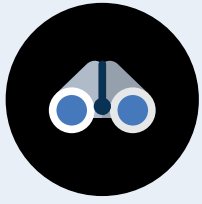


BRUCE COUNTY

Housing & Homelessness Plan Progress Report

2021





Background and Vision

Over the past year, council, staff, community partners, non-profit providers, local municipalities and the private sector have worked diligently to advance housing initiatives through ongoing partnerships, collaboration and community participation. In 2019, we developed Bruce County's Housing & Homelessness Plan Update to reevaluate the housing goals and actions.

Housing & Homelessness Plan Strategies

In conjunction with community partners and residents we identified five strategies:

- Increase Affordable Housing Stock
- Explore Rural Mobility Model
- Better Understand the Needs of Youth and Indigenous Groups
- Increase Housing Support Options
- Maintain a Coordinated System and Strong Partnerships





2021 Highlights



\$150,000

distributed to 10 homeowners for energy efficiency and accessibility upgrades



\$270,000

distributed for first or last months rent, rent and/utility arrears



\$1.75
MILLION

in funding provided to 10 community partners to provide services to vulnerable residents during the continued pandemic



Completion and occupancy of Penetangore Place, a 35-unit affordable housing development in the Municipality of Kincardine

In partnership with Grey County and other community partners developed the Bruce Grey By-Names List to respond to homelessness in the region



In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association hired a Housing Support Worker to prevent evictions for tenants at risk of homelessness

79 applicants offered community housing units in 2021

54 Bruce County residents receiving the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit

\$17,895

distributed for Westario Power's Low-income Energy Assistance (LEAP) program





Coming in 2022

Completion of Bruce County's Affordable Housing Development Toolkit to promote the development of affordable rental housing in Bruce County

Moving the community housing application from paper to an on-line application format

Enrollment of approximately 45 applicants to the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit program

Development of a new municipal housing allowance program

Creation of a Housing Demographic study to support housing programs and initiatives

Sustained investment in the home repair program

Continuation of the Housing Stability Fund to assist households with first or last months rent, rent arrears, utility arrears and/or moving expenses

Continuation of the Homelessness Response Steering Committee to enhance the community homelessness response system

Creation of a Coordinated Access System



Progress on Addressing Actions

A healthy, coordinated and integrated housing and homelessness system relies on the efforts of all partners to help advance solutions. Based on community feedback regarding the current housing issues facing Bruce County, the following five goals that were identified are listed below:



Increase affordable housing stock.

Bruce County understands there is a lack of available housing stock throughout the region. Bruce County is committed to working with the non-profit housing providers and the private sector as well as lower-tier municipalities to increase the affordable housing stock, including supportive housing, in Bruce County.



Explore rural mobility models.

Bruce County has limited transportation options either within communities or between communities. Although solving the transportation concerns is outside the scope of the Plan, we will work with community partners, private and public sector employers and lower-tier municipalities to discuss transportation barriers and solutions.



Better understand the needs of Youth & Indigenous groups. As suggested in the Bruce County's 2018 Homelessness Enumeration, youth and Indigenous groups were identified as priority groups for further exploration and deeper understanding.



Increase housing support options.

Bruce County will review and determine how best to meet the needs of individuals and families at greatest risk and help them access services quickly, by exploring and leveraging supportive housing options.



Maintain a Coordinated System and Strong Partnerships.

Navigating the system can be a confusing and daunting task. Bruce County and its community partners are aware of the need for a coordinated system with a no wrong door approach. Bruce County is committed to strengthening collaborative partnerships to streamline and transform services as well as explore a Housing First Approach for rural communities to assist with rapid rehousing and ending homelessness.

Increase Affordable Housing Stock

Accomplishments

- Completion and occupancy of a 35 unit build in the Municipality of Kincardine
- Over \$2 million in capital repairs
- Attended two municipal council meetings to discuss affordable housing development



What's Next

- 1 Collaboration with Planning and Economic Development to create an Affordable Housing Development Toolkit
- 2 Engage with municipal councils to seek local commitment to prioritize surplus land
- 3 Develop and promote the development of secondary units in existing homes and new builds
- 4 Respond to regular inquiries from developers who want to build affordable housing
- 5 Continue to work with municipalities to leverage flexibility for affordable housing development

Explore Rural Mobility Model

Accomplishments

- Continued to bring the voice of the plan to integrated mobility and transportation discussions

What's Next

- 1 Continue to bring the voice of the Plan to discussion on integrated mobility and transportation



Better Understand the Needs of Youth and Indigenous Groups

Accomplishments

- Ongoing collaboration with our service sector partners serving the needs of Youth and Indigenous Groups to build capacity for the research project to better understand the needs of Youth and Indigenous Groups

What's Next

- 1 Beginning phases of a research project to understand the needs of Youth and Indigenous groups

Increase Housing Support Options

Accomplishments

- Hired a Housing Support Worker to support tenants at risk of eviction
- Continued support of the Homelessness Response Steering Committee to develop strategies to increase supportive housing
- Continued partnership with VON Aging at Home Supportive Housing in community housing units

What's Next

- 1 Research on Home Share programs for potential implementation
- 2 Partner with Bruce County Community Paramedics and McMaster University to coordinate Community Paramedic Clinics in Bruce County community housing buildings

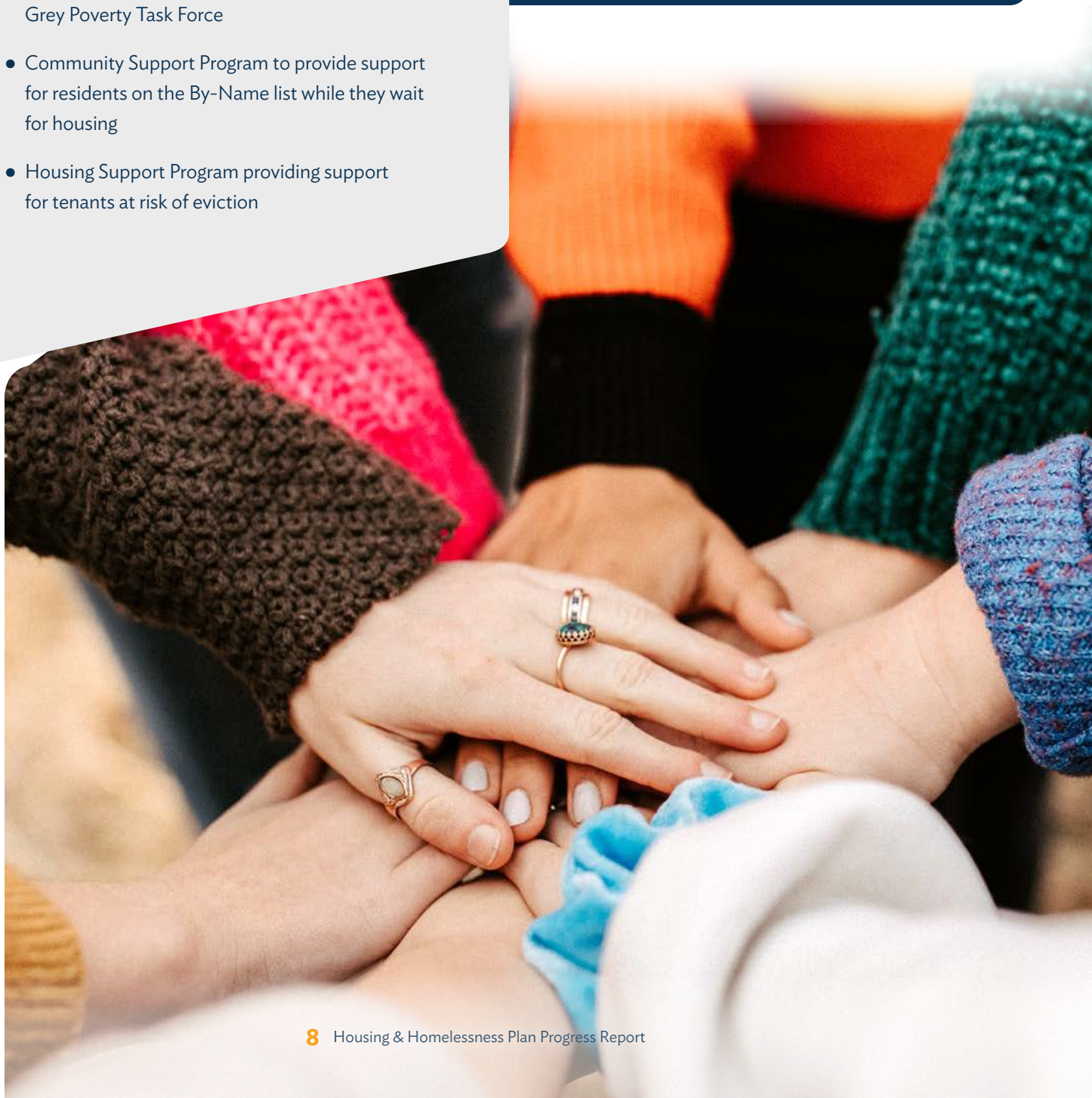
Maintain a Coordinated System and Strong Partnerships

Accomplishments

- Continued representation on the Homelessness Response Steering Committee, Community Safety and Wellbeing – Housing Action Table, and Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force
- Community Support Program to provide support for residents on the By-Name list while they wait for housing
- Housing Support Program providing support for tenants at risk of eviction

What's Next

- 1 Maintain collaborative partnerships with community partners and health care provider to increase access to housing supports





Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)

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

CHPI's Objectives include:

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



Components

- **HOUSING STABILITY FUND**
To assist individuals, couples and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to secure affordable permanent housing in Bruce County.
- **SHELTERING AND HOMELESSNESS SUPPORTS**
The YMCA Grey Bruce Housing Program provides sheltering and support services for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness.
- **GIIWE PROJECT**
An Indigenous led, inter-agency collaboration aimed at reducing off-reserve Indigenous homelessness.

- **COMMUNITY SUPPORT COORDINATION**
Provide financial counseling and supports related to affordable housing to individuals who are at risk of eviction.

in 2021

\$729,552

of provincial funding was spent on these programs to assist residents of Bruce County who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.



Summary

Bruce County has remained committed to its vision and has cultivated and developed strong partnerships within the community to broaden awareness and acceptance of the need for more affordable housing.

A special thank you to County Council, County staff, local municipal councils and staff, and all of our community partners and developers for their dedication, commitment and innovation that is resulting in Better Housing Choices for all for our residents who call Bruce County Home.





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www.brucecounty.on.ca/housing-services

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