



County of Huron
Social & Property Services
**2023 Housing and
Homelessness
Annual Report**

www.HuronCounty.ca/social-services

Cover Photo: Sanders Street Housing Development

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we stand upon today is the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral peoples and is connected to the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and its resources by the Great Lakes in peace.

We also acknowledge the Upper Canada Treaties signed in regards to this land, which include Treaty #29 and Treaty #45 ½.

We recognize First Peoples' continued stewardship of the land and water as well as the historical and ongoing injustices they face in Canada. We accept responsibility as a public institution and as treaty people to renew relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people through reconciliation, community service, and respect.

Fundamental Right to Housing Statement

The Corporation of the County of Huron is dedicated to enhancing the social and economic well-being of Huron County through the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

The County supports an individual's fundamental right to housing without discrimination as protected under Ontario's Human Rights Code.

Message from the Director of Social and Property Services | Barbara Hall

Social and Property Services' goal is to enhance the social and economic well-being of Huron County by creating and preserving affordable housing for all individuals.

To guide our efforts, we have developed a strategic plan for the period of 2014-2024, focusing on key areas such as leadership and governance, expanding access to affordable housing, data collection, and improving service coordination. Each year, we provide an update on our progress through an Annual Report. Through our strategic areas, we aim to establish a people-centered system of housing and homelessness that addresses the unique and complex needs of individuals and families in our community.

Over the years, we have taken significant actions to address affordable housing and homelessness. These actions include the establishment of a local Housing and Homelessness Steering Committee, the implementation of homeless prevention partnerships, as well as investments in affordable housing.

In 2023, we faced both challenges and advancements in our efforts. Homelessness in our community has been on the rise, and funding continues to be a challenge. However, we have made significant progress in various areas. We have completed the Bennett Street triplexes and commenced the construction of the Sanders Street and Gibbons Street builds, which will provide a total of 60 new units. We have also shifted our Emergency Sheltering Program from a congregate setting to a motel model, ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness.

In terms of our coordinated approach, we have successfully implemented a By-Name List and a Coordinated Access System. The By-Name List allows us to have real-time, up-to-date information on individuals experiencing homelessness, enabling us to prioritize and refer them to appropriate housing interventions.

I would like to express my gratitude to our dedicated Housing and Homelessness Teams, who work tirelessly to manage waitlists, administer funding, and provide

affordable housing options across the continuum of housing needs. I would also like to acknowledge our local, provincial, and national partners who collaborate with us to address housing and homelessness challenges in our community.

The County of Huron remains committed to enhancing the social and economic well-being of our residents through the creation and preservation of affordable housing. We will continue to advocate for resources, improve service coordination, and work towards a people-centered system of housing and homelessness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Hall', written in a cursive style.

Barbara Hall

County of Huron

Director of Social and Property Services

2014-2024 Strategic Areas for Action

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Expand Access to Affordable Housing, including Housing with Supports
3. Data Collection
4. Develop an Emergency Service System Oriented Toward Ending Homelessness
5. Increase Targeted Efforts to Prevent Homelessness
6. Improve Service Coordination
7. Use Municipal Tools to Facilitate Affordable Housing Preserve and Improve Existing Social Housing
8. Preserve and Improve the Existing Social Housing
9. Establish a People-Centered System of Housing and Homelessness

Actions to Date

2014:

- Established a local Housing and Homelessness Steering Committee.
- Homeless prevention partnerships commence.
- Investment Affordable Housing- Extension funded for 5 years (2014-2019).

2015:

- On-boarded Housing Outreach Worker.
- Addiction Supportive Housing (ASH) Program of Huron is established.

2016:

- Huron Out of the Cold is launched with partners.
- Huron Turning Point Residence opens.
- Homeless Programs Supervisor position is developed.

2017:

- Enumeration planning phase begins.
- Homelessness Programs continued to be maintained.

2018:

- Homelessness Enumeration occurs.
- A Contribution Agreement for a 12-unit affordable housing rental build is developed.

2019:

- Special Priority Population Portable Housing Benefit launched.
- Preliminary Municipal housing benefit planning.
- Ontario Provincial Housing Initiative and Canada Ontario Housing Initiative funding- 3 years.

2020:

- The County of Huron leads the operations of the Huron Out of the Cold partnership.
- The County of Huron develops an ongoing COVID-19 response.

2021:

- The County of Huron launches an advocacy campaign entitled Be Part of the Solution that offers fact-based resources and reports on current County actions towards reducing and ending homelessness in this community.
- The County of Huron participates in an Enumeration Project identifying 169 individuals experiencing homelessness in Huron County. It is important to note that this number represents the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in Huron County.

2022:

- Huron County receives the Housing Renewal Plan identifying residential intensification opportunities.
- Three sites prioritized: Sanders Street, Bennett Street, and Gibbons Street builds. Project Business Cases prepared.
- The County of Huron launches the By-Name List.
- Huron County Coordinated Access commences.

2023:

- Housing Programs Supervisor position is developed.
- Homelessness Programs Coordinator position is developed.
- Housing Liaison position is developed.
- Bennett Street build is completed, and 6 new tenants are housed.
- 20-unit Sanders Street and 40-unit Gibbons Street builds begin.
- The Emergency Sheltering Program shifts from a congregate setting to a motel model.
- A total of \$7,916,063.00 received from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI), the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), and the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) for the investment in three new community housing builds: Bennett Street, Sanders Street, and Gibbons Street.

2023 Highlights

- Huron County received \$1,085,200 in provincial funding for homelessness services which are used to fund transitional housing, emergency sheltering, and supportive housing programs.
- \$152,123.32 distributed to 162 households for first or last months rent, rental arrears, and/or utility arrears to support homelessness prevention.
- A continued development of a coordinated response to homelessness through the Huron County Coordinated Access System. New partnerships in 2023 include: the Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services, the Southern Huron Connection Centre, the Northern Huron Connection Centre, the Huron Women's Shelter, the Housing Liaison, and the Huron County Paramedicine Program.
- In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services maintained the Heart to Home Stability Team.
- Funding from the County supported a motel model of emergency sheltering in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services and the United Way of Perth Huron. The Heart to Home Stability Team supported 46 unique individuals within the Emergency Shelter Program this season, and of those 46 individuals, 20 individuals were supported in obtaining long-term, permanent housing. The Team also supported 18 individuals to become document ready, an important step in accessing housing programs and income support in the homelessness serving system. Individuals who were experiencing homelessness for the first time, or who were accessing Emergency Shelter for the first time, were added to the Huron County By-Name List to ensure data quality and access to housing resources through the Coordinated Access System.
- 88 Huron County residents receiving the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit.
- 7 Huron County residents receiving the Homelessness Housing Allowance.

- 40 applicants from the Centralized Housing Waitlist moved into community housing.
- 47 households from Huron County's By-Name List were supported in finding permanent or long-term housing.
- Huron Turning Point Residence, Addiction Supportive Housing (ASH), and the Bennett Street Program operate as transitional housing programs which are an essential component of a stepped model of care. Collectively, 26 unique individuals were transitionally housed in these programs.
- Huron Safe Homes for Youth supported 4 young people experiencing homelessness. The Organization recognizes that adolescence is a period of transition where youth and their families face many challenges, and that often unresolved difficulties may contribute to a breakdown of the family unit. In response, the Organization is able to respond to crisis and emergency situations involving young people and their families, in an attempt to resolve difficulties, and when appropriate, restore the family unit.
- Achieved a Basic Quality By-Name List for chronic homelessness with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and Built for Zero Canada.
- Achieved a Reaching Home level of Coordinated Access with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and Built for Zero Canada.

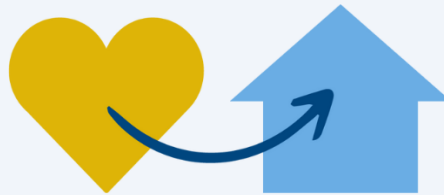
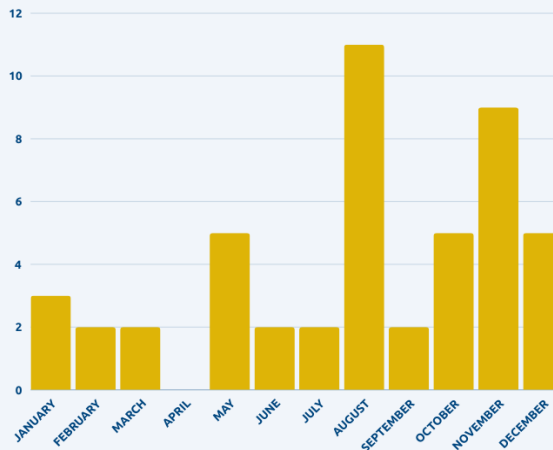
2023 HURON HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS SERVING SYSTEM

47 HOUSEHOLDS FROM THE BY-NAME LIST MOVED INTO PERMANENT LONG-TERM HOUSING IN 2023.



30 SINGLE ADULTS
15 FAMILIES
2 YOUTH

MOVE-INS BY MONTH:



33 CHRONICALLY HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS
14 EPISODICALLY HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS

Coming in 2024

A New Long-Term Affordable Housing and Homelessness Plan (2025-2035)

The Province of Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy requires all Consolidated Municipal Service Managers to create a long-term Plan intended to guide the County and its partners in planning, coordinating, and delivering housing and homelessness services for the next ten years.

Opening of Sanders Street Build in Exeter, Ontario

The County of Huron is in the construction phase of a 20-unit apartment building, located on Sanders Street in Exeter, Ontario. The project is anticipated to be complete by summer 2024, bringing 20 new units online.



By-Name List & Coordinated Access

Community Entry Points:

Community Entry Points are identified agency locations in Huron who have regular contact with individuals or families experiencing homelessness and have been trained to assess individual and family needs. Community Entry Points ensure that anyone experiencing homelessness in Huron County has equitable access to available housing and supports that are appropriate for their unique needs.

When an individual or family presents as homeless in the community, they will be directed to an identified Community Entry Point to begin the process of assessment and referral. Agency staff, at the Community Entry Points, will be trained to help individuals be diverted from homelessness wherever possible. If an individual or family has experienced homelessness for 14+ days without being able to resolve their own experience of homelessness, the Community Entry Point will:

1. Gain consent to share information, and
2. Complete an assessment to determine their acuity and unique needs.

By-Name List:

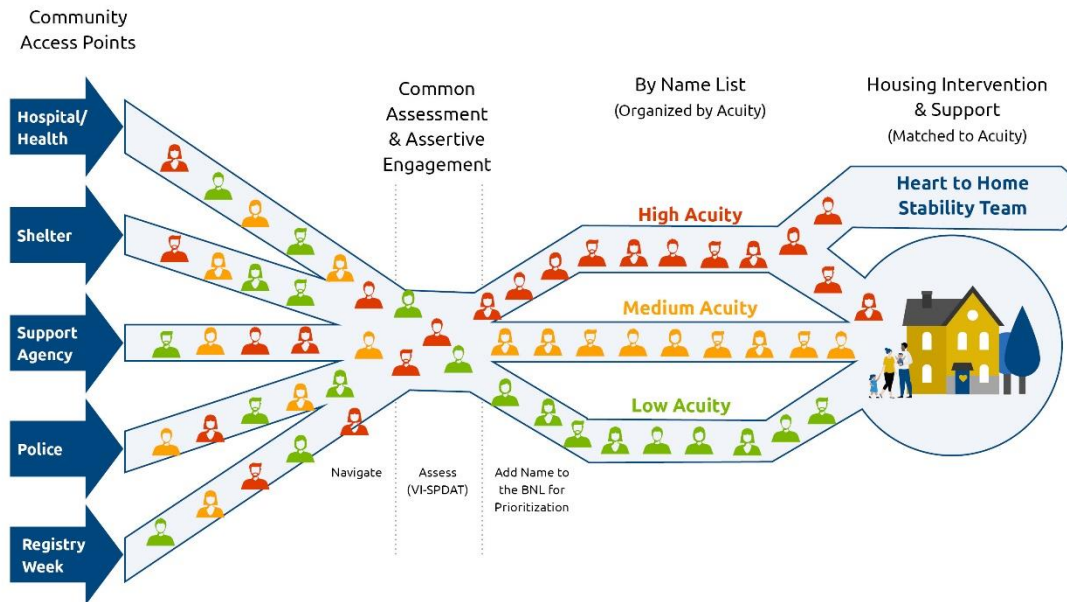
A By-Name List (BNL) is a real time, up to date list of all people known to experiencing homelessness in a community. Individuals and families are listed using unique identifiers, and additional information such as name, current state of housing, presenting risks and vulnerabilities is also collected.

As individuals are added to the By-Name List (BNL), they will be prioritized, matched, and referred to appropriate housing intervention or community supports dedicated to resolving homelessness.

Coordinated Access System:

A Coordinated Access System is a community wide strategy to help prevent homelessness and eliminate chronic homelessness. The objective of the Huron County Coordinated Access System is to match households experiencing homelessness to the appropriate housing and support resources, using a Housing First approach.

Coordinated Access In Action:



Housing and Homelessness in Huron County

The County of Huron's Housing and Homelessness Teams are responsible for:

- Managing waitlists and access to affordable housing throughout Huron County, according to provincial and local priorities.
- Administering funding, overseeing standards, and providing capacity building to non-profit and co-operative housing providers in Huron County.
- Providing affordable housing options across the continuum of housing needs, from shelters, transitional and supportive housing, to rent-geared-to-income and affordable rental options in Huron County.
- Meeting the unique and complex housing needs of individuals and families in Huron County, informed by the priorities set out in the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, as well as provincial and federal programs and legislation.

Meet the Housing & Homelessness Team:

Christine Hoffman, Manager of Housing Services

Housing Services Team:

Jayne Koskamp, Housing Services Supervisor

Amanda Stevenson and Juli Melick, Client Services Supervisors

Julie Fortune, Client Services Coordinator

Colby Middleton, Housing Programs Coordinator

Shannon Daniels, Housing Stability Worker

Homelessness Programs Team:

Erin Schooley, Homelessness Programs Supervisor

Madison Spriggs, Homelessness Programs Coordinator

Kasey Crawford, Housing Liaison

Honourable Mention

The Housing and Homelessness Annual Report wouldn't be complete without celebrating the career of Christine Hoffman, Manager of Housing Services with Social and Property Services.

Following her graduation from College, Christine started her professional journey with Gaffney Construction. Christine worked as part of the Gaffney Construction Team for two years before starting with Ontario Housing in Stratford.

After five years in Stratford, Christine moved over to Ontario Housing with Huron County. Upon the download in 2001, she then became a direct employee of the County of Huron.

Christine became the Manager of Housing Services in 2020.

Christine has been working in housing for 34 years.

We want to thank Christine for the years she has dedicated to housing and homelessness in Huron County, and we wish her all the best in her retirement.

From all the staff at the County of Huron, congratulations Christine!

Update on Residential Intensification Projects

Building a variety of affordable housing options that meet diverse needs of individuals and families living across a range of household incomes is crucial to reducing pathways into homelessness.

In 2023, we completed a triplex development that brought six new units online and we are in the construction phase of a 20-unit apartment building, located in Exeter, Ontario that is anticipated to be complete by summer 2024.

In addition, we have recently begun construction on a 40-unit apartment located on Gibbons Street in Goderich, Ontario. While we are committed to seeing this development through to completion, funding continues to be sourced to support this project.

Sanders Street Build (Exeter, Ontario):



- Designed by Allan Avis Architects.
- 20 one-bedroom units.
- The building is being constructed on a site currently owned by the County of Huron.

- The High Performance Building Standard tool was used in the design of this building. This resulted in a build that has a higher energy efficiency than the provincial standard.
- The building will have 8 barrier free units, which also exceeds the minimum standards.

Gibbons Street Build (Goderich, Ontario):



- Designed by Allan Avis Architects.
- Construction on this project is underway and anticipated to be complete by summer 2025.
- 40 units overall; 30 one-bedroom units and 10 two-bedroom units.
- 10 of the total units will be reserved for supportive housing units.
- The building will be constructed on a site that was sold to the County of Huron from the Town of Goderich for \$1.
- The High Performance Building Standard tool was used in the design of this building. This resulted in a build that has a higher energy efficiency than the provincial standard.
- The building will have 8 barrier free units, which also exceeds the minimum standards.

Bennett Street Triplexes (Goderich, Ontario):



- Designed by Allan Avis Architects.
- 6-units; 4 one-bedroom units and 2 two-bedroom units. The ground floor units are accessible units.
- The triplexes were constructed on County owned property, replacing two single-detached dwellings.
- The High Performance Building Standard tool was used in the design of this building. This resulted in a build that has a higher energy efficiency than the provincial standard.

Feature Profile | Housing Liaison

The current housing crisis is creating increased barriers for vulnerable members in our community. The increased cost of monthly rent and utilities, along with an increased demand for housing availability, are making securing housing challenging. Shelter components of those in receipt of Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program cover only a fraction of the current rental rates, making private market rent increasingly challenging for members of our community to afford.

In partnership with the Perth Huron United Way, The County of Huron's Housing and Homelessness Team is happy to have onboarded a Housing Liaison in June of 2023. This position requires strong advocacy skills, empathetic listening, and the ability to navigate the complex and confusing private housing market and associated housing resources. The Housing Liaison helps to break down the barriers to housing, while also supporting individuals to see their own skill sets and empower them to leverage those skills to resolve their own housing instability.

The Housing Liaison takes referrals from the Huron County By-Name List in accordance with the County of Huron Coordinated Access Framework.

Key Job Components:

- Liaison between the landlord, support services, and the tenant, serving as the main point of contact for the landlord.
- Completes private market research and continuously builds a landlord database.
- Address issues related to maintenance, health and safety, housing quality, and rent and utility payments.
- Inspect the unit and assess any need for repairs.

2023 Private Market Wins:

- The creation of a *Client Resource Binder* which is utilized by the greater Homelessness Serving System in Huron County.

- 6 presentations and community training sessions on the *Client Resource Binder* for social services partners who service the greater Homelessness Serving System in Huron County.
- 5 individuals and families housed in the private market who received support from the Housing Liaison.
- 54 private market landlord relationships established by the Housing Liaison.

Bright Spot | Achievements with The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness & Built for Zero Canada

On May 31, 2023, Huron County was confirmed through the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness as having **achieved a Basic Quality By-Name List for chronic homelessness**. Huron County is recognized as the 39th community in Canada to reach this milestone.

Having a Quality By-Name List means that Huron County has full coverage of real-time, person-level data from which we have demonstrated that reliable monthly aggregate-level data can be pulled. This data allows Huron County to support people in a coordinated way and ensure no one falls through the cracks, informs system improvements, monitors trends and progress in the community's work to address and reduce homelessness, and advocates for resources based on concrete data.

On July 14, 2023, Huron County was confirmed through the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness as having **achieved a Reaching Home level of Coordinated Access**. Huron County is recognized as the 36th community in Canada to reach this milestone.

To achieve Reaching Home Coordinated Access, communities must confirm a score of 7/7 on their Coordinated Access Scorecard, complete the Provider Participation Tool, and complete the Coordinated Access Initial Written Documents Checklist.



Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)

The vision for the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a better-coordinated and integrated service delivery system that is people-centred, outcome-focused, and reflects a Housing First approach to prevent, reduce, and address homelessness in communities across Ontario.

In 2023, \$1,085,200 of provincial funding was spent on these programs to assist residents of Huron County who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless.

HPP Objectives Include:

- To assist people experiencing homelessness to obtain and retain housing.
- To assist people at risk of homelessness to remain housed.

Components:

Housing Assistance

Supportive Housing

Emergency Shelter Solutions

Community Outreach and Support

Our Partners

Local Partners

- Huron-Perth Health Unit
- Huron Women's Shelter
- Safe Homes for Youth
- The Salvation Army
- Canadian Mental Health Association Huron-Perth
- Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley
- Huron O.P.P.
- Huron County Libraries
- Huron County Community Paramedicine Program
- United Way Perth-Huron & The Social Research and Planning Council
- Huron Health System
- Libro Credit Union
- Huron Turning Point Residence
- Huron County Council
- Huron-Perth Healthcare Alliance

Provincial Partners

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

National Partners

- The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
- Built for Zero Canada