

Research Agenda

National Housing Research Program

Research Agenda 2014

**Australian Housing and Urban
Research Institute**

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1 PURPOSE

The AHURI [National Housing Research Program](#) (NHRP) Funding Round 2014 offers exciting opportunities for conducting housing and homelessness research in Australia. The NHRP Research Agenda 2014 provides direction in the further development of AHURI's housing and homelessness research evidence-base. This will enable AHURI to actively contribute to national housing reform priorities such as the [National Affordable Housing Agreement](#) (NAHA) and the attendant National Partnership Agreements.

The NHRP Research Agenda 2014 consists of eight Strategic Research Issues and five Priority Topics identified as highly relevant to housing policy development. This provides guidance as to specific topics of immediate interest to policy-makers, whilst providing the opportunity for the research community to pursue other innovative research. The Priority Topics and the focus of the Strategic Research Issues have been developed by AHURI Limited in consultation with the AHURI Limited Board, the Australian, state and territory governments, and the AHURI Housing Research Panel.

Section 2 of this document describes the key issues and lines of enquiry for each of the Priority Topics. Section 3 provides a brief summary of completed and current AHURI research for each Strategic Research Issue. The summaries indicate gaps in the evidence-base identified by the [AHURI Housing Research Panel](#), but there may be other issues that warrant further research.

Research proposals need to build upon the research already completed. The [AHURI research catalogue 2000–13](#) provides a summary of all AHURI funded projects by theme. [The AHURI evidence-base informing the national housing reform agenda](#) provides a summary of AHURI research against national housing reform priorities.

Applications are invited for Research Projects, Essays and Investigative Panels on topics within the scope of this Research Agenda. Investigative Panels in particular contribute to policy development by directly engaging policy-makers, practitioners and the research community in the exchange of ideas.

Researchers are strongly encouraged to make use of existing data sets when appropriate, including data collected by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, longitudinal data sets such as the Housing, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey and administrative data sets held by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. A list of potential data sources is [available on the AHURI website](#).

The NHRP seeks applications for research capacity building and will award one Postgraduate Top-up Scholarship per university and one Postdoctoral Fellowship, based on merit, in the NHRP Funding Round 2014.

The *Research Agenda 2014* should be read in conjunction with the *NHRP Funding guidelines for applicants*, *Funding guidelines for Postdoctoral Fellowships*, and the *Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research*. Applicants should use the templates provided on the [AHURI website](#).

2 PRIORITY TOPICS

This section sets out those topics identified in consultation with the housing policy community as warranting priority research.

Index of Priority Topics

- PT1 Patterns of service use by people who have experienced homelessness
- PT2 The delivery of the National Rental Affordability Scheme
- PT3 Housing markets and productivity
- PT4 Demographic change and future housing subsidy
- PT5 Repackaging housing and support services in response to national disability reforms

PT1 Patterns of service use by people who have experienced homelessness

Among people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness are particular cohorts who are repeat users of a range of resource intensive services across the social housing, homelessness, justice, out-of home care and health systems. These cohorts are sometimes regarded as being caught in an institutional circuit.

This Priority Topic aims to identify which cohorts are more likely to be caught in the institutional circuit and the patterns of service use within those cohorts. A feasibility study of the utility of large quantitative datasets, including linked administrative datasets, to address this topic is an important element of the research design.

This research requires:

- Use of various data sets (including the Specialist Homeless Services Collection and Journeys Home) and linked administrative data to undertake a longitudinal cohort study of service use by people who experience homelessness.
- Identification of the patterns of service use for particular cohorts (e.g. age groups, Indigenous/non-Indigenous, people leaving state care).
- Identification of critical points for early intervention to reduce homelessness and break the institutional circuit for particular cohorts.
- Analysis of the utility of this data in the future development, and evaluation, of past policies and programs.

This Priority Topic informs Strategic Research Issue 1

Related AHURI Research

Lifetime and intergenerational experiences of homelessness in Australia

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p80516/>

What makes a difference? Building a foundation for nationally consistent outcome measures (AHURI Research Synthesis)

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/psyn043/>

Evidence to inform NSW homelessness action priorities 2009–10 (AHURI Research Synthesis)

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/psyn013/>

Other related research

Abraham Chigavazira, Guy Johnson, Julie Moschion, Rosanna Scutella, Yi-Ping Tseng and Mark Wooden (2013) *Journeys Home Research Report No. 2 Findings from Waves 1 and 2* Report prepared for the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, February.

PT2 The delivery of the National Rental Affordability Scheme

The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) was introduced in 2008, providing incentives for 50 000 new private rental dwellings to be provided to tenants at 80 per cent of market rent. Of the initial allotment of 50 000 incentives, over 11 000 NRAS properties had been allocated by January 2013 and a further 28 000 incentives were reserved (Australian Government 2013). NRAS has been successful in attracting market interest in investment in affordable rental housing with approximately 43 per cent of NRAS participants being from the private sector (Australian Government 2013).

The aims of NRAS are to:

- Increase the supply of new affordable rental housing.
- Reduce rental costs for low and moderate income households.
- Encourage large-scale investment and innovative delivery of affordable housing.

This Priority Topic requires examination of the implementation of NRAS to date and the extent to which it has met its stated objectives. This will take into account the respective roles of different stakeholders in delivering NRAS properties including the Australian, state and territory governments, as well as the commercial and not-for-profit housing developers and providers.

This research requires:

- An examination of the policy and administrative processes involved in the implementation of NRAS including, but not limited to; assessment processes, state and commonwealth administration, and regulatory and legislative structures.
- An assessment of what has been delivered by NRAS to date, including targeting of particular household types and the number, type and location of dwellings.
- An examination of the investment models used by not-for-profit and commercial developers to finance and build NRAS properties.
- Consideration of how the scheme might develop in future. For example, it could explore options and barriers to enhancing NRAS to attract institutional investment and transition issues when there is a rollover of stock at the end of the 10-year period.
- Modelling of the effect of NRAS on the lower end of the local private rental housing markets and the supply of affordable rental housing.
- Analysis of whether NRAS is a cost effective way to deliver additional housing supply by comparison with direct delivery of housing by state and territory governments.

This Priority Topic informs Strategic Research Issue 2

Related AHURI Research

Financing and institutional arrangements for the provision of affordable rental housing in Australia (Investigative Panel)

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p71016/>

Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p52012/>

Modelling for PRWG using AHURI-3M

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p30399/>

Other related research

Australian Government (2013), *National Rental Affordability Scheme monthly performance report* 31 January 2013. <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/housing-support/programs-services/national-rental-affordability-scheme/national-rental-affordability-scheme-performance-reporting> accessed 5 May 2013

PT3 Housing markets and productivity

While it is generally acknowledged that housing markets play a significant role within the broader economy, the effect of the housing market on productivity is not well understood.

This Priority Topic responds to this policy issue by exploring how the efficient functioning of housing markets in cities influences productivity in the Australian economy. This research requires:

- An assessment of the effect of housing markets on capital city productivity with a focus on the effect of housing market conditions on labour supply and cost through, for example, an analysis of job vacancy rates and wage rates.
- Developing an understanding of the adaptability of housing markets in meeting the requirements of increasing economic growth.
- Understanding the relationship between metropolitan house prices, housing affordability and capital city productivity.

This Priority Topic informs Strategic Research Issue 6

Previous relevant AHURI research

Housing affordability, occupation and location in Australian cities and regions

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60279/>

House prices and consumer spending

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60360/>

Review of economic evaluation methods for city shaping projects

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p76001/>

Housing, location and employment

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p70065/>

Housing assistance and economic participation

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/nrv/nrv1/>

Housing affordability for lower-income Australians

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/nrv/nrv1/>

PT4 Demographic change and future housing subsidy

Planning for the fiscal sustainability of housing subsidies into the future requires an understanding of the housing assistance needs of different population groups. Demographic changes to consider will include changes in household composition and age structures, population ageing, international and intranational migration. This research will complement the National Housing Supply Council projections of housing demand. It will also refer to research completed by AHURI in 2008 which responded to the Intergenerational Reports (IGR) released by the Commonwealth Treasury with research projecting the future housing needs of Australians.

This Priority Topic will draw on a range of data sources to provide a projection of future housing requirements across tenures and the likely cost of housing assistance measures (in terms of depth and duration of housing assistance) by demographic cohort. Accordingly this topic covers a broad range of housing assistance measures such as tax and transfer subsidies, Commonwealth Rent Assistance, First Home Owner Grants, and social housing provision. It is expected that the analysis will include a specific focus on demographic changes for the Indigenous population and the implications for the provision of housing assistance.

This research requires:

- An analysis of the distributional effect of current housing assistance provision for different population cohorts, including analysis of whether the depth of subsidy is matched with the level of need.
- An understanding of the implications of the geographic location of different household types for housing assistance measures, based on various spatial measures (e.g. urban/regional/remote or middle/inner and outer rings of cities).
- Consideration of the possible changes to housing assistance—and the depth and duration of subsidy required—to meet emerging needs across tenures and facilitate intergenerational equity and sustainability.
- Identification of proposals for policies and programs to mitigate future costs of housing assistance by meeting emerging needs (e.g. sustaining tenancies, supporting low-income homeowners and access to home ownership for some groups, facilitating downsizing for some older people).

This Priority Topic informs Strategic Research Issue 7

Related AHURI Research

21st century housing careers and Australia's housing future

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p40402/>

What drives housing outcomes in Australia? Understanding the role of aspirations, household formation, economic incentives and labour market interactions

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p80151/>

A spatial analysis of trends in housing markets and changing patterns of household structure and income

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60064/>

The Australian housing system and intergenerational sustainability

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60314/>

A distributional analysis of the impact of direct and indirect housing assistance

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60098/>

Tax expenditures and housing

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download/judith_yates_research_paper

Other related research

Commonwealth Treasury (2002) (IGR1) *Intergenerational Report 2002/03*, 2002/03 Budget Paper No. 5, Canberra, archive.treasury.gov.au/igr/

Commonwealth Treasury (2007) (IGR2) *Intergenerational Report 2007*, Canberra. www.treasury.gov.au/igr

Commonwealth Treasury (2010) (IGR3) *Intergenerational Report 2007*, Canberra. www.treasury.gov.au/igr

Peter McDonald and Jeromey Temple, *Projections of Housing Demand in Australia: 2008-2038* Narrative Report, Prepared for the National Housing Supply Council. www.nhsc.org.au/content/housing_demand_08_38/downloads/summary.pdf

PT5 Repackaging housing and support services in response to national disability reforms

National disability reforms promising a client centred approach are reshaping expectations about the delivery of a range of services, including housing assistance for people living with a disability. Given the critical role of housing design, location and affordability in supporting independent living, there is a need to examine the implications of the national disability reforms for the delivery of housing and housing assistance.

This Priority Topic examines the implications of the new funding arrangements under the national disability reforms (including DisabilityCare Australia) for the delivery of housing and housing assistance. This should include various forms of housing and assistance, such as supported accommodation, social and community housing, and programs that support access to independent living in private rental and home ownership for people living with disability. It is important that this research explicitly addresses the housing needs of Indigenous people living with a disability.

This research requires:

- Consideration of how the move to individualised funding affects housing demand for people living with disability, including transitions from, or to, supported housing and between tenures.
- Exploration of different approaches to link support services and housing assistance. Particular attention should be given to Australian states that have moved to individualised funding and international best practice.
- Consideration of the implications of the shift to individualised funding for those living in regional areas.
- Examination of the implications of the disability reforms for the role of governments in the delivery, regulation and funding of housing assistance for people living with disability.

This Priority Topic informs Strategic Research Issue 8

Related AHURI Research

21st Century Housing Careers and Australia's Housing Future

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p40402/>

Housing and care for older and younger adults with disabilities

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60019/>

Costs and benefits of housing as the 'home base' for older people

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p60313/>

Homelessness and services and system integration

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/p82013/>

3 STRATEGIC RESEARCH ISSUES

The eight Strategic Research Issues of the AHURI Research Agenda are designed to generate research to advance national housing policy development.

Index of Strategic Research Issues

- SRI1 Housing and related systems that prevent homelessness and promote wellbeing and stable housing outcomes
- SRI2 Housing choice in a social/affordable housing system with diverse providers and increased supply
- SRI3 Housing and neighbourhoods that generate social inclusion, economic opportunities and wellbeing
- SRI4 Housing opportunities for Indigenous people that support improved amenity, wellbeing and economic sustainability
- SRI5 Structures within the housing system, including finance, support services, and tenure arrangements that enable households to access housing as their needs change over time
- SRI6 Efficient land and housing markets that meet demand (affordably and appropriately), enable labour market and other mobility, and support productivity gains in the economy
- SRI7 Understanding and responding to the impact of systemic shifts upon structures within the housing system and housing outcomes
- SRI8 Understanding and responding to the effects of non-housing policies and programs upon housing outcomes and wellbeing

SRI1 Housing and related systems that prevent homelessness and promote wellbeing and stable housing outcomes

Overview

AHURI has completed 26 projects on homelessness since the year 2000 and 5 projects are in progress. Priority Topic 1, *Patterns of service use by people who have experienced homelessness*, will contribute to this Strategic Research Issue.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified gaps in the evidence-base warranting further research. These include:

- Evaluations of effective programs to provide stable housing to people who have experienced homelessness, with attention to international approaches that are transferrable to the Australian context.
- Identification of the characteristics of successful homelessness prevention interventions particularly for young people.
- Approaches to identifying and engaging with people who are chronically or episodically homeless who require support but do not currently access services.

AHURI research to date

Early intervention is cost-effective

It is cost-effective to intervene early to address homelessness because it leads to potential savings in other areas of public expenditure such as justice, health and welfare services.

Effective remedies integrate housing and support

Adequate and appropriate housing along with social support is necessary in the prevention and reduction of homelessness. There is scope to improve integration of homelessness services with mental health and drug and alcohol services.

Informal community resources can be important in supporting people who have experienced homelessness by reinforcing housing security

Social connection is critical in reducing the risk of homelessness and in breaking the cycle of homelessness. For youth recovering from mental illness, housing security is equally about community attachments, amenity and security of tenure.

Understanding pathways into homelessness is critical to targeting policy interventions

For many young people the process of leaving state care is critical in achieving good housing outcomes. The provision of supports from different service systems is important in supporting care leavers to find stable housing and avoid homelessness.

Marginal housing forms such as boarding houses and caravan parks can be understood either as a form of homelessness or as a preventative measure

Whilst some marginal housing, such as boarding houses, can be classified as a form of homelessness, it nonetheless provides accommodation that can reduce rough sleeping. Caravan parks are being used by crisis accommodation agencies, reflecting a severe shortage in the supply of low cost housing, especially for people in urgent need of accommodation. However, for those living in various types of marginal housing existing problems can be exacerbated due to cramped living conditions, lack of privacy and other practical difficulties.

Different cultural and geographic groups have differing experiences of homelessness and require different interventions.

Best practice approaches often include more than the provision of housing and take into account the specific needs of the targeted group/s. Different groups at high risk of homelessness include: older people with mental illness; newly arrived migrants; women and children who have experienced domestic violence; heroin users; ex-prisoners; and young people—including those leaving care and those living in rural locales.

Indigenous people require specifically tailored approaches to effectively tackle homelessness

Many Indigenous people have difficulties in accessing private housing (ownership or rental) and can experience high rates of crowding. Subjective stress based measures of crowding (rather than mainstream density measures) might be relevant in both rural and urban Indigenous contexts: while kinship ties and mobility patterns could increase crowding stress these could also be relieved by firm rules and other practices to share out visitors amongst kin. The provision of culturally appropriate processes and service delivery is an important part of addressing homelessness for Indigenous people.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 82014** The cost of homelessness and the net benefit of homelessness programs: a national study (Jul 2013)
- 82013** Homelessness and services and system integration (Jun 2013)
- 80516** Intergenerational homelessness and the use of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (Feb 2013)
- 30699** Marginal rental housing and marginal renters: a typology for policy (Jun 2013)
- 50682** The role of informal community resources in supporting independent housing for young people recovering from mental illness (Jan 2013)
- 50602** Homelessness prevention for women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence: innovations in policy and practice (Nov 2012)
- 30655** Homelessness and 'Housing First': issues for Australian policy and practice (Essay) (Mar 2012)
- 70686** The role of community housing in meeting the housing and support needs of homeless people (Apr 2013)
- 20607** The role of 'assertive outreach' in addressing primary homelessness (Jan 2012)

AHURI research in progress

- 21024** An evaluation of the nature and effectiveness of supportive housing models (FR available third quarter 2014)
- 21005** Preventing first time homelessness amongst older Australians (FR available final quarter 2014)

- 53017** Homelessness: re-shaping the policy agenda? (Essay)
(FR available third quarter 2013)
- 53027** The structural drivers of homelessness in Australia 2001–11
(PP available third quarter 2014, FR available first quarter 2015)
- 82028** The cost effectiveness of sustaining tenancies of formerly homeless clients
with high needs
(PP available third quarter 2014, FR available second quarter 2015)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI2 Housing choice in a social/affordable housing system with diverse providers and increased supply

Overview

AHURI has completed 32 projects on social and affordable housing since the year 2000 and 8 projects are currently in progress. Priority Topic 2, *The delivery of the National Rental Affordability Scheme*, will contribute to this Strategic Research Issue.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified the following gap in the evidence-base warranting further research:

- Financially sustainable methods to stimulate and support an increased supply of social and affordable housing, including housing for Indigenous groups.

AHURI research to date

There has been a decline in the relative size of the public housing system over the past thirty years

This has been precipitated by two significant factors:

1. The decline in capital and operational funding for public housing.
2. The declining rental revenue base due to increased targeting to low-income and very-low-income tenants.

This has reduced the financial viability of State Housing Authorities leading to operational deficits. Current research on the cost effectiveness of social housing provision is examining how different public and community housing providers compare in terms of housing management inputs, services provided and tenant outcomes.

The development of the not-for-profit housing sector in Australia is at a critical point, having responded effectively to opportunities to upscale and diversify.

Government measures including the Social Housing Initiative and the National Rental Affordability Scheme have promoted growth in the not-for-profit housing sector. There have been significant organisational changes as the business models of these providers have become more complex, including enhanced organisational governance and executive capacity. For the sector to continue its expansion, longer term certainty of government policy settings and funding to support a pipeline of housing production is crucial.

Private sector finance is needed to grow the not-for-profit sector

The largest potential source of funding is the huge pool of institutional resources controlled by superannuation and other managed funds which operate with long term investment horizons. All models for achieving growth require a stream of subsidy support, a mechanism for delivering that support and a marketable set of financial instruments for investors to acquire in order to finance the housing. The packages need to satisfy criteria of; equity, efficiency, capacity to generate large sums of private finance, and financial and political feasibility.

Housing Supply Bonds have been identified as a suitable mechanism to channel private investment towards affordable rental housing

A proposal for Australian Housing Supply Bonds has been developed, with recommendations covering an appropriate financial intermediary, marketable terms and conditions for a suite of bond instruments, regulatory requirements and complementary reforms. Further research is underway exploring the use of a social housing guarantee to help expand affordable housing.

National regulation of the not-for-profit housing sector is needed for expansion

The key challenge in introducing a regulatory system is balancing the interests of housing providers, investors, non-government organisations representing tenants' interests and existing regulatory bodies. One option is for regulators to provide greater oversight of ongoing affordability, appropriate location, tenant mix and a diverse range of housing types to strengthen social outcomes including economic participation.

Stock transfer between State Housing Authorities and community housing organisations has taken place across Australia, to varying degrees

The conditions applied by state and federal governments to transferred housing affect business opportunities for housing providers by influencing resident mix, economies of scale, revenue and the potential for using assets to secure additional growth. These conditions mainly concern allocation rules, rent setting and government leverage requirements. Research is underway on the transfer of stock to not-for-profit organisations in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

A diverse range of models for public private partnerships in the delivery of affordable housing are emerging

Partnerships involving private finance initiatives have been limited to date, reflecting the complexity and lack of expertise in managing these arrangements in the community housing sector. Most existing partnerships are structured around traditional contractual arrangements. Successful partnerships are responsive to local institutional contexts, market conditions and different community needs and expectations.

Defence Housing Australia (DHA) has been able to facilitate institutional investment in affordable housing

This has been assisted by an injection of capital by government and a flexible approach to program delivery. Continued success has also relied on asset management strategies that involve: developing at scale; large maintenance contracts that drive down average costs; significant trading of stock over time and robust design guidelines that assist in acquiring and developing appropriate housing.

Access to appropriate sites is a key determinant of the financial, social and environmental outcomes of not-for-profit affordable housing projects

In some cases the costs associated with delays in achieving planning approval may threaten the financial viability of developments. Inflexible planning practices and restrictions, or resistance from local residents can also cause delays. Third party objections and appeal rights may significantly affect the delivery of developments, particularly high density housing.

There is a continuing need to improve access to the social housing system and to improve choice and mobility for tenants

International evidence indicates that integrating waiting lists has reduced double counting and therefore improved efficiency. However, there is a need to develop additional programs that address a wider array of housing needs to ensure the needs of groups of people with high or complex needs are met. Research is also underway to examine the factors influencing tenant choices to remain in, or depart from public housing.

Social housing services to Indigenous clients are mainly provided by State Housing Authorities

An intercultural approach that uses opportunities for mainstream providers to work with Indigenous organisations has the potential to deliver more diverse housing choices and adapt services to local cultural norms. Research is currently

investigating the new and emerging models of tenancy management in remote Indigenous communities.

Adopting a sustaining tenancies approach can reduce the incidence of eviction in social and affordable housing

The growth in the number of tenants with complex needs and demanding behaviours has warranted changes in management practices by State Housing Authorities. By adopting practices of systematic and close support of tenants, authorities can assist tenants to adapt their behaviour in appropriate ways and sustain their tenancies.

Tenant support programs can produce positive outcomes for those clients with at-risk tenancies. Indigenous clients, who receive support through tenant support programs, are more likely to sustain their tenancies, be linked to external support programs to meet their non-housing needs and avoid homelessness. Strong linkage with outside agencies is a key factor of success. Research is underway on the cost effectiveness of sustaining tenancies of clients with high needs, exiting homelessness.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 71016** Financing and institutional arrangements for the provision of affordable rental housing in Australia (Investigative Panel) (Mar 2013)
- 70689** Understanding leadership, strategy and organisational dynamics in the not-for-profit housing sector (Apr 2013)
- 30678** Resident third party objections and appeals against planning applications: implications for medium density and social housing (Dec 2012)
- 70617** How sustainable are Australia's contemporary affordable housing projects? (Feb 2012)
- 70569** Service integration and Indigenous housing (Aug 2011)
- 70588** Partnership working in the design and delivery of housing policy and programs (Feb 2011)
- 40600** The stigmatisation of social housing: findings from a panel investigation (Apr 2011)
- 40559** Regulatory frameworks and their utility for the not-for-profit housing sector (Jan 2011)
- 30652** Housing Supply Bonds: a suitable instrument to channel investment towards affordable housing in Australia? (May 2012)
- 70615** Pathways and choice in a diversifying social and affordable housing system (May 2012)

AHURI research in progress

- 71008** Public housing stock transfers in Australia: past, present and prospective (FR available final quarter 2013)
- 71007** Understanding and addressing local opposition to affordable housing projects (FR available third quarter 2013)
- 71006** Understanding decision making in the not-for-profit housing sector: longitudinal and comparative components (FR available first quarter 2014)

- 82028** The cost effectiveness of sustaining tenancies of formerly homeless clients with high needs
(PP available third quarter 2014, FR available second quarter 2015)
- 41023** New and emerging models of tenancy management in remote Aboriginal communities (Investigative Panel) (FR available second quarter 2014)
- 71025** Cost effectiveness and tenant outcomes in social housing
(PP available second quarter 2014, FR available first quarter 2015)
- 71026** Social housing exits: analysing incidence, motivations and consequences
(PP available third quarter 2014)
- 53019** Enhancing affordable housing investment via a social housing guarantee
(FR available third quarter 2014)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI3 Housing and neighbourhoods that generate social inclusion, economic opportunities and wellbeing

Overview

AHURI has completed 46 Research Projects that address this topic and there are currently 4 relevant projects underway including a Multi-Year Research Project on [Addressing spatial concentrations of social disadvantage](#), which commenced in mid-2011.

Applications for this Strategic Research Issue will **not** be sought in the 2014 Funding Round as there is sufficient research currently underway.

AHURI research to date

The connection between living in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage and wellbeing outcomes is complex

There is no clear link between densification and an increase in social disadvantage. The perception that high-density housing leads to concentrated social disadvantage may be largely due to the historical investment in high rise public housing. Area based initiatives can improve place outcomes in relation to crime and safety, housing and the physical environment, and community outcomes. However, the specific effect on individual wellbeing (e.g. in health, education or employment) has not been established.

Various forms of social exclusion are experienced by households across all tenures

Using a multi-dimensional framework of social inclusion, it has been established that significant numbers of households in all tenures experience disadvantage. Almost equal proportions of private renters (42%) and outright home owners (39%) can be considered to be socially excluded to some degree, nevertheless, the highest proportion reside in public rental (80%).

Housing assistance can significantly improve social inclusion and wellbeing for disadvantaged households

Housing assistance programs can have positive lifetime benefits for individuals, such as improved access to education, employment and income support; with these benefits outweighing the cost to governments. The location and urban form of an area can also affect an individuals' participation in society. The stigma of living in a poorer area, the lack of access to health and education services and low housing affordability are all linked to reduced wellbeing.

The location, cost and type of housing can significantly affect economic participation

Housing costs vary by location and the location of affordable housing affects access to jobs, transport choices and travel time. Stable housing allows public housing tenants to participate in the labour market. However, housing assistance and income support settings can also create disincentives for workforce participation.

Private rental housing markets and urban planning processes contribute to concentrations of disadvantage in particular areas

The spatial concentration of disadvantage is not determined by the location of public housing estates alone. A typology of socio-spatial disadvantage in Australian cities is being developed in the current Multi-Year Research Project to understand the processes contributing to the concentration of disadvantage. Work is also underway

to determine the existence of neighbourhood effects above the particular disadvantage of households.

Older Australians prefer to live independently, actively engage in their communities and age-in-place

Older people appreciate flexibility of options and home modifications that allow them to remain in their chosen dwelling longer. The availability of outdoor and indoor space—such as a private garden or an extra bedroom—is important as people tend to engage in more home-based activities with age. Government assistance can effectively assist older people to remain in their home as they age. Home modification and maintenance support can facilitate independent living. It is more cost-effective to modify houses that are built according to adaptable design guidelines than to retrofit non-adaptable designed homes. Well-integrated housing and support services facilitate the best outcomes for older people or those with additional needs.

Housing may affect child development outcomes

Recent analysis of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children and the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children has confirmed the link between housing and children's physical health, social and emotional development and learning. However housing variables are not as influential as broader socio-economic disadvantage. Among housing variables it is the things likely to affect the quality of family relationships—frequent moves, renting rather than owning and being in financial stress—that have an impact upon children's social and emotional wellbeing. Crowding has the greatest negative effect on learning outcomes particularly for Indigenous children.

People with disabilities have constrained choices about the type and location of housing

There is a shortage of housing appropriate for people living with a disability. Housing should be appropriately designed, well located, accessible to public transport and services, and amenable to support services—including those delivered in the home and those that the individual travels to access. Such housing must also take account of the need for additional disability-related space requirements which needs to be captured in social housing allocations processes, as well as through housing assistance measures such as Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

Housing also affects psychological wellbeing, such as companionship, happiness, depression, morale and ability to cope with life, as well as flow on effects for general health

The connection between health and mental state is reinforced by recent research on loneliness, which identifies older people as a key group who are at risk. People who are lonely report being twice as unhealthy as those who are not. Certain groups such as divorced or separated men, single parents and older people are particularly vulnerable. Loneliness is particularly high for people living in single person dwellings, whether in public or private rental housing.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 50599** Social inclusion and housing: a household and local area analysis (May 2013)
- 80651** Housing and children's development and wellbeing: evidence from Australian data (Feb 2013)
- 50682** The role of informal community resources in supporting independent housing for young people recovering from mental illness (Jan 2013)

- 80650** Housing stress and household wellbeing in Australia (Sep 2012)
- 40600** The problem of social housing stigmatisation and innovations that can minimise its effects (Investigative Panel) (Apr 2011)
- 40601** Loneliness, housing and health in Australia (Essay) (Feb 2011)
- 40585** Housing assistance, social inclusion and people with a disability (Nov 2011)
- 40548** The housing impacts of neighbourhood change: gentrification, affordability and displacement (Jan 2011)
- 50566** Housing, public policy and social inclusion (Oct 2011)

AHURI research in progress

- 70704** Multi-Year Research Project: Addressing spatial concentrations of social disadvantage (FR1 available, FR2 available final quarter 2013, FR3 available first quarter 2014, FR4 available second quarter 2014, FR5 available final quarter 2014, FR6 available mid 2015)
- 51003** Changing spatial distribution of lower income housing: understanding and responding to transport disadvantage (PP available final quarter 2013, FR available second quarter 2014)
- 53001** Wellbeing outcomes of low-income renters: a multi-level analysis of area effects (PP available, FR available first quarter 2014)
- 82015** Refugees, housing and social inclusion in Australia (FR1 available final quarter 2013, FR 2 available third quarter 2015)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI4 Housing opportunities for Indigenous people that support improved amenity, wellbeing and economic sustainability

Overview

AHURI has completed 30 Research Projects on Indigenous housing with a further 3 projects currently underway including a Multi-Year Research Project on [*Aboriginal lifeworlds, conditionality and housing outcomes*](#) that commenced in 2012.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified the following issues for further research:

- The role of housing and non-housing policies and programs (e.g. in the child protection and education systems), in mitigating the effect of family violence on housing outcomes for Indigenous Australians in regional and urban areas.
- The effects of increased employment opportunities and business ownership on the housing careers of Indigenous people.
- The governance arrangements for Indigenous housing at local, regional and state level most likely to achieve good outcomes in housing for Indigenous people.

AHURI Research to date

The tenure pattern of many Indigenous people in Australia is different to that of the non-Indigenous population

Indigenous people in Australia are less likely to own their own home, more likely to live in social housing and experience homelessness at greater rates compared with non-Indigenous people. The housing occupied by many Indigenous people is likely to be in poor condition, particularly for those households renting from community housing associations and living in remote areas.

A high proportion of Indigenous people live in social housing compared with non-Indigenous people

Even so, mainstream housing policy settings and service delivery practices are not necessarily responsive to the needs and preferences of many Indigenous clients. An intercultural approach to the delivery of social housing—that involves mainstream and culturally specific housing services working together—could improve client outcomes as it allows for cultural values, preferences and lifestyles.

Many Indigenous people aspire to owning their own homes

One study of 86 tenants in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales found that approximately half of those interviewed had investigated home ownership, and this did not vary between people who lived on community title land and those who did not. Home ownership among Indigenous people living in urban areas remains lower than non-Indigenous people, though it has been growing. The study found that most Indigenous people value the opportunity to leave a house to younger generations and the sense of stability and security home ownership offers more than the wealth building opportunities it provides. Home ownership was often considered to present financial burdens.

Community Land Trusts

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) offer an intermediate form of tenure that separates land and property and retains the subsidies in the value of the land. The CLT model offers an intermediate tenure with many of the benefits of home ownership, whilst retaining community control over land (held under community title).

There are strong connections between mobility, crowding and homelessness.

Travelling to visit relations is a critical part of Indigenous culture for many and should be distinguished from mobility due to severe and prolonged housing shortage. The risk of homelessness increases with the length of absence and the degree to which travel is voluntary. There is scope to better adapt housing policy responses to mobility (e.g. by providing for temporary mobility within the social housing sector and providing temporary accommodation in regional centres).

Crowding in Indigenous households should be understood in the context of the cultural obligation to accommodate family in need

In many households, the effects of large household numbers are mediated by firm household rules, sharing visitors with other households, arranging people in appropriate groups for sleeping, and using semi-enclosed outside areas. Regional housing managers should be assisted to exercise flexibility in administering tenancy rules to support the 'hub' households that provide temporary accommodation to people who are visiting for various reasons.

The way that housing is delivered on the ground can contribute to good social and economic outcomes as well as housing outcomes

Housing procurement—the contractual arrangements for construction and management of new housing projects—presents opportunities for economic and community development in remote Indigenous communities. Remote locations, constrained resources and complex organisational practice in governments, community and industry present challenges to the delivery of housing irrespective of differences in program scale, contract type, funding, project duration and intended outcomes.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 80516** Intergenerational homelessness and the use of homelessness services (Feb 2013)
- 20640** Overcrowding for Indigenous households in non-remote areas (Oct 2012)
- 80651** Housing and children's development and wellbeing: evidence from Australian data (Feb 2013)
- 70569** Service integration and Indigenous housing (Aug 2011)
- 20583** Remote Indigenous housing procurement and post-occupancy outcomes (May 2011)
- 40526** Improving housing policy responses to Indigenous patterns of mobility (May 2011)
- 70639** Community Land Trusts and Indigenous housing outcomes (Mar 2012)

AHURI research in progress

- 21207** Multi-Year Research Project: Aboriginal lifeworlds, conditionality and housing outcomes (FR1 available third quarter 2013, Case Study Reports available third quarter 2015, FR available first quarter 2016)
- 72010** Community Land Trusts and Indigenous communities: from strategies to outcomes (FR available final quarter 2013)
- 41023** New and emerging models of tenancy management in remote Aboriginal communities (Investigative Panel) (FR available second quarter 2014)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:
http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI15 Structures within the housing system, including finance, support services and tenure arrangements that enable households to access housing as their needs change over time

Overview

There have been 41 projects completed on this topic, including the National Research Venture 2 [*21st century housing careers and Australia's housing future*](#) and National Research Venture 3 [*Housing affordability for lower income Australians*](#). There are a further 7 projects currently in progress.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified gaps in the evidence-base warranting further research:

- An examination of multi-unit residential trusts as currently provided in the UK and USA and identification of their application for Australia.

AHURI Research to date

Australian housing careers no longer follow a traditional linear path

Housing careers have changed due to major demographic and socio-economic change such as young people leaving home later, increased divorce rates and the increase of house prices to the point where few renters have sufficient savings for a deposit. These changes are connected with a rise in the number of multi-generational households.

More Australians are relying on private rental accommodation for significant periods or all of their lives

The incidence of long-term private renting—renting continuously for periods of ten years or more—has grown as an overall proportion of private renting in Australia, and is now experienced by around a third of all private renter households. Long-term private renters, particularly those on lower incomes, experience lower rates of satisfaction in relation to their financial situation and feeling part of the community.

Housing affordability problems can push people into more marginal forms of housing such as caravan parks and boarding houses

Many of the difficulties faced by marginal renters can be traced to a lack of control of their own living circumstances. To address this, residents' rights need to be strengthened through legislation and regulatory systems need to be put in place to enforce those rights. Efforts to increase affordable housing in both the social and private sectors, need to be supplemented with a variety of other strategies to provide workable and legitimate housing opportunities for those who are forced to exit the private rental market.

Key groups at risk of housing eviction include people with substance abuse problems, women escaping domestic violence, people living alone, young people, sole parents and older people

Older private renters (especially women) are reportedly more fearful for the future. This can be largely attributed to their lack of wealth and security of tenure—both factors perceived to be important for living well in old age. Evictions not only have detrimental effects for those evicted but lead to increased costs for governments. The circumstances warranting eviction can often be prevented through counseling and education programs for key at risk groups.

Secure occupancy for renters could be enhanced in Australia

A comparative study of eight countries (four European countries, the United States of America, Canada and two countries in the United Kingdom) found that Australia has the weakest provisions for secure occupancy in the private rental sector. More stable and long-term tenancies for rental housing could be achieved by encouraging greater private investment in the social rental sector (as in Austria and The Netherlands). Australia requires a better mix of housing products, welfare programs and social infrastructure to help low income households to access and maintain private rental accommodation.

It is getting progressively harder for low-moderate income households to purchase a home

An examination of the sustainability of current rates of home ownership found that overall rates of home ownership will continue to decrease based on present purchase patterns. The scale and intensity of mortgage stress (as measured by the 30:40 ratio—the proportion households in the bottom 40 percent of households paying more than 30 per cent of their household income in mortgage expenditure) has increased, particularly affecting households with children.

Mortgage default is usually related to personal circumstances such as accidents, illness and divorce

The loss of a partner through bereavement, separation or divorce significantly affects housing affordability and disrupts home ownership aspirations. In one study, home ownership rates fell from 69 per cent to below 50 per cent within two years following divorce or separation, and this outcome disproportionately affects women. Better access by borrowers to financial advice and mortgage relief assistance, as well as stricter lending standards and consideration of illness and hardship by lenders, would reduce rates of default.

Home ownership can provide real or perceived wealth that can facilitate choice for older Australians about how and where they age

High rates of home ownership among the elderly has underpinned success in government policy on retirement incomes, however increasing numbers of asset-poor older renters could undermine good future outcomes. Around half of all moves by older Australians (aged over 50) involved downsizing the home – this mainly reflects life style choices rather than constraint.

Reverse mortgages and home equity withdrawal may assist in supporting home ownership

Reverse mortgages can provide a source of income and greater financial independence for older people and can potentially reduce the burden on long-term aged care and retirement facilities by funding necessary home modifications. However, there is a need for increased regulation, better advice to consumers, reduction in break fees and continued monitoring of the situation of reverse mortgage holders given the nature of the product and of the client group. Current research is exploring the financial risks and benefits of home equity withdrawal for older people.

Shared equity products and Community Land Trusts may offer models to facilitate access to home ownership

Consumers prefer schemes that allow them to *staircase* to full ownership and choose their own house in the private market (rather than be limited to particular stock) and to capture equity gains by selling in an open market.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 20610** Bridging the divide: the experiences of low-income households excluded from the private rental sector in Australia (Mar 2013)
- 70688** Multi-generation households in Australian cities (Essay) (Feb 2012)
- 70589** Age-specific housing markets and housing and care for low to moderate income older persons (Sep 2011)
- 50565** Secure occupancy in rental housing: conceptual foundations and comparative perspectives (Jul 2011)
- 30653** Sustaining home ownership in the 21st century: emerging policy concerns (Essay) (Apr2012)
- 70695** Moving home: the role of housing policy in responding to and promoting mobility (Essay) (Jun 2012)

AHURI research in progress

- 70687** Downsizing amongst older Australians (PP available, FR available third quarter 2013)
- 50683** Changes in the private rental system and the effects of long-term private rental (PP available, FR available third quarter 2013)
- 30699** Marginal rental housing and marginal renters: a typology for policy (PP available, FR available third quarter 2013)
- 81004** Housing equity withdrawal: uses and risks of alternative options for older Australians?
(PP available, FR available final quarter 2013)
- 21005** Preventing first time homelessness amongst older Australians
(FR available final quarter 2013)
- 53011** The edges of home ownership
(FR available final quarter 2013)
- 30674** The housing security consequences of underemployment
(PP available, FR available final quarter 2013)
- 21024** An evaluation of the nature and effectiveness of supportive housing models
(FR available third quarter 2014)
- 41022** Future housing and support needs of people with dementia
(PP available first quarter 2014, FR available fourth quarter 2014)
- 51020** Sustaining private rental tenancies: targeted tenant support across life events and housing transitions
(FR1 available first quarter 2014, FR2 available final quarter 2014)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI6 Efficient land and housing markets that meet demand (affordably and appropriately), enable labour market and other mobility, and support productivity gains in the economy

Overview

AHURI has completed 18 projects on land, housing and labour markets since the year 2000 and 5 projects are currently in progress. Priority Topic 3, *The housing market and economic productivity*, will contribute to this Strategic Research Issue.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified gaps in the evidence-base warranting further research:

→ The role of regional centres in meeting future housing demand.

AHURI Research to date

There has been persistent market failure at the affordable end of the private rental sector

The persistent shortage of stock available for low-income private renters has led to affordability problems for a significant proportion of low-income earners. The greatest shortages in affordable private rental dwellings in 2006 were in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. This research is currently being updated for the period 2001–11. Supply shortfalls in rural and regional areas—especially in the rental market—were also acute because of a shortage of investors and inappropriate planning regulations.

Private rental investment in Australia is largely made up of individual investors

This contributes to the volatility of the private rental market as the decisions of these investors are largely unpredictable. ‘Mum and dad’ investors are not only driven by financial motivations for investing in rental property - situational circumstances and personal goals also influence decisions regarding the purchase or sale of properties. Where financial motivations are involved, the main concern is capital gains rather than rental income. This contrasts with institutional private rental investors who are more likely to focus on rental returns.

Governments can influence and shape affordable housing supply outcomes through more effective planning policies

Planners can improve affordability through addressing land supply and assembly and planning approval processes. Overseas, mechanisms such as inclusionary zoning, density bonuses and affordability targets for new developments have been used to increase the supply of appropriate and affordable housing. However, in Australia, planning system complexity, uncertain timeframes, inconsistent planning requirements and a lack of adequate resources at the local government level have all been identified as barriers to achieving affordable housing. This affects affordability because developers pass the holding costs incurred as a result of delays in the planning process on to purchasers. There is also a lack of planning guidelines to define and encourage high quality higher-density housing.

Community acceptance of higher-density housing is required to support the policy directions for affordable housing and more compact cities

There was significant resident opposition to fast tracked planning approval in the Social Housing Initiative through third party objection and appeal rights, which led to delays, costs to developers and residents, and community anger and mistrust of government planning and approval processes. Standards of design, effective communication, community-supported examples of higher-density housing plus

training and professional support for planners, is necessary to realise planning goals with community acceptance. Nevertheless, planning processes put in place for the Social Housing Initiative significantly reduced project delivery times. In some cases, these projects demonstrated innovation in procurement of social housing including tenancy mix, mixed funding arrangements and resident cooperatives.

The redevelopment of greyfield precincts in cities is identified as an important strategy for addressing affordable and sustainable housing supply in Australia

The supply of infill development is a crucial strategy for Australia's cities. For it to succeed, the benefits of infill development need to be promoted to drive public acceptance of higher density development. Furthermore, affordable housing and infrastructure provision both need to be coordinated. Flexible delivery arrangements within planning and policy frameworks, together with appropriate infrastructure and subsidy, can reduce the level of risk and uncertainty and support larger-scale redevelopment in the middle suburbs.

Understanding how to influence housing supply requires a greater understanding of financing, production and construction of new housing in Australia

Housing sector labour force shortages are often cited as blockages for supply. Three issues complicate the supply of housing sector workers - the existence of segmented labour markets, the shifting geographic nature of the work, and problematic practices in relation to recruitment, skills recognition and retention of workers which undermine efficiency. A number of factors lengthen house construction times including the increasing number of different design options available to purchasers.

Urban renewal programs improve neighbourhood amenity and have other positive benefits

Modeling of house price variation in five Victorian urban renewal sites found that urban renewal produced economic benefits for individual home owners in terms of increased property value and additional revenue for government from taxes and charges such as stamp duties, land taxes and property rates.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 30634** Understanding the patterns, characteristics and trends in the housing sector labour force in Australia (Jun 2013)
- 30670** Cost-effective methods for evaluation of neighbourhood renewal programs (Dec 2012)
- 80649** Delivering diverse and affordable infill housing development (Investigative Panel) (Aug 2012)
- 70694** Quantifying planning system performance and the national housing reform agenda (Investigative Panel) (Jul 2012)
- 20605** Exploring the use of residual measures of housing affordability as an alternative to the ratio approach (Essay) (Jan 2012)
- 50597** Residual incomes in Australia: analysis and implications (Oct 2011)
- 50593** Towards a new development model for housing regeneration in greyfield precincts (Investigative Panel) (Jul 2011)
- 40586** The drivers of housing supply and demand in rural and regional centres (Mar 2011)

- 40548** The housing impacts of neighbourhood change: gentrification, affordability and displacement (Jan 2011)
- 50502** Australia's private rental market: changes (2001–2006) in the supply of, and demand for, low rent dwellings (May 2011)
- 70695** Moving home: the role of housing policy in responding to and promoting mobility (Essay) (Jun 2012)
- 30653** Sustaining home ownership in the 21st century: emerging policy concerns (Essay) (Apr 2012)

AHURI research in progress

- 30643** Current labour processes and management of subcontractors: impacts on productivity in the housing construction industry (PP available, FR available third quarter 2013)
- 50683** Changes in the private rental system and the effects of long-term private rental (PP available, FR available third quarter 2013)
- 52012** Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts (PP available third quarter 2013, FR available final quarter 2014)
- 81009** The financing of residential development in Australia (FR available first quarter 2014)
- 53021** Housing affordability dynamics in Australia: new insights from the last decade (FR1 available final quarter 2014, FR2 available second quarter 2015)
- 51018** Changes in supply/demand for low-rent housing in the Australian private rental market, 2006–11 (FR1 available first quarter 2014, FR2 available final quarter 2014)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI7 Understanding and responding to the impact of systemic shifts upon structures within the housing system and housing outcomes

Overview

AHURI has completed nine projects on this issue and six projects are currently underway. Priority Topic 4, *Demographic change and future housing subsidy*, will make a contribution to this Strategic Research Issue.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel has identified the following issue warranting further research:

- Understanding the impact of intergenerational wealth transfer on housing outcomes

AHURI Research to date

Declining affordability and constraints on supply are the key challenges to creating a sustainable and desirable housing system in Australia

Current market failures, policy fragmentation and embedded inequalities in income and wealth compromise the stability of the Australian housing system. Australia has a long-term structural housing affordability problem. The available evidence suggests a range of factors that contribute to this including: house prices growing faster than incomes; gentrification in inner cities; the changing composition of households including a rise in the number of single person households; government subsidies and tax concessions that disproportionately favour home ownership; and overall housing shortages. As a result, two key groups have experienced large falls in rates of home ownership—middle-upper income 25–44-year olds and low-income 45–64-year olds. In addition to this there is increasing competition for affordable private rental properties.

Housing affordability problems will especially affect younger generations

The lack of affordable housing in particular areas may affect access to employment opportunities and create an emerging generation unable to purchase homes thereby widening income and asset inequality. Research is underway to better understand the dynamics of housing affordability stress and the effectiveness of housing assistance programs.

Worsening housing affordability is a specific issue for older households, especially for renters

There is growing concern about the decline in home ownership which is critical to housing policy for older Australians. Demand for public housing by older Australians is projected to significantly increase due to affordability issues in the private rental market.

Poor housing affordability has led to residential mobility, but has not yet resulted in labour shortages

Before 2001 there was little direct evidence that housing affordability problems were heightening labour shortages, as low-income jobs moved to low cost suburbs and those jobs in the inner city—such as hospitality or retail jobs—were filled by young people who were more likely to share housing costs in group households.

Polarisation in income distribution is spatially distributed in Australia's major cities

The difference between high and low-income earners' wages has increased, as the difference in housing costs in high and low cost suburbs has increased. This has considerably restricted the residential choices for low income households. The gentrification of suburbs has also contributed, by eroding affordability and leaving only poor quality housing stock accessible in inner metropolitan areas, with the consequence that people on low-incomes are increasingly restricted to outer areas.

The resources boom and consequent two-speed economy has resulted in bifurcated housing markets in some rural and regional areas

One segment of the market is focused on high-income, often temporary workers in the resources sector; while the established population working in ancillary industries, or not working at all, are forced to compete for less expensive properties at the bottom end of the housing market.

The sub-prime crisis in the US has starkly illustrated the connection between housing and the broader economy

Mortgage stress has become more visible in the wake of the long boom in housing markets, especially capital cities. Strong demand for housing, its relative limited supply, and easily accessible credit have seen household debt levels rise over the last decade, as housing affordability has dropped. This leaves many Australian households vulnerable to interest rate rises and unemployment, or underemployment.

The labour market affects housing outcomes and housing choices

Research currently underway is exploring the relationship between housing security and underemployment in Australia. The number of households in severe mortgage stress (that is, in arrears, trying to sell or refinance, or facing foreclosure) is dependent on increases in the unemployment/underemployment rate and rises in interest rates. Current research on the structural drivers of homelessness will propose ways that service provision and housing and labour market policy could be used to prevent or address homelessness.

House price inflation is correlated with higher consumption and this can serve to promote economic growth. However, there are concerns that it might also create volatility

Increases in housing wealth have been shown to result in an increase in consumption by Australian households. This is because increased housing wealth helps to relax borrowing constraints on home owners, especially for middle aged home owners. House and rental price instability has significant consequences for the broader economy by affecting household spending patterns and generally reinforcing economic volatility.

Immigration and relocation within Australia have implications for housing and housing support services

For most refugees, establishment in the housing market follows a number of moves in the first year of settlement, including episodes of homelessness for some. Use of government and other services by recent migrants varies by tenure, with home owners and home purchasers having the least recourse to assistance, and public and private tenants the greatest. Research underway is examining the housing careers of humanitarian refugees, investigating their access to suitable long term housing and whether specialist housing and other services are successful in facilitating settlement.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

30637 Investigative Panel on a socially sustainable housing system for Australia (June 2011)

AHURI research in progress

82015 Refugees, housing and social inclusion in Australia (FR1 available final quarter 2013, FR2 available third quarter 2015)

30674 The housing security consequences of underemployment (FR available final quarter 2013)

53011 The edges of home ownership (FR available third quarter 2013)

51002 Tall tales and true: housing stories from ABS data (FR available first quarter 2014)

53027 The structural drivers of homelessness in Australia 2001–11 (PP available third quarter 2014, FR available first quarter 2015)

53021 Housing affordability dynamics in Australia: new insights from the last decade (FR1 available final quarter 2014, FR2 available second quarter 2015)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

SRI8 Understanding and responding to the effects of non-housing policies and programs upon housing outcomes and wellbeing

Overview

AHURI has completed research on the effects of health, taxation, income support, environmental policies, and the integration of housing and community services on housing outcomes. Priority Topic 5, *Repackaging housing and support services in response to national disability reforms* will also contribute to this Strategic Research Issue.

The AHURI Housing Research Panel identified the following issues as warranting further research:

- The role of education, training and employment programs in facilitating exits from social housing and/or homelessness.
- The impact of unemployment on housing outcomes.

AHURI Research to date

Connections between housing and health

Four projects examining the relationship between housing and health have been completed.

While housing and health are connected the causal relationship is unclear

Renters are more likely to report poor health than home owners. For public housing tenants, reduced housing costs, increased residential stability, reduced crowding and more socially diverse neighbourhoods have been shown to benefit educational outcomes for children, the health and wellbeing of tenants, and reduce health costs for government. There are links between health outcomes and loneliness, and a connection has been established between loneliness and housing, particularly for older people.

Integration between housing and community services

AHURI research has examined the intersection between housing policy and the delivery of community services including mental health, health, disability and aged care services; with 21 completed projects and two projects currently underway.

Service integration can occur at a system level whereby it is centrally funded and managed, and at the service level, involving coordinated delivery across or within sectors.

Integration involves 'joint working' and this can range from loose collaborative arrangements around referral of clients and good communication between staff in different organisations to coordinated delivery of services and full integration where the resources of different organisational units are pooled. The objective of system and service level integration is a seamless service system as experienced by clients of services and improved client outcomes.

The integration of support services with housing contributes to better wellbeing outcomes for people experiencing mental illness

People with mental illness may struggle to maintain housing and be at higher risk of becoming homeless. Integration between homelessness support services and mental health and health services is particularly effective. With appropriate housing and support however, people with significant psychiatric disabilities can maintain stable housing.

Well-integrated housing and support services facilitate better outcomes for older people

Additional services can greatly enhance tenant wellbeing and can sustain tenancies. Better coordination between the community-based aged care support sector, the residential aged care sector and housing policy will be needed to meet the needs of older Australians. Current research is investigating the future housing and support needs of people with dementia and how service coordination can be improved.

Programs to assist Indigenous people to sustain tenancies are most effective when there are strong linkages with outside agencies

These programs are most successful when they address the underlying needs of clients in areas such as health, mental health, drug and alcohol dependency, urban life skills and family relationships as well as immediate tenancy-related issues.

Taxation

The AHURI-3M housing market model can be used to test the impact of changes in income support and taxation settings on housing supply. Four projects have been completed using this model, including the [National Research Venture 1](#). Two current projects are examining changes in patterns of home ownership and the financial risks and benefits of home equity to supplement retirement incomes.

Governments can influence housing supply and affordability through taxation mechanisms

Taxation in Australia provides an indirect housing subsidy because resident home owners are exempt from capital gains tax and imputed taxes on rental income (unlike rental investors). Modelling of one set of proposals under the Henry Tax Review shows replacing stamp duties with a broad based land tax could present a cost neutral way for governments to reduce costs of housing and improve affordability.

Income support

The effects of income support arrangements have been examined in ten completed AHURI projects with a primary focus on the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). This research shows that the impact of CRA on private rental affordability is variable, due to regional differences in housing markets. Other research has addressed the pertinence of child support payments showing how a combination of child support, other government income support and housing assistance has assisted separated parents to secure better quality housing.

Environmental policies

Home owners have higher energy consumption than renters

This finding is supported by two studies and is consistent irrespective of household size or dwelling type. This is despite home owners being more likely to have energy saving devices installed and being more able to adapt their homes. With housing being a key site of energy consumption, the carbon tax is likely to affect households differently depending on household size, housing type and tenure. Meeting environmental sustainability objectives also has implications for issues of housing supply, affordability, housing design and the urban form within which housing is located.

Recently completed AHURI research (since 2011)

- 82013** Homelessness and services and system integration (May 2013)
- 50682** The role of informal community resources in supporting independent housing for young people recovering from mental illness (Jan 2013)
- 70589** Age-specific housing markets and housing and care for low to moderate income older persons (Sep 2011)
- 80647** Modelling the impacts of the Henry Review tax recommendations on housing supply and affordability (Sep 2011)
- 70619** The health impacts of housing (Investigative Panel) (Aug 2011)

AHURI research in progress

- 41022** Future housing and support needs of people with dementia
(PP available first quarter 2014, FR available fourth quarter 2014)
- 82028** The cost effectiveness of sustaining tenancies of formerly homeless clients with high needs
(PP available third quarter 2014, FR available second quarter 2015)

For a full list of AHURI projects relating to this Strategic Research Issue, please refer to the AHURI research catalogue:

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/housing_information/resources/.

4 RESEARCH APPROACHES

4.1 Indigenous Housing Research

AHURI encourages the submission of applications for projects with an Indigenous focus in the NHRP Funding Round. It is expected that research proposals will incorporate the Indigenous aspect of any topic, and will be budgeted accordingly. Applications that do not include an Indigenous component should specify why the research topic precludes it.

4.1.1 *Ethics of Indigenous research*

All research must adhere to appropriate principles and protocols as specified in the NHRP Guidelines for applicants. Research that includes a focus on Indigenous housing issues must adhere to appropriate research ethics as specified in Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research. These principles and protocols apply to all stages of the research—including development of the proposal, assessment of the proposal, conduct of the research, and dissemination of the research findings. An important element is the need for consultation with Indigenous people at key stages throughout the research process.

4.2 International Research Collaboration

[International collaboration](#) is an integral feature of the activities of AHURI, and it is a growing feature of the National Housing Research Program. Housing researchers are encouraged to explore prospective collaborative and comparative research activities with international partners. Research applications through the NHRP Funding Round 2014 will be considered favourably where international collaboration relevant to the proposed research topic is included.

International collaboration should aim to meet the following objectives:

- Leveraging NHRP funding by securing additional resources (cash and in-kind) by international partners.
- Adding quality to research through international comparative analysis by experts in other countries.
- Building research capacity by creating international exchange and professional development opportunities.
- Building the profile of AHURI as an institute of international standing.
- Enabling AHURI to present and participate in international research events.
- Supporting AHURI events programs by encouraging international experts to visit Australia.

International links

There are opportunities to establish links with the following international research organisations to collaborate on housing and homelessness research.

[OTB Delft in the Netherlands](#) and AHURI share a common interest in housing and urban research, policy development and evaluation. Each institute provides a strategic platform in their respective nations and regions—Western Europe and Australasia—and aim to further the internationalisation of their research expertise.

The [Joseph Rowntree Foundation in the United Kingdom](#) (JRF) has established a Housing Market Taskforce which is focusing on what longer term measures, including policy approaches, might promote a more stable housing market cycle.

The [Centre for Housing Policy at York University](#) (CHP) is one of Europe's leading centres for housing and social policy research. Their researchers have expertise across the full range of housing issues, and skills from analysis of large scale data sets to interviewing vulnerable people.

The [College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at City University of Hong Kong](#). (CLASS) has a focus on language, culture, communications, society, government, public administration, social policy and human service intervention. This partnership will include collaborating on an international comparative analysis examining young people's housing careers.

The [Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy](#) is a joint research center of the New York University School of Law and the New York University Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service. The Center has an extensive housing research program on issues including: metropolitan house prices and economic productivity, downsizing by older households, the capacity of not-for-profit housing developers/providers, and the issue of evictions and homelessness.

Contact: Vicki Been, Director of the Furman Center, vicki.been@nyu.edu

The [Wellesley Institute](#) is a Toronto-based non-profit and non-partisan research and policy institute. It focuses on developing research, policy and community mobilisation to advance population health. The Institute has a particular interest in issues of affordable housing supply (including the prospective role of institutional investment) and the dynamics of homelessness.

Contact: Michael Shapcott, Director, Housing and Innovation, michael@wellesleyinstitute.com

The [Homeless Hub \(Canadian Homelessness Research Network\)](#) at York University, Toronto, is dedicated to ending homelessness by improving the impact homelessness research has on policy and practice. The Hub supports the work of regional networks across Canada as well as clusters focused on topical issues (street youth, income and employment, justice issues, Aboriginal homelessness, women and homelessness).

Contact: Stephen Gaetz, Director, SGaetz@edu.yorku.ca

4.3 Data sources

Researchers are strongly encouraged to make use of existing data sets when appropriate, including data collected by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and longitudinal data sets such as the Journeys Home: Longitudinal Study of Factors Affecting Housing Stability and the Housing, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey. The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs also holds administrative data sets that can be made available to researchers. A list of potential data sources is available on the [AHURI website](#).

4.4 Contexts

Researchers are encouraged to see how their research fits into a broad framework for understanding housing and homelessness research. It is important to capture how housing issues may affect (or be affected by) other outcomes and to consider the context at which the effects might be felt—at the individual or household level, or at a community, institutional or national level. For example, the impact of mortgage defaults might be felt very acutely amongst those households affected, but may also (as we have seen in the United States) impact on the macro-economy at a national, or even international, level.

4.5 Methods and research vehicles

AHURI supports the use of a wide range of innovative research methods, provided they are appropriate to the research question and data source chosen. In specifying the proposed research methods, researchers should show a clear appreciation for data sources, methodology (see Table 1), and measurement models. Research that utilises innovative or mixed methods is encouraged. For example, a Research Project might involve quantitative analysis of longitudinal data and qualitative analysis of housing and household biographies to gain a stronger understanding of what is happening over time. Alternatively, researchers might devise a data set capable of generating both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Table 1: A matrix of methods

		Approaches		
		Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed methods
Data resources	Literature and data review methodologies	Systematic or structured review	Snowballing (key works/ bundling/ scoping) and meta-analysis	Limited examples as yet, but wide scope
	Scenario building	Modelling	Expert (and lay) deliberation of alternative futures	Straightforward combination
	Interventions and experiments	Variant of randomised control trial using 'natural' experiments	Case study comparisons	A variety of experimental designs and participatory methods
	Original analyses of cross-sectional data	Secondary use of existing survey resources; new household surveys (whole instruments or new questions)	Semi-structured and open-ended interviews, focus groups, group interviews, home and neighbourhood tours, ethnographic studies	New data resource? A combined qualitative database (individual projects, plus core, perhaps drawn in a sift from a major survey)
	Original analyses of longitudinal data	Panel/ cohort survey analysis	House biographies Housing pathways	

Source: Smith 2009 *AHURI Research Agenda: looking forward*

AHURI encourages the appropriate use of the research vehicles—Essays, Investigative Panels and Research Projects. Investigative Panels are intended to promote innovative thinking and problem solving, engagement between researchers and policy-makers, and importantly to enable research outputs to be completed in timeframes of less than 12 months. Research Projects are typically centred around one or two key research questions and typically involve primary methods of data collection and consequently often extend beyond 12 months.

Through the forthcoming NHRP Funding Round, applications for Essays, Investigative Panels and Research Projects will be accepted.

Essays

The aim of the Essay is to compose a logical argument directed at emerging policy issues. Essays are designed to foster debate around the conceptual or practical

issues underpinning the future development of policy. It is important to note, however, that they are presented as Essays, not in the typical AHURI Final Report format. Essays are intended to focus on a particular policy research issue and bring together secondary evidence, innovative thinking and debate led by a position or argument from the researcher. Where suitable, the AHURI National Office may engage appropriate discussants from the research and policy communities and other experts in the field. Discussants may be asked to provide a written commentary on the original Essay and to participate in an AHURI Research Seminar with the author(s). The responses would be published alongside the original Essay on the website, along with a short response from the original author.

Investigative Panels

Investigative Panels are designed to bring about direct engagement between experts from the research and policy communities (and potentially practitioners from industry and community sectors) to interrogate a specific policy or practice question. The Investigative Panel process will draw on the experience and expertise of the members of the Investigative Panel, who will meet to discuss a research question of immediate practical relevance to policy development. An Investigative Panel must have clear Terms of Reference to frame the discussion and ensure the objectives of the Panel are clear. They also require a facilitator and a note taker. Generally the facilitator is not a member of the research team but has some expertise in the area. Typically, Investigative Panels will involve some literature or data review or scenario building provided to the Panel prior to the meeting. Care needs to be taken to focus and capture key findings from the discussion and to explain how the Investigative Panel process supports the findings and generation of new knowledge.

Research Projects

A Research Project involves the conduct of research on a contained research topic. Research Projects may vary in scale, and can range across discrete secondary data analysis to major primary data collection exercises. AHURI encourages innovation in the publishable outputs that result from Research Projects, and these are expected to vary in accordance with what is suitable to each project.

4.6 Engagement

Engagement with the policy community and practitioners is central to AHURI's aim of providing an evidence-base for policy development.

AHURI encourages the development of innovative and meaningful engagement for Research Projects and Investigative Panels.

Each Research Project needs to incorporate an appropriate approach to engaging with the policy and practice community. When projects are contracted, AHURI seeks nominations for representatives from the policy community to participate in engagement activities. AHURI also reports back on the outcomes of engagement activities. There are a number of engagement strategies currently used to ensure that Research Projects are policy relevant and that the implications of research findings for policy development are fully explored.

User Group Meetings

User Group Meetings are organised by AHURI. They are teleconferences between policy-makers and research team leaders at different stages of the research process. Meetings offer policy-makers the opportunity to provide feedback (comments, criticisms or questions) about the research, but also provide opportunities for researchers to be brought up to date about recent policy developments or potentially to arrange further collaborations (e.g. around data sources or other input to the research).

Policy Development Workshops

Policy Development Workshops are intended to enable direct engagement between experts from the research and policy communities and, as appropriate, practitioners from industry and the community sector. These workshops will offer the opportunity for policy makers and researchers to explore and refine the emerging research findings and policy recommendations for inclusion in the Final Report.

Projects will be selected by AHURI Limited for the inclusion of a Policy Development Workshop on the basis of policy relevance and the value that additional focus from policy stakeholders is likely to add to the research outcomes. The spread across national and regional policy priorities as well as representation across jurisdictions and capital cities is also considered.

Reference or Advisory Groups

These are organised by the Research team, are incorporated into the project and funded as part of the Research Project. They usually involve AHURI staff and incorporate a feedback mechanism to AHURI as there remains a reporting requirement to the policy community through AHURI processes. They are meetings between the research team, policy-makers, practitioners and other expert advisors (e.g. from non-government organisations), at appropriate stages of the research process. They also policy-makers the opportunity to provide feedback about the research and comment on early findings, and provide opportunities for researchers to be brought up to date about recent policy developments or potentially to arrange further collaborations. These are tailored to the Research Project and are likely to involve face to face meetings and a more active engagement in the ongoing development of the project.

4.7 Dissemination

Research dissemination is coordinated by AHURI National Office and is included in the budget of each research application. The dissemination budget covers AHURI Housing Research Seminars and other dissemination activities to achieve the greatest exposure to senior policy-makers and practitioners. AHURI runs an annual series of Housing Research Seminars as well as the biennial [National Housing Conference](#).

AHURI Housing Research Seminars

The Housing Research Seminar Series is part of AHURI's National Housing Research Program. Seminars are designed to improve accessibility to the AHURI evidence-base; to disseminate research findings and draw out their policy and practice implications. AHURI researchers present a short introduction to the key findings of their research. This is followed by a panel discussion facilitated by AHURI Limited with an invited discussant from the government, community or industry sector and questions from the audience. AHURI aims to hold one Housing Research Seminar in each capital city each year with the support of the local housing authority.

Conferences

Conferences are face-to-face presentations of the results of research by the research team leader to a number of attendees at an AHURI or other housing or social policy related conference. The audience would comprise a range of interested parties including policy-makers responsible for social welfare policy.

Other Activities

In some cases rather than a seminar or conference presentation project leaders or team members may participate in roundtables or workshops where their research is presented to a targeted group for discussion.

4.8 Publications

AHURI Research Reports

AHURI's [Positioning Papers](#), [Final Reports](#) are double blind peer reviewed by two members of the [AHURI Editorial Board](#) and published on the AHURI website in the Positioning Paper journal series or the Final Report journal series. Researchers retain the intellectual property from the research and are strongly encouraged to on-publish in other academic journals but AHURI Limited holds the copyright to the AHURI Research Reports.

AHURI Research and Policy Bulletins

Research and Policy Bulletins (RAPs) are produced by AHURI Limited and published on the AHURI website. These are also published in hard copy and distributed to policy-makers. RAPs highlight the implications of the research findings for policy development.

5 NATIONAL HOUSING RESEARCH PROGRAM FUNDING ROUND 2014

5.1 National Housing Research Program 2014 key dates

	Opening	Closing
NHRP Funding Round	Monday 8 July 2013	Friday 30 August 2013, 12 noon AEST
Postdoctoral Fellowship	Monday 8 July 2013	Friday 30 August 2013, 12 noon AEST
Top-up Scholarship	Monday 8 July 2013	Wednesday 30 April 2014

5.2 National Housing Research Program application process

The Research Agenda 2014 should be read in conjunction with the [NHRP Guidelines for applicants](#), Funding guidelines for [Postdoctoral Fellowships](#), and the [Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research](#) available on the AHURI website. An AHURI Research Centre Director must submit all applications for funding using the AHURI funding application pro-forma also available on the AHURI website.

The selection process for funding through the National Housing Research Program is competitive and based on the absolute merit of the application. Each application is independently assessed on key selection criteria by four members of the [AHURI Housing Research Panel](#). Advice is provided by the AHURI Housing Research Panel to the AHURI Limited Board for funding approval. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by **23 December 2013**.

6 MORE INFORMATION

6.1 AHURI Research Centre Directors

Applications for funding through the annual AHURI National Housing Research Program Funding Round are invited from participant researchers through the AHURI Research Centres. The participating universities in the AHURI housing research network now operate as stand-alone single Research Centres.

For further information about applying for the research funding, please contact the AHURI National Office (03 9660 2300 or research@ahuri.edu.au) or contact the relevant Research Centre Director:

AHURI Research Centre—Curtin University

[Dr Steven Rowley](#)

AHURI Research Centre—Monash University

[Professor Shane Murray](#)

AHURI Research Centre—RMIT University

[Associate Professor Robin Goodman](#)

AHURI Research Centre—Swinburne University of Technology

[Dr Wendy Stone](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Adelaide

[Dr Emma Baker](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of New South Wales

[Professor Hal Pawson](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Queensland

[Dr Cameron Parsell](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Sydney

[Associate Professor Nicole Gurrán](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Tasmania

[Associate Professor Daphne Habibis](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Western Australia

[Professor Paul Flatau](#)

AHURI Research Centre—University of Western Sydney

[Associate Professor Michael Darcy](#)

For contact details for each of these Research Centre Directors, please go to http://www.ahuri.edu.au/about/research_centres/.

6.2 State Liaison Officers

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AHURI Research Centres

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AHURI Research Centre—Monash University

AHURI Research Centre—RMIT University

AHURI Research Centre—Swinburne University of Technology

AHURI Research Centre—University of Adelaide

AHURI Research Centre—University of New South Wales

AHURI Research Centre—University of Queensland

AHURI Research Centre—University of Sydney

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