



ANNUAL REPORT

1 JULY 2022 – 30 JUNE 2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Just Home Margaret River Inc. meet and work on the land of the Wardandi and Pibulmun peoples, and we acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge that First Nations peoples are most affected by housing injustice, including dispossession and displacement from Country, and we commit to working in partnership with First Nations peoples to ensure their rights are upheld.

We stand with First Nations movements and activists who are claiming their rights and self-determination.

Just Home is inclusive of people in all their diversities, particularly people who experience marginalisation. We recognise that the struggle for housing justice is interconnected with all struggles for justice, equity and rights.



**Just Home Margaret River Inc. staff and volunteers in action*

Contents

Foreword from Chair	4
Our year in numbers	5
About Just Home	7
Our supporters	8
Homelessness in AMR	9
2022-2023 JUST HOME STRATEGIC PROGRAMS	12
Housing, Information and Referral Service (HIRS)	12
Community Resilience (Lifeskills).....	16
Community Development Program	17
Agency networking	19
Housing Advocacy	21



FOREWARD FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

As Just Home concludes its sixth year as an incorporated organisation, we have been reflecting on how far we have come. As a small community service organisation, we have negotiated the ups and downs one must in order to reach our goals. Through these experiences, and by continually maintaining a strong connection to people and place, Just Home continues to firmly establish *our* place as a trusted expert of matters relating to housing and homeless support and advocacy in the Augusta-Margaret River region.



The ups and downs of operating an organisation however pales in comparison to the experiences being had by the growing number of people in our community who are facing or experiencing homelessness. **Western Australia is now the state with the highest proportion of rough sleepers, with the south-west being the second region most impacted by this issue**, after the Kimberley.

Rising interest rates and rental costs, severely low vacancy rates, a growing population, lack of local supports, an unregulated short stay accommodation industry, and insufficient investments into social and affordable housing has accelerated an already dire situation. The result? More and more of our families, young people and elderly community members are living in housing stress and/or are homeless. In fact, over the last 12 months Just Home has **supported more than double the number of people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness compared with two years ago**.

To help find sustainable and long-term solutions to this issue, Just Home staff and volunteers continue to raise consciousness levels and advocate for appropriate housing solutions in our region. This has been achieved in part through the increased level of media engagements, community engagement, as well as direct and continued engagement with the WA government.

It is clear that Just Home's support services, community development and advocacy efforts are more important than ever. However, after failing to secure funding from the state government, Just Home has needed to reduce costs to ensure we can continue to operate over the 2023-24 financial year. This has meant sadly losing our long-standing Community Development Officer. With that in mind, while our efforts over the next 12 months will be constrained, we will continue to do our best to make effective change in key areas, including; regulation of short stay accommodation, increased support for local community services, and of course, the development of social and affordable housing.

In solidarity, always,



Naomi Godden

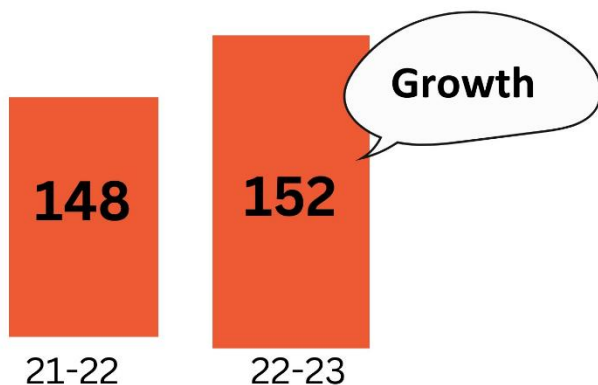
Chairperson, Just Home Margaret River Inc.

Our year in numbers

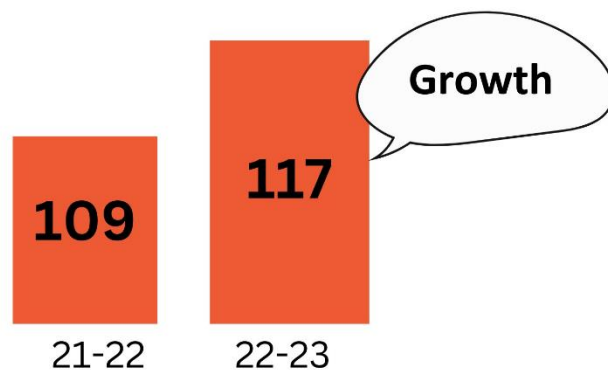
2022-2023



Just Home Members



Just Home Volunteers



5 strategic programs



- Housing Information and Referral Service (HIRS)
- Community Resilience Program (Lifeskills)
- Agency Networking
- Community Development Program
- Housing Advocacy

Housing support engagements

116%

Increase in engagements in a two year period

2022-23 = **149** engagements

2020-21 = **69** engagements



Lifeskills sessions

14 Lifeskills sessions aimed at supporting people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness attended by...

190 people



Just Home Communications

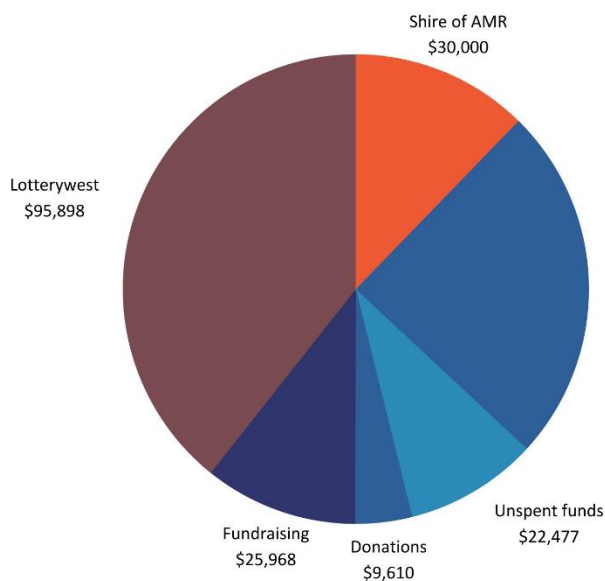


91 media stories

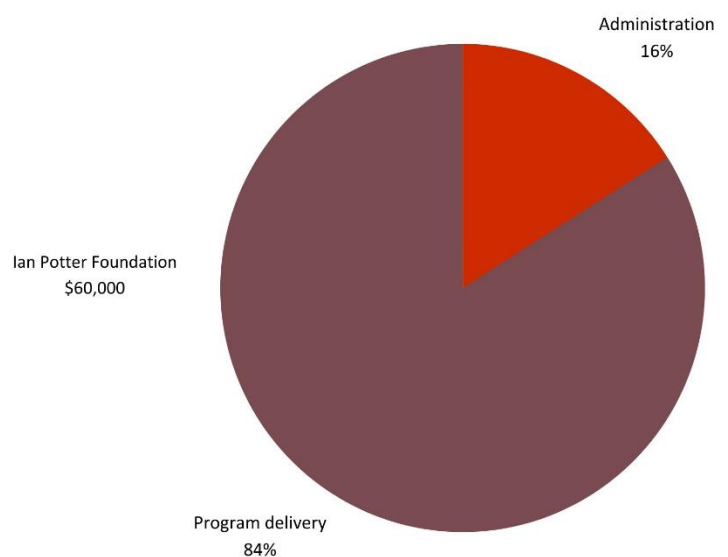
- 64 social media posts
- 18 newspaper articles
- 8 radio interviews
- 1 podcast



Income vs Expenditure



FY 2022-23 Income - \$256,241.48



FY 2022-23 expenditure

Just Home employees

- **Alex Hughes** (Program Manager)
- **Tara Pearman** (Program Facilitator, Housing Information and Referral Service)
- **Gerry Clarke** (Community Development Officer and Lifeskills Program facilitator)
- **Tamara Callaghan/Enid Gelden** (Bookkeeper)



ABOUT JUST HOME MARGARET RIVER INC.

Just Home Margaret River (Inc.) is a grassroots volunteer movement for housing justice in the Margaret River region. We became an Incorporated Association on 30 May 2017 and subsequently registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Just Home is led by community members with current or previous experience of homelessness and/or housing insecurity, in solidarity and partnership with community members concerned about injustice in their region. We are committed to ensuring that our community has appropriate, accessible, low cost, secure and sustainable housing and shelter options for people on a low income, who may be vulnerable, disadvantaged and/or in crisis, or who may be experiencing homelessness.

*Our **goal** is that everyone has access to appropriate, accessible, low cost, secure and sustainable housing or shelter.*

*Our **vision** is secure, stable shelter for all.*

*Our **mission** is to promote and facilitate appropriate secure and sustainable housing and shelter for people experiencing homelessness.*

We participate in research, advocacy and activism to address disadvantage and injustice, and inclusive community education and self-determination for people experiencing disadvantage regarding housing and housing related issues.

The Just Home Margaret River Inc. Committee for 2022-2023 included:

- Chair: Naomi Godden
- Deputy Chair: Stuart Carrick
- Secretary: Emma Partington
- Treasurer: Angela Wellman
- Committee members: Shelley Cullen, Jessica Brennan

Our staff for 2002-2023 included:

- Alex Hughes – Program Manager
- Tara Pearman - HIRS Program Facilitator
- Gerry Clarke – Community Development and Lifeskills Program Facilitator
- Tamara Callaghan/Enid – Bookkeeper

Just Home's Strategic Programs for 2022-2023 included:

- Housing Information and Referral Service (HIRS)
- Lifeskills Training
- Agency Networking
- Community Development Program
- Housing advocacy

OUR SUPPORTERS

Just Home thanks the following organisations, businesses and individuals for grants, donations, in-kind support and volunteering in 2022-2023:

- The Ian Potter Foundation
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River
- Lotterywest
- Australia Post
- Margaret River Community Centre
- Margaret River Soup Kitchen
- Margaret River Lions
- Shelter WA
- Arts Margaret River
- Accordwest
- WA Alliance to End Homelessness
- Mindful Margaret River
- WA Council of Social Service
- Streetsmart Australia
- Margaret River HEART
- Margaret River Organic Garden
- Transition Margaret River
- Rotary Club of Margaret River
- Baptist Church Margaret River
- Co-Operation Housing
- Jane Kelsbie Member SW MLA
- Grand dog Designs
- Radio Margaret river
- Cullen Wines
- Nirala Hunt
- Monti Karus
- Dave Seegar
- Sally Hays
- Annie Davies
- Dave Galloway
- Wendy Castleden
- Terri Godden



CULLEN WINES
WILYABRUP & MARGARET RIVER



HOMELESSNESS IN AUGUSTA-MARGARET RIVER (AMR)

Overview

Western Australia (WA) proportionally now has more rough sleepers than any other state in Australia with the South-west, after the Kimberley, being the region that has been impacted the most with an **overall increase of 63% in homelessness in the region**. While devastating, this perhaps is not shocking given that the housing crisis has been developing and worsening for a long time with little in the way of government investment or intervention.

In 2015, the AMR Shire released their *Affordable Housing Strategy*, which following analysis stated that **AMR was 'severely unaffordable'** (akin to Melbourne, the second most unaffordable city in Australia). In 2021, Realestate.com detailed that the median rent price in Margaret River was \$400/week, among the highest in the South West; while the median income was one of the lowest (e.g. on average those renting in **Margaret River spend \$50 more per week on rent but earn \$8,500 less per year** than those people living in Bunbury). A report released by Just Home in the same year detailed the median expenditure on housing to be 45% of household income, indicating 'severe housing stress' across the region (*'I wouldn't wish this on anyone', 2021*). **Since this time, rental prices have soared, with current median rental prices as of July 2023, being \$580/week (a rise of \$160 or 45% increase in two years).**

A further factor that is having an ongoing impact on available housing stock is the short-stay accommodation market, with 27 per cent of dwellings in the region being empty (2021 Census). A recent online snapshot of this issue, taken on the 24th October 2023, showed there were 765 Airbnb's available for hire while there were only 9 properties available for long-term rental; **a ratio of 1 rental property available for every 85 Airbnb's**. Of the 9 properties available, only one was under \$400 per week.



**Formerly homeless Margaret River local now enjoying permanent, stable housing*

The below table outlines some of key factors that are contributing to the current situation and how this is impacting on individuals and on our community.

1

SITUATION	18% population increase since 2019 (highest in south-west)	Vacancy rate is less than 0.2%	27% of homes are empty (e.g. holiday/second homes)	Households are experiencing higher than average housing stress
IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS	150+ people in AMR are experiencing homelessness	600+ people are at imminent risk of homelessness	Vulnerable groups (elderly people, single parents) are suffering in isolation	High levels of mental health issues being experienced
IMPACT ON COMMUNITY	People are leaving the region (including key labour work force)	Increased pressures on already strained community services	Negative impacts on children's development and wellbeing	Weakens the overall strength of our community

Impacts on community

With critical low rental market vacancy rates (0.2%), extremely significant increases in rental costs in the past two years (45%), high population growth and increased cost of living, it is not surprising that there has been an **overall increase of 63% in homelessness in the region**, representing one of the largest increases across the whole of WA. This can be seen in Just Homes own data, where engagements to the HIRS program (housing and homelessness support service) have more than doubled in the last two years, from 69 engagements per year to 149 during 2022-23 financial year; **an increase of 116% per cent**.

Despite the significant need, there are no other community based, not-for-profit or government agencies providing housing and homelessness support services locally in AMR. Residents are instead expected to travel 100+ kilometres to Busselton and Bunbury to access necessary services (return bus trip costs \$56), or use the internet to try and reach out for support (which many people don't have). Both of these options for many residents are unreasonable, unfeasible and a key reason they turn to Just Home for help.

Based on our research, Just Home estimates that there are 150 people living homeless in AMR, with conservatively an estimated 600 people being on the precipice of homelessness.

¹ ¹ Shire of Augusta Margaret River (2015). Affordable Housing Strategy
 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 census
 Median rent data available via www.realestate.com
 Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Income of Australia 2017-18
 Just Home Margaret River Inc. 'I wouldn't wish this on anyone' report, 2021
 Just Home Margaret River Inc. Annual Report 2021-22

What is homelessness?

“Homelessness” is being without a ‘home’ that provides a sense of security, stability, privacy, safety, and the ability to control one’s living space. In the Augusta Margaret River region, homelessness includes:

- sleeping rough
- sleeping in an improvised dwelling
- needing crisis accommodation but not able to access any
- sleeping in a tent
- sleeping in a car
- sleeping in an overcrowded house
- sleeping in a hostel
- sleeping in temporary accommodation such as ‘couch surfing’
- sleeping in a caravan or caravan park

What are the current options for people facing homelessness?

Options	Related issue
Move to a tent or caravan/campervan on private or public property, or sleep in their car or on the street.	This will be difficult due to affordability and availability of camping sites, due to high intrastate visitors.
Temporarily move in with family/friends while trying to find accommodation	Some people do not have this option available to them. If available, this could be a very stressful option for different reasons, including overcrowding.
Find temporary accommodation e.g. hotel or short-stay accommodation	This is a very expensive option with ongoing availability likely to be limited.
Find a home	Current vacancy rates suggest that this will not occur quickly and/or be unaffordable
Leave the AMR region	This outcome is regular occurrence, resulting in a loss of vital workers and general disruption (to individuals, community and economy).

Peoples experiences of homelessness can look very different from one another and how we respond should be on a case by case basis, listening to their needs and working to create personalised solutions.

To learn more about local people’s experiences of homelessness, [click this link](#) where you can watch three videos of people telling their personal story of how they became ‘Homeless in Margs’.



49%

**of people
who reach
out for
support are
experiencing
homeless**

**A Margaret River mum’s comment on what it was like living homeless with her children*

2022-2023 JUST HOME STRATEGIC PROGRAMS

Just Home Margaret River Inc. are pleased to report the following highlights against our *Just Home Collective Action Plan 2020-2023*.

1. HOUSING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE (HIRS)

Goal - To provide housing information, referral and advocacy to up to 100 Augusta Margaret River individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness to maintain tenancy or access housing

Contributing Funding

<i>Ian Potter Foundation - Community Resilience Project</i>	<i>\$180,000 (2020-2023)</i>
<i>Lotterywest Prevention and Intervention Program</i>	<i>\$23,699</i>
<i>Augusta Margaret River Shire</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Soup Kitchen</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
<i>Commonwealth Bank Staff Foundation</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>

The Housing, Information and Referral Service (HIRS) has been in operation since late 2020. It is the arm of the organisation that provides support to those in our community (and sometimes outside of the community) who are experiencing homelessness and/or housing insecurity. As noted in the previous progress report submitted last year, when the new HIRS Coordinator was appointed, the opportunity was taken to amend the HIRS service slightly. The most significant change related to the distinction between an enquiry and a client. The following definitions describe the two types of engagements the HIRS Facilitator is responsible for:

HIRS enquiry - Enquiries stem from a range of sources (e.g. concerned family members, organisations and agencies, community members). In most cases, individuals first engage Just Home via an enquiry with a proportion going on to become clients. Enquiries generally receive targeted information, low level one-off support and referrals to other services.

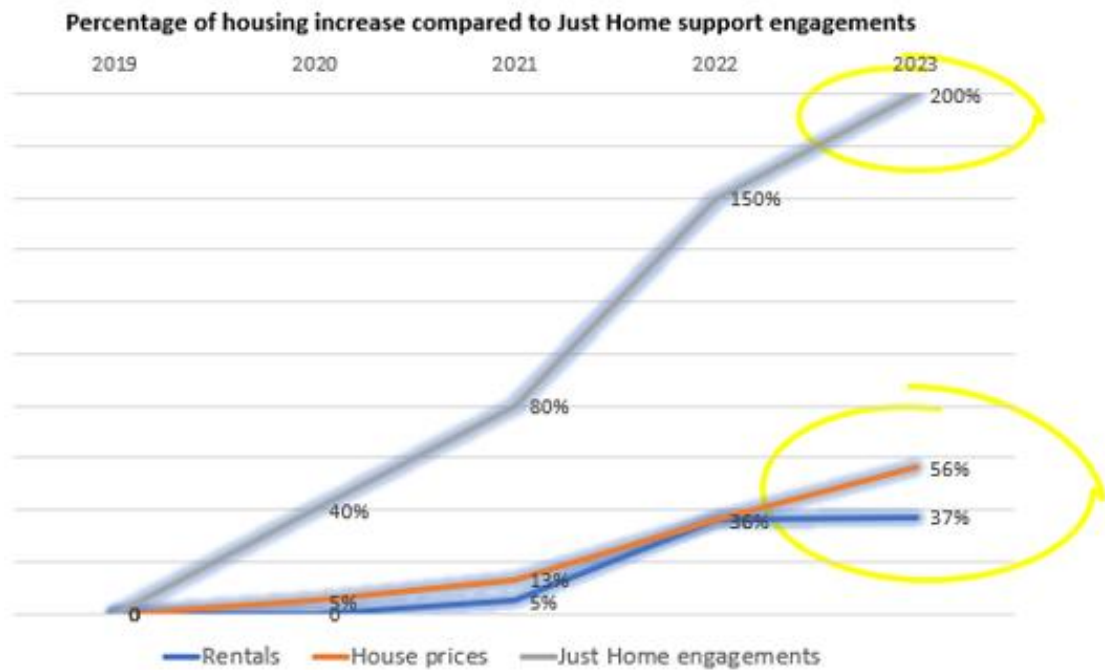
HIRS Client – Clients are engaged on a deeper level, with greater frequency, over a longer period of time. More information is collected and support provided by the HIRS Coordinator to help meet the individual/family's needs.

HIRS engagements (enquiries vs clients)

Over the lifetime of the HIRS service, Just Home Margaret River has received **328 recorded enquiries**. For the financial year 2022-2023, the number of total engagements has been 149, compared to 69 engagements in 2020-2021. **This is an engagement increase of 116% in two years** (*Financial year 2021-2022 had a significant service gap prior to recruiting a new HIRS Program Facilitator).

Another way of presenting this engagement increase is that from 2020-2021, the HIRS service was seeing just over **1.3 new people every week** compared to in 2022-2023 where the HIRS service saw 2.9 new people every week (that equals a new person seeking support per work day for the part time HIRS Program Facilitator).

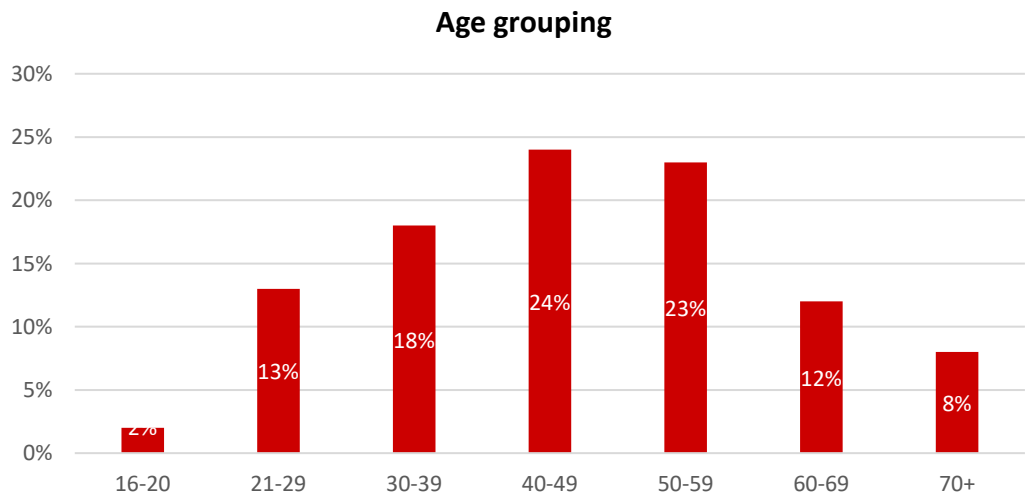
The below graph helps to illustrate the correlation over recent years between the rising HIRS engagement levels and the cost of housing (rental and purchases).



The engagement split between people identifying as male or female has been fairly even, with a slightly higher percentage being seen for people identifying as female.

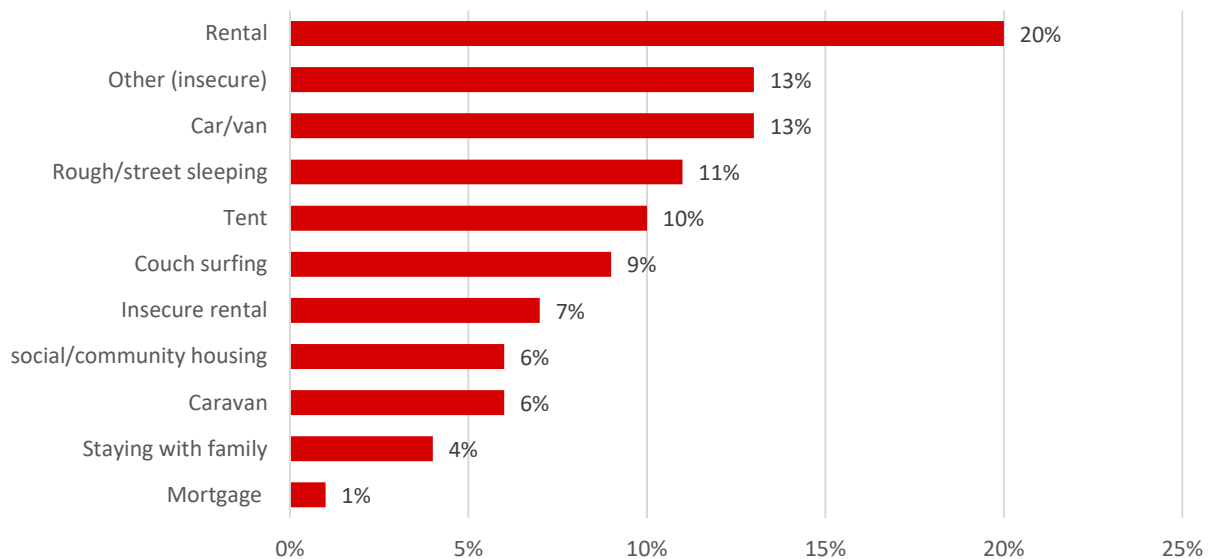
Gender	Engagement percentage
Males	44%
Females	56%

The age range of those seeking support is 16 to 81 years old. The most common grouping was the 40-49-year age group. While this is not represented via the graph below, a common statistic highlighted in relation to homelessness, relates to those who are 55 years and older. In relation to Just Home’s engagements, **the 55 years and older group made up 33% (one third) of the overall numbers.**



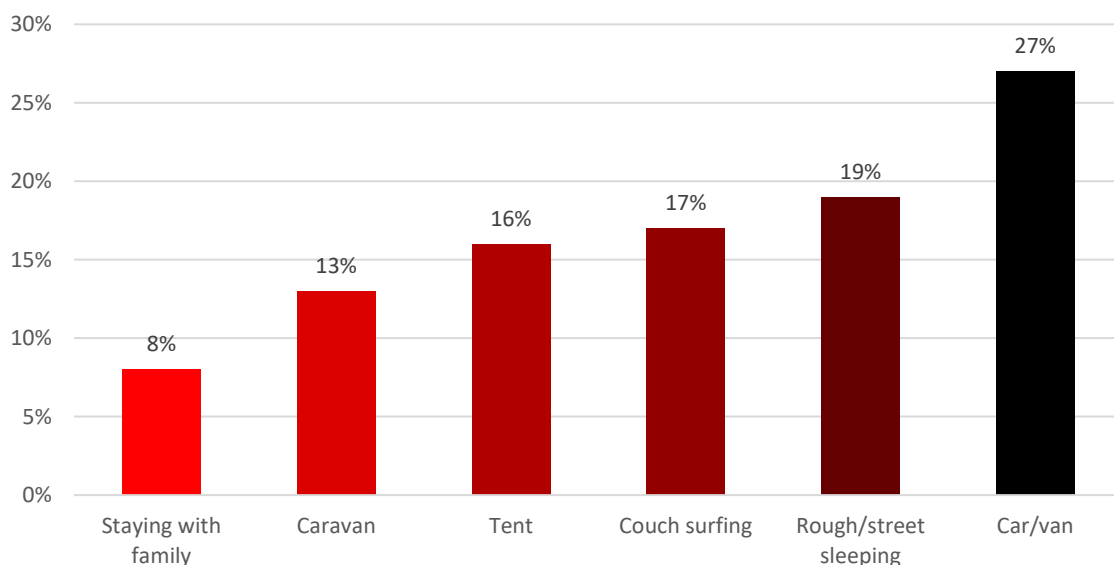
The most common housing situation people presented with when engaging the Just Home HIRS program, were those currently living in rentals (20%). The next most common response was: 'Other (insecure)', a category that includes several living conditions that do not fall into other listed categories (e.g. motel, backpackers etc.). Of most concern though were the next most common responses: sleeping in a car/van (13%), rough/street sleeping (11%), sleeping in a tent (10%), and couch surfing (9%).

Clients by current housing situation



Almost half of the people who engaged the HIRS service over the 2022-2023 period were experiencing homelessness (49%). Of this group, living in a car or van was the most common (27%), followed by rough/street sleeping (19%), and then couch surfing (17%).

Clients experiencing homelessness by type



Case study – Laura, single parent, 35-44 age group, female (pseudonym used)

Following a series of insecure, unaffordable and unsuitable housing options, Laura and her three children were forced to stay at her new partner's home. This decision put pressure on their relationship and a decision was made for Laura and her children to leave this house. With no other options, Laura commenced living at a caravan park in a tent with her two young children and teenage son.

On the day she engaged Just Home (May 2023), she disclosed that after living this way for several months, she had considered phoning child protection services just to ensure her children could be taken somewhere warm and dry. Laura loves her children very much but was feeling incredibly desperate, with her mental health being significantly impacted. She was being broken by the situation and felt defeated by the system.

While there were no concerns for Laura's parenting, child protection opened a case on her family due to her housing situation. As the situation had gotten too much for Laura's teenage child, a decision was made for him to live with a family member in Perth. Laura has been on the social housing waitlist for two years.

HIRS Support

- Just Home engaged Laura as a client and started to explore housing options together
- Ongoing supported was provided, including liaising with the Department of Communities
- Just Home connected with Housing Choices, who were eager to partner as they are not based in the region but had an available property in AMR shire.
- Just Home worked with the Housing Choices staff member and using local knowledge, helped them to understand the needs and situations of local clients.

Outcomes

- Over a six-week period, Just Home helped to coordinate a collaborative effort amongst a number of organisations to seek a solution for Laura and her children.
- At the end of June, Laura and her two children were offered a home and housed In July 2023
- Laura has since returned to her nursing studies and continues to work on a part-time basis.
- Following the acquisition of the home, child protection closed their case.
- Laura's older children have visited and family relationships are reportedly more secure and safe.



Just Homes HIRS Program Facilitator, Tara Pearman, accepting a donation of new shelter bags from Margaret River Lions President, Keith Meyer.

2.COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROGRAM (LIFESKILLS)

Goal - To develop and implement independent living skills training sessions with up to 100 Augusta Margaret River individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness to enhance their capacity, skills and resilience to manage challenges in their lives.

Contributing Funding

Ian Potter Foundation - Community Resilience Project	\$180,000 (2020-2023)
Augusta Margaret River Shire Community Resilience Grant	\$8,932.63

The Community Resilience Life Skills sessions operated in conjunction with the Friday morning 'Coffee Yarns' sessions until April 2023. In April 2023, to increase Life Skills session attendance and encourage new attendees into the programs, a decision was made to separate the 'Coffee Yarns' and Life Skills sessions. The new series, which ran from April 2023 until July 2023, was named 'Life on a Shoestring'. To garner a broader audience, 'Life on a Shoestring' was designed to engage both the 'Coffee Yarns' attendees as well as the broader community. The theme revolved around living smart in economically difficult times.

In total, 138 people engaged with the Life Skills program, an average of 10 people attending per session (37% males and 63% females).

The following is a list of all fourteen sessions that ran over the 2022-2023 financial year:

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Get Real Reconciliation |  Mending with the Boomerang Ladies |
|  Homelessness week 2022 interviews |  'Soupie Dave's' infamous Dahl |
|  Brainstorm/Services focus group |  Five Ways to Cook Fritters |
|  Legal and Financial Advice for Women |  'Soupie Dave's' infamous Dahl |
|  Tenancy Rights workshop |  Five Protein packed Bean Recipes |
|  Building design |  Making a sprout bag and mending |
|  Weed Foraging |  Sprouting legumes |

The 'Coffee Yarns' program has provided a safe peer supported space for people to meet, with the majority of the people who engaged the program being rough sleepers. The program attracted consistent attendees until a critical incident (external to the organisation) took place in May 2023 which impacted attendance over the following months. Furthermore, and on a positive note, several of the regular attenders have now found housing in different regions and therefore no longer can attend.

In total, the Coffee Yarn session attracted 52 people, with most attending multiple sessions (54% males and 46% females)

The 'Life on a Shoestring' series provided practical skill building around cooking, shopping and mending, it has been very popular and has created opportunities for the those who typically attended the 'Coffee Yarn' sessions to have meaningful engagement with the broader community

Overall attendance for both programs was 190 people.

3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Goal - To develop strategic partnerships to facilitate the development of increased social housing in Augusta-Margaret River through the Homelessness and Affordable Housing Working Group

Contributing Funding

Ian Potter Foundation - Community Development Program	\$30,000 (2020-2023)
Lotterywest – Community Development Program	\$180,000 (2020-2023)

Several significant pieces of work, including successful outcomes, have been achieved this financial year.

Social and Affordable Taskforce well-established and working to drive local solutions in AMR

To support the facilitation of social and affordable housing solutions in the Augusta Margaret River Shire, the Social and Affordable Housing Taskforce was established in the 2021-22 financial year. It is currently made up of six key organisations who attend quarterly meetings. Current members of the taskforce include Just Home Margaret River Inc., Department of Communities, Rotary Club of Margaret River, Co-operation Housing, Accordwest and the WA Alliance to End Homelessness. In addition to the current members listed, guests often attend the taskforce via invitation. In the 2022-2023 financial year the taskforce has met four times to discuss and progress the majority of the following projects.

Margaret River Community Housing Alliance

The Margaret River Community Housing Alliance is made up of Margaret River Rotary Club, Accordwest, and Just Home. Formed this financial year, the alliance is aiming to develop a community led, place-based housing solution that addresses a local need. To date, this has included the identification of appropriate land and engagement of appropriate stakeholders (e.g. Minister John Carey MLA, Department of Lands, Public Transport Authority, Department of Communities etc.). An architect has also been engaged and has drafted an initial building plan alongside lived experience members. The alliance is now in the process of developing an agreement to contractually unite the partners. This will assist efforts in obtaining a peppercorn lease on identified land (Clarke Road).



Successful advocacy for the Kyloring Cooperative Housing (8 social housing dwellings)

Just Home supported Co-operative Housing in an advocacy campaign that saw a successful bid for social housing funding. A significant \$2.9 million was awarded to Co-operation Housing to support the Kyloring build in the Witchcliffe Eco Village. This State government funding will enable 8 social homes to be built for persons currently on the social housing waitlist (aged over 55 years). This is a significant boost in social housing stock for our region.

WA Government commitment to build five new social housing dwellings in 2024

As part of our collaborative efforts, Just Home offered to draw up a masterplan for the Henning Avenue precinct in an effort to see intelligent incremental densification. The Department of Communities and the Shire have been clear however that as there is still a significant period of life left in the existing homes, and therefore densification discussion cannot take place until these properties are ready for demolishing. As a result of this, Just Home will not be committing time and resources to develop this plan until a more suitable time.

More recently however, the Department has stated that contracts have been signed with a builder to develop five new social homes in Margaret River, four being on Henning Avenue. A delivery date for these dwellings is not known at this time.

Margaret River Lions and the Lionheart Project

An enthusiastic group from the Margaret River Lions Club have been exploring the potential of developing affordable housing solutions. The project, named *Lion Heart*, was first presented to the Social and Affordable Housing Taskforce in May 2023. While the concept is excellent, following further engagement with taskforce members, a deeper understanding of the scope of this project was realized with subsequent time to develop this idea required.

In the short term, the Lions club members are eager to support Just Home (and the community members seeking support) and so will be holding a fundraising event in early 2024.

Water Corporation site (Willmott Avenue)

Just Home has been involved in strategic advocacy efforts aimed at the Department of Communities to acquire the now decommissioned Water Corporation site for the purpose of creating a mixed development of dwellings (i.e. social, affordable and private housing). The site was rezoned in 2023 and the Department of Communities have reported they are now actively pursuing the land.

Department of Communities – Social housing stock

Over the 2022-2023 financial year, Just Home has actively been trying to ascertain how much Government housing (particularly social housing stock) has been bought, sold and developed in AMR region over the last ten years. The purpose of the questioning is so we can definitively know in real terms whether we are going backwards or forwards in the supply of government housing. Despite direct questions being posed to the Department of Communities, across several levels, to date we have received no response aside from indications that they are unwilling to share such information. In June 2023, we escalated the enquiry to local Labor MP, Jane Kelsbie, who is also pursuing the information.

Baptist Church

Just Home has been meeting regularly with staff from the Baptist Church, who are interested in supporting housing solutions in the region. While enthusiasm for a larger initiative appears to have waned over time, there is still some interest from the local AMR churches to form an alliance that could provide support to a specific initiative (e.g. fund raising for a community housing project borne from the alliance - mentioned above).

4. AGENCY NETWORKING

Goal - To develop a network of agencies servicing Augusta-Margaret River that are connected to homelessness issues to build strong referral pathways, work collaboratively with complex situations, and advocate for increased resources in the region.

Contributing Funding

Ian Potter Foundation - Community Resilience Project	\$180,000 (2020-2023)
Lotterywest Prevention and Intervention Program	\$23,699

Just Home continues to collaborate with a range of local and state-wide groups and organisations, strengthening networks and partnerships, with the ultimate aim of improving the support provided to community members at risk as well as driving local solutions for the region.

Through forums such as the Social and Affordable Housing Taskforce, Just Home continues to coordinate efforts that works towards collaborative solutions in our region, including the formal establishment of the community housing development alliance, made up of Just Home, Accordwest and Margaret River Rotary Club.

The HIRS services is connected and works closely with social and community housing providers, Department of Communities WA (Busselton office) and Accordwest. As these agencies are essential to supporting client outcomes, the HIRS Program Facilitator has focused on building connection and strong referral pathways with these agencies, including frontline staff. An example of this can be seen with the Department of Communities local branch in Busselton, where the staff have agreed to receive applications and communications such as Housing assessment annual updates/reviews for Just Home clients directly from the HIRS Program Facilitator. This addition is increasing functionality of the system by removing frequently experienced barriers for applications. As many Just Home clients do not access to reliable transport, cannot always afford fuel, or possibly have no drivers licence, having a 'local' office 40 minutes' drive away (Department of Communities) is a barrier to service. Other barriers include; access to internet, sufficient data, reliable devices and digital literacy. In this way **Just Home provides a valuable, accessible community link to this important service.**

During this financial year, a strong partnership has been established with Accordwest who is working closely with Just Home to increase support and accommodation for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness within Margaret River and the wider South West Region. This is being carried out via a support and advisory service to the HIRS program (MOU in place), as well as via the Housing Taskforce, of which Accordwest are an active member.

Other key agencies and networks Just Home is actively working with include:

- WA Alliance to End Homelessness
- Make Renting Fair
- Margaret River Community Pantry
- Arts Margaret River

- Margaret River Soup Kitchen
- Margaret River Community Centre staff – provision of emergency relief.
- Department of Communities (various areas)
- Shire of Augusta-Margaret River – town planning, community development and head ranger
- Mindful Margaret River – range of holistic health and community professionals
- Community Mental health services
- Social workers (Hospital based)
- Lamp Inc – NDIS support Coordination
- JSW Training and Community Services – Youth South West program
- Anglicare WA – Financial Counselling Outreach, Youth Housing, Safe at Home initiatives
- AMR Shire network/Vasse health Network meetings - range of professionals and services
- Real estate companies commercial and private
- Community groups - Lions, Rotary and Transition Margaret River
- Women's refuges (Bunbury and Busselton)
- Local church groups (The Uniting Church, Baptist Church)



5. HOUSING ADVOCACY

Goal 5

To increase community consciousness and action for housing justice in Augusta Margaret River.

This goal is not funded and is undertaken by both volunteers, staff and supporters.

During financial year 2022-23, Just Home has been involved in the following community awareness and fundraising activities that have aimed to raise community consciousness and action:

- 📅 August 2022 - Street/Café Smart promotion campaign
- 📅 April - July 2023, 'Life on a Shoestring' workshop sessions aimed at a general community
- 📅 April 2023 – 'Homeless in Margs' video series – lived experience videos of housing insecurity and homelessness in AMR
- 📅 December 2022 - Busselton Fundraiser Swim for homelessness



Just Home increased our media presence over the 2022-23 financial year with regular featured articles in print (online and newspapers), radio, social media and podcasts totalling 91. Below are some of the most significant media items across the reporting period:

- 📅 July 2022 - ABC radio interviews for homelessness week
- 📅 August 2022 - Press release for AMR Mail and ABC as part of homelessness week
- 📅 September - ABC radio piece on homeless people sleeping in tents
- 📅 October 2022 – Article in AMR Mail on Tenancy Workshop
- 📅 November 2022 – Article in AMR Times on Just Home and the Premiers Community Cabinet meeting
- 📅 December 2022 – Article in AMR Mail on Busselton Fundraiser Swim for homelessness
- 📅 February 2023 - Radio Margaret River interview on homelessness in AMR
- 📅 February 2023 – Radio interview on Triple M interview regarding homelessness in AMR
- 📅 March 2023 – ABC radio interview responding to Census Data
- 📅 June 2023 – Article in AMR Times regarding EOFY assistance and housing update



Going forward... financial year 2023-2024

Given the current housing situation and the subsequent rise in struggles being experienced by local community members, it is clear that Just Home's support services, community development and advocacy efforts are more important than ever.

However, after failing to secure funding from the state government, Just Home has needed to reduce costs to ensure we can continue to operate over the 2023-24 financial year. This has meant sadly losing our long-standing Community Development Officer.

With that in mind, while our efforts over the next 12 months will be constrained, we will continue to do our best to make effective change in key areas, including; regulation of short stay accommodation, increased support for local community services, and of course, the development of social and affordable housing.

[Housing] it makes me feel secure. I don't feel under duress to the point where I'll be back on the street. It's not a nice feeling. I don't recommend it for anyone.

