



*Queensland*

*Good jobs  
Better services  
Great lifestyle*

# ourplace

A First Nations Housing and Homelessness  
Action Plan 2024-2027

## Consultation Guide

Understand the past, prepare for the future, act now.



**Queensland  
Government**



## About the Artwork

Embodied design (artwork) and document design by Iscariot Media, a Brisbane-based 100% Aboriginal owned creative and training agency ([IscariotMedia.com](http://IscariotMedia.com)).

Building on the foundations laid down by the first *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023*, this design moves to an aerial view bringing more depth and perspective to the next phase of action.

This design maps the landscape both physically and conceptually demonstrating the paths forward for communities in Queensland. Through various symbols this design is inspired by the diverse physical environments of our communities, from densely populated urban environments to smaller remote settings where communities gather. From the Torres Strait Islands to the North, the Eastern Coastal regions, the western communities and the built-up areas of southeast Queensland, themes of connection, strength, movement and communication thread across the whole design and become the link between all communities mirroring the themes present within *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027*. When we come together to create a stronger and more vibrant environment for our communities, we not only improve the wellbeing of all Queenslanders, but we also inspire positive change that can have far-reaching implications for generations to come.

*Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027. Consultation Guide.*

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# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land. We extend our respect to Elders, past, present, and emerging, and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this country.

We acknowledge the continuation of diverse cultural practices and knowledge systems of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination is a human right as enshrined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. The *Queensland Human Rights Act 2019* also recognises the particular significance of the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



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# A shared commitment

For First Nations peoples, there was no concept of ‘homelessness’ before colonisation. Everyone had a place to call home. Home was with kin, on Country, practising culture. But today, First Nations peoples are homeless or experiencing housing stress at far higher rates than other Queenslanders.

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* affirmed the Queensland Government’s commitment to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing outcomes. It paved the way for the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023* (first Action Plan), that places local communities at the centre of housing decision making. This fundamental shift created the foundations for a new way of working where First Nations communities lead, identify and implement housing solutions.

Queensland, along with the rest of Australia, is currently facing unprecedented housing pressures. The Queensland Government is taking urgent steps to respond, including holding the Queensland Housing Summit in October 2022 and the Housing Roundtable in March 2023 to chart a path towards a healthy housing system for Queensland.

First Nations peoples are more vulnerable to impacts from the current housing pressures. There is work to be done to overcome both the historical and current housing inequity, so that every Queenslander has the foundations of a safe and secure home.

Closing the housing gap requires both immediate action and long-term commitment through partnerships across all levels of government, industry and the sector. It will require bold actions, guided by First Nations voices to deliver housing solutions that work, now and for the future.

We are currently codesigning *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027* (Our Place Action Plan), building on the foundations of the first Action Plan. The Our Place consultation will provide the opportunity to explore how we can all work together to address First Nations housing inequity, guided by First Nations voices, to understand the past, prepare for future challenges and act now.

We know that solutions must be designed and delivered in partnership with the First Nations peoples of Queensland. Listening to people, to our stakeholders and to those with lived experience means that solutions reflect community’s concerns, values, needs and aspirations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples of this land we now share. The wisdom, knowledge and practices of First Nations peoples must be valued and elevated to help inform better government services for the benefit of all Queenslanders.



**The Honourable Meaghan Scanlon MP**  
Minister for Housing



**Neil Willmetts**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland

## A note on the language

Queensland is home to two unique and distinct First Nations cultures, Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. There are hundreds of Aboriginal nations, languages and groups on the mainland of Australia, each with their own cultures, lores and ways of living. Torres Strait Islander peoples also have unique cultures, languages and lores.

In this document, the collective terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations are used interchangeably. Indigenous (with a capital I) is used to reference First Nations peoples in Australia, only where it appears in a title of a document or policy and indigenous (with a lower case i) signals reference to indigenous peoples globally. We acknowledge the use of these terms can inadvertently homogenise and diminish the recognition of diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Use of ‘peoples’ recognises individual and collective dimensions as affirmed by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and also the diverse cultural identities within these collective terms.

## Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ATSIHAP 2019-23	<i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023</i>
ATSIHQ	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland
ATSILS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services
CNOS	Canadian National Occupancy Standard
HHAP 2021-25	<i>Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025</i>
HIF	Housing Investment Fund
HPP	Housing Policy Partnership
ICHO	Indigenous community housing organisation
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning and more
LTC	Local Thriving Communities
QAIHC	Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
QATSICPP	Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak
QHS 2017-27	<i>Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027</i>
QHS AP 2017-20	<i>Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2020 Action Plan</i>
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

# Have your say

We want to make sure that all interested Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland, and our industry, peak and sector partners have their say to inform the Our Place Action Plan.

You can have your say through:

- an online survey for individuals
- written submissions from organisations
- face-to-face and online yarning circles and focus groups across Queensland.

Find out more information about how to have your say at: [qld.gov.au/OurPlaceActionPlan](https://qld.gov.au/OurPlaceActionPlan).

Consultations close on 14 July 2023.

## Focus on First Nations voices

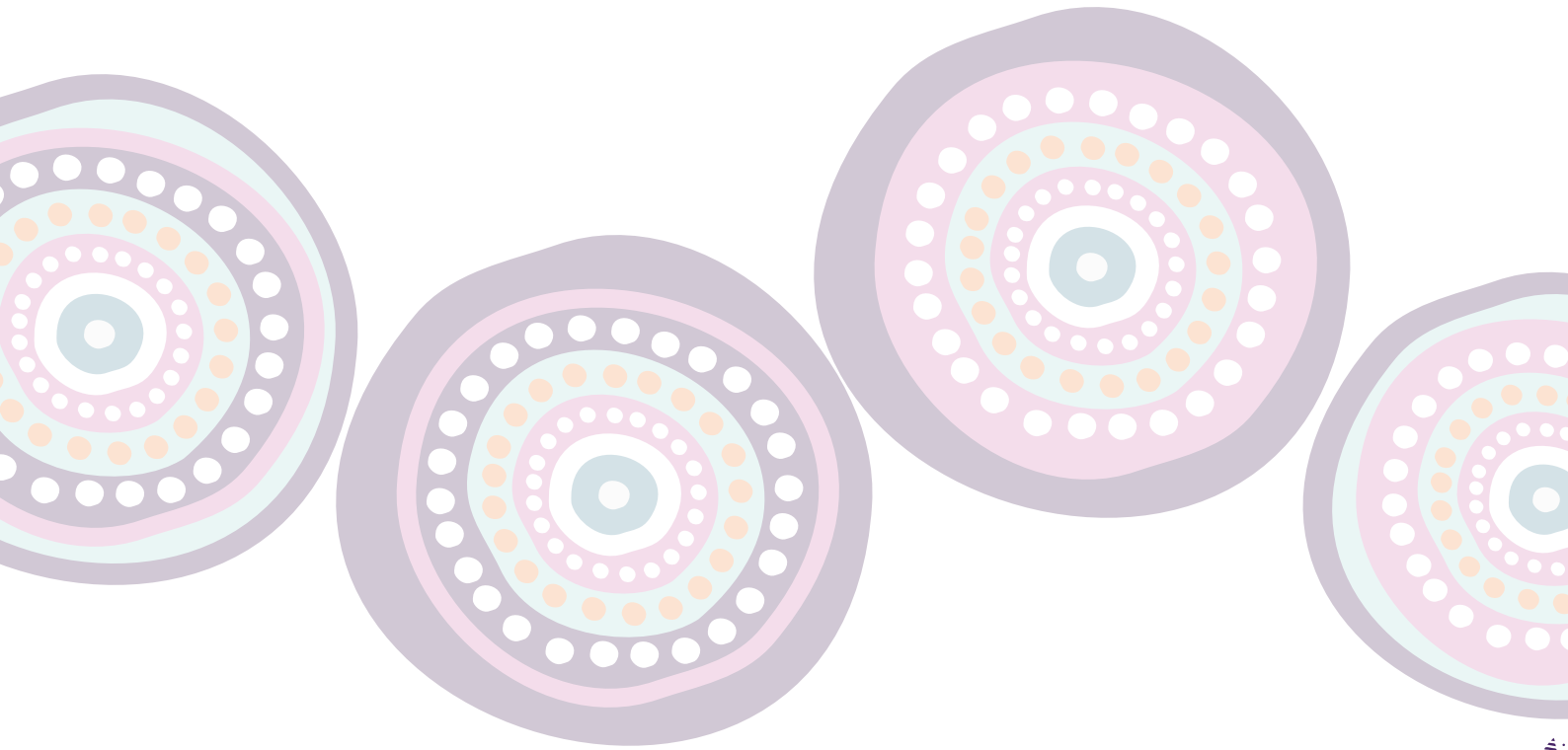
First Nations peoples' lived experiences are central to this consultation. The journey to closing the housing gap can only begin by listening to and building on existing community strengths and the community and cultural knowledge carried by First Nations peoples.

In line with this, First Nations peoples, organisations and lived experience will be prioritised in the analysis of responses.

## Next steps

Submissions and stakeholder feedback will be collated, analysed and summarised in a consultation report after the feedback timeframe has ended.

Building on this feedback, the Queensland Government will continue to work with a broad range of stakeholders, communities and partners to co-design the Our Place Action Plan.



## A shared challenge

Closing the housing gap is bigger than any one sector, industry or level of Government and requires all parties to work together towards a shared goal. This consultation process acknowledges the broader pressures that Queensland's housing system is experiencing and the comprehensive response the Queensland Government is delivering.

### ● Queensland Housing Summit

The Queensland Housing Summit, held in October 2022, provided almost 200 industry and other stakeholders an opportunity to discuss innovative strategies to support improved housing outcomes and was followed by the release of an Outcomes Report on 1 December 2022.

The Outcomes Report includes a program of actions, backed by \$56 million in new funding, which focuses on expanding housing supply and increasing housing support for Queenslanders. To find out more visit [qld.gov.au/about/queensland-housing-summit](https://qld.gov.au/about/queensland-housing-summit).

### ● Housing Opportunities Portal

This portal collects your ideas for solutions to make land available for temporary or permanent housing, repurpose existing buildings into housing or innovative projects. To make a submission visit [statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/planning/housing/housing-opportunities-portal](https://statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/planning/housing/housing-opportunities-portal).

The housing pressures being faced require action and collaboration across government, all ideas and solutions received through the Our Place Action Plan consultation process will be shared with the relevant agencies and stakeholders to inform broader system change and reform.



### The Queensland Government's Commitment

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring all Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing and is investing almost \$4 billion in social and affordable housing.

Investment of \$2.9 billion was committed under the *Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025* which included establishment of the \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund (HIF).

On 20 October 2022, the Queensland Government announced that the HIF was being increased to \$2 billion, generating returns to support 5,600 social and affordable housing commencements across Queensland by 30 June 2027.

# Consultation questions

To support the development of the Our Place Action Plan, the following questions have been developed to guide conversations and to prompt thinking and insights.

These questions are used to help shape input across all elements of the co-design including written submissions, the online survey, yarning circles and focus groups.

They are designed to be used flexibly and to encourage a focus on what is needed for your place, people and community or those you advocate for.



## The case for change

- What do you want *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027* to achieve?
- What does 'closing the housing gap' mean to you?
- How should First Nations housing outcomes be measured?

## The journey so far

- What lessons can we learn from the first Action Plan?
- Which specific initiatives from the first Action Plan have worked well?
- What could be the impacts on housing from reforms such as Closing the Gap, Path to Treaty and others?

## Person-centred and place-based responses

- From your perspective, what is needed to provide person-centred responses to housing need?
- Thinking about your community, what place-based responses are required to address local housing need?

## The challenges and opportunities ahead

- Are there other opportunities and challenges that need to be considered?
- What should we do now to prepare for these opportunities and challenges?

## A role for everyone

- Who needs to be involved?
- What are their roles?

## Governance and accountability

- What is needed to better enable shared decision making?
- How can First Nations self-determination be strengthened in the governance of the Our Place Action Plan?

## Your ideas for solutions

- What housing services and supports currently work well for First Nations people in Queensland?
- What changes or new initiatives are needed to achieve First Nations housing equity in Queensland, in order of priority?



# Sharing your truth

First Nations peoples' lived experiences are central to this conversation. For some First Nations peoples, interactions with government departments may have resulted in negative outcomes and feelings of racism, fear, exclusion or mistrust. The Our Place consultation acknowledges this and embraces truth telling and the need for safety and support.

## Truth telling

Queensland is on the Path to Treaty, beginning with truth telling. There will be a formal Truth Telling and Healing Inquiry which will document the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. The formal Truth Telling and Healing Inquiry, led by First Nations peoples, will provide a safe, supported and meaningful process to share stories and begin healing.

First Nations peoples are hearing about the Queensland Government's commitment to truth and healing, and many are ready to bring this truth to light. This consultation process may trigger memories, reactions or emotions.

We are committed to truth telling and healing and to providing a safe, supported and meaningful process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share stories and continue to heal. If there is a truth burning within that relates to Queensland's housing departments over the years, then we ask you to share a description of your experience and if you wish to do so, your personal details.

With your permission, this information can be shared with the Truth Telling and Healing Inquiry and will also help the Queensland Government become ready to support open and transparent truth telling in Queensland.

To share your truth visit [YourSay.chde.qld.gov.au/our-place-action-plan-share-your-truth](https://YourSay.chde.qld.gov.au/our-place-action-plan-share-your-truth).



“Treaty, through truth-telling, is not about guilt, but more about honesty. Truth Telling will not be easy for any of us. We will need to confront the positive and negative stories honestly and openly from both sides—First Nations communities and Government. That’s how we will get to treaty negotiations.”

Cheryl Buchanan, Co-chair, Interim Truth and Treaty Body



## Safety and support

The face-to-face consultations are designed to provide culturally and physiologically-safe environments and further supports will be connected to these sessions.

It is acknowledged that you may need additional support during any stage of participating in the Our Place consultation. If, at any time throughout this consultation, you wish to talk with someone or are worried about someone, please use the resources below:

### Call:

Lifeline on 13 11 14

### Visit:

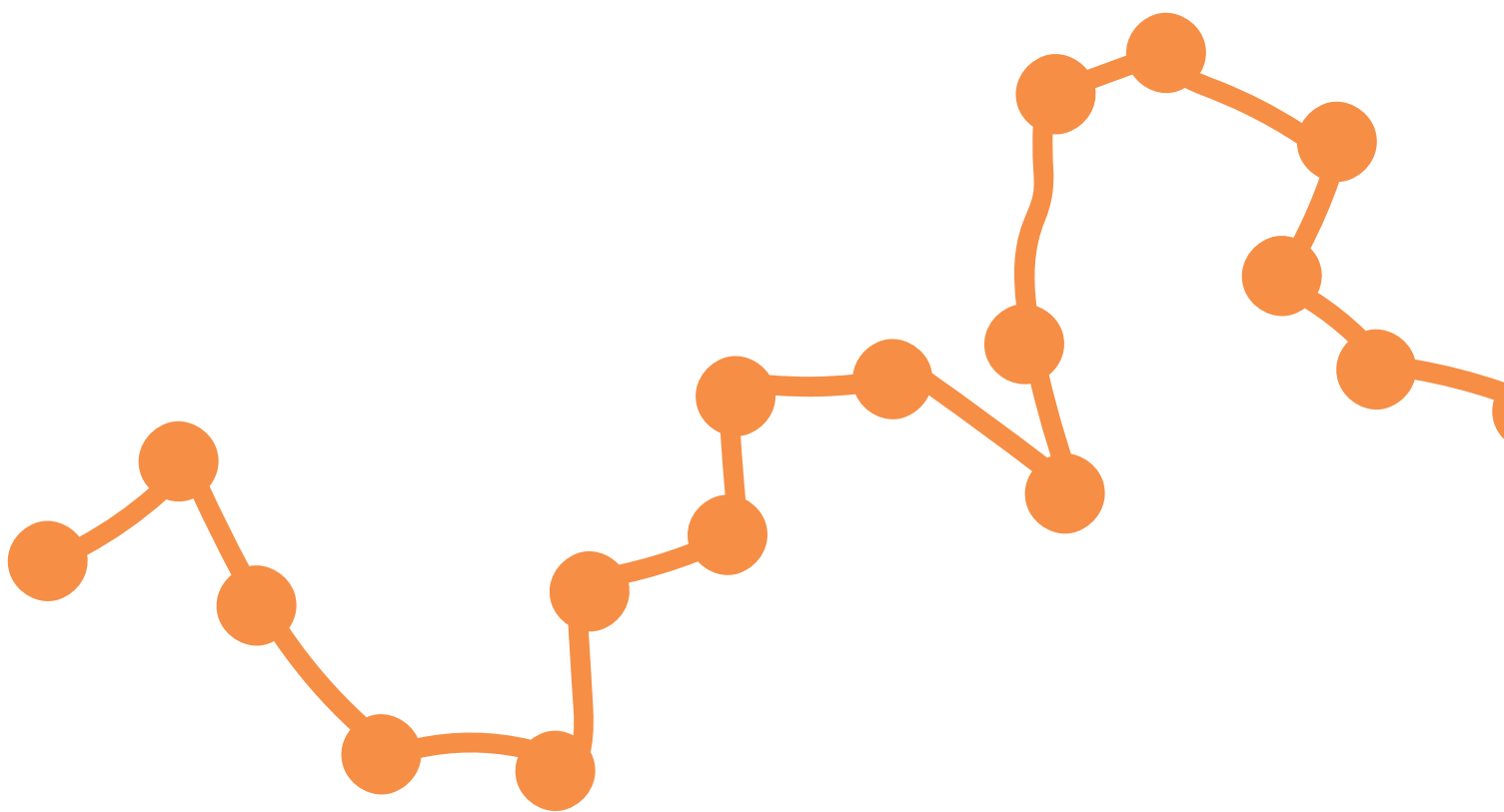
**Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care website** for information on how to support yourself and others.

**Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia website**, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention for support services.

**Beyond Blue website** for information on how to take care of yourself and manage your mental health and wellbeing.

For help with housing advice or support, please visit

**[qld.gov.au/FirstNations/managing-home-money/housing-support](https://qld.gov.au/FirstNations/managing-home-money/housing-support)**.



# The case for change



## QUESTIONS

- What do you want *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027* to achieve?
- What does ‘closing the housing gap’ mean to you?
- How should First Nations housing outcomes be measured?



## Understanding the ‘housing gap’

Having a home is a fundamental human right.<sup>1</sup> Having a roof over your head, and a safe place to call home is fundamental to social and emotional wellbeing and economic prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

Housing by itself does not break the cycle of disadvantage, however with the foundation of a home, better outcomes in education, health, domestic and family violence, justice, youth justice, child protection and economic development are more likely.<sup>3,4</sup>

Kinship, interconnectedness and community pride are central to family and community life, but First Nations cultures, practices and Country that once provided everything needed to have a ‘home’ have been eroded. First Nations peoples of Queensland now experience a ‘housing gap’.

Everyone should have the chance to live in a safe and secure home, regardless of their race or how much money they make.

For First Nations peoples, the underlying causes of housing insecurity include racism and historical exclusion from education and employment (for example, the wages of thousands of First Nations Peoples being stolen and controlled by the state).<sup>5,6,7</sup>

To make things fairer, we need to recognise and prioritise the unique perspectives and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. That is why the Queensland Government is working towards a future where First Nations peoples in Queensland have a fairer housing system.

# The current situation

**First Nations peoples currently experience a housing and homelessness gap. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland are:**

**Six times more likely to experience homelessness than other Queenslanders.<sup>A</sup>**



**More than 10 times more likely to live in social housing than other Queenslanders.<sup>B</sup>**



**Twice as likely to live in severely crowded homes than other Queenslanders.<sup>C</sup>**

**Only half as likely to own their own homes as other Queenslanders.<sup>D</sup>**



**Five times more likely to experience financial stress than other Australians.<sup>E</sup>**

A AIHW, 2017, *Australia's welfare 2017*, in brief. Cat. no. AUS 215, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

B AIHW, 2020, *Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report*, Cat. No. HOU 322, AIHW, Canberra.

C AIHW, 2017.

D Sanders, W, 2011, *Indigenous Australians and home ownership*, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research.

E Centre for Social Impact, 2019, *Money stories: Financial resilience among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, First Nations Foundation and NAB.



## National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) was signed by the Coalition of Peaks and all Australian Governments in 2020.

The objective of the National Agreement is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and all levels of government to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, so they can achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.

There are 19 national socio-economic targets across 17 socio-economic outcome areas that have an impact on life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The National Agreement commits Governments to working in a new way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through four priority reforms:

1. formal partnerships and shared decision making
2. building the community-controlled sector
3. transforming government organisations
4. providing shared access to data and information at a regional level.

In relation to housing, the National Agreement sets out the following outcome and target.

### Outcome

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need.

### Target

**9a:** By 2031, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing is to be increased to 88%.

**9b:** By 2031, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households:

- within discrete Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities receive essential services that meet or exceed the relevant jurisdictional standard
- in or near to a town receive essential services that meet or exceed the same standard as applies generally within the town.

For the first time, this agreement provides an agreed framework, through the priority reforms, that allows representatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to solve challenges on an equal footing with all Australian Government departments.

## How housing outcomes are measured

Currently, Target 9a, under the National Agreement is the key indicator used to determine progress towards 'closing the housing gap'.

Overcrowded housing can affect health, education and social outcomes, including by jeopardising personal safety and security. However, research has found wellbeing benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live with a supportive network of people.<sup>1</sup> The experience of overcrowding for First Nations households includes cultural and social factors, such as connection to family and a culture of sharing resources.<sup>2,3</sup>

### How overcrowding is measured

The data used to determine overcrowding is taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Australian Census of Population and Housing. Conducted every five years, the Census tells the story of how we are changing in terms of the economic, social and cultural make-up of the country.

Overcrowding is measured using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS), which will reflect the culture and preferences of some, but not all, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The CNOS considers a household is overcrowded if they are estimated to require three extra bedrooms.<sup>11</sup>

The CNOS is sensitive to both household size and composition in determining housing requirements. The measure assesses the bedroom requirements of a household by specifying that:

- there should be no more than two persons per bedroom
- children less than five years of age of different sexes may reasonably share a bedroom
- children five years of age or older of opposite sex should have separate bedrooms
- children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom
- single household members 18 years or older should have a separate bedroom, as should parents or couples.

### Queensland's progress

The baseline for measuring overcrowding under Closing the Gap was set based on Census data. At that time, Queensland was at 79%. The most recent 2021 Census, measured that 81% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland lived in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) dwellings.

# The journey so far



## QUESTIONS

- What are the lessons to be learnt from the first Action Plan?
- Which specific initiatives from the first Action Plan have worked well?
- What could be the impacts of housing reforms such as Closing the Gap, Path to Treaty and others?



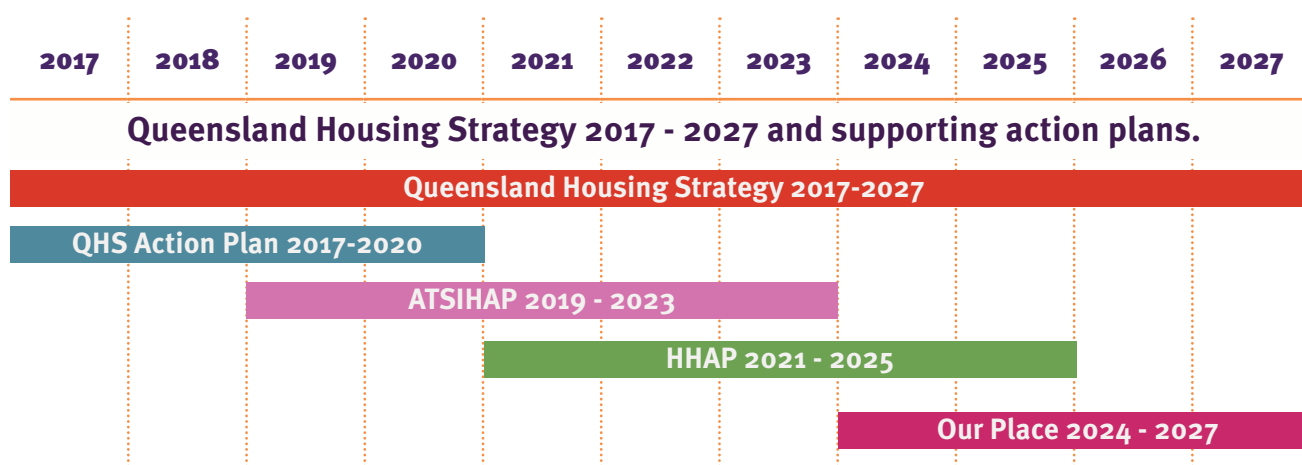
## Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* (QHS 2017-27) sets out the Queensland Government's commitment to work with communities, industry and the housing sector to deliver a better housing future for all Queenslanders. It is a 10-year plan to deliver more social and affordable homes and to transform the way housing services are delivered as essential frontline services across the state.

The *Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025* (HHAP 2021-25) builds on the foundations of the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2020 Action Plan* (QHS AP 2017-20) and the state's COVID-19 response throughout 2020.

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023* (ATSIHAP 2019-23; the first Action Plan) is supported and complemented by the HHAP 2021-25, reiterating the Queensland Government's commitment to working towards better housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland.

The QHS 2017-27 is being delivered through multiple action plans which can be found at [housing.qld.gov.au/about/strategy/housing](https://housing.qld.gov.au/about/strategy/housing).





# The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023

With a commitment of \$67.1 million to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the ATSIHAP 2019-23 (the first Action Plan) is being delivered in partnership with First Nations communities through community-led decision making.

The Action Plan focuses on sector strengthening, person-centred responses and Local Housing Plans supporting capital delivery for housing outcomes to support First Nations peoples in remote and discrete communities.



## A snapshot of achievements of the first Action Plan

- Established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland (ATSIHQ), the peak body for First Nations housing in Queensland to help strengthen the sector.
- Developing co-designed, place-based and community-led Local Housing Plans for all 17 remote and discrete councils.
- Completing 33 new builds, 11 home extensions and 20 new allotments with the capital grants under the \$40 million state contribution.\* In addition:
  - » nine allotments, 14 new builds and one extension are in construction phase.\*
  - » 11 allotments, seven new builds and 20 extensions are in the planning phase, with works forecast to commence in 2023.\*
- Established the Healthy Housing Program, along with Queensland Health, piloting in two locations.
- Expanded the First Nations Traineeship Program resulting in 61 First Nations peoples being supported to gain nationally accredited qualifications and on the job training, with 23 completed and transitioned into employment and a focus to extend into remote and discrete community delivery.\*

Challenges experienced during the delivery of the first Action Plan included COVID-19 public health and biosecurity measures that restricted travel to remote Indigenous communities from March 2020 to March 2022. There were also severe weather events across Queensland and critical shortages in building materials and skills, especially in remote locations, along with construction cost increases.

Despite these challenges, the first Action Plan created the foundations for a transformational new way of working, enabling community-led delivery of culturally appropriate housing solutions. This shift required ongoing and respectful negotiation, driving system change and managing the complexities of delivery in remote Queensland communities.

We will now build on the achievements of the first Action Plan through the Our Place Action Plan.

*\*Figures correct as at 3 May 2023.*

## Community-led decision making

The first Action Plan created the foundations for Councils to determine their programs for use of the individual funding allocations, that will deliver up to 122 new housing allotments, 154 new homes and 20 extensions to existing houses across all remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities based on current programming under the one-off \$105 million Commonwealth funding.

# A reframed relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland

The Queensland Government is committed to building a reframed relationship with First Nations peoples through key reforms, such as:

## Path to Treaty

Path to Treaty in Queensland is a critical step in setting the foundation for a new and just relationship that provides a platform of equality and opportunity. The Path to Treaty is a shared journey underway between the Queensland Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people, with the goal of negotiating a treaty, or treaties.

## Local Thriving Communities

The Local Thriving Communities (LTC) reform is a commitment to working with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to establish greater decision-making authority in service delivery and economic development. This approach is based on mutual respect and high expectations relationships, applying a collaborative approach to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities a greater voice in shaping their future.

## A commitment to a new way of working

These are just some of the significant initiatives demonstrating the Queensland Government's commitment to building a transformative relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- The Queensland Government's *Reconciliation Action Plan and Addendum 2018-2022*
- The *Human Rights Act 2019* which acknowledges the importance of the right to self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland
- Legal recognition of traditional Torres Strait Islander child-rearing practices under the *Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Act 2020*
- The establishment of the Queensland First Children and Families Board and First Nations Arts and Cultures Panel
- *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037*
- First Nations health equity reform agenda, including the co-design and implementation of legislated Health Equity Strategies by the 16 Hospital and Health Services in partnership with First Nations stakeholders
- Queensland's framework for action—*Reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence*.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Australian Parliament and Government

The proposed referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, further builds on recognition of the importance of listening to and embedding the voices of First Nations peoples to government.

# Person-centred and place-based responses



## QUESTIONS

- From your perspective, what is needed to provide person-centred responses to housing need?
- Thinking about your community, what place-based responses are required to address local housing need?



Evidence demonstrates that services and practices are most effective when they adapt to local requirements and can be adjusted to meet the specific needs of individuals.<sup>12</sup> ‘One-size-fits-all’ approaches that ignore the individual locational and cultural needs and life circumstances of First Nations peoples don’t work.<sup>13</sup>

Solutions must be decided, designed and delivered to be tailored to needs and aspirations in each place, informed by the voices of those who live there and their individual lived experiences.

Person-centred responses are about providing culturally-responsive services and housing support to respond to individual needs, wherever people are along the housing continuum.

## Towards ending homelessness for young Queenslanders 2022-2027

*Towards ending homelessness for young Queenslanders* is the Queensland Government’s commitment to improving housing outcomes for young people.

It recognises the importance of housing as a means of closing the gap for young First Nations peoples and identifies specific commitments to support young First Nations peoples to obtain and sustain housing.

For young people, a place to call home enables connection with family and culture and makes it easier to engage in education and employment and build community connection, inclusion and resilience.

## Factors that compound inequity

Some First Nations peoples in Queensland face the complex and growing effects of different types of discrimination and exclusion. In addition to racism, people may be treated unfairly because of their age, gender, abilities and sexual orientation.

Factors such as exiting state care, domestic and family violence, and leaving prison can also compound housing inequity.<sup>14,15</sup>

### Domestic and family violence

One in four Specialist Homelessness Services clients report domestic and family violence as the reason for their homelessness.<sup>F</sup>

### Leaving custody

First Nations peoples leaving custody access homelessness services twice as often as non-Indigenous people – already 20 times the rate of the wider population.<sup>H</sup>

### LGBTQIA+ people

In 2021 12.7 percent of LGBTQIA+ First Nations survey participants stated they had experienced homelessness or housing insecurity because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>G</sup>

### People with disabilities

Nationally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were 1.7 times as likely as non-Indigenous people to be living with disability.<sup>I</sup>

### Older persons

In 2018-19 older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons accounted for eight percent of all homeless First Nations persons.<sup>J</sup>



Culture is priceless to First Nations peoples—it's a birthright, and a human right. Without a cultural approach, housing and homelessness solutions will not work.

To close the gap in housing, everyone involved must value and listen to First Nations voices to ensure person-centred responses and acknowledge the unique factors and experiences that compound inequity for First Nations peoples.

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## Place-based responses

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* includes a commitment to drive improvements in First Nations housing outcomes across urban and regional areas as well as remote and discrete communities. Place-based responses recognise that there are unique and different needs in urban, regional and remote communities.

### Urban and regional

Southeast Queensland is the largest and fastest-growing First Nations community in Australia.<sup>16</sup> Roughly one in three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland live in this region. Many First Nations peoples also reside in regional cities including Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, and Toowoomba.<sup>17</sup>

A strong sense of community sustains First Nations families in Queensland's cities, with active communities where high levels of participation, volunteerism and activism are part of their vibrant fabric.<sup>18</sup>

First Nations peoples experience unique housing inequities. It is well documented that the drivers of homelessness and the entry and exit points to accessing services are different for First Nations peoples in urban settings.<sup>19</sup>

### Remote and discrete communities

Around 20% of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live in remote or discrete communities.

Queensland has 34 discrete communities, located within 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Local Government Areas and the Torres Shire, most of which are classified as 'remote' or 'very remote'.<sup>20</sup>

Queensland's remote and discrete First Nations communities accounted for seven of the top ten most economically and socially disadvantaged locations in Australia.<sup>21</sup> The 'housing gap' widens (as measured by overcrowding) as remoteness increases.<sup>22</sup>

There are multiple and, in some locations, complex types of land tenure arrangements in remote and discrete communities which directly impact housing solutions.<sup>23</sup>

In remote and discrete communities, cultural knowledge has survived and been passed down from one generation to the next. Co-location of diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations gave rise to communities of people sharing experience rather than cultural affiliation. The strength and commitment to progressing self-determination in these communities are testament to the resilience of First Nations peoples.



# The challenges and opportunities ahead



## QUESTIONS

- Are there other opportunities and challenges that need to be considered?
- What should we do now to prepare for these opportunities and challenges?



While it's not possible to fully predict what Queensland will be like in 2032, we know there are challenges on the horizon which will continue to affect housing outcomes for First Nations peoples in Queensland. At the same time, the next decade will provide unique opportunities to find new solutions, including with the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## Population growth and unique demographic needs

Queensland's population is growing, and this is placing record demand on housing and support services. In addition, the First Nations population in Queensland itself will grow to almost 5% of the total population by 2032. The number of First Nations households will grow along with this increase – particularly in urban locations.<sup>24</sup>

## Climate change

Climate change is impacting all Queenslanders. There has been an increase in the severity and frequency of natural disasters such as flooding, bushfires and cyclones. Queensland homes are at the greatest risk of uninsurability nationally.<sup>25</sup>

First Nations peoples are experiencing the negative impacts of climate change earlier and more acutely than others, for example, tidal inundation of homes and burial sites has been occurring on the Torres Strait Islands for many years. First Nations cultural knowledge and practices play an important part in tackling the effects of climate change.

## Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will bring significant economic and social benefits to the city and the state. The Games are also an opportunity for Queensland to build on reconciliation efforts and showcase Queensland's unique cultural identity to as home to two of the oldest living cultures in the world, as well as the significant community and sporting contribution of First Nations peoples.<sup>26</sup>

The Queensland Government is drawing upon the learnings of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, and other experiences about the impacts mega-events can have on cities and regions around the world. Public consultation has commenced on *The Brisbane 2032 Legacy Plan* to drive economic, social, cultural, environmental, and built environment opportunities that ensure lasting benefits before, during and after the games.



# A role for everyone



## QUESTIONS

- Who needs to be involved?
- What are their roles?



Building a fairer housing system for First Nations peoples in Queensland will take dedicated, sustained and collective effort to shift how First Nations housing and homelessness responses are framed, designed and delivered in Queensland.

Everyone involved in homelessness, social and affordable housing will need to work together, including all levels of government, the community housing sector, industry and the community, peak bodies, service providers, and most importantly be guided by First Nations peoples. This change will only succeed if it helps to activate the strengths and realise the potential of First Nations communities, individuals, organisations and families.

## First Nations peoples

Self-determination works because strategies, programs and policies reflect the interests, values, concerns, aspirations and priorities of the people affected.<sup>27</sup>



## Strong and sustainable First Nations organisations

Housing equity must be built on a strong and sustainable First Nations housing and homelessness sector. Community-controlled organisations are better for First Nations peoples, achieve better results, employ more First Nations peoples, and are often preferred over mainstream services.<sup>28</sup>

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland

Established on 13 May 2021, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland is the peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing in Queensland. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland is a not-for-profit organisation representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community housing providers interests through advocacy and advice on the future of the sector.

### Indigenous Community Housing Organisations (ICHO)

The ICHO sector in Queensland has over 60 independent community housing providers who have a comprehensive system of partnerships with, and accountability to, their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

ICHOs have a collective goal of delivering quality and culturally safe housing for First Nations peoples, by First Nations peoples, to meet the housing needs of tenants, families and communities.<sup>29</sup> As well as housing services, some ICHOs deliver additional culturally responsive support services.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Local Councils

Twenty per cent of Queensland local governments cover discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In these communities, councils are not just responsible for public administration of local government services but are key to community leadership.

Indigenous Councils play a significant and unique role, especially as housing providers, with complex land and tenure arrangements, in addition to a mix of service arrangements which can vary significantly from community to community.

### The broader First Nations community-controlled sector

First Nations community organisations in support successful tenancies. These organisations provide a range of services including youth support, health, drug and alcohol services and child and family wellbeing. Collectively the sector provides holistic responses that keep First Nations communities strong.



## Other peak and industry bodies

Peak and industry bodies play a key role in representing the interests of their members in the housing sector, advocating for policies and practices and providing expert advice on opportunities and challenges to ensure they reflect the experience of their members and industries. They also provide a platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and professional development for their members.

First Nations peak bodies and organisations such as the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP), the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Legal Service (ATSILS) play a significant role representing, advocating for the rights, safety and wellbeing of First Nations children, young people, and families.

## Culturally safe service system

Culturally safe and responsive services are crucial in the mainstream housing service system, including real estate services, as they remove barriers to accessing housing and help to reduce inequitable outcomes for marginalised communities, such as First Nations peoples.

By providing culturally safe services, the mainstream housing system and industry can ensure that all members of the community have access to safe, affordable, and quality housing that meets their specific needs and supports their overall health and wellbeing.

Greater service integration is critical to achieving housing and better wellbeing outcomes. Better outcomes are achieved when people are supported into accommodation, while accessing individually tailored supports such as integrated housing, health, disability and other government and community support services. This can be accomplished through pathway planning and working with services to sustain housing and improve whole-of-life outcomes. A connected service system invests in better decision making processes, planning and outcomes for people with specialised needs.

## All levels of government

Governments have long recognised the unique housing challenges experienced by First Nations peoples, particularly those living in remote communities.

Responding to the housing needs of First Nations peoples is complex and cannot be resolved without the continued coordination of action across the three tiers of government. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap outlines the agreement between the Coalition of Peaks and Commonwealth, all state governments and the Australian Local Government Association to work in partnership to close the gap.

# Governance and accountability



## QUESTIONS

- What is needed to better enable shared decision making?
- How can First Nations self-determination be strengthened in the governance and accountability of the Our Place Action Plan?



## Partnerships and shared decision making

The Queensland Government is building a reframed relationship and enabling self-determination. To do this, shared decision making must continue to shift from consultation and inclusion to negotiation, ownership and partnerships on equal footing. Change must be based on representation, leadership and shared decision-making with First Nations peoples to rebalance power and resources to create a housing system free from racism and discrimination.

### Closing the Gap Housing Policy Partnership (HPP)

In December 2022, the Joint Council on Closing the Gap endorsed the establishment of the Housing Policy Partnership (HPP). Through the HPP, representatives from the Coalition of Peaks, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts, and governments will come together to take a joined-up approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing policy to drive First Nations community-led outcomes on Closing the Gap. The HPP will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, communities and organisations to negotiate and implement agreements with governments to implement priority reforms and strategies.

The Queensland Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland are working together to ensure that the voices of ICHOs, First Nations peoples, communities and organisations shape the decisions that affect them.



# Your ideas for solutions



## QUESTIONS

- What housing services and supports currently work well for First Nations peoples in Queensland?
- What changes or new initiatives are needed to achieve First Nations housing equity in Queensland, in order of priority?



The next steps on the journey towards a fairer housing future for First Nations peoples in Queensland must build on the important work already done, benefit from local, national and international evidence of what works and be co-designed with First Nations communities, individuals, families, local government authorities, non-government organisations and other sector stakeholders.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must determine, drive and own decision making about matters that impact their lives, families and communities in partnership with the Queensland Government. This is vital to closing the gap and achieving real positive change and outcomes.

## Your voice for Our Place

We recognise and acknowledge the efforts of the many dedicated and passionate individuals and organisations across the state that have been working tirelessly for many years for better housing outcomes and to elevate the voices of First Nations peoples in the housing decisions that affect their families and communities.

This consultation is just the starting point to determine how the Queensland Government, in partnership with First Nations peoples and organisations, can better address the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland.

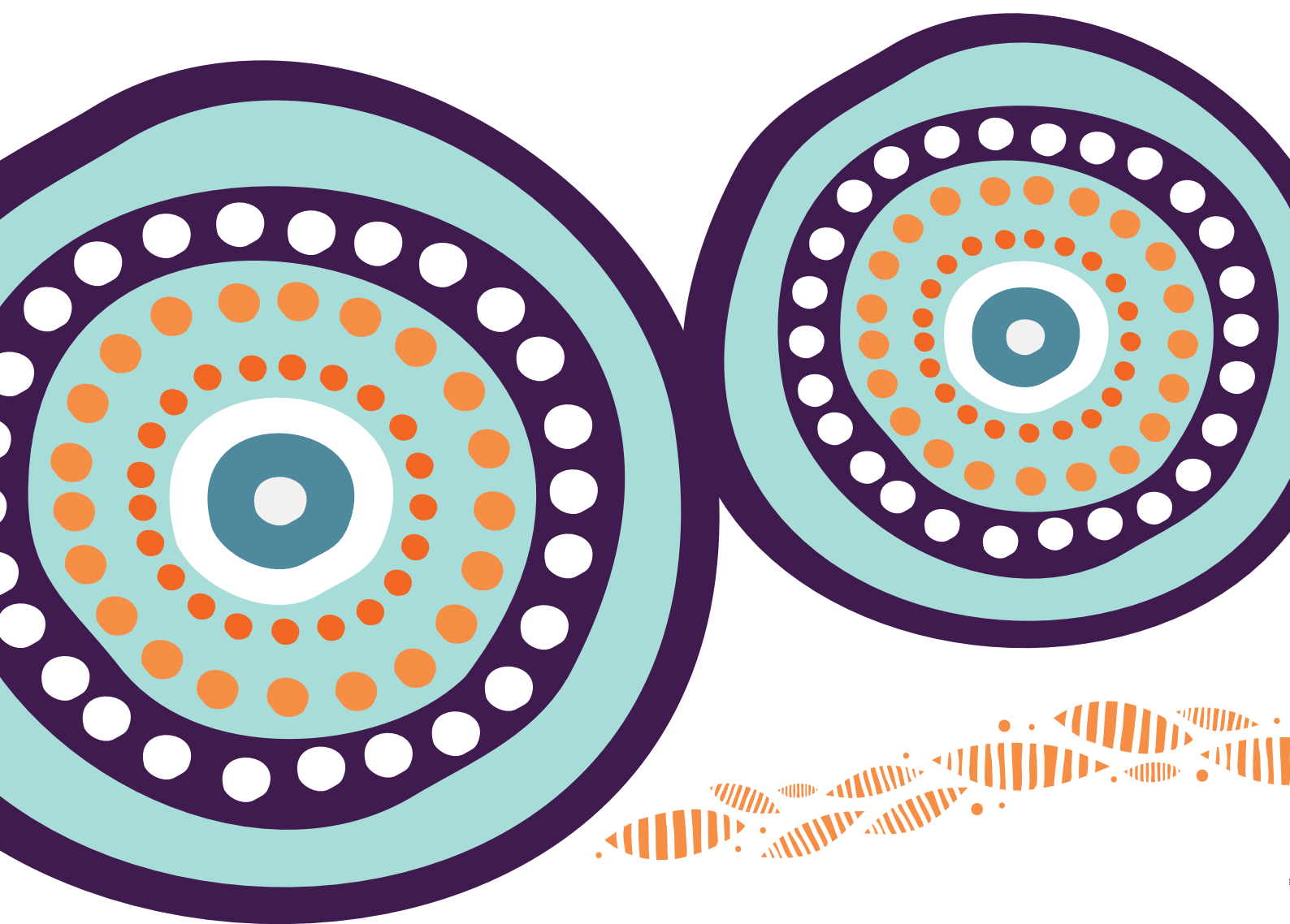
A state-wide consultation process will be held in June, with online and in-person conversations occurring across Queensland.

You can have your say through:

- an online survey for individuals
- written submissions from organisations
- face-to-face and online yarning circles and focus groups across Queensland.

Find out more information about how to have your say at [qld.gov.au/OurPlaceActionPlan](https://qld.gov.au/OurPlaceActionPlan).

Consultations close on 14 July 2023.





# Current housing supports for First Nations peoples in Queensland

To find out about the range of housing supports currently available, please visit [qld.gov.au/FirstNations/managing-home-money/housing-support](https://qld.gov.au/FirstNations/managing-home-money/housing-support).



## Help with renting

Finding a home to rent and getting financial help with renting.



## Buying a house

Advice on buying a home, including financial support and concessions.



## Public and community housing

Information for people living in or applying for public and community housing.



## Remote community housing

Information about housing in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



## Emergency and temporary accommodation

Where to find emergency or crisis accommodation in Queensland.



## Aged care

Aged care housing options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors in Queensland.

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Our Place: A First Nations Housing and  
Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027

*Queensland*  
Good *jobs*  
Better *services*  
Great *lifestyle*



**Queensland**  
Government