

Ending street homelessness in the inner city



Adelaide Zero Project

Impact Report

March 2021

www.adelaidezeroproject.org.au

FOREWORDS

I have had the privilege of working with and following the progress of the Adelaide Zero Project for three years. There have been many successes made, problems solved and lessons learned. Across the life of the Adelaide Zero Project, I have been most impressed with the depth of their collaboration. The Project's inclusiveness, success in embracing a broad cohort, and the sharing of leadership through collaboration, has been integral to the Project's achievements.

Whilst the Adelaide Zero Project's achievements are admirable, there are many lessons that need to be considered as this work evolves. As the Project has shown, quality data drives decision making and ensuring that good quality data is being collected, analysed and reported is essential. It is vital that all Partners are empowered to identify challenges and implement solutions. Partnership and collaboration at all levels must continue, especially through setting and sharing priorities, and in meeting outcomes.

As the work to end homelessness continues and is extended throughout South Australia, it is critical to be mindful of mistakes and build on past successes. The Adelaide Zero Project has clearly shown that the sector possesses the qualities required to make a lasting change and create a community where no one is homeless.

DR NONIE BRENNAN

Senior Advisor
Institute of Global Homelessness

The Adelaide Zero Project continues to lead the way nationally by working towards ending rough sleeping in Adelaide's inner-city. By adopting the Functional Zero approach, Adelaide took on the challenge to be the first city outside of North America to reach Functional Zero homelessness for people who are sleeping rough.

The Adelaide Zero Project has made progress on achieving this goal by establishing a collective governance structure to ensure accountability across all Partners, creating a collectively owned and shared By-Name List, launching a publicly available Dashboard to track our progress in achieving this goal and helping to co-ordinate services and secure appropriate housing for people sleeping rough in the inner-city.

All of these achievements were made possible by the commitment of over 40 Partners to work collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for the people sleeping rough in our City.

With the SA Housing Authority setting a target to achieve Functional Zero for people sleeping rough in South Australia by 2025, there are great opportunities to share learnings from the Adelaide Zero Project for all of South Australia. We share our thanks to all of the dedicated Partners and individuals who continue to support this critical work.

LOUISE MILLER FROST AND REVEREND PROFESSOR PETER SANDEMAN

Co-chairs
Adelaide Zero Project Co-Chairs

At the Don Dunstan Foundation, we are very proud to have played a central role in the initiation and development of the nation-leading Adelaide Zero Project and through it, to have contributed to increased community awareness of the complexities of homelessness.

The Adelaide Zero Project, with the Don Dunstan Foundation as the project's backbone organisation, has contributed heavily to thought leadership within the homelessness sector. The By-Name List, the public Dashboard, the collaborative coordination of care and housing, and the shared investment into the Project by all Partners, are just some of the incredible achievements that all in the project should be proud of.

The innovation, skills and collective approach developed through the Adelaide Zero Project are all essential to reaching Functional Zero rough sleeping in the city, and we pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all the Project Partners in the progress made to achieving this goal.

The Foundation is proud to have initiated and to have been a part of the Adelaide Zero Project, helping to create a fairer world for those experiencing homelessness

RITCHIE HOLLANDS

Executive Director
Don Dunstan Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging the Kurna People

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kurna People, the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we work and live on. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the Kurna people to country and we respect and value their past, present and ongoing connection to the land and cultural beliefs.

Acknowledging the Adelaide Zero Project Partners

The Adelaide Zero Project has been a collaborative effort since its inception with more than 40 organisations from across the public, private, community and university sectors who have collectively taken up the challenge to achieve Functional Zero rough sleeping in the Adelaide CBD. We thank all of our Partners for their commitment to achieving this goal.

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THE CATALYST TO CHANGE

Most leaders pride themselves on getting it right. When international homelessness expert Rosanne Haggerty, and her team at Community Solutions (US), exceeded their target in their 100,000 Homes Campaign, they celebrated.

Yet, despite having housed 105,000 people across the United States in under four years, none of the communities had truly ended homelessness as people continued to fall into the system.

In response, [Community Solutions](#) pioneered the [Functional Zero](#) approach—where communities counted down to zero people experiencing homelessness, rather than simply counting up as people kept falling into the system. **Functional Zero is reached when the average capacity of a community's housing system is greater than the existing need.** The first step to achieving Functional Zero requires a community to have real time and person-specific data on individuals sleeping rough—to know the names and understand the needs of people experiencing homelessness on any given night.

Sarah, a fragile, elderly woman experiencing chronic homelessness in New York was known as a “service resister”. She knew Rosanne, by name, despite only having a few interactions. Whilst Sarah had been offered support such as food, blankets and to apply for shelter in the past, she told Rosanne that “no one had ever offered her help to find a home.” Rosanne saw that every person sleeping rough needs to be more than just counted; they need to be known by name, for their individual story to be understood, and that this was the starting point to reducing rough sleeping.

We realised we need to start with the people experiencing homelessness themselves and figure out, with them, person by person, what it would take to connect them with a stable home using every resource in our community.

– Rosanne Haggerty, 2016
[Homelessness Conference Adelaide](#)

When Rosanne, Adelaide's former Thinker in Residence, spoke at the Don Dunstan Foundation's 2016 Homelessness Conference, she believed Adelaide was uniquely positioned to end homelessness. Rosanne challenged Adelaide to end rough sleeping by putting a plan in place using the Functional Zero model that several communities in the US had already successfully adopted.

In 2017, Adelaide became the first Australian city to commit to reaching Functional Zero, with this innovative approach adopted by the Adelaide Zero Project.

Initiated and co-ordinated by the Don Dunstan Foundation, the Adelaide Zero Project has brought together a coalition of over 40 homelessness, housing, health, government, university, corporate and community Partners, with the goal of achieving Functional Zero homelessness for people sleeping rough in Adelaide's inner-city. A truly collective approach has been revolutionary—Partners have united with shared goals, shared measurement and shared outputs to achieve better outcomes for people sleeping rough.

Between May 2018 and December 2020, the Adelaide Zero Project housed an average of 18 people every month. Throughout this time, services worked together to better coordinate housing and support, undertake in-depth research and establish some of the most comprehensive data on rough sleeping in Adelaide and of any community in Australia. By building on this, the Adelaide Zero Project continues to inform and contribute to the reform of the state-wide homelessness system.

This report tells the story of the extraordinary collective efforts of the Adelaide Zero Project and how this has positively impacted the lives of over 500 people—whose names are now known and who, because of the Project, have been housed.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Rosanne Haggerty's inspiring call to action prompted representatives from the Don Dunstan Foundation, Flinders University and AnglicareSA to attend the Institute of Global Homelessness Conference in Chicago to consider what could be done in Adelaide.

In late 2017, inspired by the international success stories, Adelaide became Australia's first [Vanguard City](#) as part of the Institute of Global Homelessness' A Place to Call Home initiative. The initiative now recognises 13 Vanguard cities worldwide for their commitment towards ending homelessness.

A Project Steering Group was formed and Co-Chairs Peter Sandeman, the then Chief Executive Officer of Anglicare SA and Louise Miller Frost, Chief Executive Officer of Catherine House at the time and now

Chief Executive Officer of St Vincent de Paul Society (SA), were appointed. With the Don Dunstan Foundation as a neutral backbone organisation and the significant financial sponsorship from then Premier Jay Weatherill and the South Australian Government, over 40 Partners were brought to the table from homelessness, health, support organisations delivering services in the inner-city, social housing providers across the metropolitan area, State and Local Government, Universities, and the private sector.

The big shift of thinking that Rosanne had illuminated, was the need to focus everyone on driving outcomes for people that we know [who are sleeping rough].

– Professor Ian Goodwin-Smith, Director, The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise, UniSA

Hearing what was being done in the US and the UK gave us a sense that this was not an unrealistic ambition. It was practical, doable and there were learnings that could be adopted here. We returned with the sense that a Functional Zero approach was achievable in Adelaide.

– Reverend Professor Peter Sandeman, former Chief Executive Officer, AnglicareSA and outgoing Adelaide Zero Project Steering Group Co-Chair

Extensive planning and relationship management by the Don Dunstan Foundation and the Co-Chairs played a significant role in establishing and maintaining a collective governance structure. Ultimately, those who came to the table understood that solving a complex problem such as homelessness requires expertise from a range of services and stakeholders, as well as courage to embrace new ways of thinking and doing.

Everyone played a part. The business sector, the not-for-profit sector, the philanthropy sector, Universities, the international experts, all of these voices were really useful at different times to keep it moving along.

– David Pearson, former Executive Director of the Don Dunstan Foundation and current Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness

The first phase of the Adelaide Zero Project was kick-started in 2017 with a research project produced by University of Adelaide and Flinders University researchers, and following this, a [90-Day Project](#) to explore how the Functional Zero model could be applied in Adelaide. The Adelaide Zero Project Partners chose to test the model by focusing on people who were sleeping rough within Adelaide's inner-city.

Learning from other communities, the aim was to achieve Functional Zero for one population, in one area, as the first step towards building a state-wide system with the capacity to end all forms of homelessness.

Setting an explicit target galvanised the homelessness sector and helped everyone to focus on outcomes rather than variously chasing outputs, as had previously been the case.

– Professor Ian Goodwin-Smith, Director, The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise, UniSA

Partners were united by the idea of putting the interests of individuals who had been sleeping rough at the centre of everything they did—establishing cohesion through a shared goal and methodology. Agencies across multiple sectors embraced new ways of working together within the Adelaide Zero Project's collective governance structure, pooling resources and expertise to find solutions for all the people sleeping rough in the city rather than being limited to their own clients.

Phase Two of the Project was launched on 22 February 2018 with public commitment to the Project from all major political parties, prior to the South Australian State election in March 2018.

The first [Connections Week](#) took place in May 2018 and set the Project's implementation plan in motion. Led by the Hutt St Centre and harnessing the input of over 200 volunteers, Connections Week was the most comprehensive and concentrated exercise of street outreach and data capture ever conducted in Adelaide. This data was used to create Adelaide's very first By-Name List—a centralised, live list of the names and needs of anyone sleeping rough in the city. As an essential element of the Functional Zero approach, the By-Name List quickly became a revolutionary tool for the Adelaide Zero Project, underpinned by shared ownership across services, who now use the By-Name List to coordinate and prioritise the right housing and support.

By the end of 2019, the impact of the Adelaide Zero Project was being recognised nationally and internationally. During her visit to Adelaide as part of the Don Dunstan Foundation's Thinkers in Residence Program in 2019, [Dr Nonie Brennan](#), Senior Advisor at the Institute of Global Homelessness, noted that in many respects the Adelaide Zero Project is leading the way in developing and implementing strategies that build and support the advancement of a system to end sleeping rough.

In December 2020, the Don Dunstan Foundation transitioned out of the role of backbone organisation for the Adelaide Zero Project as South Australia's homelessness sector began reforms in line with SA Housing Authority's Strategic Plan, which aims to achieve Functional Zero rough sleeping state-wide by 2025. The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise at the University of South Australia is continuing to support the Project's backbone function during this time, as Partners prepare to embed and share the experiences and lessons from the Adelaide Zero Project to inform the broader homelessness system moving forward.

The Don Dunstan Foundation is confident the foundations that have been built and the progress that has been made will enable the ongoing success of the Adelaide Zero Project in addressing homelessness in Adelaide.

– Dr Jane Lomax-Smith, Chair of the Don Dunstan Foundation Board of Directors

WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL ZERO?

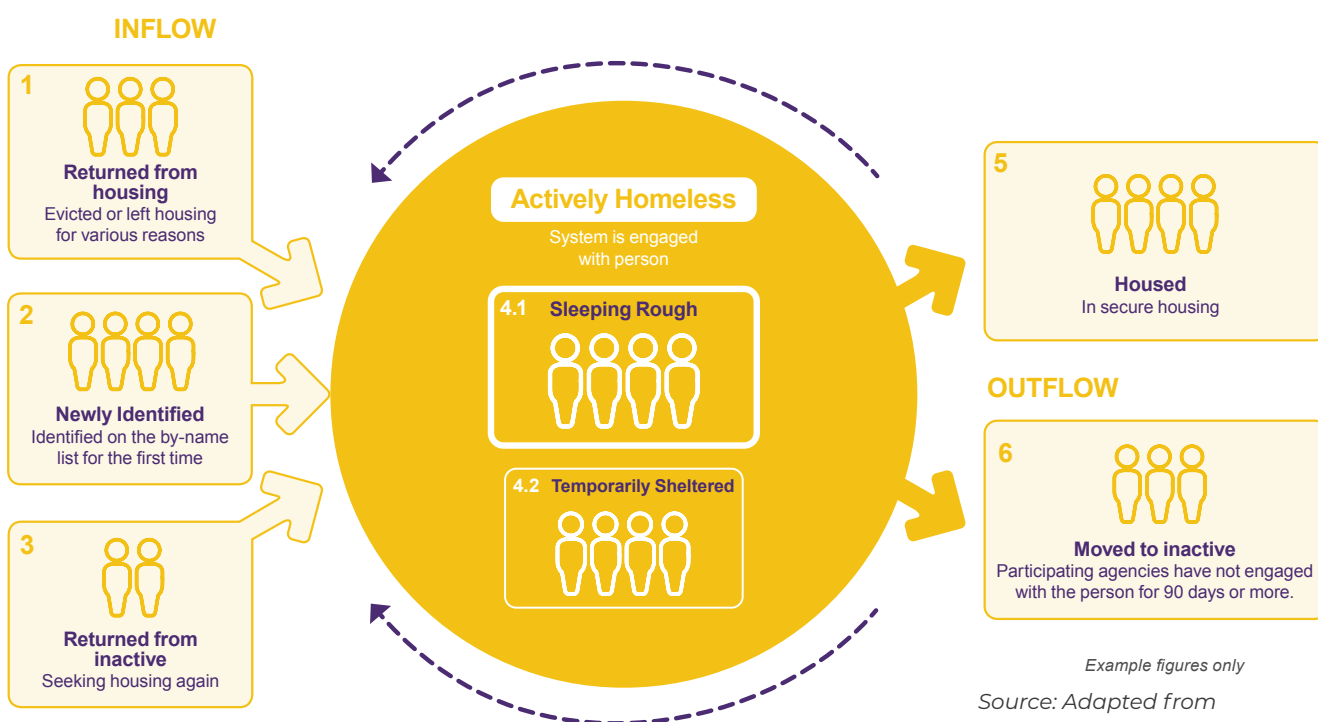
One of the centrepieces of the Adelaide Zero Project's innovative approach is committing to achieving Functional Zero.

Functional Zero homelessness is reached when a community's average monthly housing placement rate is more than the number of people sleeping rough at any given time. A community proves it can sustain Functional Zero if it maintains this for at least three consecutive months. Any community, working with any type of homelessness, can use the Functional Zero model to measure and improve their local system.

The Functional Zero model recognises that homelessness is a dynamic challenge—even when a community has achieved and sustained Functional Zero, people will still fall into homelessness, but the approach works to ensure that people's experience of sleeping rough is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The Functional Zero model requires a community to know the number of people experiencing homelessness on any given night. Armed with such data, the homelessness system can then adapt and change **to ensure there is enough housing and support** to help people end their experience of homelessness, and, ideally, to **also prevent people who are at risk from experiencing homelessness in the first place**. The Adelaide Zero Project's public [Dashboard](#) helps the community to actively measure and respond to homelessness and stay accountable, by reporting these figures in as close to real time as possible.

Throughout the world, 14 communities have achieved Functional Zero for their target population. Another 46 communities are achieving significant reductions and demonstrating that ending rough sleeping is, in fact, possible.



Key Achievements



November 2017

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST VANGUARD CITY

Adelaide became the first Australian city to join a select group of Vanguard Cities on six continents to partner with the Institute of Global Homelessness in setting ambitious but achievable goals to end homelessness.

1

2

February 2018



COLLECTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Adelaide Zero Project established and evolved a collective governance structure to ensure accountability across all Partners, including State and Local Government, Universities, and the community and business sectors. Collective governance infrastructure is a significant achievement for a community-led project in securing significant buy-in.



May 2018

ADELAIDE'S FIRST CONNECTIONS WEEK

Led by the Hutt St Centre, Adelaide's first Connections Week ran in 2018. Over 200 volunteers connected with anyone sleeping rough in the city to understand their names and needs. A further Connections Week took place in 2019.

3

4

May 2018



BY-NAME LIST

Led by Neami National, Adelaide Zero Project established the first shared By-Name List in Australia and trialled this for people sleeping rough in the inner city, by knowing the names and needs of each of these people and co-ordinating housing and support to meet their individual needs.



August 2018

PUBLIC DASHBOARD

Adelaide Zero Project launched a homelessness Dashboard, the first available publicly in Australia. The Dashboard actively tracks Adelaide's progress towards achieving and sustaining Functional Zero street homelessness in the inner city.

5

6

October 2019



THE WAYMOUTH

Partnering with Carrington Cottages and SA Housing Authority, Adelaide Zero Project opened a new temporary, lower barrier accommodation at 'The Waymouth'. The initiative provides a safe space for individuals, couples and people with pets on the By-Name List while they work with services to access support and long-term accommodation, not previously available in the system.



December 2019

DATA QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Adelaide became the first city outside of North America to be certified by Community Solutions for having quality data. This means Adelaide's By-Name List accurately records the names and needs of everyone sleeping rough in the inner city. No community worldwide has reached Functional Zero without meeting this milestone first.

7

8

May 2020



JOINED THE NATIONAL ADVANCE TO ZERO CAMPAIGN

The Adelaide Zero Project formally signed Adelaide on to the national Advance to Zero campaign along with other Australian communities, and began using the new Advance to Zero data platform for By-Name Lists to better measure homelessness across the country.



November 2020

HOUSING 500 PEOPLE FROM BY-NAME-LIST

Adelaide Zero Project housed over 500 people in under three years who were sleeping rough and on the By-Name List, becoming the fastest community in Australia to achieve this milestone towards functional zero.

9

WORKING TOGETHER DIFFERENTLY: THE COLLECTIVE IMPACT APPROACH

First conceptualised in 2011, the Collective Impact approach recognises that existing methods for creating social change are often ineffective for solving complex issues like homelessness.

Collective Impact has been used effectively to drive system-level change. For example, Homeward, a not-for-profit organisation targeting homelessness in Virginia (US), used the [Collective Impact approach](#) to bring together a coalition of 30 government and non-government agencies who reduced homelessness by almost 30 percent. The key to their success was not only through having a neutral backbone organisation, shared goals and shared data, but also an understanding that fixing the homelessness system required commitment and action from every corner of the community sector.

Effectively tackling such “wicked problems”, like homelessness, requires the involvement of different sectors, all committed to a common agenda for the purpose of solving a specific social problem. [The Tamarack Institute](#) provides a structured approach to collaboration involving five core elements:



Source: Adapted from [The Tamarack Institute](#).

Collective Impact initiatives require resources and people to manage and facilitate the projects and the varied number of participants involved. Often, the coordination of this collaboration is where other frameworks fail as participants are often already under resourced or seen as biased facilitators.

– *Rethinking Community Development: What does Collective Impact offer?*
Report by The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise for the Local Government Association of South Australia (2020)

The Adelaide Zero Project put the Collective Impact approach into practice through:

ACTION TAKEN	Setting a Project-wide goal to reach Functional Zero	<i>Common agenda</i>
	Using a localised common assessment tool and shared database to support the By-Name List and public Dashboard for accountability	<i>Shared measurement</i>
	Leveraging the expertise and capacity of lead agencies to coordinate different aspects of the Project, coordinating housing and support responses to build benefit	<i>Mutually reinforcing activities</i>
	Developing clear communication channels and frequent monitoring and reporting processes	<i>Continuous communication</i>
	Utilising the Don Dunstan Foundation's independence from the homelessness sector and government to provide strategic project management and coordination. Support and capacity provided from the SA Housing Authority and City of Adelaide where required.	<i>Neutral backbone</i>

The role of the Don Dunstan Foundation as the neutral backbone organisation was fundamental to the success of the Project. In February 2019, as part of her [Adelaide Zero Project Support Review Visit](#), Chair of the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) Advisory Committee, Baroness Louise Casey praised the efforts of the Don Dunstan Foundation and the investment of the Adelaide Zero Project in the backbone work to drive innovation and collective action towards solutions on the ground. But while the Collective Impact approach has proven to be successful, it also required a courageous shift in thinking for many Partners.

Those who work in this area are very passionate and committed, so it was hard, when they'd been working a certain way for a long time, to be open to the possibility that there may be an even better way to do things. In the end, the number of organisations that came together for this Project has been extraordinary, and what kept everyone together is that we were all clear that we were looking for the same outcomes.

– The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Sandy Verschoor

CONNECTIONS WEEK

Prior to the Adelaide Zero Project, point-in-time street counts were used every few months to track the number of people sleeping rough in the inner-city.

Point-in-time counts often under-represent the number of people sleeping rough and limit the ability for communities to respond in real-time to people's changing needs, and changes in systems and environments. The Adelaide Zero Project's Connections Week kick-started a more comprehensive approach to know the names and needs of everyone sleeping rough in Adelaide's inner-city in real-time.

In 2018, Hutt St Centre led Adelaide's first Connections Week, supported by a collective effort with the Don Dunstan Foundation, Neami National and other Adelaide Zero Project Partners. Involving over 200 sector workers and volunteers, teams connected with people sleeping rough across the city, using a common assessment tool, the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritisation Decision Assessment Tool (VI-SPDAT). Together, they identified the names and needs of 143 people sleeping rough. The data collected from Connections Week was used to immediately establish Adelaide's By-Name List.

A further Connections Week was held in 2019 to audit the accuracy of the By-Name List—this time with even greater coverage of the city due to the help of 280 volunteers. An additional 60 people were identified as sleeping rough who were not on the By-Name List. Since 2019, the Adelaide Zero

Project has implemented additional data accuracy measures, including regular cross-matching and audits, to ensure the By-Name List reliably reflects the names and needs of individuals sleeping rough in real-time.

The big change brought about by the Adelaide Zero Project was about engaging with people... starting with Connections Week. It ensured that we had information about people's needs and became an intake process rather than just keeping an idea of numbers and what was happening on the street.

– Louise Miller-Frost, Chief Executive Officer, St Vincent de Paul Society (SA) and Adelaide Zero Project Steering Group Co-Chair

Connections Week consolidated relationships between Partner organisations, raised vital community awareness about the work of the Adelaide Zero Project, and inspired and mobilised the broader sector. The relationships established during Connections Week has also helped Neami National's Street to Home team to more effectively link in with other services when they provide assertive outreach twice daily.

[Connections Week] generated common language, common understanding, shared data and a new level of confidence in our frontline workers that we can have a community-owned system.

– Chris Burns, Chief Executive, Hutt St Centre

BY-NAME LIST AND PUBLIC DASHBOARD

The key to measuring progress towards Functional Zero involves developing a By-Name List to identify the names and needs of every individual sleeping rough.

A By-Name List provides a real time understanding of who is sleeping rough throughout the city, helping services to monitor the number of people moving through the system each month, and supporting more accurate and effective coordination of housing and support. Importantly, the By-Name List is the foundation of the community-owned database that is actively used by multiple Partners who provide housing and support. Data that is community-owned and led is essential in driving collective and systemic change.

The vibrancy of the data that is now available [in Adelaide] from the By-Name List begins to tell the story of the real people behind the numbers and their experiences which form the statistics.

*– Dr Nonie Brennan, Senior Advisor,,
Institute of Global Homelessness and former
Chief Executive Officer, All Chicago (USA)*

The Adelaide Zero Project's By-Name List, which Neami National acts as the data custodian for on behalf of the Project, was created following Connections Week 2018.

The By-Name List began to shed light on the acute vulnerability of the individuals sleeping rough, painting a clearer picture of the diverse issues and needs across different cohorts and backgrounds. The common assessment tool, coupled with new insights from data in the By-Name List, helped services to prioritise and match the right type of housing and support based on each person's degree and type of vulnerability. It cemented a focus on getting the best results for people, rather than a focus on numbers and outputs.

The By-Name List provided the impetus to prioritise housing allocations for some of South Australia's most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness in an environment of social housing scarcity. It has enabled a concerted focus on ... collective prioritisation and allocation.

*– Simon Schrapel AM, Chief Executive,
Uniting Communities*

[The By-Name List and public dashboard] has to be shared and used by all organisations in the future...The most important outcome of the Adelaide Zero Project so far is the By-Name List.

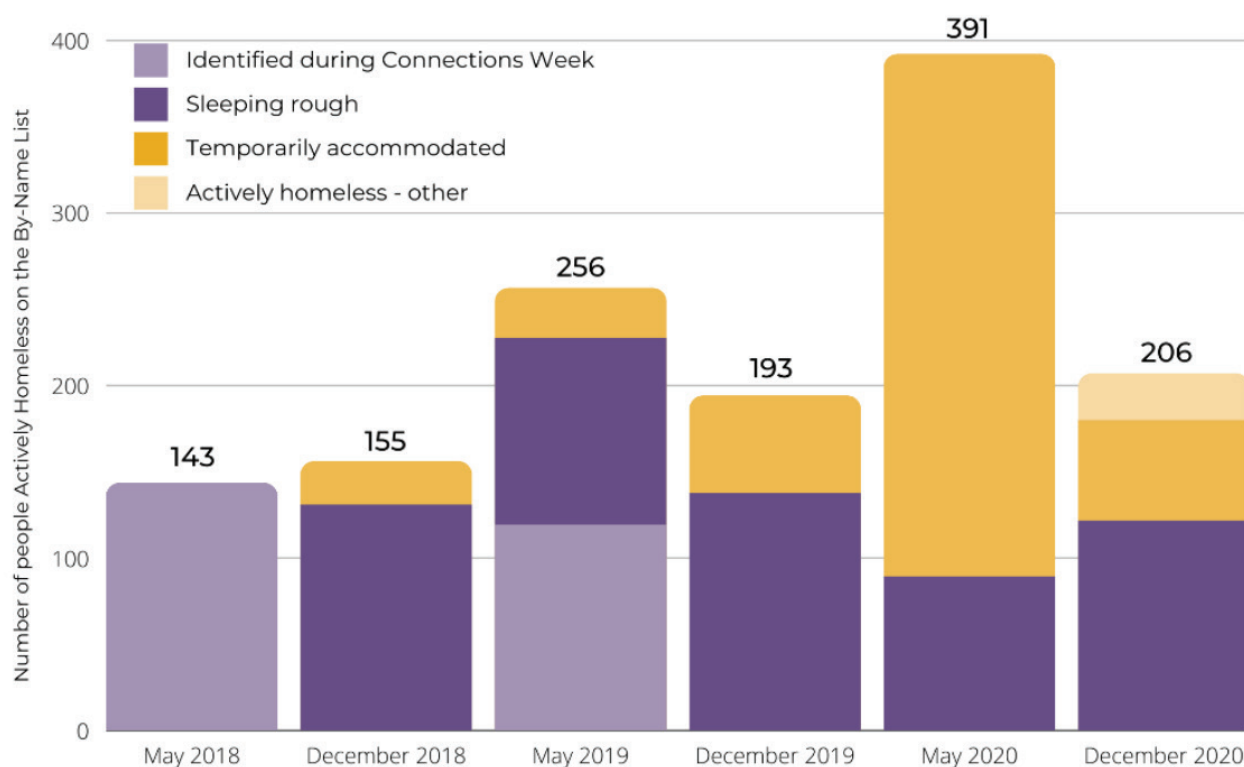
*– The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor
of Adelaide, Sandy Verschoor*

By January 2019, the first 100 people had been housed from the By-Name List. By August 2020, 1,000 individuals had been recorded on the By-Name List, with over 400 people housed. Despite new challenges that came with COVID-19 in 2020, the Project reached the significant milestone of housing 500 people by December 2020 since implementation began in May 2018, with an average of 18 people housed each month.

Through the By-Name List, Adelaide has developed the most comprehensive understanding of rough sleeping of any community in Australia. In 2019, Adelaide became the first city outside of North America to achieve the 29 data quality standards required to meet Community Solutions' By-Name List certification.

Adelaide got to quality data faster than almost any community I have seen in our international work.

– Jake Maguire, Principal, Community Solutions (USA)



*Additional data fields such as "Actively homeless - other" were captured as the database improved over time.

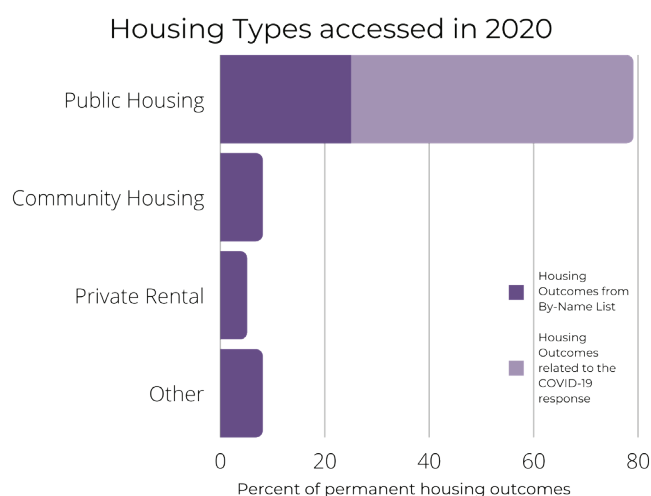
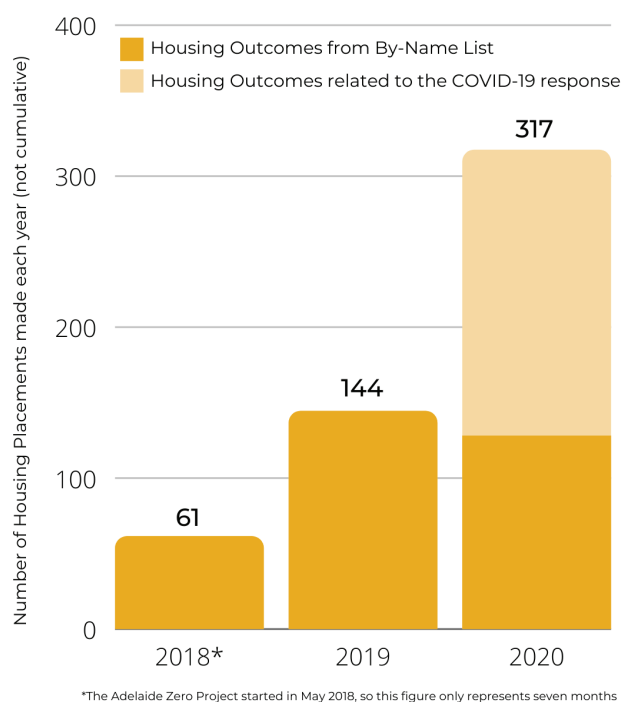
Part of obtaining the quality data certification was to ensure the Project had a Coordinated Outreach Framework. This helped to ensure all services providing outreach to people sleeping rough in the city, within or outside the Project, work together, enabling greater coverage and data capture. Four of the Specialist Homelessness Services Partners, Neami National, Baptist Care SA, Hutt Street Centre and HYPA, all directly update the By-Name List on behalf of other agencies who use the VI-SPDAT as part of their assessment, ensuring the data is as accurate as possible in real-time. Client consent for data sharing is also an important part of this process.

Ensuring the By-Name List is accurate and accessible means that we can truly identify, understand and meet the needs of each person sleeping rough in Adelaide. Having the public Dashboard keeps us accountable within and outside the Project.

– Kim Holmes, SA State Manager,
Neami National

The Adelaide Zero Project's Dashboard, which publicly tracks and displays the number of people sleeping rough in a city, is an Australian first. Publicly reporting on the monthly progress towards Functional Zero has embedded accountability both within the Project, and to the public. This accountability has helped ensure the internal processes to reliably capture and report the data provide stakeholders and the public with confidence in the Project.

By measuring the number of people moving through the By-Name List, the sector now has a better understanding of the quantity and type of housing and support required to collectively meet the needs of all people sleeping rough in the city, as well as knowing what is needed to support individual clients and the agencies serving them.



DATA-DRIVEN IMPACT

By sharing data, Partners collectively analyse, discuss and understand trends for people sleeping rough and dig into data in ways that has never been possible before.

Preventing people's entry into homelessness has also become clearer through the By-Name List, which enables services to directly engage with people to understand their pathways into homelessness. Project Partners widely agree that there is further opportunity to leverage the insights from the By-Name List.

For example, [the Better Understanding the People on the Adelaide Zero Project's By-Name List Report](#) outlined the need to develop new or stronger links with culturally appropriate housing and support outcomes for Aboriginal people, as well as pathways through aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Using data from the By-Name List has allowed us to identify and connect into other sectors, including Corrections and Mental Health, improving the outcomes for people experiencing rough sleeping.

– Kim Holmes, SA State Manager,
Neami National

The [Adelaide Zero Project] has informed more effective responses as well as service design and investment. At Baptist Care, a new Health and Wellbeing Centre is being built to address the needs for short-term hospitality and healing places for Aboriginal clients. The data produced by the Adelaide Zero Project gave us further insight into the needs of this cohort and validation that we were on the right track with this initiative.

– Graham Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Baptist Care SA

The Adelaide Zero Project has provided data to support:

- Housing and support allocation decisions every week since the BNL was established
- Ministerial briefings
- Pandemic responses
- Government service response reviews
- Academic journal articles and external research
- National reviews of the common assessment tool

SELF-REPORTED DEMOGRAPHICS & IMPACTS

As at 31 December 2020.

42% of people sleeping rough were **ABORIGINAL and/or TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER** despite being only 2% of the South Australian population



Length of time sleeping rough

46% had been sleeping rough for **more than 2 years**

25% had been sleeping rough for **less than 1 year**



82%

Physical health issues



84%

Mental health issues



81%

Substance use



65%

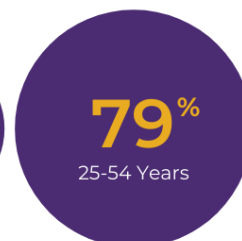
Relationship breakdown



58%

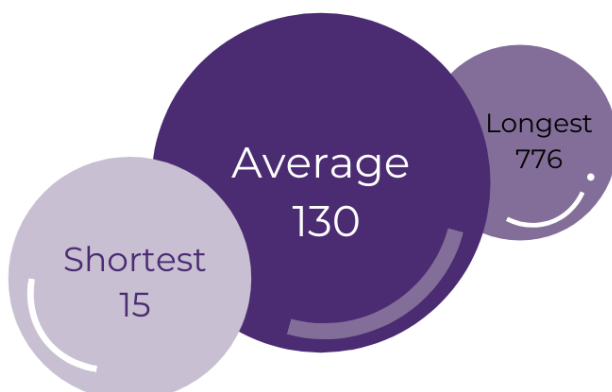
have a **combination** of physical health, mental health and substance use issues

Age Breakdown



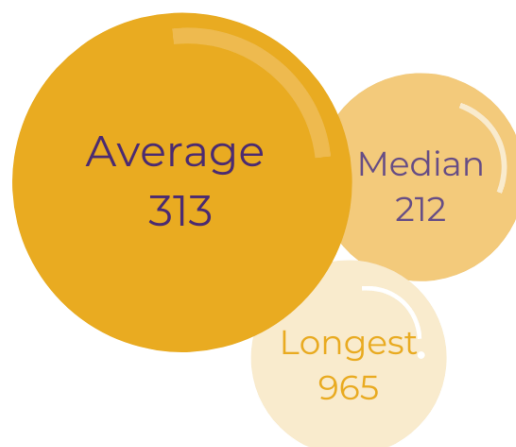
This data represents the 206 people Active on the By-Name List as of 31 December 2020.

Length of time to Housing (Days)



The days above represent the length of the person's most recent episode of homelessness before permanent housing. (for people housed between 1 October and 30 December 2020)

Length of time since first identified on the By-Name List (Days)



INNER-CITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Inner-City Community of Practice (ICCoP) is a vital mechanism established through the Adelaide Zero Project, bringing service providers and government agencies together across a range of sectors who interact with people sleeping rough. Homelessness, housing, health, police and correctional services come together to coordinate and allocate housing and support according to people's needs on the By-Name List. This is critical to securing appropriate, rapid outcomes and responding to the complex vulnerabilities faced by people sleeping rough. ICCoP is a central function of the Project, helping to overcome barriers across a range of social systems and coordinate efforts to access housing and support for those who are sleeping rough.

We've totally changed the way we engage with people who are rough sleeping because we understand so much more now about how an individual might come to be homeless.

– Superintendent Matt Nairn, Officer in Charge, Eastern District, SA Police.

In 2019, ICCoP identified an opportunity to improve service coordination based on the Multi Agency Protection Service (MAPS) model. Using the VI-SPDAT to identify needs and vulnerability, ICCoP, through case coordination, can wrap around the right services and housing options that sets people up for successful and sustainable tenancies.

For complex systems in which only connected team approaches have a chance of succeeding the ICCoP has become a critical element of the Adelaide Zero Project operations—arguably its most important and enduring feature.

– Simon Schrapel AM, Chief Executive, Uniting Communities

Collaboration between Baptist Care SA's Eastern Aboriginal Specific Homelessness Service, Baptist Care SA's Able and Deadly, Aboriginal Community Connect, SA Housing Authority, Wali Wiru and the Royal Adelaide Hospital Avoidance Outreach Team resulted in housing a person with extraordinarily complex needs from the By-Name List in December 2020.

Staff from five separate teams and three different sectors collaboratively prepared a complex Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Application, talked through possible alternatives due to the shortage of properties with disability access, considered referrals, support required, cultural knowledge and the ability to have important conversations in a person's traditional language.

Placing the needs of this individual, who had been sleeping rough for a very long time, at the centre of their collective efforts, helped the services to secure a lease for this person for the first time in their life.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

Many of the Adelaide Zero Project's Partners played a key role in mobilising a system-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The initiative involved the State Government funding motel and hotel accommodation through the COVID-19 Emergency Accommodation for Rough Sleepers (CEARS) response, while service providers coordinated supports to

meet each individual's needs in their accommodation. Led by the SA Housing Authority, service providers were able to leverage the Adelaide Zero Project's collective approach and relationships that had been embedded across sectors, as well as the By-Name List and Dashboard, to track and respond, in real-time, to the number of people requiring support during this time. The SA Housing Authority prioritised housing for people leaving motels to ensure they did not return to rough sleeping.

The Marshall Liberal Government is focused on reducing homelessness in South Australia and is proud to support the important work of the Adelaide Zero Project towards the goal of Functional Zero homelessness in the inner-city.

In a silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Marshall Liberal Government, in partnership with our service providers, collectively housed 250 South Australians who were rough sleeping from temporary, motel-accommodation into long-term housing with additional support. These results would not have been possible without the collective effort of the sector, government and Adelaide Zero Project."

– The Honourable Michelle Lensink MLC, Minister for Human Services

Services have continued to use the By-Name List to triage the right type of housing and support to ensure people are supported to maintain their tenancies moving forward. Between 18 March and 30 September 2020, 274 people were supported into long-term housing through both the CEARS response and the existing Adelaide Zero Project mechanisms, compared with just 75 people in the six months before the pandemic. The immense pressures associated with COVID-19 showed the strength and ability of service providers and government agencies to successfully respond to rapidly changing circumstances. The additional supports and resources made available throughout the CEARS response showed that the system has the capability to quickly house and support many people to exit homelessness.

With continued investment and fewer barriers to access housing and support, the CEARS response indicates what is required to continue to progress towards Functional Zero in Adelaide.

The work that had been done by the Project in bringing partnerships together, doing the analysis, developing the By-Name List, making sure we understood what was needed, was fundamental to the response to COVID. The pandemic put all of that work into fast mode.

– *The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Sandy Verschoor*

LOOKING FORWARD

The Adelaide Zero Project has and continues to make significant progress towards ending homelessness by building new relationships across sectors, harnessing a common goal, sharing data and coordinating efforts to provide long-term housing and support for people experiencing homelessness.

Through the investment in establishing and maintaining a By-Name List, Adelaide now has the most comprehensive understanding we have ever had of the needs of people sleeping rough in the city.

Further work is needed, however, to achieve the goal of Functional Zero. There is now an opportunity to target efforts using what we have learned through the Project so far. While 522 people have been housed across the Project as of 31 December 2020, there were 206 people still actively homeless in Adelaide's inner-city on this date, including 121 people sleeping rough. Focussed action remains critical as the Project continues to set interim targets to ensure ongoing progress and accountability to those who are still sleeping rough.

In December 2020, the Project Partners committed to an interim target to reduce the number of people who are currently listed as Active on the By-Name List down by 30% before 30 June 2021, with a focus on five cohorts:

- People who are eligible for additional support through the CEARS response
- People who are chronically sleeping rough
- Veterans (current and former serving members of the Australian Defence Force)
- People aged under 25 years
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People

While the Adelaide Zero Project's initial focus was to test the Functional Zero model for people sleeping rough in the inner-city, the learnings generated through the Project so far can, and should, be applied beyond this original scope. This could include other high-risk cohorts, such as people experiencing domestic violence, and to different forms of homelessness, for example couch surfing. These learnings should also be applied to different regions outside of the inner-city. The Adelaide Zero Project has helped to influence system-wide reform, yet continued ongoing focus and support is still required to break through the remaining barriers, such as securing new housing options.

Access to Housing and Support

There is still a need for a greater and more diverse supply of properties from the public, community and private rental housing sectors. Such properties need to be prioritised for the most vulnerable. By monitoring the inflow and active number of people sleeping rough month-to-month, compared to the average number of housing placements, the Adelaide Zero Project's Dashboard indicates the volume of housing needed in the system to meet the community's current and projected needs.

The lack of appropriate social housing, and services to support longer term recovery processes, is an ongoing challenge in addressing homelessness ...

We know from the research that it is cheaper to provide social housing than it is to have people 'on the streets'.

– Louise Miller Frost, Chief Executive Officer, St Vincent de Paul Society (SA) and Adelaide Zero Project Steering Group Co-Chair

Person-centered data from the By-Name List also highlights what it takes to support people to sustain a house. Data from the By-Name List consistently shows that people sleeping rough in Adelaide have high and complex needs, requiring housing that suits their individual situation, along with specialised support.

We need to look at ways of using the data and of assessing vulnerability and finding ways of meeting people's needs even more effectively as a system. There's more to learn, not just about the outflows from the system, but also the inflow. We need to get to know the people on the By-Name List even further.

– Professor Ian Goodwin-Smith, Director, The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise, UniSA

The Adelaide Zero Project has captured stories of people's recovery and restored wellbeing after being housed, reiterating the importance of ensuring anyone's experience of homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring.

One tenant of Community Housing Limited completely transformed his garden and yard from a dirt bowl, to a lush lawn for the dogs and a veggie patch. The garden provides fresh produce for cooking in his home. The Housing Officer has seen a marked difference in his emotional wellbeing, his confidence, and the way he communicates since being housed somewhere he can call 'home'.

In every community where we see success in reducing or eliminating homelessness, a Housing First approach is always a priority. For 50 years we tried to get vulnerable people to be housing ready and for 50 years the number of people experiencing homelessness increased. Moving from a housing ready to a Housing First approach has been well documented in decreasing homelessness.

– Dr Nonie Brennan, Senior Advisor, Institute of Global Homelessness and former Chief Executive Officer, All Chicago (USA)

Investment in greater service coordination

The [Ending homelessness in the inner city through service coordination: feasibility study, final report](#) by The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise and the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness highlights that a joined-up system is needed to respond flexibly to the needs of people sleeping rough. Informed by Partners and learnings of the Adelaide Zero Project, the report emphasises the need for co-location of services, a more integrated service system, and broader linkages to intersecting systems (such as health and corrections). It is argued that this approach, bolstered by dedicated resources and staff to oversee and drive a high level of coordination, is needed to meet people's diverse needs through a range of specialist supports and sectors.

Culturally appropriate responses to Aboriginal homelessness and mobility

A lack of appropriate and safe accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from remote communities who travel to Adelaide, can often result in people sleeping rough in public spaces. Current responses are managed through homelessness sector services, which is often not appropriate as these services are commonly not needed or wanted by visitors from remote communities. With funding from the City of Adelaide, the Adelaide Zero Project commissioned The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise to undertake an investigation into better service responses to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and remote visitors who sleep rough in Adelaide through the [Aboriginal mobility data project, final report](#). To appropriately understand and respond to the needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people who sleep rough in the inner-city, a culturally appropriate engagement tool or process needs to be developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

There is a great gap in the approach currently being taken to support Aboriginal people, particularly those visiting from remote communities, who sleep rough. Supporting these people while they are visiting for health or medical reasons or simply because they exercise their right to travel, remains one of the more difficult pieces of unfinished business of the reform process.

– Reverend Professor Peter Sandeman,
former Chief Executive Officer,
AnglicareSA and outgoing Adelaide
Zero Project Steering Group Co-Chair

Prevention

During her Review Visits to Adelaide on behalf of the Institute of Global Homelessness, Baroness Louise Casey drew on the analogy ‘turning off the tap’; that there is a need to focus investment and interventions to prevent people falling into homelessness. In the [Better Understanding the People on the Adelaide Zero Project’s By-Name List Report](#) produced for the Adelaide Zero Project by the by The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise, with the support of AnglicareSA, important research was conducted with data from the By-Name List on the pathways into rough sleeping and how they could be addressed. In producing research such as this, the Adelaide Zero Project developed the data and the deliberations to facilitate more effective “tap-turning” interventions and support.

[International evidence](#) has also proven that public and private funds can be used to prevent someone from falling into homelessness and/or to support individuals sleeping rough into housing quickly, using a [Housing First](#) approach. The provision of one-off, flexible financial assistance for items such as furniture, transport, bonds or utility setup costs can be a vital intervention to ensure people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, can get and keep long-term housing.

Thanks to funding from StreetSmart Australia, Origin Energy and End Homelessness SA, an Emergency Fund trial was initiated by the Adelaide Zero Project in the second half of 2020. Findings from this trial are due in mid 2021, and will provide key learnings about the potential to adapt and expand this preventative mechanism in future.

We have worked with the Adelaide Zero Project Partners to think more broadly about Primary prevention, stretching beyond a focus on individuals to a population and systems wide approach, providing new ways to address the underlying causes of homelessness. This kind of unique cross-sector exploration and collaboration wouldn’t have been possible without the coordinating leadership role played by Adelaide Zero Project.

– Carmel Williams, Manager, Health
Determinants and Policy, Wellbeing SA

Continuous Improvement— small steps towards Functional Zero

Dozens of communities in the US who have successfully reduced homelessness in their communities achieved this using data for improvement, not judgement. Working closely with frontline services and policy teams, these communities have used data from their By-Name List to identify a blockage or a trend in their homelessness system. By running small tests of change, communities have identified and scaled new strategies to create more efficient processes, more targeted supports or more appropriate policies. This step-by-step, continuous improvement approach has led communities to reduce the number of people actively homeless, house and support people faster and prevent more people from entering the system until they reached Functional Zero.

Supported by [Community Solutions](#) through the [Australian Alliance to End Homelessness](#), the Adelaide Zero Project has adopted this approach and created a continuous improvement framework with services.

Changing community systems is hard work and to reduce homelessness we need to learn how to improve our homeless system. We need to build into our work the opportunity for testing, piloting, and evaluating, and with that, we need to allow ourselves to pivot or change our work quickly when we see we are not meeting our goals.

– Dr Nonie Brennan, Senior Advisor,
Institute of Global Homelessness and
former Chief Executive Officer,
All Chicago (USA)

The Adelaide Zero Project generated some monumental wins in addressing homelessness in Adelaide. The Project's collaborative approach and wealth of new data is paving the way towards a more person-centred homelessness system. SA Housing Authority are excited to build on this approach with the sector with a target to reach Functional Zero rough sleeping by 2025.

– Ian Cox, Head, Office for Homelessness Sector Integration, SA Housing Authority

Closing Remarks

While it is clear the Adelaide Zero Project has been a valuable change agent to address rough sleeping in the Adelaide CBD, it has not produced the final word on what a new service system should look like. Importantly, in light of the opportunity of broader sector reforms, the Adelaide Zero Project Steering Group agrees that the shared data platform, By-Name List, common assessment tool (VI-SPDAT) and the way of working together to allocate housing and support services according to need are key successes of the Project that can lead to a better, more integrated homelessness system across the state.

Whatever happens with the reform landscape, there are elements of the Project that we should not lose, like the community-owned, shared data that is near to real time that everyone can use. It is a resource which is now being looked at by the whole country as an example.

– Dr Selina Tually, Senior Research Fellow, The Australian Alliance for Social Enterprise, UniSA

In May 2020, the Adelaide Zero Project became a campaign Partner of the [Advance to Zero](#) campaign run by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, joining other cities across Australia who are looking to build By-Name Lists and adopt lessons from Adelaide. The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness has recognised the Project's contribution nationally, through sharing local progress with the establishment of a quality By-Name List, the first public dashboard to help the community understand their homelessness system and much more. David Pearson, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, urged Adelaide to continue to engage in a national Collective Impact approach, taking stock of what has been learned locally and to share those lessons more widely.

The Adelaide Zero Project is paving the way towards ending rough sleeping, showing that a Collective Impact approach can work to address the complexities of homelessness for individuals and for systems. Through a continued commitment to collective action, leadership and investment, there is now an opportunity to build on the Project's unique data, tools and collaboration to drive broader, systemic change and achieve the SA Housing Authority's state-wide

target of Functional Zero rough sleeping by 2025. In the meantime, Adelaide Zero Project Partners are committed to reducing the number of people sleeping rough as they continue to work towards Functional Zero. Together we must ensure there is a continued and urgent focus on people who are still sleeping rough, whilst building on the Adelaide Zero Project's lessons and momentum to create a better system that prevents more people from experiencing homelessness in the future.

I am inspired by Adelaide's leadership in forging a data driven path to end rough sleeping—and ultimately all homelessness—that will be a model for Australia. It is amazing to see what has been accomplished since the 2016 Homelessness Conference where the idea for the Adelaide Zero Project was born. The powerful collaboration among organisations that share the vision of measurably eliminating homelessness achieved the first complete and real time picture of homelessness in Adelaide. This team is poised to go the distance and use this deep and real time awareness of the issue to drive steady reductions in rough sleeping and all forms of homelessness. Government can now rely on accurate data and this strong team to invest in targeted housing solutions and make “zero” rough sleeping in Adelaide a reality.

– Rosanne Haggerty, President, Community Solutions (USA)

Adelaide Zero Project Resources

Adelaide Zero Project Implementation Plan 2.1: June 2020 - December 2020

www.dunstan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/V2.1-Adelaide-Zero-Project-Implementation-Plan-April-2020-to-December-2020.pdf

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www.dunstan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Adelaide-Zero-Project-Monitoring-Evaluation-and-Reporting-Framework.pdf

More resources, including our public Dashboard, can be found www.adelaidezeroproject.org.au

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