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**HomeGround
Services**

ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12



"The cost of homelessness for an individual is trauma, isolation and lifelong physical and mental health problems. The cost for our community is an expensive crisis service system that grows year on year and is perpetually overwhelmed by demand."

— Heather Holst, Acting CEO

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Interactive Content Guide



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







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"People experiencing homelessness often face a multitude of barriers to good health and wellbeing and to stable housing. HomeGround works to break down those barriers by reaching out to the most vulnerable and working with them on the journey to end their homelessness. I look forward to continuing our partnership with HomeGround to address these important and challenging issues."

Hon. Wendy Lovell MP, Victorian Minister for Housing, Children and Early Childhood Development

[Read more](#)



"I know that HomeGround, like many other important services, is helping people to break the cycle of homelessness and to put it behind them permanently. I congratulate HomeGround on their work."

Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP, Federal Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Small Business

[Read more](#)



"We see HomeGround as a valued partner that not only provides access to safe housing, but also addresses the key factors that lead to homelessness, including poor health, disability, mental illness, family violence and unemployment."

Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP, Victorian Minister for Mental Health, Community Services and Women's Affairs

[Read more](#)



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Our **vision**
is to end
homelessness
in Melbourne

Our **mission** is
to get people
housed and keep
people housed

Our **values**

People

The people who use our services, our staff and our partners are at the centre of everything we do.

Respect

We respect our own values and strengths as we value those of the people we work with.

Dignity

We value the dignity, talents and potential of the people who use our services, our staff and our partners.

Choice

Each person has the right to make informed and empowered personal choices.

Diversity

The differences between people provide us with new perspectives and approaches.



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◀ Maria's story

Felicity's story ▶

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"I was having psychosis and was detached from reality. I found a tree where people couldn't see me and that was my home for a whole month. I drank from a tap and didn't eat. I weighed less than 40kg and couldn't walk."

MARIA

Housing Mental Health Pathways Program (HMHPP)

"I had a full-time job in a women's shelter in Adelaide. Slowly I got sick, it was like a pressure cooker in my head, I couldn't do it anymore. In my illness I caught a bus to Melbourne, it wasn't rational. It could have been anywhere. I had my papers, a sleeping bag and just the clothes on me."

"I arrived in winter. I caught the first tram I saw and it was going to Brighton. The tram driver said we've reached the end. I was having psychosis and was detached from reality. I found a tree where people couldn't see me and that was my home for a whole month. I drank from a tap and didn't eat. I weighed less than 40kg and couldn't walk.

"One day I collapsed crawling to the tap and someone found me. I woke up at the Alfred Hospital. The doctor there, a young man, said they were going to detain me. After I recovered a bit, I looked around at these wonderful people who were caring for me and I said this is my second time and I'll give it a very good go.

"I went to the psychiatric ward. They contacted HomeGround because I was homeless and said I couldn't stay in hospital forever. I was walking again, improving.

"Felicity worked to find me a safe place with people from my own age group. That took some time. I wanted to live with other people and it was a community rooming house. I need people around to help me watch my mental health and avoid depression.

"I've got a neighbour and we always chat and I bring her fruit. The Maria who was there a year ago doesn't exist any more. I used to be very isolated and afraid of everybody. It's important that I am surrounded by friendly people. I volunteer at Prahran Mission in the restaurant and help other people again.

"The most important thing for someone with a mental illness is where they live. Because where you live is where you spend your night, where you wake up in the morning and think about what you will do today. You live in a place where you are safe and you are happy you can confront whatever comes.

"Anyone can find you a house, but HomeGround gives you the right place for each person. If it wasn't for this service, even the doctors said it to me, that there was no place to send me after hospital. Then I got connected with HomeGround and here I am. I love it here. I can call it home.

"If the woman who found me ever reads this I want to hug her and say 'thank you for what you did'."



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[Felicity's Story](#)



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“People are resilient. When the conditions are right, situations can change, people can change”

FELICITY

Housing Mental Health Pathways Program (HMHPP)

“I started in the Accommodation Options for Families program at the start of 2010 and soon moved into the HMHPP later that year. I’d worked in family services and had decided I would never work in housing because it’s such a hard area - too depressing.

“However, when I saw there were programs working longer-term with families and then in partnerships with hospitals I decided it was a challenge worth taking. I found the values at HomeGround fitted my own. Everyone speaks about the needs and interests of clients - that doesn’t happen everywhere. It’s not corporatised like other agencies I’ve worked in - that isn’t why I got into social work.

“The chance to meet someone in the Alfred Hospital, work with them from there and then help them find and move into a place and then get themselves settled is great.

“I make sure the housing is right for someone because you can’t get your mental health under control if you’re afraid to sleep at night.

“People are resilient. When the conditions are right, situations can change, people can change, I feel chuffed when I see someone happy, working again, reconnecting with their family and healthy again.”

[Maria’s Story](#) 

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WELCOME

Welcome to our annual report. As you can see we've stepped into the electronic world but still hope to give you the same informative and engaging experience as in previous years.

After many years of rapid growth and the addition of major new programs, the last year has seen a tightening of the political and economic environment in Victoria. Instead of extra investment we have seen cuts. Instead of expansion we are about to enter a period of structural reform and realignment.

We remain the largest single provider of the full range of housing, support and other homelessness services in inner-Melbourne and operate fundamental elements of Victoria's housing and homelessness system with a strong track record.

We are well placed to meet the challenges of this new operating environment.

Our commitment to the people who use our services and to delivering strong and sustainable housing and life outcomes will stand us in good stead when services are assessed for their effectiveness.

Our evidence-based approach, our willingness to innovate when we find gaps and our desire to collaborate means we are well equipped to step into new areas and explore the cross-sectoral partnership opportunities that will be encouraged and fostered by state and federal governments.

And of course we have the best staff team in Australia. Talented, passionate and dedicated, it is these people who make HomeGround what we are today and what we can become in the future.

Finally, we would like to formally recognise the immeasurable contribution Stephen Nash has made to both HomeGround and the community. He departed as founding CEO in mid 2012 and should feel immensely proud of the quality of the organisation he leaves behind after 15 years leading HomeGround and its predecessors Argyle Housing and Outreach Victoria.

We look forward to working with existing and new partners over the next year and beyond,

Neil Chatfield
Chairperson

Heather Holst
Acting CEO

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ACHIEVEMENTS

2009-12 Strategic Plan

The last year saw us complete our most recent three-year strategic plan. This was a period of major growth and development, one that has transformed us into a markedly different organisation – and created a range of new opportunities and challenges along the way.

Throughout, our focus on our vision, mission, values, staff and the people who use our services has remained constant.

Highlights include:

- Increasing our capacity to prevent homelessness through earlier interventions and closer collaboration with government and partners in areas including family violence, justice, mental health, hospitals and family services.
- Developing a range of smart and effective private rental access programs and our own Housing Options Program, which has made us one of the experts in this vital emerging field.

- Creating better links between housing and homelessness with health, mental health, disability, child protection, family violence and justice responses.
- Securing large-scale philanthropic and corporate support for our work and using private donations and pro bono partnerships to leverage existing funding streams and increase our impact.
- Establishing the most exciting new model of integrated housing and support in the last ten years – at Elizabeth Street Common Ground.
- Partnering to introduce Victoria’s first Street to Home program and seeing it house 50 of our most vulnerable community members as of June 2012.
- Establishing a housing outcomes dataset which will enable us to document the performance of all our services by the end of 2012.
- Partnering in the Nicholson development, which combines home-owners, general

“Thank you for your support and advice. I really felt like I had someone who cared.”

– Client feedback

renters, community housing tenants, people who have experienced homelessness and retail spaces.

- Giving the people who use our services a greater say in how we deliver assistance through client participation initiatives.
- Prioritising staff support, training and development to ensure we attract and keep the best people working in our sector.
- Managing organisational growth and changing industrial relations requirements; introducing our first enterprise bargaining agreement; developing a best practice disability action plan; and achieving extremely positive staff engagement results on our bi-annual staff survey.

>

Lorina, Lavienna & Madeleine at a local community barbecue



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PRIORITIES

2012-15 Strategic Plan

We have just set in motion our next strategic plan that outlines our areas of major focus for the next three years. This document has had input from the people who use our services, staff and external stakeholders before being finalised by our Board.

The five areas we will focus our efforts on are:

- Providing effective and evidence-based services to people in housing crisis and increasing the capacity for those who use them to contribute to their development.
- Increasing the range of safe and affordable housing options available to people – both through developing our own housing and by unlocking the private rental market in collaboration with private, not-for-profit and social landlords.
- Ensuring all our services and organisational decisions are based on strong evidence to ensure our resources are being used efficiently and deliver the best possible outcomes.

- Refocusing our work in the areas of partnerships, advocacy and external communications to integrate them into a community engagement approach that opens up opportunities for individuals, organisations and communities to play a greater role in ending homelessness.
- Continuing to strengthen and build the best possible organisation and staff team to deliver services and our strategic plan.
- A renewed focus within organisational development will be on exploring partnership opportunities such as co-location, shared services and other collaboration.



^ Mohammed and Luke at an Outreach event

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◀ Jimmy's story



Bianca's story ▶

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"I love it here. I've got friends, Colin next door, Dave upstairs, it's alright. Better than what I've had before. I'm safe. This is my place."

JIMMY

Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP)



"I was living in a public housing flat in Richmond for two years. Before that I'd slept out quite a lot. Two years out before Richmond. But it was getting too cold for my dog Scooby Doo, a black Maltese Terrier. I'd give him my sleeping bag and then I couldn't get in. He's even on State Trustees, he's my son. He's a beautiful little dog, I love him."

"My place wasn't safe. People would come in whenever they wanted and use my phone or take my food. They put me in a coma. First thing I said when I woke up was 'Where's Scooby Doo?' My neighbour Belle had him, which I was happy about.

"Bianca (from HomeGround) came in when the Office of Housing decided I needed to move to be safe. She's helped me settle in, get myself sorted

and deal with Office of Housing on my behalf. I got this place.

"Anne (from Royal District Nursing Service) comes around and looks after my health. I'd just go to the emergency department, but now Anne has got me a doctor and I'm seeing someone for my legs. Bianca also got Yarra Council to help me with my shopping.

"There's a man on the corner who has an Alsatian, he's five years old. I play with him and feed him. I've had dogs all my life. My neighbour next door keeps an eye on my place when I'm not home.

"I'm going to put all vegies in there when I get rid of the roses. The price of veggies is unbelievable. I want to grow a banana tree.

"I've got a new nephew. I'm saving all my five cent pieces to give him. I see him every week and give them to him. It's hard to get down there because I need to take so many rests because of my legs.

"I love it here. I've got friends, Colin next door, Dave upstairs, it's alright. Better than what I've had before. I'm safe. This is my place until I die."

[Bianca's Story](#) 

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“There’s a lot of satisfaction when you feel you have contributed to someone’s stability and made a difference in their life.”

BIANCA

Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP)

“I’ve been at HomeGround for five years now, one year in IAP (crisis housing assistance) and four years in SHASP with maternity leave in there as well.

“I was attracted to SHASP because you get the chance to work with people for longer and you see lots of good outcomes – people who would have lost their home without our help. It’s very rewarding.

“There was one family where I helped a mum and her two kids into a refuge and then back into public housing and we kept them in housing and safe the whole time. She recently became an Australian citizen. There’s a lot of satisfaction when you feel you have contributed to someone’s stability and made a difference in their life.

“I’m terrified if there are more funding cuts for SHASP next year. There’s no doubt people will lose their homes if we can’t help them.

“HomeGround is a great team, not just SHASP but the whole place. I’ve always felt welcome and there’s flexibility to help fit your lifestyle – if you need to start later or want to come in early it’s okay. I just slipped right in after my son was born and I came back.”

[Jimmy’s Story](#)



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REFORM AHEAD

It may be a cliché, but it is also a truth - There is no reason for homelessness to be so prevalent in a wealthy and well-governed country like Australia. If wage and income-support systems were adequate and policy was geared towards housing affordability and security of tenure, we would see homelessness become a minor and temporary problem very quickly.

Similarly, if health, mental health, justice, disability and family services had the expertise and capacity to deal properly with housing issues then we wouldn't see people falling through the cracks of our far-too-complex service systems.

HomeGround's approach is to inject our housing and support expertise into these areas through the development of innovative service models and diverse partnerships that provide the integrated responses that people need to put an end to crisis once and for all.

The Victorian Government has started pursuing a similar goal for people who come into contact with public housing, disability and child protection services with Service Connect, but it is uncertain how people who do not enter these services will be assisted.

The guiding principle should be that the services which are most universal and those which are 'the first to know' are the logical places to bring together integrated responses. Certainly, we've seen the strength of using our two high volume entry points in Collingwood and St Kilda as the place to start providing more integrated responses.

Other approaches we've explored include our successful partnership with Centrelink, which brought us into contact with a group comprising 61% who had not sought housing assistance before and with the result of only 4% remaining in inadequate housing after contact with our services.

The Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) is another critical approach that is already firmly embedded in the public housing system and a proven example of previous innovation made good. It is widely regarded as the most successful homelessness prevention program in Victoria's history.

There is also a need to assess vulnerability and health needs as a mechanism for prioritising access to appropriate housing and support – given the severe shortage of both housing and support.

Longer-term, both these constraints must be addressed, but in the interim we must make sure those at greatest risk of violence, abuse and death are given immediate access to safety.

Both family programs and those that prioritise based on health needs should be strengthened as a part of future reform plans.

Accommodation Options for Families and Support for Families at Risk are two leading examples of the former and Melbourne Street to Home and Elizabeth Street Common Ground two of the latter.

The principles of integration, universality and prioritisation also support the value of the Opening Doors framework, where homelessness and housing agencies are the single point of contact for an integrated service response.

This system is becoming better established and the next step is to connect with other specialist service sectors such as family services, disability and mental health.

We are entering a period of rapid reform in Victoria and that means both opportunity and risk. If we strengthen the things that are working now and innovate based on strong evidence we will improve outcomes for Victorians in housing crisis and move one step closer to reducing and ending homelessness in our communities.

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HOMELESSNESS MAKES YOU SICK

The true cost of homelessness*

* Melbourne Street to Home interviewed 138 people sleeping rough in inner Melbourne in October 2011

Click to watch "Ending street homelessness in Melbourne" video  

Of those sleeping rough in Melbourne during October 2011:



72%

had a serious medical condition

69%

had a mental health condition



54%

had been victims of violence while homeless



26%

had been to an emergency room 3 times in the last 3 months

64%

were at risk of death within 5 years without housing

11% were over 55

5% had cancer

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◀ Jason's story

Maria's story ▶

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“Now I’m in my own place for the first time ever and I know my neighbours and Maria helped me get a little kitten from the shelter. His name’s Buddy.”

JASON

Melbourne Street to Home

“I grew up in Frankston and had family problems from a young age. I ended up sleeping out when I was a teenager, down on the foreshore and other places. I was pretty hard to handle back then and things were hard at home.

“I ended up on drugs and in with all that. Later I was in jail and then back on the streets again. You get used to it, but it’s no good sleeping rough too often. People get bashed pretty often and you’ve always got to find a new place every night.

“I’m 34 now and pretty much been homeless for 20 years. It shouldn’t take that long to get help, but when I met the first person from Street to Home it was different. They actually go out at three in the morning and find out where people are sleeping.

“They work out your situation and what your health is like and then find a place for you. They actually can get you housing, health appointments and keep helping after you move in. You’d be mad not to get into Street to Home if you have the chance.

“Now I’m in my own place for the first time ever and I know my neighbours and Maria (from HomeGround) helped me get a little kitten from the shelter. His name’s Buddy. I’m a big Hawks fan. He was a bit timid at first, I think he had a bad start in life. He’s good now, I got him microchipped and desexed. He’s pretty happy.

“Lately I’ve even got back in touch with Dad and volunteered with Street to Home last year when they went out in the morning talking to people. I helped them with some of the spots to visit.



I’m off drugs now and have a job interview coming up.

“I want to help other kids who were like me to get help earlier so they have a better time of it. You do shadow shifts for the first couple of months then casual shifts and then full-time. It’s something I want to do.

“If I get through to one young person then I reckon I’m doing my job.”

[Maria’s Story](#)



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“It’s an exciting program, working with people sleeping rough, to find housing and also address their health needs. There’s nothing like it.”

MARIA

Melbourne Street to Home

“I started on a two week agency placement for someone who was sick. I’m from Belfast but have some family here. Then there was a full-time position so I applied for it.

“I’d always done youth work back home and thought working with adults would be a challenge. It’s an exciting program, working with people sleeping rough, to find housing and also address their health needs. I get to manage myself, plan my day, which I like. Street to Home is a strong program – there’s nothing like it in Ireland.

“It’s a supportive team here. It’s a laid back culture, you are trusted to do your job and you feel welcome. Even our team planning process gives workers a say in how our programs are run. There’s recognition and no huge hierarchy. It’s inclusion for everyone.

“I’ve said it a hundred times, it’s all about how you establish a relationship with each person, regardless of age or someone’s issues, it could take weeks or it could take months, but that’s the foundation, trust.

“If you’re passionate about what you do, about social change, the good outcomes like Jason’s give you energy to keep doing what you do.”

Jason’s Story 

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OUR SERVICES

We work with nearly 10,000 households each year who are already homeless or at risk of becoming homeless across 20 different programs that each work with different parts of the community in different ways.

We work from six offices across Melbourne. Our services fall into five broad categories:

Prevention and early intervention

Services that identify people before, or soon after, they become homeless to facilitate a quick re-entry back into safe and affordable housing with minimal cost and support required.

Crisis response

Services that work with people who are experiencing homelessness and are likely to have specific support needs that must be met in conjunction with the provision of housing.

Outreach and longer-term response

Services that work with people who have long histories of homelessness, often spanning back to childhood, and require long-term outreach and health support before and after they access housing.

Housing access

Services that work with real estate agents, commercial accommodation providers, community housing providers and social landlords to create access to housing options that would otherwise be unavailable.

Property and tenancy management

Services that manage properties and/or tenancies in HomeGround owned or headleased properties on behalf of public or private owners.

[For more information on specific services and eligibility criteria](#)



^ Ken speaks with Adrian about his housing options

“The level of coordination and professionalism present in HomeGround’s service delivery is refreshing.”

- Stakeholder feedback

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“HomeGround’ - a wonderful name for an organisation truly committed to the task of ending homelessness - and one that has always approached this challenge with energy and creativity. Rural Housing Network has been privileged to work with HomeGround to design and implement a supported housing project in Shepparton.”

- Catherine Upcher, CEO, Rural Housing Network

“Urban Communities greatly values our partnership with HomeGround. Their approach connects with Urban Communities’ mixed tenure business to prove that being homeless shouldn’t exclude you from living and participating in a diverse community, nor from feeling welcome and at home.”

- George Housakos, CEO, Urban Communities



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KNOWING WHAT WORKS

>
Bootsie, Lubby
and John in Fitzroy



HomeGround works with government, research academics, corporate and philanthropic partners and the community sector in the areas of research and service development.

We do this to provide better services and support for the people who use our services and to drive policy and systems reform that facilitates better outcomes. We also use our research findings to inform public debate about homelessness and housing issues.

In the past year we have been involved in a range of research and service development projects, including:

- 1. What Makes a Difference Project**
Measuring service outcomes
- 2. North and West Metropolitan Aboriginal Access Outpost Evaluation**
Co-location of homelessness and Aboriginal health services
- 3. Melbourne Street to Home Interim Evaluation**
Housing and health responses for people with long histories of homelessness and rough sleeping (RMIT)

4. Accommodation Options for Families Evaluation
Getting vulnerable families out of unsafe rooming houses and into adequate housing

5. East Coburg 'Nicholson' Evaluation
A new model of socially mixed community housing

6. Housing outcomes data
An improved system from measuring the outcomes of our own services

HomeGround staff and clients took part in the following externally driven evidence projects:

- 1. Elizabeth Street Common Ground Interim Evaluation**
Permanent housing and coordinated support for people with the longest experiences of homelessness (University of New South Wales)
- 2. Opening Doors Evaluation**
(Victorian Department of Human Services)
- 3. The Cost of Homelessness and the Net**
Benefit of Homelessness Programs: A National Study (AHURI, Murdoch University)

- 4. Ageing out of place** (Hanover Welfare Services, Housing for the Aged Action Group)
- 5. The Cost of Being Poor** (La Trobe University)
- 6. Connecting the Dots** (Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Evidence and Planning Branch)
- 7. Role of community housing organisations in addressing the housing and support needs of homeless people** (AHURI UNSW Social Policy Research Centre)
- 8. Exploring homeless women's use of Community Food Programs in Melbourne** (Deakin University)

[Services data](#)

[More information](#)

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KEEPING FAMILIES SAFE

Accommodation Options for Families*

*Accommodation Options for Families keeps families in safe housing. Figures come from its 2010/11 evaluation and include HomeGround, The Salvation Army Social Housing Service, Vincentcare, and Hanover Welfare Services. AOF is currently funded until 30 June 2013.

Click to watch

["Creating better housing options" video](#)

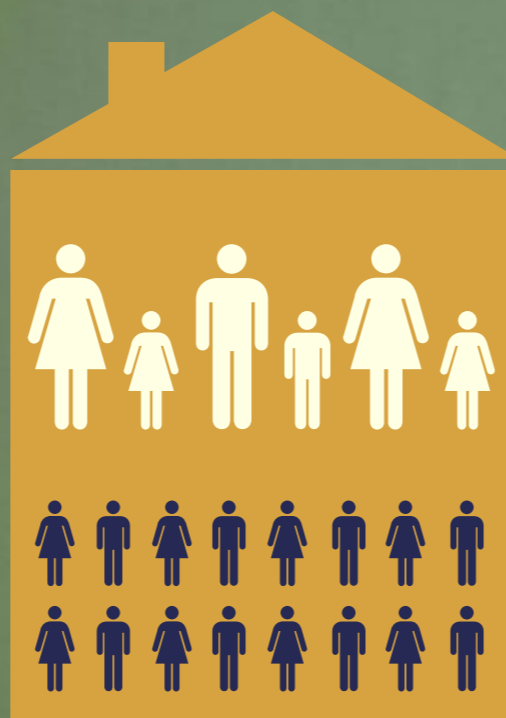


In just over a year:

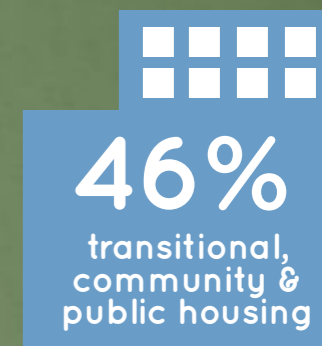
175 families

416 children

found safe housing



Comprising:



Parents said:



said their kids felt safer



said they could meet their kids needs better



could manage their household budget better

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◀ Courtney's story

Carlee's story ▶

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CARLEE

Accommodation Options for Families (AOF) Support for Families At Risk (SFAR)

“When my oldest daughter was three we moved to Wagga because my partner Scott’s Dad had heart problems. That didn’t work out and when we moved back we couldn’t get anywhere. We stayed with friends for as long as we could.

“I was pregnant at that stage with my youngest daughter and I went to a rooming house with my two girls and had a room and then a bungalow out the back. Scott couldn’t live with us there.

“The bungalow was \$300 a week and so tiny, cramped. Our stuff was in storage so we were paying for that as well – we lost most of it in the end.

“Every room in that house was full, four bedrooms and the bungalow. People living there dealing with their issues – but sometimes all over the place. You didn’t want to upset anyone in case they’d get violent or take it out on you or your kids.

“HomeGround started helping when we were in the rooming house. Sophie (from AOF) worked with me trying to find other options so we could

get somewhere safe. She also just helped keep me together during that time.

“Then out of the blue I saw a house with a ‘for lease’ sign in the window near my middle daughter’s kinder.

“Sophie helped negotiate with the owner and get us established. She helped get us 13 weeks free childcare and get us stable. He’s a great landlord and now we can all live together like a proper family.

“We couldn’t get a place on our own through a real estate agent and we’d been waiting for public housing for more than four years so if that place hadn’t come up we’d still be in that rooming house.

“Then the Support for Families At Risk Program took over and I met Courtney. She supports me and doesn’t judge me. If I’ve got grief or I’m struggling with issues from my past I know she’s coming around and I can talk to her.

“We’ve pretty much been in struggletown our whole lives. It’s good having that extra person, even if it’s helping sort out activities for the kids or a voucher so we could get a fridge or just food vouchers if we’re stuck at the end of the month. Just those little things that get you back on your feet again.

“My little one was born in September and we moved in here in November. When she was born in that little room, we just needed to get out. It’s just happiness, you can breathe easy, your mind’s that bit free-er, you can just breathe normal again.”

[Courtney’s story](#)

[Accommodation options for families](#)

[Support for families at risk](#)

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“Without that support lots of people would have lost their housing. It’s preventing problems starting in the first place.”

COURTNEY

Support for Families At Risk (SFAR)

“I was working in child protection before this and wanted to move into family support to help people over a longer period. I like to get to know and understand people and address their wider support needs, not just housing.”

“In SFAR I work with people across areas like mental health, financial counselling, drug and alcohol issues and provide regular personal support and some material assistance. It’s a great program, we’re flexible and can work with people for up to 12 months. There aren’t many that do that.

“I’d heard about HomeGround from a friend, that it was a good group of people, about the wellbeing programs, that they do little things to support staff. It was both the program and the organisation that got me in.

“It makes a real difference in people’s lives, supporting them through crisis to keep their places and not be put back to square one. It’s more than housing, without that support lots of people would have lost their housing. It’s preventing problems starting in the first place.”

Carlee’s story



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WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY

>
Street Change
2012 winner
Jenny Biddle

Beyond the direct assistance and support we provide to people in crisis and our research activities, we also maintain a strong commitment to engaging with the community as an essential plank of our vision to end homelessness in Melbourne.

No single agency or even government can solve this problem alone. We believe every single member of the community – from large companies to local councils and schools to philanthropy – has a role to play and a responsibility to do what they can.

Our community engagement work broadly covers the areas below:

Corporate and philanthropic partnerships
We work with a wide range of corporate and philanthropic organisations as partners in service delivery, property issues, organisational development, research and community engagement.

Community education

We talk to the community around housing and homelessness issues using our publications, the media, social media and by running our popular Talking Point forums. In addition, we visit primary schools to speak about homelessness; offer support to social work, community development, journalism and multimedia students; and participate in public events and conferences.

Client participation

The people who use our services and others who have experienced homelessness have a vital role to play in engaging the broader community in this area.

We work closely with the Council to Homeless Persons' Peer Education and Support Program (PESP) and involve service users in a range of internal and external forums.

Systems reform

Through our service delivery and research activities we learn a lot about what is working and what isn't effective in the systems and policies that govern our work.



We work directly with policy makers and engage the broader community in discussions about making policy and systems better focused on delivering housing outcomes to people in crisis.

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OUR TEAM

We say it every year but it bears repeating - We are only ever as good as the people who work and volunteer within our organisation.

>
Our team -
April 2012



**Without staff, we have no services.
Without the Board we have no governance.
Without talent, experience and passion,
we won't deliver the best outcomes possible.**

We have one of the best staff groups in Australia and a highly professional Board drawn from across diverse professional backgrounds.

Each of our non-service teams comprise a small number of specialists in their areas.

Administration

Ensures the smooth running of our organisation; deals with the public and external stakeholders; and provides the foundation for efficient and high quality service delivery.

Communications

Publishes and promotes services information; maintains online information on our websites and social media presences; liaises with the media; collaborates with sector partners; maintains our internal intranet and ensures timely and accurate internal communications.

Human resources

Maintains our position as an 'employer of choice' through the provision of training and professional development opportunities; a sector-leading wellbeing program; recruiting talented staff; managing our enterprise bargaining agreement and other industrial relations responsibilities; and through supporting managers and coordinators to provide high quality supervision and staff management.

Finance

Administers payroll, invoices, annual budgeting, accountable internal processes and supports the executive and management in good financial practices and the development of new systems to meet our changing organisational needs.

Service development

Maintains our various accreditations, manages our legislative and compliance responsibilities and ensures a comprehensive internal system of planning and evaluation that starts with our strategic plan and flows right through to individual work and professional development plans.

[Meet our executive and management team](#)



[View our organisational chart](#)



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OUR BOARD



Neil Chatfield (Chairperson)



Gina Hansen



Dominic Esposito



Wayne Read



Simone Gandur



Dimity Reed AM



Peter Clark



Graeme Bruce



Nikos Thomacos



Michael Wright

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[Meet our executive and management team](#)

[View our Board qualifications](#)

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Every two years we survey our staff, last time...

96.1% believe they receive the training they need to do their job effectively

95% find their job interesting and challenging

91% have a strong sense of belonging to HomeGround

96% would recommend HomeGround as a good place to work

98% are proud of the work that HomeGround does

100% say HomeGround provides effective services to the people it works with

- HomeGround staff satisfaction survey 2011

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PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

“Their work is so much more than just putting roofs over heads. They rebuild lives. Doing pro bono work with HomeGround lifts your spirits.”

— Shawn Callahan, CEO, Anecdote

No individual, organisation or government can end homelessness alone. Achieving this will require an unprecedented approach to partnerships and sharing of expertise and resources. We are committed to putting this into practice in all parts of our organisation.

We pursue partnerships in the following key areas:

Service partnerships

All of our services work in formal and/or informal partnerships with others to provide the most comprehensive, effective and integrated response possible.

Research partnerships



Our research and service development team partners in our own research projects and also provides input into others’ research. See page 21 for some of the work we undertook in the last year.

Corporate partnerships

We work with a wide range of small, medium and large businesses to support our services and other organisational work. These partnerships provide both external expertise and the means to achieve more for the people we work with than would otherwise be possible.

Philanthropic partnerships

Philanthropic partners have provided us with volunteers, properties and grants to do everything from putting furniture together to funding entire support programs. Our Private Rental Management Program makes homes available to formerly homeless tenants.

[Learn more about our partners and supporters](#)  



^ HomeGround tenant Barry Lillis and Victorian Housing Minister Wendy Lovell at the official opening of The Nicholson in East Coburg

83%

HomeGround is an effective agency to partner with

– Stakeholder Survey 2012

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SERVICES DATA

Note: Where people use multiple services they are counted twice. We are developing our data analysis tools to quantify overlap. Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Client numbers

New clients	4768
Existing clients - re-referred	4824
Total clients	9592

Client numbers by service

Accommodation Options for Families	83
ConnectED	11
Elizabeth Street Common Ground	83
Housing assistance (IAP)	7205
Housing Mental Health Pathways Program	80
Indigenous Tenants At Risk Program	30
Justice Housing Support Program	67
Melbourne Street to Home (HomeGround only)	31
Outreach programs	107
Private Rental Access Program – Family Violence	75
Private Rental Access Program – Youth	63
Private Rental Brokerage Program	205
Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP)	981
Support for Families At Risk Program	64
Tenancy and Property Management Team	489

Gender

Male	58.8%
Female	40.4%
Unknown	0.8%

Income types

Newstart Allowance (unemployed)	29.8%
Disability Support Pension	23.5%
Other (inc. employed)	9.8%
Parenting Payment	8.5%
No form of income support	5.3%
Youth Allowance	5%
Unknown	18.3%

Age

<17	1.4%
18-24	14.4%
25-34	28.9%
35-44	27.6%
45-54	16.5%
55+	10.1%
Unknown	1.1%

Household type

Single	67%
Single with children	15.5%
Couple	6.3%
Couple with children	4%
Other	3.6%
Unknown	3.5%

Top countries of birth

Australia	72.7%
Other	21.9%
Unknown	5.4%

Other countries of birth

Sudan	5.9%
Ethiopia	4.6%
Vietnam	3.8%
Somalia	3.5%
New Zealand	3%
United Kingdom	2.7%
Russia	2%
Iraq	1.3%
Turkey	1.1%
China	1.1%

1st Languages

English	85.3%
Other	4.6%
Unknown	10.1%

Other Languages

Arabic	9.5%
Vietnamese	8.2%
Russian	7%
Turkish	3.9%
Mandarin	3.4%
Greek	2.3%
Somali	2%
Other African languages	1.8%
Cantonese	1.6%
Tagalog	1.4%

Indigenous clients

Indigenous	6.4%
Non-Indigenous	82.4%
Unknown	11.1%

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Summarised statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2012

	2011/12 (\$)	2010/11 (\$)
Revenue from operations		
Government and other grants	14,212,006	12,573,317
Grants in advance	—	1,353,379
Rental income – THM	1,094,440	1,055,269
Rental income – service delivery own buildings	590,437	—
Interest	134,949	224,496
Sundry income	535,003	1,031,177
Total revenue	16,566,836	16,237,638
Expenditure		
Staff costs	8,888,534	8,093,914
Payments to partner agencies	1,649,722	1,797,654
Client costs	2,120,940	2,275,730
Property costs – THM	536,249	530,620
Rental expense – THM	1,022,560	1,015,136
Property costs – service delivery own buildings	588,013	—
Consultants & professional fees	211,630	450,865
Amortisation / depreciation and impairments	665,969	294,857
Office expenses	648,362	670,954
Motor vehicle expenses	409,786	412,651
Other expenses	684,536	898,158
Total operating expenditure	17,426,300	16,440,539
Operating surplus / (deficit) for the year	(859,464)	(202,901)
Other income		
Capital purchase grant Vic government / transferred to capital reserve	1,000,000	13,382,750
Total comprehensive income for the year	140,536	13,179,849

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Summarised statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2012

	2011/12 (\$)	2010/11 (\$)
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,445,897	3,653,018
Receivables	61,258	333,993
Prepayments and other receivables	176,279	245,754
Total current assets	4,683,434	4,232,765
Non current assets		
Property plant & equipment	18,906,440	18,646,865
Other non current assets	36,089	48,556
Total non current assets	18,942,528	18,695,421
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	1,790,975	1,038,659
Provisions	245,225	450,392
Total current liabilities	2,036,200	1,489,051
Non current liabilities		
Borrowings	4,363,668	4,311,153
Provisions	194,140	236,564
Total non current liabilities	4,557,808	4,547,717
Net assets	17,031,953	16,891,418

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Summarised statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2012

Equity	2011/12 (\$)	2010/11 (\$)
Accumulated surplus	941,130	1,460,915
Capital reserve (property)	14,020,155	13,382,750
Furniture and housing reserves	661,479	694,374
Program funding received in advance	1,409,189	1,353,379
Total equity	17,031,953	16,891,418

The summarised Statement of Comprehensive Income and Financial Position has been extracted from the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2012.



Danby Bland Provan & Co
Chartered Accountants

123 Camberwell Road
Hawthorn East Victoria



G D WINNET
Partner

02 October 2012

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HomeGround Services

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[Our newsletter](#)

CREDITS

Feature photography
Ponch Hawkes

Design
Stokes Street Studio

Thank you to all the pro bono partners who have contributed to this publication and other communications projects in the last year.

The value of these contributions enables us to reach far more people than we would otherwise.

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