businesses on referrals and supports for people experiencing homelessness.

4.2: Build capacity of council officers to have a Human Rights-informed response to situations involving community members in crisis

Delivery of the homelesslibrary.com program

- The Library program was successful in engaging library staff around their role in supporting the lives of community members who are affected by being either homeless and/or rough sleeping.
- In addition, Council facilitated a conversation during Homelessness Week with a guest from the Council to Homeless Persons who has lived experience and a guest from Vincent Care who spoke about current COVID responses. 65 staff and community members participated via Zoom.

4.3: Maintain effective networks with government, community and not for profit organisations

Development of Homelessness Protocol

- Internal Stakeholder workshop held December 2019
- Due to COVID-19 Pandemic completion of the Homeless Persons protocol was postponed. This important piece of work will continue to be included in the 2021 plan.

Council Officers have been regularly attending the following networks to ensure Moreland is kept informed of key developments particularly during COVID-19 Pandemic:

- Northern Local Area Support Network (Specialist Housing Support Services)
- Melbourne Metro Rooming House Working Group
- Specialist Housing Services weekly then monthly meeting with Council to Homeless Persons and DHHS
- Northern Metropolitan Region COVID19 Rooming House Response Information Sharing Meeting

4.4 Promote the Community Grants Program

Grants which have a focus on homelessness / rough sleeping / affordable housing:

Project Grants 2019/20

- Melbourne Homeless Collective - The Plate Up Project
- Operation Newstart CHASE program
- Project Respect - Capacity building for services to be more responsive to women in the sex industry and women trafficked for sexual exploitation

Youth Initiative Grant

- Society Melbourne - Tackling Youth Homelessness

Council officers will continue to use the Community Grants as a tool for community organisations to highlight homelessness / rough sleeping and at-risk cohorts such as youth and women

4.5 Research location and prevalence of rough sleeping

As a consequence of the NOM raised in 2018, Council committed to join other inner metropolitan councils in the bi-annual StreetCount which was scheduled to take place in June 2020 (postponed due to COVID-19).

Council Officers have been able to use the StreetCount preparation activity to strengthen the partnership with Darebin in terms of aligning effort and outcomes for homeless and rough sleepers across our municipalities. From this partnership we were able to advocate to the Inner Melbourne Action Plan Councils to include Moreland and Darebin in not just the StreetCount but also Rooming Houses Network activity.

Additional actions and activities

Everybody's Home social media campaign

In July 2020 Moreland used its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts to provide a call to action to our community members to sign up in support of the Everybody's Home campaign and let the state and commonwealth governments know that the time is right for significant investment in building new social housing. The response to the posts was very positive, in particular on Facebook, with a total of 253 likes, 14300 users reached and 1184 interactions (post expanded, links followed etc.).

Cooling Communities 2020 (under Zero Carbon Evolution refresh to 2020)

During 2019/20, with Council funding and a Community Climate Change Adaptation (3CA) grant from DELWP, Australian Energy Foundation (AEF) collaborated with Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHVic) on a third phase of the Cooling Communities project. To complement the solar PV installed on 15 AHVic properties during 2018/19, residential energy (VRES) assessments were completed on 13 AHVic properties by early 2020. The assessments provide a clear scope for further energy upgrades, with the goal to improve the health and wellbeing of AHVic residents by reducing their exposure to energy poverty and weather extremes.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions and the vulnerable status of many of the residents in AHVic housing, AEF was unable to complete the remaining four energy assessments and schedule tradespeople to undertake the energy efficiency upgrades. In consultation with DELWP and AHVic, AEF agreed to pause the project until Covid-19 restrictions are lifted and notified the tenants of the delay. AEF submitted a request to DELWP to extend the deadline for project completion to June 2021.

Homes for Homes initiative

In December 2019, Council became the first local government to partner with Homes for Homes, a philanthropic initiative that raises funds for affordable housing through a small contribution on sale of a property.

- Homes for Homes is now specified in the Community Benefit criteria for the Moreland Design Excellence Scorecard
- A communications plan to market participation of property-related businesses and community members in Homes for Homes has been codesigned between Council and Homes for Homes. Implementation was largely delayed due to COVID-19. An Initial social media posting happened on LinkedIn in July.
- Two new apartment developments in Moreland have been confirmed as Homes for Homes partners:

- o The Stewart Collective – potential 30-year donations \$244,288
- o Brunswick East By Milieu – potential 30-year donations \$126,970

Officers continue to maintain an awareness of any other similar programs such that they can also be connected to Council's affordable housing work.

2020 Review of the Moreland Technotes

In August 2020, further to a report about designing and providing public space which supports people who are homeless, it was resolved that the Moreland Technotes include the following statement:

The design and construction of the public spaces (new and retrofit) will need to ensure our public spaces are welcoming and inclusive of all users, and that no community members are excluded from accessing our public spaces due to any element of the design or infrastructure.

This was in response to NOM49/19 which dealt with concerns about the appropriateness of the design of street furniture outside Coburg Library.

Accommodation for people who are homeless

On 11 March 2020 (NOM17/20) Council resolved to investigate whether any existing Council or community property in Moreland may be suitable for proposed new homelessness accommodation and support services in an initiative led by Melbourne Lord Mayor, Sally Capp. In a report to Council in July 2020, officers advised that no suitable properties were identified. Council resolved that it will:

Encourage(s) and support(s) charities, community organisations (including homelessness service providers and community housing organisations) and the Department of Health and Human Services to provide much needed emergency, transitional and permanent housing in Moreland.

Abandoned vehicles income for Moreland Housing Reserve

In 2018 Council resolved (DCI45/18) to allocate 50% of the funds from the proceeds of the sale of abandoned vehicles by Council to the Moreland Housing Reserve. In 2019/20 this resulted in \$44,800 being transferred to the Reserve.