

National Housing Research Program

2019 Research Agenda

Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute

NHRP FUNDING ROUND

2019

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1 Purpose

The [National Housing Research Program](#) (NHRP) is building an evidence-base of practical applied research to support policy development, and is adding new knowledge to housing studies and related disciplines. The NHRP Research Agenda is updated annually to provide direction in the development of this evidence-base and to set priorities for the annual funding round. The Research Agenda is developed through consultation with the AHURI Limited Board, government housing Chief Executives, the Australian Government, relevant state and territory governments, Research Centre Directors and the NHRP Research Panel.

The purpose of this document is to present the AHURI NHRP 2019 Research Agenda.

The 2019 Research Agenda is structured around three Evidence-Based Policy Inquiry topics, two Investigative Panel and topics provided for Stand-alone Research Projects. These topics have direct relevance to policy development priorities and call for research to inform practice and policy reforms.

Chapter 2 of this document provides an overview of the Policy Development Research Model, including the Evidence-Based Policy Inquiry approach, Investigative Panel approach, and Stand-alone Research Projects.

Chapter 3 describes the Evidence-Based Policy Inquiry topics offered through the 2019 Research Agenda.

Chapter 4 identifies the Investigative Panel projects offered through the 2019 Research Agenda.

Chapter 5 identifies the Stand-alone Research Project topics offered through the 2019 Research Agenda.

Each of the Inquiry, Investigative panel and Stand-alone Research Projects identified in Chapters 3–5 identifies research opportunities in response to a policy issue in the current policy and practice context, as well as in the context of current and completed AHURI research.

The 2019 Research Agenda must be read in conjunction with:

- [NHRP Handbook](#)
- [NHRP Guidelines for applicants](#)
- [NHRP Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research](#)

Supporting documentation and application forms are available on the [AHURI website](#).

Research proposals need to build upon the research already completed and AHURI researchers are encouraged to check previous AHURI research reports. AHURI research is publicly available on the fully searchable [AHURI website](#).

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 Social Services and state and territory government departments.

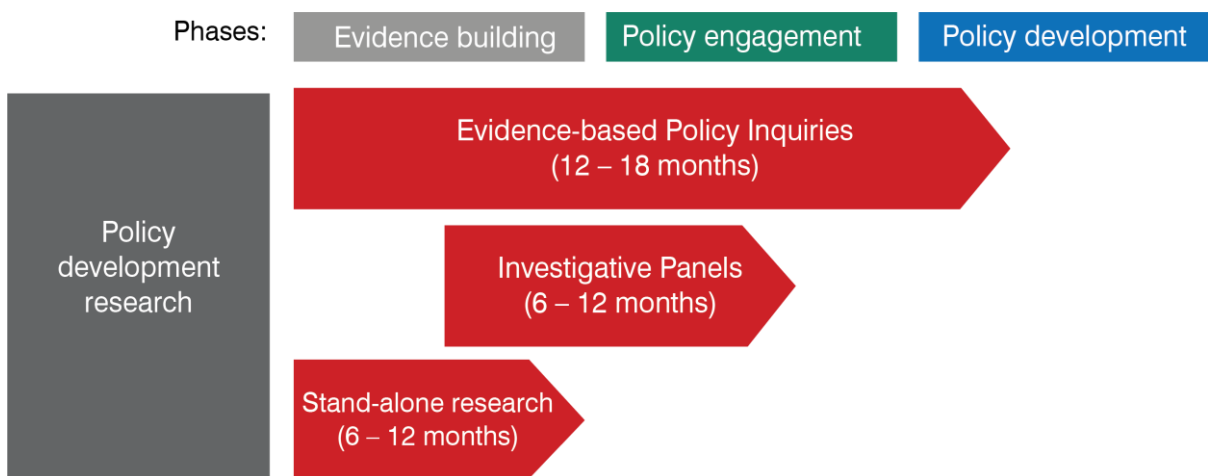
The NHRP seeks applications for research capacity building and may award one Postgraduate Scholarship Top-up per university in the NHRP 2019 Funding Round.

2 Policy Development Research Model

The Policy Development Research Model facilitates engagement between the research and policy communities. Policy development research integrates the traditionally separate processes of evidence building and policy development into one set of practices. The Policy Development Research Model demands a high degree of collaboration within and between the policy and research communities.

This occurs through specialised research vehicles developed by AHURI in which research and policy engagement are integrated. These vehicles include Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries (henceforth Inquiries) and Investigative Panels and stand-alone and data update research projects which are established to address priority policy issues (see Figure 1). Policy priority issues are developed into the topics presented for 2019 through consultation with Australian Government and state and territory government Housing Chief Executives, Research Centre Directors and the NHRP Research Panel; and approved by the AHURI Limited Board.

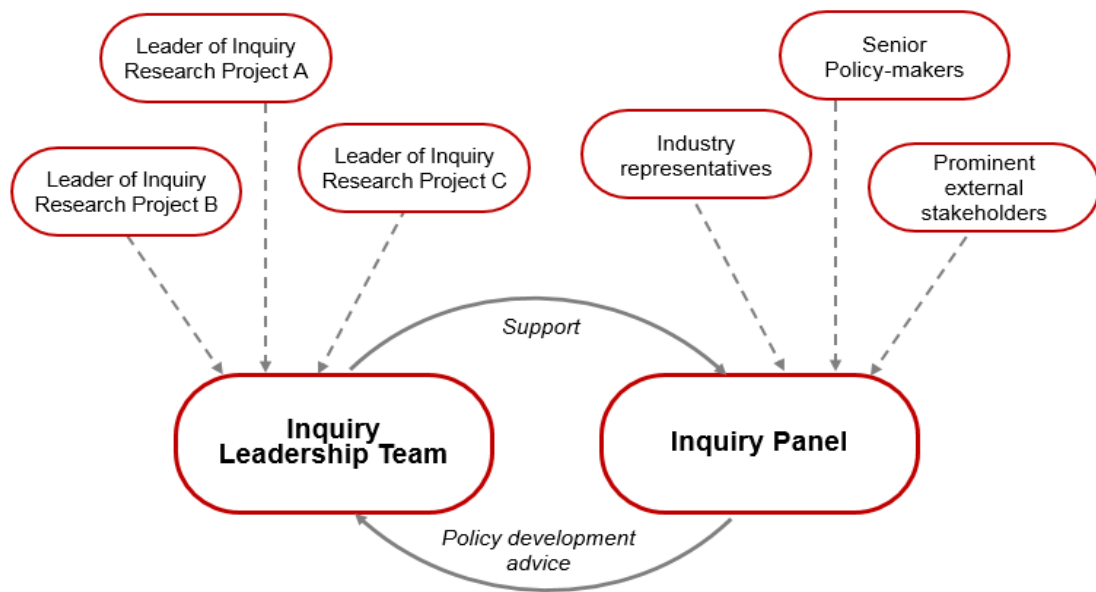
Figure 1: Policy development research



2.1 Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries

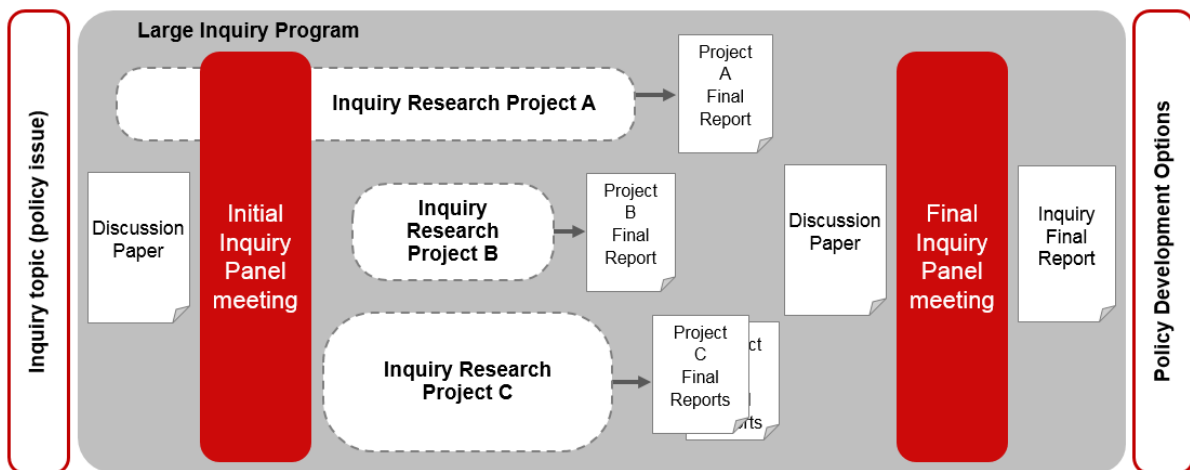
An Inquiry is led by academics with the expertise to develop the Inquiry Program which provides the overall logic and the framework of the Inquiry. This Inquiry Leadership Team also conduct a suite of independent, original Inquiry Research Projects to advance knowledge to address the policy issue. The Inquiry Panel draws a mix of policy and practice expertise from government, non-government and private sectors together to consider the evidence and the outcomes of the research to address the policy issue and to make particular recommendations for policy development and/or practice innovation (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Inquiry key personnel structure



The Inquiry Leadership Team authors the materials for the Inquiry Panel and all publications for the Inquiry. The Final Report for the Inquiry and for each of the Inquiry Research Projects are published over the course of the Inquiry in the AHURI journal series. These Final Reports are double blind peer reviewed. An example of the structure and outputs expected in an Inquiry is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Inquiry structure and outputs—large Inquiry



In the NHRP 2019 Funding Round, funded Inquiries will run in parallel—each focussed on one pressing policy issue, as listed below and detailed in Chapter 3.

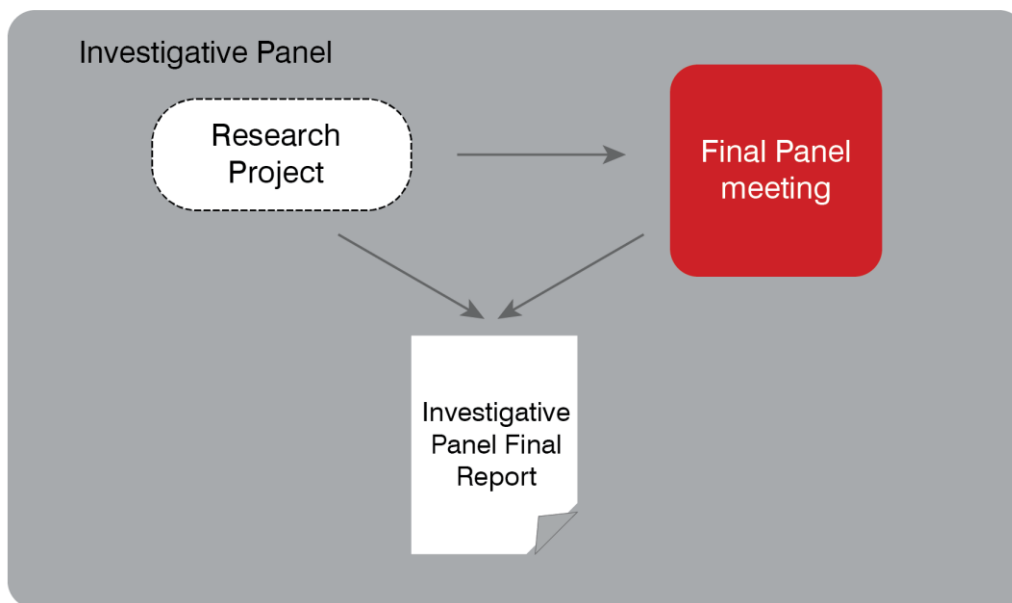
- 2019A** Inquiry into population growth, migration and agglomeration
- 2019B** Inquiry into exiting institutional settings
- 2019C** Inquiry into housing subsidies and the funding gap

2.2 Investigative Panels

Investigative Panels are designed to bring about direct engagement between experts from the research and policy communities, and practitioners from industry and community sectors, to interrogate a specific policy or practice question. They are best suited to research examining new or emerging policy issues, for which rapid evidence building is required.

The Investigative Panel is a research method that draws together elements of key informant interview and focus group approaches, to generate new knowledge through the expert panel discussions. The Panel may be called together for one or two meetings depending on the research approach. The research approach may also include other research activities or methods such as a literature review, interviews or secondary data analysis but the information from the Panel members is an important contribution to the research. Panel members are chosen for their expertise and knowledge about the subject. The Final Report is however authored by the researcher(s) and contributions from individual Panel members are not attributed or identifiable. See Figure 4 below for a typical Investigative Panel structure.

Figure 4: Investigative Panel structure



An Investigative Panel is deemed the most appropriate method to address the topics listed below and detailed in Chapter 4.

2019D Investigative panel on housing and energy costs

2019E Investigative panel on urban regulation, planning and supply diversity

2.3 Stand-Alone Research Projects

The NHRP Funding Round 2019 will include funding smaller stand-alone research projects, including data projects, to ensure a broader range of policy issues and more varied research delivery output timelines. Research topics have been developed through consultation with the government housing Chief Executives, Research Centre Directors and the NHRP Research Panel. These are listed below and detailed in Chapter 5.

- 2019F** Urban renewal outcomes
- 2019G** Urban form—apartment living
- 2019H** Indigenous and homelessness in urban settings
- 2019I** Remote housing
- 2019J** Assistive technologies in housing
- 2019K** Companion animals as inhibitors to rental mobility
- 2019L** The social landlord in public housing
- 2019M** Ageing in public housing
- 2019N** Sustaining Indigenous tenancies
- 2019O** The role of construction costs in house prices
- 2019P** Whole of life housing costs
- 2019Q** Data projects

3 Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries

2019A Inquiry into population growth, migration and agglomeration

Policy issue: Increasing agglomeration of major cities in Australia is fuelled by population growth including from regional, cross border and international migration.

What impact does population growth and movement have on social and economic outcomes, and what are the implications for Australian urban policy development and implementation?

Context

The population of Australia is rapidly growing and is expected to reach 36 million by mid-century. Settlement patterns are changing and a large proportion of this growth is expected to be located in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth, with around two thirds of Australians currently living in a capital city.¹

While this population growth might serve to propel economic growth, that growth is not evenly distributed—populations in inner and outer areas of our major cities and some regional cities are growing rapidly but some middle suburbs and regional cities are growing slowly or declining². At the same time, the population is ageing, and rapidly in some areas.

Australia's highly urbanised populations provide many agglomeration benefits for economic development, including facilitating access to large pools of skilled labour, rapid communication and sharing of technological innovation. However, businesses may also be adversely affected by congestion costs such as high land and house prices thereby reducing productivity benefits (Maclennan, Ong et al. 2015), and workers hampered by increased commuting times (van den Nouwelant, Crommelin et al. 2016), and affordability stress in increasing parts of the city (Hulse, Reynolds et al. 2015).

Improved transport and information and communications technology opens scope for increased mobilities of businesses and workers and this may influence residential mobility, though it may enable residential location to be less linked to work needs and more to social mobility concerns (Burke and Hulse 2015). Even so, housing costs can influence business location decisions, as accessing competitively priced labour is dependent on provision of affordable housing.

Productivity might be aided by improving connectivity and creating of economic opportunity in underdeveloped areas including regional cities. Increasing housing and transport infrastructure might capitalise on cheaper land for business and housing development, improve market access for goods and services produced in regional locations or provide commuter access for workers. Improving connectivity between cities also increases access to labour. Some regional centres (especially those connected to capital cities, like Geelong, Wollongong or Newcastle, or resource boom towns) have also faced affordability pressures at the same time that non-metropolitan economies have also restructured and diversified (Beer, Tually et al. 2011; McKenzie, Philips et al. 2009).

¹ Infrastructure Australia (2018) *Future Cities Planning for our growing population*, <http://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/files/future-cities/Future-Cities-Paper-web.pdf>.

² Australian Government (2010) *Our Cities: the challenge of change background and research paper*, AGPS, Canberra, https://infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/pab/files/NUPBP_Complete.pdf.

Research opportunities

To address the policy question outlined above researchers might consider:

- Critical evaluation of policy approaches to urban development in major cities (including infrastructure, technology, environment, land use planning and housing policies) that facilitate and respond to population growth, and their consequences for economic growth in Australia.
- How can the benefits of agglomeration be maximised through infrastructure, technology and environmental policy to harness effective economic, liveability and productivity outcomes?
- At what city size do we observe agglomeration effects? Is there a natural limit to the size of cities, taking in to consideration density and footprint? Does distance to capital cities matter for agglomeration effects—and if so, is it positive or negative?
- What do Australian policy initiatives over, for example the last 30 years tell us about the transformation of capital cities and the creation of secondary cities? What international lessons are there for Australia, including success in the creation of new cities? How is Australia unique?
- Quantification of agglomeration benefits (e.g. proximity to markets, access to pools of skilled labour), relative to congestion costs (e.g. housing stress, traffic congestion and transport costs) of population growth.
- What are the trends in population growth over time or population movement in terms of trends away from regions? Consider the composition of the population (i.e. age groups/occupation status) and their habits in relocation (e.g. housing usage). Consider recommendations for more effective approaches by governments to foster cost-effective and value for money investments in housing related infrastructure in cities.

Relevant AHURI research

- Beer, A., Tually, S., Rowley, S., McKenzie, F.H., Schlapp, J., Birdsall-Jones, C. and Corunna, V. (2011) *The drivers of supply and demand in Australia's rural and regional centres*, AHURI Final Report No. 165, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/165>.
- Bradbury, B., Chalmers, J. (2003) *Housing, location and employment*, AHURI Final Report No. 44, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/44>.
- Burke, T. and Hulse, K. (2015) *Spatial disadvantage: why is Australia different?*, AHURI Research Paper, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/research-papers/spatial-disadvantage-why-is-australia-different>.
- Hulse, K., Reynolds, M., Stone, W. and Yates, J. (2015) *Supply shortages and affordability outcomes in the private rental sector: short and longer term trends*, AHURI Final Report No. 241, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/241>.
- Maclennan, D., Ong, R., Wood, G. (2015) *Making connections: housing, productivity and economic development*, AHURI Final Report No. 251, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/251>.
- McKenzie, F. H., Phillips, R., Rowley, S., Brereton, D., Birdsall-Jones, C. (2009) *Housing market dynamics in resource boom towns*, AHURI Final Report No. 135, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/135>.
- van den Nouwelant, R., Crommelin, L., Herath, S. and Randolph, B. (2016) *Housing affordability, central city economic productivity and the lower income labour market*, AHURI Final Report No. 261, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/261>.

2019B Inquiry into exiting institutional settings

Policy issue: People exiting institutional settings are at greater risk of becoming homeless or cycling back into the system.

Where are the successful examples of reducing homelessness after institutional care, especially from out of home care and the justice systems?

Context

AHURI research shows the average annual costs to government for health, justice, and out-of-home care costs for children was \$25,343 per homeless person in the year before they accessed case managed support (in 2010 dollars). In contrast, the annual average cost to government for the whole Australian population for these services was \$2,588 per person (Zaretsky, Flatau et al. 2013) clearly demonstrating that the potential economic benefits of preventing or addressing homelessness among those who are exiting institutional settings is significant notwithstanding the social benefits.

AHURI research has shown that pathways for care leavers can be characterised as either 'volatile' or 'smooth', with their experiences of care and transition planning impacting on their post care housing outcomes. Those with volatile experiences often left care at an early age, experienced sexual abuse, were placed in inappropriate accommodation and had a large number of placements in care. Many had profound difficulties maintaining relationships and keeping accommodation, and had to search in cheaper areas disconnected from employment opportunities and social connections. Key factors in managing successful exit from out of home care were: feeling secure in care, having an exit plan and being involved in the process of planning, addressing problematic substance abuse, developing improved relationships with family, finding work and finding the right sort of support (Johnson, Natalier et al. 2010).

AHURI research finds the risk of returning to prison increased through an experience of homelessness, not having sufficient accommodation support as well as exacerbation of drug and alcohol problems. Moving often post-release was found to be a predictive factor in a person's return to prison. When stable housing was combined with helpful support that assisted in addressing issues such as drug problems, family relations and employment, the evidence is that ex-prisoners are much less likely to return to prison. A key policy implication was the finding that a multi-agency team approach to housing, health, mental health and employment and one that includes ex-prisoners' views and knowledge was vital. The research found that those who perceived agencies as unhelpful were more likely to end up back in prison (Baldry, McDonnell et al. 2003).

AHURI research also finds that people with mental ill-health who are homeless experience wide-ranging and compounded disadvantage and social exclusion. Iterative homelessness is further shaped by institutional neglect, a lack of appropriate housing options for homeless people with mental disorders, and the alienation of this group from the mental health system (Robinson 2003). There is a need for a point of stability—whether developed through housing, drop-in centres or support groups—through which to sustain and build relationships with individuals experiencing iterative homelessness and mental health issues (Robinson 2003) and informal community resources to support young people recovering from mental illness (Duff, Jacobs et al. 2013). Many of those experiencing mental ill health also experience drug and alcohol problems. There is a need for integrated services (dual diagnosis) to assist those in that situation (Flatau, Conroy et al. 2013).

Research opportunities

There is an opportunity for researchers to consider:

- how homelessness is prevented and reduced after institutional care especially in relation to exits from out of home care and the justice systems
- examples of regulation or joined up government services which ensure better planning and after-exit support, including housing arrangements
- recent developments in Australia and overseas in preventing or reducing homelessness after institutional care and sustaining tenancies post exit
- how well tenancies are sustained
- how successful programs are funded, measured and reported.

Relevant AHURI research

Baldry, E., McDonnell, D., Maplestone, P., Peeters, M. (2003) *Ex-prisoners and accommodation: what bearing do different forms of housing have on social reintegration*, AHURI Final Report No. 46, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/46>.

Duff, C., Jacobs, K., Loo, S. and Murray, S. (2013) *The role of informal community resources in supporting stable housing for young people recovering from mental illness*, AHURI Final Report No. 199, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/199>.

Flatau, P., Conroy, E., Thielking, M., Clear, A., Hall, S., Bauskis, A. and Farrugia, M. (2013) *How integrated are homelessness, mental health and drug and alcohol services in Australia?*, AHURI Final Report No. 206, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/206>.

Johnson, G., Natalier, K., Mendes, P., Liddiard, M., Thoresen, S., Hollows, A., Bailey, N. (2010) *Pathways from out-of-home care*, AHURI Final Report No. 147, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/147>.

Robinson, C. (2003) *Understanding iterative homelessness: the case of people with mental disorders*, AHURI Final Report No. 45, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/45>.

Zaretsky, K., Flatau, P., Clear, A., Conroy, E., Burns, L. and Spicer, B. (2013) *The cost of homelessness and the net benefit of homelessness programs: a national study—Findings from the Baseline Client Survey*, AHURI Final Report No. 205, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/205>.

2019C Inquiry into housing subsidies and the funding gap

Policy issue: A funding gap is an inevitable by-product of supplying subsidised housing and governments are grappling with how to best fill the gap and by whom.

What is the value of the current system, and if considering a housing continuum how might Australia move forward?

Context

Demand based housing assistance (e.g. Commonwealth Rent Assistance or CRA) plays a key role in reducing housing stress (Melhuish, King et al. 2005) but also contributes to revenue for rental investors. Currently some private renter households reliant on welfare incomes (e.g. Disability Support Pension) face affordability stress, and subsidies such as CRA are insufficient to achieve affordability. Recent policy analyses have shown that creating and maintaining a rental housing portfolio targeted to people on very low to low incomes requires explicit ongoing subsidies to bridge the gap between operating costs (including debt servicing) and rental incomes³.

Policy makers might provide additional housing subsidies depending on housing need or location. Provision of greater assistance might address affordability concerns but also incentivise housing supply and consider security of tenure concerns. A range of possible ways to bridge the gap include:

- increasing maximum rates of Commonwealth provided CRA or provide supplementary assistance in state jurisdictions (e.g. that proposed in NSW)⁴.
- reducing operational losses under private financing of rental housing by affordable housing providers (Randolph, Troy et al. 2018)
- funding an NRAS like tax credit program to deliver more new affordable housing (Rowley, James et al 2016)
- providing secure leases in the private rental market by incentivising landlords (Wood, Cigdem et al 2017).

The Australian government has backed expanding affordable housing supply through funnelling low cost finance to community housing providers through a bond aggregator and all state and territory jurisdictions have been charged to support this growth (via the planning system, stock transfers, build-to-rent models and affordable housing targets). However, these measures are not expected to be enough to incentivise supply without additional subsidies⁵.

Any reforms to CRA or direct subsidies would also need to consider wider concerns around contestability between public, social and private sector providers. The Productivity Commission's March 2018 final report *Introducing Competition and Informed User Choice into Human Services* includes a recommendation to establish a single system of financial assistance across private rental and social housing, and that state and territory governments charge market rents and offset this via a state funded housing supplement⁶.

³ Australian Government Council on Federal Financial Relations (2017) *Supporting the implementation of an affordable housing bond aggregator*, Report of the Affordable Housing Working Group to Heads of Treasuries September.

⁴ NSW Government (2017) *Future Directions in Social Housing in NSW*, <http://www.socialhousing.nsw.gov.au/?a=348442>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Productivity Commission 2018, *Introducing Competition and Informed User Choice into Human Services: Reforms to Human Services*, Final Report, Canberra, <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/human-services/reforms/report>.

Research opportunities

An inquiry must consider how the present system of housing subsidies is designed and how this can be changed going forward to facilitate increased affordable and secure housing in cost effective ways. An inquiry might consider the following:

- how housing assistance for renters might be adapted or supplemented to address present funding gaps for affordable and secure housing
- the graduation of the benefit for different groups (e.g. Disability Support Pension recipients) by identifying various cohorts of recipients of rental housing assistance that are helped, those not sufficiently helped and those that do not need assistance
- how direct subsidies to suppliers might work in conjunction with demand subsidies to improve affordability
- how systems might be harmonised and transitioned and while avoiding any problematic market distortions that might emerge
- conducting modelling of outcomes under different policy scenarios, including understanding how many might be affected, who is benefited, and which subsidy rates are most cost-effective to achieve improved affordable housing outcomes.

Relevant AHURI research

Cigdem, M., Wood, G. and Ong, R. (2015) *Australian demographic trends and their implications for housing subsidies*, AHURI Positioning Paper No. 164, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/position-papers/164>.

Melhuish, T., King, A., Taylor, E. (2004) *The regional impact of Commonwealth Rent Assistance*, AHURI Final Report No. 71, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/71>.

Randolph, B., Troy, L., Milligan, V. and van den Nouwelant, R. (2018) *Paying for affordable housing in different market contexts*, AHURI Final Report No. 293, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/293>.

Rowley, S., James, A., Gilbert, C., Gurrán, N., Ong, R., Phibbs, P., Rosen, D. and Whitehead, C. (2016) *Subsidised affordable rental housing: lessons from Australia and overseas*, AHURI Final Report No. 267, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/267>.

Wood, G., Cigdem, M. and Ong, R. (2017) *Australian demographic trends and implications for housing assistance programs*, AHURI Final Report No. 286, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/286>.

4 Investigative Panels

2019D Investigative Panel on housing and energy costs

Policy issue: Rising energy costs can affect the health of lower income households through reduced appliance usage as well as overall affordability impacting cost of living.

What are the challenges to driving greater roll-out of alternative technologies to support better housing outcomes for low income tenants? How can these technologies, which save energy and reduce costs, enhance living environments by addressing adverse health and safety outcomes?

Context

Energy costs have been steadily increasing nationally, adding substantially to the cost of living and affecting the wellbeing outcomes of lower income households. In social housing, older buildings were poorly designed and the costs of retrofitting have been considered largely prohibitive. However, in extreme weather conditions there is a risk to health and wellbeing if tenants do not have technologies or cannot afford to ameliorate conditions. South Australia has recently announced a scheme in which solar photovoltaic cells are installed on public housing dwellings, which will benefit social housing tenants through energy savings⁷. As technologies become more widely available it is expected that the cost of installation would reduce and efficiency increase.

Concerns have been raised that landlords might under-invest in energy saving technologies (e.g. through insulation, solar heating and double glazing) since the costs of doing this would only benefit the renter. Owners are more likely to invest in energy saving appliances relative to renters (Fielding, Thompson et al. 2010). However in Australia energy usage is actually higher among owners relative to renters, and so there is not sufficient evidence in Australia to point to 'split incentives' (Gabriel, Watson et al. 2010). Householders were more open to regulation and voluntary changes measures compared to tax and pricing policies. At the time of previous research, relatively few had installed solar devices.

Governments presently provide a range of concessions for welfare recipients including in relation to energy bills and have concerns regarding health and wellbeing risks due to energy costs.

Research opportunities

An investigative panel might:

- identify current approaches to addressing energy costs of dwellings, and quantify the cost of providing energy subsidies to tenants and landlords
- consider the risks to tenant health if energy costs are too high and healthy living environments cannot be maintained
- compare innovative approaches to the provision of energy efficient homes across Australia and internationally
- suggest ways to surmount logistical and other obstacles for implementing renewable and energy saving technologies in social housing, private rental and owner occupied dwellings
- consider at what point ('the tipping point') sustainable technologies provide greater social and economic benefits compared to existing approaches

⁷ Renewal SA, *Renewing our streets and suburbs*, 22 February 2017, <https://renewalsa.sa.gov.au/solar-public-housing-feb2017/>.

Relevant AHURI research

Fielding, K.S., Thompson, A., Louis, W.R. and Warren, C. (2010) *Environmental sustainability: understanding the attitudes and behaviour of Australian households*, AHURI Final Report No. 152, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/152>.

Gabriel, M., Watson, P., Ong, R., Wood, G. and Wulff, M. (2010) *The environmental sustainability of Australia's private rental housing stock*, AHURI Final Report No. 159, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/159>.

2019E Investigative Panel on urban regulation, planning and supply diversity

Policy issue: Meeting housing need with adequate supply by facilitating access to appropriate housing.

What role does urban regulation have in facilitating a more diverse and affordable housing supply?

Context

Governments and the market have struggled to supply sufficient housing to meet increased demand. They have been even less effective at facilitating affordable housing and diverse dwelling types. New product has often been located in high land cost locations (where price appreciation is more likely) making it less affordable to those on low incomes (Ong, Dalton et al. 2017). New affordable supply has also tended to be two bedroom dwellings rather than larger sized dwellings more suitable for families (Rowley, James et al. 2016).

The planning system can be used to incentivise housing supply, and regulate the sort of housing constructed. But planning has not always been effective in increasing housing supply in strategic locations or generating dwelling types that are appropriate to household sizes which are getting smaller on average (Goodman, Buxton et al. 2010). AHURI research suggests there is significant scope to intensify usage of present land, regenerate older dwellings (and create more diverse and higher density housing) in greyfield suburban areas (Murray, Bertram et al. 2015), through precinct renewal processes rather than relying on subdivision, where affordability is not always possible. Options near to transport and infrastructure also generally require NRAS style subsidy; shared equity, or planning incentives like inclusionary zoning or value capture for affordable housing to be affordable (Rowley and Phibbs 2012; Gurran, Gilbert et al. 2018).

Incentivising a range of dwelling types or removing expensive additions to a development might create both appropriate and affordable options. Governments might play a decisive role in fostering more diverse (and affordable) supply in a range of locations by altering planning incentives. For example, new planning arrangements could mandate a mix of dwelling types and affordable housing (Davison, Gurran et al. 2012).

Research opportunities

An investigative panel should engage developers, planners and policy makers to consider:

- how the present mix of regulation, infrastructure funding, taxation incentives and other interventions might be altered to facilitate better supply of housing to meet demand
- measures that might succeed in incentivising developers to offer more diverse dwelling types in affordable rental housing in a range of locations
- the differences in planning systems, for instance third party objections rights and what might be learned.

The panel should draw on practical examples of regulatory systems and development projects in Australia or overseas that have successfully leveraged diverse housing products.

Relevant AHURI research

- Davison, G, Gurrán, N., Nouwelant, R., Pinnegar, S. and Randolph, B. (2012) *Affordable housing, urban renewal and planning: emerging practice in Queensland*, South Australia and New South Wales, AHURI Final Report No. 195, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/195>.
- Goodman, R., Buxton, M., Chhetri, P., Taylor, E. and Wood, G. (2010) *Planning and the characteristics of housing supply in Melbourne*, AHURI Final Report No. 157, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/157>.
- Gurrán, N., Phibbs, P., Yates, J., Gilbert, C., Whitehead, C., Norris, M., McClure, K., Berry, M., Maginn, P., Goodman, R., Rowley, S (2015) *Housing markets, economic productivity, and risk: international evidence and policy implications for Australia—Volume 2: Supplementary papers*, AHURI Final Report No. 255, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/255>.
- Gurrán, N., Gilbert, C., Gibb, K., van den Nouwelant, R., James, A. and Phibbs, P. (2018) *Supporting affordable housing supply: inclusionary planning in new and renewing communities*, AHURI Final Report No. 297, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/297>.
- Murray, S., Bertram, N., Khor, L., Rowe, D., Meyer, B., Murphy, C., Newton, P., Glackin, S., Alves, T. and McGauran, R. (2015) *Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts*, AHURI Final Report No. 236, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/236>.
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- Rowley, S. and Phibbs, P. (2012) *Delivering diverse and affordable housing on infill development sites*, AHURI Final Report No.193, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/193>.
- Rowley, S., James, A., Gilbert, C., Gurrán, N., Ong, R., Phibbs, P., Rosen, D. and Whitehead, C. (2016) *Subsidised affordable rental housing: lessons from Australia and overseas*, AHURI Final Report No. 267, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/finalreports/267>.

5 Stand-alone Research Projects

2019F Urban renewal outcomes

Policy issue: Urban renewal aims to provide housing with social and financial outcomes.

How might urban renewal facilitate mixed tenure developments to meet both social and economic return considerations?

Context

Urban renewal represents a major opportunity for housing policy makers and planners in facilitating urban growth and new housing supply. However without intervention, in-fill and renewal projects can lead to gentrification and displacement of residents, and high costs of land and development can make new housing unaffordable to low income earners (Davison, Gurrán et al. 2012). Planning authorities in Australia have been aware of these issues and have introduced initiatives to preserve affordable housing or incentivise its creation (Davison, Gurrán et al. 2012). Governments have also sought to leverage their existing stocks of public housing and land for private sector involvement. AHURI research finds scope to do more of this in middle ring 'greyfield' suburbs where stock is ageing and land is underutilised (Newton, Murray et al. 2011).

A key objective of redevelopment is to create mixed tenure developments to create socially mixed communities to avoid concentrating many low income renters in one location (Parkinson et al. 2014). However some of the benefit of public renewal investments is captured by those benefiting from uplift in property values (Wood et al. 2012) so public investments should be well targeted to achieve public goals.

Research Opportunities

Research should consider:

- how evaluation of renewal projects has informed how public investment is best configured to maximise leverage for financial return and reinvestment
- the differential challenges on publicly owned (government) land or privately owned land
- social objectives of renewal projects, especially with regard to affordability, diversity of housing stock and social inclusion, including how these should be measured and accounted for
- the learning from renewal projects across Australia, what principles and processes have been important in yielding successful outcomes and what an evaluation framework would require.

Relevant AHURI research

Davison, G, Gurrán, N., Nouwelant, R., Pinnegar, S. and Randolph, B. (2012) *Affordable housing, urban renewal and planning: emerging practice in Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales*, AHURI Final Report No. 195, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/195>.

Newton, P., Murray, S., Wakefield, R., Murphy, C., Khor, L. and Morgan, T. (2011) *Towards a new development model for housing regeneration in greyfield residential precincts*, AHURI Final Report No. 171, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/171>.

Parkinson, S., Ong, R., Cigdem, M. and Taylor, E. (2014) *Wellbeing outcomes of lower income renters: a multilevel analysis of area effects*, AHURI Final Report No. 226, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/226>.

Wood, G. and Cigdem, M. (2012) *Cost-effective methods for evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal programs*, AHURI Final Report No. 198, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/198>.

2019G Urban form—apartment living

Policy issue: High density living in major cities is increasing at a rate which may not be supported by services and infrastructure or sustain social wellbeing outcomes.

What policy frameworks support the management of high rise apartments and social wellbeing outcomes?

Context

Apartments are becoming a dominant segment of urban housing markets with changing demographics living in them, such as increasing number of families. Increasing housing affordability pressures have meant that households are adapting their demands to new forms of housing, including to apartments and townhouses (Burke, Stone et al. 2014). Apartment living in major cities is also an accepted cultural and generational choice with a high level of investment encouraged in CBD areas.

Relative affordability of apartments can make them an attractive option in a tight housing market. State and Federal Governments have started to commit resources to support the process of densification but with a concern for liveability and connectivity. The timely provision of infrastructure to support apartment living in high density areas is important, as is the ongoing management of the apartment complex.

Research opportunities

Researchers might investigate:

- the demand for high density housing, who is entering this housing (e.g. families, singles, older people, people with disability) and whether apartments are providing affordable and appropriate housing
- the role of location (and its proximity to transport, services and other cultural or social amenities) and supporting infrastructure in meeting needs
- the role and implementation of strata title and strata management of larger apartment complexes
- the role policy makers and developers might play in improving outcomes for apartment dwellers in affordability, wellbeing (e.g. social connectedness) and community outcomes.

Relevant AHURI research

Burke, T., Stone, W. and Ralston, L. (2014) *Generational change in home purchase opportunity in Australia*, AHURI Final Report No. 232, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/232>.

Davison, G, Gurrán, N., Nouwelant, R., Pinnegar, S. and Randolph, B. (2012) *Affordable housing, urban renewal and planning: emerging practice in Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales*, AHURI Final Report No. 195, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/195>.

Goodman, R., Buxton, M., Chhetri, P., Taylor, E. and Wood, G. (2010) *Planning and the characteristics of housing supply in Melbourne*, AHURI Final Report No. 157, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/157>.

Murray, S., Bertram, N., Khor, L., Rowe, D., Meyer, B., Murphy, C., Newton, P., Glackin, S., Alves, T. and McGauran, R. (2015) *Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts*, AHURI Final Report No. 236, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/236>.

2019H Indigenous and homelessness in urban settings

Policy issue: Major cities and inner regional areas have the highest proportions of homeless Indigenous people.

What are the specific drivers and causes of Indigenous homelessness in cities and regional settings, and what are the opportunities to support homeless Indigenous families, young people and children in these contexts?

Context

Aboriginal people are over-represented in both the national homeless population and as users of specialist homelessness services (SHS); Aboriginal people make up 3 per cent of the Australian population, yet constituted 24 per cent of SHS clients 2015–16 (AIHW 2016)⁸. Major cities and Inner regional areas had the highest proportions of Indigenous people who were homeless and living in supported accommodation (44% and 42% of homeless Indigenous people respectively; AIHW 2016). The rate of intergenerational homelessness for Indigenous respondents is significantly (69%) higher than for non-Indigenous respondents (43%) (Flatau, Conroy et al. 2013). There are currently no federal, state or territory programs which specifically target Aboriginal people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and Aboriginal homelessness funding arrangements are characterised by fragmentation and an absence of policy coordination (Flatau, Zaretsky et al. 2016; Spinney, Habibis et al. 2016). AHURI research has identified opportunities for mainstream services in urban settings to partner with Indigenous organisations which play critical roles in local communities providing access to services and interpreting information, supporting tenants and communities, etc. (Miligan, Philips et al. 2011).

Research opportunities

Research should consider:

- causes and drivers of homelessness in urban settings
- how programs are coordinated and operationalised to support Indigenous families, children and young people
- how support is targeted to address the issues of Indigenous families, children and young people.

Relevant AHURI research

Flatau, P., Conroy, E., Spooner, C., Edwards, R., Eardley, T. and Forbes, C. (2013) *Lifetime and intergenerational experiences of homelessness in Australia*, AHURI Final Report No. 200, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/200>.

Flatau, P., Zaretsky, K., Wood, L. and Miscenko, D. (2016) *The financing, delivery and effectiveness of programs to reduce homelessness*, AHURI Final Report No. 270, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/270>.

Milligan, V., Phillips, R., Easthope, H., Liu, E. and Memmott, P. (2011) *Urban social housing for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders: respecting culture and adapting services*, AHURI Final Report No. 172, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/172>.

Spinney, A., Habibis, D. and McNelis, S. (2016) *Safe and sound? How funding mix affects homelessness support for Indigenous Australians*, AHURI Final Report No. 272, Australian Housing and Urban Institute, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/272>.

⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2016) *Specialist homelessness services 2015–16*, AIHW, Canberra.

2019I Remote housing

Policy issue: Remote housing issues are a challenge for policy.

How might this challenge be addressed differently and what financing models could apply?

Context

Market processes for housing have often failed in remote areas. Indigenous housing in remote areas has been characterised by rental accommodation and remoteness from government has meant regional governments have not been able to capitalise on available government programs to ameliorate affordability issues where they have occurred (Beer, Tually et al. 2011). Hybrid models which blend aspects of ownership with community title ('Community Land Trusts') have been suggested (Crabtree, Moore et al. 2015).

Governments have sought to promote home ownership for Indigenous households with limited success and there are a number of barriers to successful implementation especially in remote settings (Memcott, Moran et al. 2009). AHURI research also finds that tenants, government and Indigenous/intermediary organisations are often seeking different tenancy outcomes, there is some evidence of a recognition space occurring and policy and management approaches could build on this by specifically targeting programs for different types of tenants (Moran, Memcott et al. 2016).

Research opportunities

Research could consider:

- alternative approaches to housing in remote areas and investigating how to effectively increase the supply of affordable housing
- ways that finance and Indigenous community investment might be utilised to facilitate sustainable housing in remote areas
- ways governments might facilitate forms of tenure and dwellings that are appropriate to the aspirations of Indigenous people in remote communities, while enabling people to capitalise on economic opportunities that are in settlements where economic development is occurring.

Relevant AHURI research

Beer, A., Tually, S., Rowley, S., McKenzie, F.H., Schlapp, J., Birdsall-Jones, C. and Corunna, V. (2011) *The drivers of supply and demand in Australia's rural and regional centres*, AHURI Final Report No. 165, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/165>.

Crabtree, L., Moore, N., Phibbs, P., Blunden, H. and Sappideen, C. (2015) *Community Land Trusts and Indigenous communities: from strategies to outcomes*, AHURI Final Report No. 239, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/239>.

Memcott, P., Moran, M., Birdsall-Jones, C., Fantin, S., Kreutz, A., Godwin, J., Burgess, A., Thomson, L., Sheppard, L. (2009) *Indigenous home ownership on communal title lands*, AHURI Final Report No. 139, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/139>.

Moran, M., Memcott, P., Nash, D., Birdsall-Jones, C., Fantin, S., Phillips, R. and Habibis, D. (2016) *Indigenous lifeworlds, conditionality and housing outcomes*, AHURI Final Report No. 260, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/260>.

2019J Assistive technologies in housing

Policy issue: Technology is changing the way we live and can support very different ways of living in our residences.

What are the new and emerging assistive technologies and how might these support key policy directions including the NDIS and aged care policies?

Context

In the context of the NDIS and policies supporting ageing in place there is increased attention to how assistive technologies can support people to live independently and to remain in their home.

AHURI research has established the importance of adaptable housing to meet the changing needs of multigenerational households and an ageing population (Liu, Easthope et al. 2012; Judd, Olsberg et al. 2010). AHURI research has also established that moving to independent living leads to important shelter and non-shelter outcomes for people with disability, including a growing sense of independence, improved privacy, choice of housemates, improvements in physical and mental health, and improved social participation (Wiesel, Laragy et al. 2015).

Research opportunities

Research could consider:

- new and emerging assistive technologies and how these will change how people can live independently and be supported
- social and economic cost benefit analysis in the context of key policy directions.

Relevant AHURI research

- Liu E. and Easthope H. (2012) *Multi-generation households in Australian cities*, AHURI Final Report No.181. Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne. <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/181>.
- Judd, B., Olsberg, D., Quinn, J., Groenhart, L., Demirbilek, O. (2010) *Dwelling, land and neighbourhood use by older home owners*, AHURI Final Report No. 144, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/144>.
- Wiesel, I., Laragy, C., Gendera, S., Fisher, K., Jenkinson, S., Hill, T., Finch, K., Shaw, W. and Bridge, C. (2015) *Moving to my home: housing aspirations, transitions and outcomes of people with disability*, AHURI Final Report No. 246, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/246>.

2019K Companion animals as inhibitors to rental mobility

Policy issue: Approaches to pet ownership is an issue for the mobility of people across tenures and in the provision of housing assistance and support.

What are the implications of differential companion animal policies in the private rental market, social housing and homelessness service provision/emergency accommodation? What are the costs and risks for landlords?

Context

Companion animals are rarely considered in housing or homelessness policy development. This is despite their prevalence and a substantial international literature on the connections between pets and wellbeing (Gabriel, Stirling et al. 2014; Wiesel, Laragy et al. 2015).

AHURI research supports the benefits of companion animals in the context of increasing loneliness in housing especially for single people (Franklin and Tranter 2011). However rules or restrictions against pets exist in retirement villages, residential aged care, private and social rented housing, where loneliness in Australia is most concentrated (Burke, Neske et al. 2004; Wiesel, Laragy et al. 2015). Concerns around risks for property may contribute to restrictions and deciding who is allocated housing in the private rental market (Short, Seelig et al. 2008).

Research opportunities

There is an opportunity to compare approaches to companion animal ownership across tenures including in public and community housing, the private rental market, homelessness services and residential care settings. To address the policy issue above, researchers should consider:

- the different companion animal policies across tenures and jurisdictions
- international comparison in the consideration of companion animals across tenures
- the costs and risks for landlords and how these might be addressed.

Relevant AHURI research

Burke, T., Neske, C., Ralston, L. (2004) *Entering rental housing*, AHURI Final Report No. 59, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/59>.

Franklin, A. and Tranter B. (2011) *Housing, Loneliness and health*, AHURI Final Report No. 164, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/164>.

Gabriel, M., Stirling, C., Faulkner, D. and Lloyd, B. (2014) *Future housing and support needs of people with dementia*, AHURI Positioning Paper No.159, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/position-papers/159>.

Phibbs, P. and Thompson, S. (2011) *The health impacts of housing: toward a policy-relevant research agenda*, AHURI Final Report No. 173, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/173>.

Short, P., Seelig, T., Warren, C., Susilawati, C., Thompson, A. (2008) *Risk assessment practices in the private rental sector: implications for low income renters*, AHURI Final Report No. 117, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/117>.

Wiesel, I., Laragy, C., Gendera, S., Fisher, K.R., Jenkinson, S., Hill, T., Finch, K., Shaw, W. and Bridge, C. (2015) *Moving to my home: housing aspirations, transitions and outcomes of people with disability*, AHURI Final Report No.246. Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/246>.

2019L The social landlord in public housing

Policy issue: There is increasing awareness in state government housing authorities of the tensions between tenancy management and tenancy support.

What outcomes best measure housing provision and how are tensions between housing assistance, asset management and other welfare concerns balanced?

Context

The demographic profile of public housing tenants in Australia has changed over the past 30 years. AHURI research finds that public housing has moved from providing accommodation for workers in manufacturing industries and ports, and an investment to maintain economic growth, to housing of last resort and a sector that is stigmatised (Jacobs, Atkinson et al. 2010). The responsibilities of housing services officers have expanded to include brokering support services for tenants and engaging more regularly with difficult or abusive tenants. AHURI research suggests that the changes to the sector are so great, and the competing problems that have to be balanced so challenging, that inevitably social housing agencies and staff have to make decisions (e.g. eviction) that may be unpalatable or appear inappropriate (Groenhart and Burke 2014).

The changing scope of housing services officer responsibilities to include more social and welfare related work has triggered a growing discourse about the role of public housing tenancy management being that of a 'social landlord'. AHURI research found a critical difficulty concerns the duty to house those who have complex problems, and the broader question of a duty to manage and maintain the tenancies of others, as well as the wider community who might be affected by difficult and demanding behaviour (Atkinson, Habibis et al. 2007).

Research opportunities

To address the policy question outlined above researchers should consider:

- the role of the social landlord in public housing and how this has developed in the changing policy context of the delivery of public housing and housing assistance
- the drivers for social housing provision—social outcomes, non-shelter outcomes, sustaining tenancies
- the tension between these and debt collection, asset management (e.g. maintenance and repairs), waiting list reduction, mutual responsibility and tenant accountability.

Relevant AHURI research

Atkinson, R., Habibis, D., Easthope, H., Goss, D. (2007) *Sustaining tenants with demanding behaviour: a review of the research evidence*, AHURI Positioning Paper No. 97, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/position-papers/97>.

Groenhart, L. and Burke, T. (2014) *Thirty years of public housing supply and consumption: 1981–2011*, AHURI Final Report No. 231, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/231>.

Jacobs, K., Atkinson, R., Colic Peisker, V., Berry, M. and Dalton, T. (2010) *What future for public housing? A critical analysis*, AHURI Final Report No. 151, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/151>.

2019M Ageing in public housing

Policy issue: There is an increasingly large cohort of ageing tenants in public housing.

Is public housing providing an effective housing tenure for older people?

Context

More Australians are ageing and living longer. There is a large increase in the 60 plus cohort in public housing expected over the next two decades reflecting the entering of this tenure under conditions of secure tenure and ageing in place (Groenhart and Burke 2014). Public housing tenants value security, access to transport and amenities but housing workers have raised concerns about on-going support and social contact for many tenants (McNelis, Neske et al. 2008).

While new service integrated models of housing for older people are emerging in the public sector, they have lagged behind the private and community sectors although there has been some support for home modifications (Jones, Howe et al. 2010). Older people with declining health and a desire for a supportive and secure environment with less physical demands may look to move to age-specific housing however they will encounter a lack of options given constrained resources and there is a reluctance to move from secure tenure. For those who had moved a lack of care services and the associated unmet care needs was a major issue (Bridge, Davy et al. 2011).

Research opportunities

Research could consider:

- realistic service provision changes that would enable better outcomes for older Australians in public housing
- how policy makers could understand the costs and benefits for governments of providing these additional services compared to private sector provision.

Relevant AHURI research

Bridge, C., Davy, L., Judd, B., Flatau, P., Morris, A. and Phibbs, P. (2011) *Age-specific housing and care for low to moderate income older people*, AHURI Final Report No. 174, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/174>.

Groenhart, L. and Burke, T. (2014) *Thirty years of public housing supply and consumption: 1981–2011*, AHURI Final Report No.231, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/231>.

Jones, A., Howe, A., Tilse, C., Bartlett, H., Stimson, R. (2010) *Service integrated housing for Australians in later life*, AHURI Final Report No. 141, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/141>.

McNelis, S., Neske, C., Jones, A., Phillips, R. (2008) *Older persons in public housing: the policy and management issues*, AHURI Final Report No. 121, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/121>.

2019N Sustaining Indigenous tenancies

Policy issue: There is a critical need to better sustain tenancies for Indigenous people and support better housing, health and wellbeing outcomes.

How have better housing and non shelter outcomes been achieved in urban, regional and remote areas for Indigenous tenants?

Context

Rental housing, especially social housing, is an important form of tenure for Indigenous people. Nationally, more Indigenous households rent (59%) compared to non-Indigenous households (29%) and Indigenous households are overrepresented in social housing (26% compared to 4% of non-Indigenous households).⁹

Research identifies individual risk factors which place tenancies at risk of failure and structural factors affecting Indigenous people (e.g. Memmot, Birdsall-Jones et al. 2012; Birdsall-Jones and Curunna 2010; Flatau, Coleman et al. 2009). A significant outcome of current policy settings is an increasing expectation that mainstream housing providers will cater to the needs of Indigenous people in urban contexts (Milligan, Phillips et al. 2011). However, in practice this has meant that service provision and tenancy management often does not meet the needs of Indigenous tenants (Habibis, Phillips et al. 2014; 2015).

Research opportunities

Research should consider:

- identification of successful initiatives which sustain tenancies for Indigenous people in both private and social rental housing in urban, rural and remote contexts
- analysis of the policy and systems settings that support or hinder stable tenancies for Indigenous people and how successful program design and service delivery is transferable across regions
- how success in tenure sustainability has contributed to better non shelter outcomes.

Relevant AHURI research

Birdsall-Jones, C. and Curunna, V. (2008) *The housing careers of Indigenous urban households*, AHURI Final Report No. 112, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/112>.

Flatau, P., Coleman, A., Memmott, P., Baulderstone, J. and Slatter, M. (2009) *Sustaining at-risk Indigenous tenancies: a review of Australian policy responses*, AHURI Final Report No. 138, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/138>.

Habibis, D., Phillips, R., Phibbs, P. and Verdouw, J. (2014) *Progressing tenancy management reform on remote Indigenous communities*, AHURI Final Report No. 223, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/223>.

Habibis, D., Phillips, R., Phibbs, P. and Verdouw, J. (2015) *Identifying effective arrangements for tenancy management service delivery to remote Indigenous communities*, AHURI Positioning Paper No. 165, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/position-papers/165>.

⁹ AIHW (2014) *Housing circumstances of Indigenous households: tenure and overcrowding*, AIHW, Canberra.

Memcott, P., Birdsall-Jones, C. and Greenop, K. (2012) *Australian Indigenous house crowding*, AHURI Final Report No. 194, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/194>.

Milligan, V., Phillips, R., Easthope, H. and Memcott, P. (2011) *Urban social housing for Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islanders: respecting culture and adapting services*, Final Report No. 172, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/172.

20190 The role of construction costs in house prices

Policy issue: The costs of construction potentially contribute to higher house prices.

What are the costs and do house prices in Australia reflect the physical costs of new construction?

Context

New housing supply in Australia is concentrated in mid-high price segments rather than low price segments, and increased prices induce only modest increases in supply, meaning that housing supply typically lags demand. Shortages are most acute in urban areas where there are job opportunities and land shortages mean supply of units is stronger than for houses (Ong et al. 2017).

Construction costs are a factor in whether a new development is viable in terms of profitability. Key input costs relate to land, labour and material costs. Increased costs of land in developed areas have led to reduced lot sizes which might help to reduce costs of housing however accompanied by increased house sizes suggesting ambiguous outcomes for housing costs (Goodman et al. 2010). Other factors that can influence prices of land include infrastructure charges which add to effective development costs, and planning and land use restrictions which limit available supply (Gurran et al. 2009). Production costs are relatively low in the suburban house building sector with labour generally available where it is needed however fluctuations in house building activity, low labour force skills, poor management and work cultures also lead to high turnover in workers (Dalton et al. 2013).

AHURI research also finds that the most important capital costs are the holding costs of land and costs of labour while delays occur (Gurran et al. 2009) but also that the costs of material inputs to Australian building may have increased over time, especially with the increased use of concrete and other more technically challenging techniques associated with multi-unit developments (Ong et al. 2017).

Research opportunities

Research should consider:

- the key drivers of costs of residential construction in different areas and market segments and change over time including the required rate of return in the construction industry
- capacity constraints in the labour market for housing construction
- whether new techniques (e.g. off-site manufacture) are viable and effectively used to reduce the cost of producing housing with offsets on house price to consumers
- the role of all cost types in producing different types of housing, including the costs of regulation, and what cost types could potentially be reduced.

Relevant AHURI research

Dalton, T., Hurley, J., Gharaie, E., Wakefield, R. and Horne, R. (2013) *Australian suburban house building: industry organisation, practices and constraints*, AHURI Final Report No. 213, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/213>.

Goodman, R., Buxton, M., Chhetri, P., Taylor, E. and Wood, G. (2010) *Planning and the characteristics of housing supply in Melbourne*, AHURI Final Report No. 157, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/157>.

Gurran, N., Ruming, K., Randolph, B. (2009) *Counting the costs: planning requirements, infrastructure contributions, and residential development in Australia*, AHURI Final Report No. 140, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/140>.

Ong, R., Dalton, T., Gurran, N., Phelps, C., Rowley, S. and Wood, G. (2017) *Housing supply responsiveness in Australia: distribution, drivers and institutional settings*, AHURI Final Report No. 281, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/281>.

2019P Whole of life housing costs

Policy issue: Secure and affordable housing is of great value when economic and social benefits are considered over the course of life.

Are values set by the market (i.e. which reflect the wealth that households estimate they will accumulate over their life) accurate in predicting/reflecting the true benefits of such housing?

Context

Housing affordability (commonly measured with housing stress measures) is a significant issue in Australia (Yates and Milligan 2007). Choice and constraint play a role for example, affordability problems for some mortgage holders may just be a temporary phase while mortgages are large, but diminish over time as equity builds—some householders may take on more stress and risk.

Recent AHURI research (Wood, Smith et al. 2013) shows that most households move out of housing stress over a period of three years, suggesting that most householders are able to manage affordability issues through additional labour efforts or moving housing. Less is known about the ongoing costs of sustaining housing such as rates and maintenance, as households' age, and their income decreases in retirement however affordable housing or home ownership have been shown to have significant social, economic and health benefits (Bridge, Cockburn-Campbell et al. 2003).

Research opportunities

There may be a role to look at how we measure affordability over the life course across different demographics not just in terms of immediate income affordability, but also in terms of life outcomes. Research should consider:

- new measures of affordability over time that might be used
- how this might impact on reimagining housing policy in Australia
- at which points in the housing pathways of individuals and families might intervention make sense, and what moral hazards for market behaviours might occur if interventions took place.

Relevant AHURI research

Bridge, C., Cockburn-Campbell, J., Flatau, P., Whelan, S., Wood, G., Yates, J. (2003) *Housing assistance and non-shelter outcomes*, AHURI Final Report No. 40, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/40>.

Wood, G., Smith, S., Ong, R. and Cigdem, M. (2013) *The edges of home ownership*, AHURI Final Report No. 216, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/216>.

Yates, J., Milligan, V. (2007) *Housing affordability: a 21st century problem*, AHURI Final Report No. 105, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/105>.

2019Q Data projects

To support policy development in housing and homelessness, the AHURI National Housing Research Program has, over time, systematically analysed a range of key secondary data sets (e.g. AIHW, ABS, HILDA) to provide a series of fundamental statistics about housing and homelessness in Australia. As new data becomes available these analyses require updating. Also as new datasets become available on additional areas of policy interest, analysis of these is encouraged to add to the evidence base.

Data projects should include a national picture and comparisons across areas such as states and territories, in particular in relation to the following themes: affordable housing supply and tenure change in home ownership, private rental and social housing; homelessness; Indigenous housing; urban and regional infrastructure and planning; housing and labour markets; housing finance; housing assistance; non-shelter outcomes; and demographics in relation to different housing need cohorts.

Applications to undertake secondary data analyses projects should clearly demonstrate the policy development rationale for undertaking the data analysis. Applications must also demonstrate critical engagement with recent developments in methodology and critical awareness of the current policy and practice context.

The deliverables resulting from secondary data projects will be short reports focused on the data analysis and its implications for policy development which may, by negotiation, warrant peer review and publication in the AHURI Report series.

6 National Housing Research Program 2019 Funding Round

The annual NHRP Funding Round opens with the publication of the NHRP 2019 Research Agenda which calls for research funding applications.

The annual NHRP 2019 Funding Round capacity building component consists of one Scholarship Top-up for a postgraduate student at each AHURI Research Centre, and their attendance at the annual postgraduate symposium.

	Opening	Closing
NHRP Funding Round	Monday 16 April 2018	Friday 10 August 2018 12 noon AEST
Scholarship Top-up	Monday 16 April 2018	Friday 12 April 2019 COB AEST

National Housing Research Program application

The 2019 Research Agenda must be read in conjunction with:

- NHRP Handbook.
- NHRP Guidelines for applicants.
- Ethical principles and guidelines for Indigenous research.

An AHURI Research Centre Director must submit all applications for funding using the AHURI Submission Form also available on the AHURI website.

Supporting documentation and application forms are available on the [AHURI website](#).

The selection process for funding through the NHRP is competitive and based on the absolute merit of the application. Each application is independently assessed against key selection criteria by four members of the [NHRP Research Panel](#). Advice is provided by the NHRP Research Panel to the AHURI Limited Board for funding approval. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by **mid December 2018**.