

Making a Difference...

together

The County of Huron's Social and Property Services Department is now in the fourth year of its Long Term Housing and Homelessness Plan, 2014-2024. With the help of focus groups, community partners, and a dedicated Steering Committee, nine key objectives were developed to help the County focus its work and offer locally relevant solutions to the housing issues faced by many in our community. The year 2017/2018 was not unique in our continued commitment to realize those objectives. Before delving further into the work of the Social and Property Services Department, we cannot move forward without a moment of pause to reflect on the local commitment and dedication by our Department Director, Barb Springall. Her leadership, wisdom and compassion guided much of the work done to address homelessness in Huron and to enhance the community's capacity to respond to the needs of Huron's most vulnerable. It is with heavy hearts that we say good bye to Barb, but promise to remain steadfast in our resolve to make a difference **together**.

Many thanks to the members of the Housing & Homelessness Steering Committee for their continued support of the vision and objectives of the

Long Term Housing & Homelessness Plan

Catherine Hardman
Choices for Change

Beth Patterson
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Huron County Health Unit

Susan Dill
Huron Women's Shelter
& Second Stage Housing



The National Occupancy Rate

how full shelters are

**INCREASED
BY MORE THAN 10%**

between 2005-2014

It has been a year of great change in the housing world at all levels; Federal, Provincial and Municipal Government. The Federal Government recognized the depth of housing need on National Housing Day announcing 1.7 million Canadians are in core housing need, with an estimated population of over 200,000 individuals living homeless and accessing the emergency shelter system annually. That latter number may be conservative given the significant number of people living in hidden homelessness situations. With that in mind it was welcome news that the new National Housing Strategy promises investments that will address long waitlists with new affordable housing units, overdue repairs on existing social housing buildings and a commitment to affordable housing and homelessness in a bid to end chronic homelessness.

Provincial requirements to enumerate the homeless population will further understand the scope of the issue. In March 2018 Huron County conducted a count of our homeless population and a report of the findings will be available in September 2018.

If you are a landlord consider participating in our Rent Supplement Program

As a private citizen please consider a secondary unit in your home; low vacancy rates make it difficult to obtain affordable housing

Work with community partners to support those in emergency housing situations by volunteering or making donations

Support housing initiatives in your community

Become an ambassador for those most vulnerable in our community by breaking down stigmas

how can you help?

together...

Let's Understand Homelessness

Homelessness has changed over the years.

Once understood to be an older single male issue homelessness has seen a shift in the demographics since the early 1980's. The homeless crisis today is far more diverse; more women, families and youth are experiencing homelessness than in the past.

Defining Homelessness.

It is important that we build a common language and understanding of the problem of homelessness. The Province of Ontario adopted the recommended definition that was set for by the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness. The complete definition and report can be found at **Ending Homelessness**. (Ontario.ca)

Homelessness is not just an urban problem.

Historically it may have looked as such as individuals experiencing homelessness were generally required to leave rural communities to access the supports they required. In rural communities it is estimated that 80% of homelessness is hidden in nature.

Why is homelessness hidden?

Stereotypes and stigmas in small communities where folks all generally know one another make it challenging for those experiencing homelessness to reveal their situation. That is generally reserved to select trusted few. Homelessness can also cause a restriction in services so keeping it a secret is generally among the many resilient skills drawn upon for survival.

Due to stigma it becomes even harder to support and offer services.

Staying hidden further allows those individuals or families to remain in the very communities in which they lived. Like those of us with a home we have the right select the community in which we want to live, where we have the much needed support from friends and family.

Among the significant barriers in improving ones homeless situation is the lack of transportation.

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS



Homelessness is complex. Seldom is there a single contributing factor to homelessness but rather a multitude of factors that intersect deepening the crisis. Exiting homelessness is even more challenging.

Structural Factors.

This is where homelessness and poverty intersect, economic and societal factors that affect opportunity. Such factors include access to adequate income, access to affordable housing, access to appropriate health supports and discrimination.

System Failures.

These are when the systems of care or support may fail such as during the transition from child welfare, corrections, hospital or a lack of newcomer services.

Individual Circumstances.

Traumatic events, familial breakdown and health issues are among examples of individual circumstances that can significantly contribute to a person's journey into homelessness.



Further explanation found at **The Homeless Hub** (homelesshub.ca)

An average of **35,000** Canadians are homeless any given night.

Youth (13-24)
18.7%

Older Adults & Seniors (50-64, 65+)
24.4%

Women (25-55)
27.3%

Men (25-55)
47.5%

Working

together

Homeless Programs and Services in Huron

HOMELESS PREVENTION

In line with the Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy, The County of Huron works in partnership with several community agencies to provide funding that assists households in maintaining their housing. Such programs include assistance with rental arrears and utility arrears.

In 2017/2018, 21 households engaged with agencies to stabilize their precarious housing situations.

HOUSING WITH RELATED SUPPORTS

The County offers the support of a Housing Outreach Worker along with relationships with other agencies that are able to offer supports to households that help stabilize housing. Huron Turning Point Residence and Addiction Supportive Housing are among the housing programs that offer intensive case management with the objective of addressing barriers to a successful tenancy.

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The County of Huron, in partnership with Lakeshore United Church and the Salvation Army entered into their second year of Huron Out of the Cold, a winter emergency shelter for adults which operates from December to the end of March. The program runs in the evening hours only, guests receive a light dinner, breakfast when they leave in the morning and a packed lunch for them to take with them during the day. While guests are in our care they have opportunity to engage with support agencies such as Ontario Works, Choices for Change, Canadian Mental Health and Housing Outreach Services.

the housing continuum

Emergency Housing Solutions

Housing Services

Investment in Affordable Housing

Homelessness	Emergency Shelters	Supportive Housing	Social Housing	Rental Housing & Home Ownership
<p>Homeless Prevention Initiatives</p> <p>Community Homeless Prevention Initiative funding for 2017/18: \$518,644</p> <p>Vision: A coordinated and holistic service delivery system that is people-centred, evidence informed and outcomes based, and reflects a Housing First approach that focuses on homelessness prevention and reduces reliance on emergency services.</p> <p>This vision reflects a shift towards a system that focuses on proactive and permanent housing solutions rather than reactive responses to homelessness.</p> <p>Estimated 235,000 Canadians homeless annually</p> <p>In 2017-18 The Huron County Community Homeless Prevention Initiative funding supported 39 households who required emergency sheltering, services and supports to 142 households and prevented the potential housing loss for 356 households</p>	<p><i>Huron Out of the Cold</i></p> <p>received 28 unique individuals in the 2017-18 season</p> <p>121 nights of service</p> <p>1/3 of the guests were female</p> <p>Guests received three meals daily, connection to community social services agencies and outreach workers</p> <p>Including St. John's Therapy Dog program</p>	<p><i>Huron Turning Point Residence</i></p> <p>3 bed transitional home for men</p> <p>Supported 7 individuals</p> <p><i>ASH Addiction Supportive Housing</i></p> <p>Supported 4 individuals</p>	<p>415 Social Housing Units, 55 Affordable Housing Units</p> <p>Huron Social Housing Wait List – just under 400 people (approximately 5 years for a one-bedroom in Goderich)</p> <p>Provincial Social Housing Wait List – approximately 180,000 people</p>	<p>Household can support itself fully in housing costs</p> <p>Huron County Funding:</p> <p><i>SHIP Funding (Social Housing Improvement Program)</i></p> <p>\$565,000 in capital repair funding went to six housing provider and the local housing corporation</p> <p><i>Investment in Affordable Housing 2017/2018</i></p> <p>funding of \$503,000 will be combined with the 2018/2019 funding allocation to create 12 affordable units in Goderich</p> <p><i>SIF (Social Infrastructure Fund)</i></p> <p>\$440,000 2017/2018 funding</p> <p>Investment in Affordable Housing Programs</p> <p>2017/18 there were 3 homeownership grants given in Huron County</p>

Zero to Very Low Income

Very Low to Low Income

Low to Moderate Income

Moderate to High Income