



BROKEN HILL COMMUNITY WORKING PARTY

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

MARCH 2022



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ASSEMBLY

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4	Final draft endorsed in principle	8 th Mar 2022	KC
5			
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7			

**BROKEN HILL COMMUNITY
WORKING PARTY**

HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN

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HOUSING and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

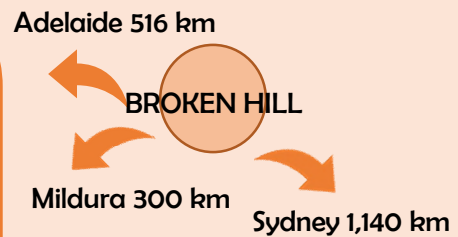


BROKEN HILL

Housing and Environmental Health Plan Executive Summary

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan provides a Master Plan for housing, infrastructure and housing-related human services for the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill. The Master Plan is based on a body of evidence outlined in this Executive Summary. Much community input is drawn from the Household Survey organised by Murdi Paaki Services a few years ago, and from the Broken Hill CWP Community Action Plan. The Plan describes the current situation and proposes measures to improve the state and supply of housing, the way it is allocated and managed, and what needs to be done in the future to meet community needs for housing, wrap-around services and economic development. The Executive Summary begins with some facts about the community, looks at the housing situation, then presents the key points of the Master Plan. The Plan belongs to the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill

Where we are to be found?



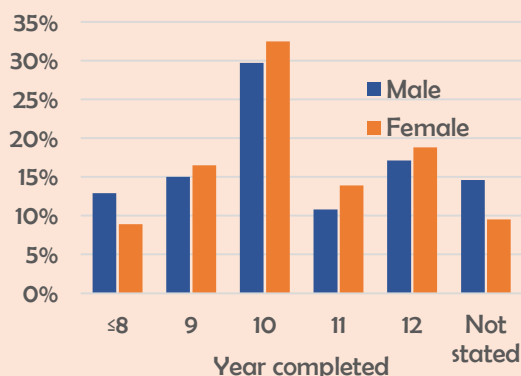
The Broken Hill climate is hot and dry. The number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ is expected to increase from 42 to ≥ 65 days/year by 2079

About the community:

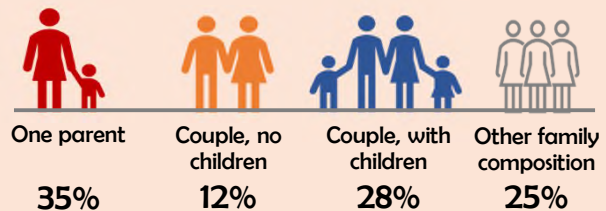


Aboriginal population = 10.3% of total population of 18,114 persons (ABS 2016 Estimated Resident Population)

Highest year of schooling, all Aboriginal adults



Family household composition



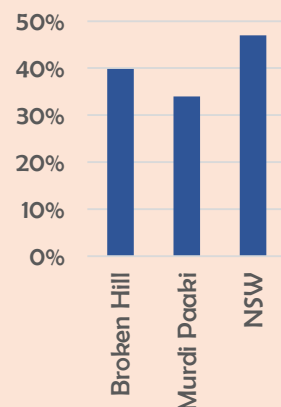
Median age of the population



36% of the Aboriginal population is aged under 15 years



Employment to population ratio





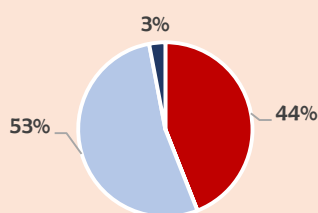
Broken Hill

Facts about housing in our community from the ABS 2016 Census and MPRH&BC Household Survey:



On Census night, 19% of private dwellings in Broken Hill were not occupied

Social housing manager(s)

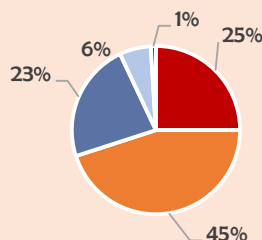


- Local ACHP
- Regional ACHP
- Out of Region ACHP
- Community housing manager
- Public housing manager

57% of Aboriginal households lived in the same house 5 years before the ABS 2016 Census

Tenure type

- Owners
- Private renters
- Social housing renters
- Other
- Renting ndf



Aboriginal
2.9



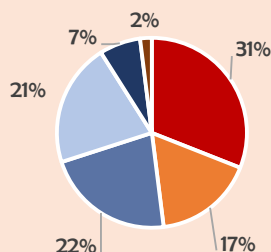
Non-Indigenous
2.1

Average household size

Existing Aboriginal social housing

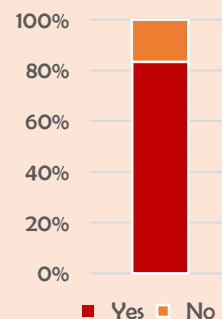
	Bedrooms			
	1	2	3	4+
Broken Hill LALC	-	3	10	6
AHO	6	2	30	12
Total dwellings	6	5	40	18

Satisfaction with housing manager

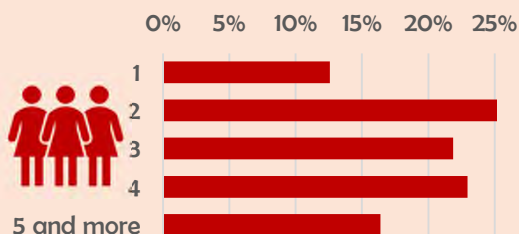


- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Not stated

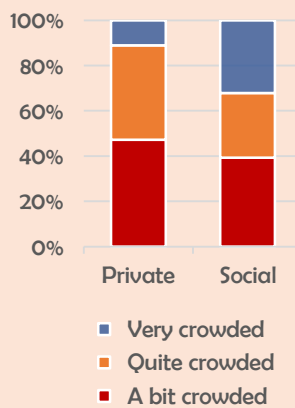
Feeling safe



Occupancy (number of persons per rental)

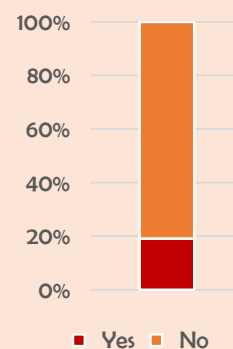


Households feeling crowded

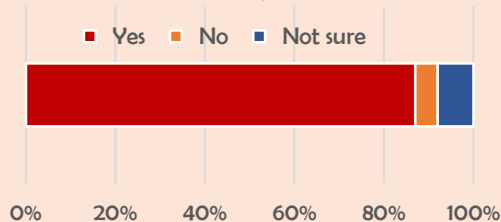


- Very crowded
- Quite crowded
- A bit crowded

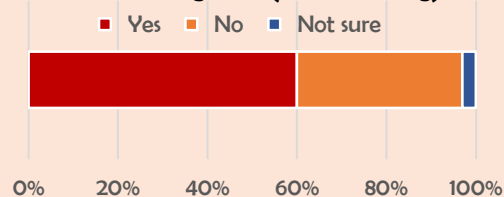
Households sheltering homeless persons



Tenants with a tenancy agreement



Tenants claiming CRA (Social housing)



Reasons for living in Broken Hill:

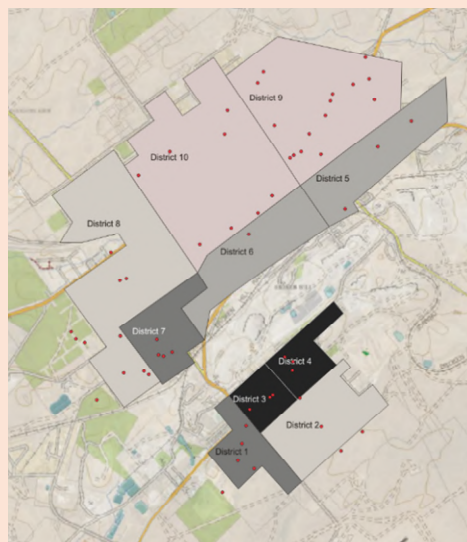
- I was born here - 14% of mentions
- To be close to friends - 17% of mentions
- To be close to family and relations - 24% of mentions

Only 4% of mentions referred to work reasons

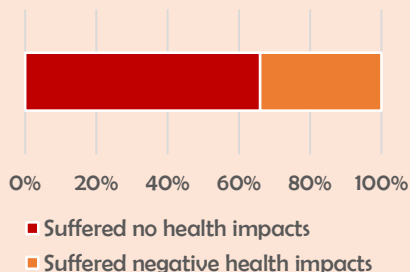


Broken Hill

Location of Aboriginal social housing in relation to environmental lead risk



Tenants experiencing negative health impacts attributable to housing

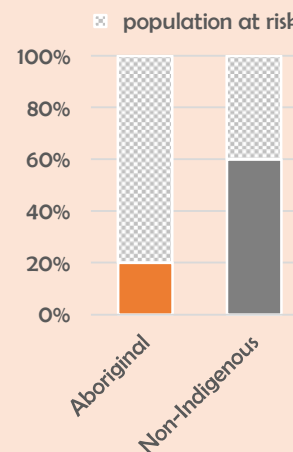


Negative health impacts - leading causes of concern:

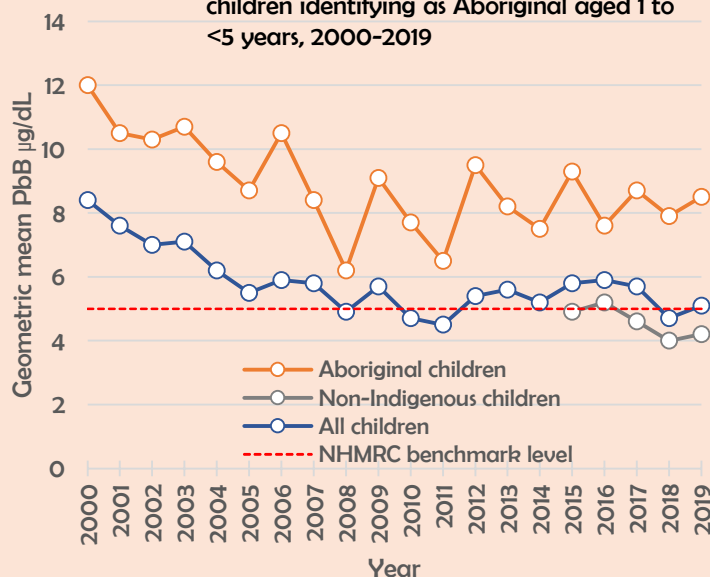
- Environmental lead contamination
- Financial stress, security and safety
- Exploitative and unstable living arrangements
- Property structural/health hardware deficiencies

There is no safe blood lead level. High levels of exposure in children can cause behavioural, learning, cognitive and attention difficulties; affect blood cell development, bones, and the liver and kidneys. Lead accumulated in an expectant mother's bones can affect her unborn child. The source is dust from past mining activity and lead paint

Percentage of children tested in Broken Hill with a blood lead level below 5 µg/dL, 2018-2019



Blood lead levels in all children and children identifying as Aboriginal aged 1 to <5 years, 2000-2019



Aboriginal families are at greater risk because of poorer living conditions, greater mobility and lifestyle differences



Broken Hill



Infrastructure improvements

- Sewerage: Install odour control to Creedon Street SPS and vent
- Traffic: Close Creedon Street as a HGV bypass
- Garbage: Conduct regular clean ups and provide access to bins for disposal of bulk items

A perspective on human services

(Core activity need for assistance = 7% of population)



	Number
0-9 years	16
10-19 years	7
20-29 years	5
30-39 years	7
40-49 years	14
50-59 years	21
60-69 years	15
70-79 years	7
80-89 years	6



SERVICE RANGE IN BROKEN HILL	Number
Community health services	3
Housing and housing-related services	
Aboriginal social housing services	3
Community housing services	1
Boarding houses	2
Tenant support services	2
Refuge	1
Homelessness services	4
Home and aged care services	
Residential aged care	3
Home care and home support	9
Social support services	2
Reintegration services	2
Family support services	6
DFV services	3
Legal services	1
Early childhood services	2
Disability services	16
Cultural services	2

Aboriginal specific

1
2
2
1
1
1
2

Key take away points from service providers:

- Contestability and procurement processes lead to service inefficiencies and poor client outcomes
- Introduction of a range of new providers has eroded established cooperative arrangements
- Some services are competing for the same client base
- Services find it difficult to recruit and retain staff - only a small pool of workers
- Some providers are taking unfunded responsibility for filling serious service gaps
- Service funding and resourcing is inadequate for need
- Lack of housing and homelessness is a critical issue



Broken Hill

ESTIMATE OF HOUSING NEED

Predicted housing need

	Bedrooms			
	2	3	4	5
Owner occupiers	-	4	-	-
Private renters	-	5	2	2
Private renters (slum)	12	12	5	-
Homeless families	26	4	2	-
Social housing	13	5	1	-
Total dwellings	51	30	10	2

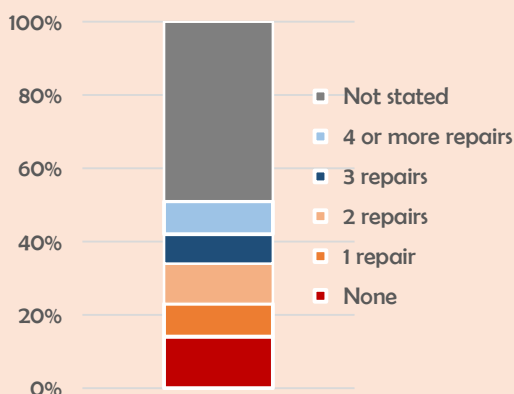
Home modifications

Required	6	by survey respondents
Completed	4	by survey respondents
To be completed	5	factored

Extra bedrooms

	Bedrooms		
	1	2	3
Estimated	1	-	-

Tenant reported condition (Social housing)



Housing repairs

(Number of properties)

Degree of work	Number
↗	19
↗ ↗	27
↗ ↗ ↗	12
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	9
↗ ↗ ↗ ↗ ↗	2

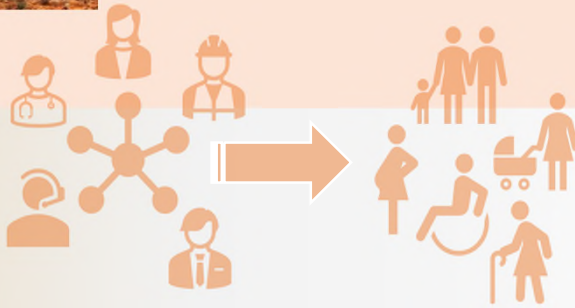
MASTER PLAN - HOUSING



- Secure remote housing status for Broken Hill. Develop a Region-specific Remote Area Housing strategy
- Carry out property Asset Surveys to determine if social housing meets industry standards and ensure properties requiring work are closely monitored while r&m activities are under way
- Commence building a land bank through acquisition of vacant or abandoned blocks for future development
- Greatly increase housing supply to meet need. Priorities are smaller units for young people and the elderly, with larger homes for families living in crowded households, people who are homeless or who are inadequately housed in substandard private rentals. Repurpose the Creedon Street flats. Add bedrooms to existing housing where crowding remains an issue
- Recognise the serious health and social impacts of environmental lead upon the Aboriginal population and, in conjunction with the Aboriginal community, develop and resource a city-wide strategic response which brings about a measurable improvement in blood lead levels of children aged 1 to <5 years
- Repair existing housing to a standard acceptable to the community and make safe and secure
- Make homes more energy efficient and improve thermal performance
- Transfer housing management responsibilities for Aboriginal social housing to a local ACHP
- Review the range of tenancy management practices identified as being unnecessarily complex, discriminatory, culturally unsafe and/or punitive
- Raise tenant awareness of their rights
- Investigate the option of developing an Aboriginal residential aged care facility
- Address the lack of emergency accommodation for homeless persons, people bailed by the Courts, offenders exiting custody, women and children leaving DfV, and people travelling to Broken Hill to access health services



Broken Hill



The Master Plan sets out the actions the CWP has adopted to secure a better future for the community. The actions come from the contributions of the community and from analysis of the gaps which prevent people from living healthy, prosperous and comfortable lives in Broken Hill. The actions written into this Executive Summary are shorthand versions of the actions in the Plan itself

MASTER PLAN - HUMAN SERVICES

Aspirations to participate in civic affairs:

- Establish a dialogue with Broken Hill City Council to advance the Broken Hill HEHP and Broken Hill CWP Community Action Plan and to provide a forum for discussing and advancing areas of common interest

Aspirations for improved service delivery:

- Engage CWP in provider selection and performance review to improve service accountability
- Arrange for services to be subject to Service Level Agreements negotiated in conjunction with the CWP
- Improve service coordination, integration and quality to raise standards of assistance received
- Limit the number of out of town providers in the interests of delivering culturally safe services
- Expand range and accessibility of services to improve client outcomes
- Encourage the growth of Aboriginal services in the interests of providing culturally safe services
- Encourage providers to employ local community members
- Establish a technology hub to assist community members to link with services

Aspirations for children and families:

- Ensure families have access to support, safe places and counselling in times of need which are within easy reach and culturally safe
- Take steps to identify risks to children and reduce the harm that these risks pose
- Introduce an Aboriginal-specific pre-school service
- In conjunction with BHCC, prepare a youth engagement strategy

Aspirations for greater economic participation:

- Grow the proportion of the population employed
- Foster the growth of Aboriginal businesses
- Connect with the strategic interests of BHCC and Far West RDA
- Work with MPS to develop a Broken Hill enterprise development action plan

Aspirations for improvement in physical and social and emotional wellbeing:

- Improve access to AoD services, including developing a local residential healing centre
- Deal with the factors which give rise to DfV and ensure the infrastructure and resources are in place where there is no alternative but to seek safety
- Advocate with FWHLA for equitable access to renal services

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GLOSSARY

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACHP	Aboriginal Community Housing Provider
ACFI	Aged Care Funding Instrument
ADWF	Average Dry Weather Flow
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System
AHO	Aboriginal Housing Office
APB	Aborigines Protection Board
AVO	Apprehended Violence Order
BHCC	Broken Hill City Council
BHELP	Broken Hill Environmental Lead Program
BHLALC	Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council
BHP	Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited
CA-G	Commonwealth Attorney-General
CAP	Community Action Plan
CHP	Community Housing Provider
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Programme
CNOS	Canadian Occupancy Standard
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
CRC	Community Restorative Centre
CWP	Community Working Party
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice
DPIE	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
EW	Essential Water
FWCLC	Far West Community Legal Centre Limited
FWLHD	Far West Local Health District
HCP	Home Care Package
HEHP	Housing and Environmental Health Plan
HLP	Healthy Living Practices
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
MPRA	Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly
MPRH&BC	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium
MPS	Murdi Paaki Services Limited
MP TSEP	Murdi Paaki Tenant Support and Education Programme
NCAT	NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSHS	National Social Housing Survey
N-W NSW IREG	North-Western NSW Indigenous Region
NSWALC	New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council

OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment (NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs Plan)
OOHC	Out of Home Care
PDWF	Peak Dry Weather Flow
PHN	Primary Health Network
RAHLA	Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RFDS	Royal Flying Doctor Service
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SPS	Sewage Pumping Station
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
WATAAS	Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service
WWF	Wet Weather Flow
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan was developed by the Broken Hill Community Working Party in conjunction with Murdi Paaki Services Ltd. The Broken Hill Community Working Party would like to acknowledge the contributions of all community members and others who participated in the development of this plan through offering their advice, knowledge and encouragement.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present: those of the Wilyakali Nation and those of other Nations who have found their home in Broken Hill. We also acknowledge and respect the efforts of those community members seeking to improve the wellbeing of all Aboriginal families and individuals living in our community.



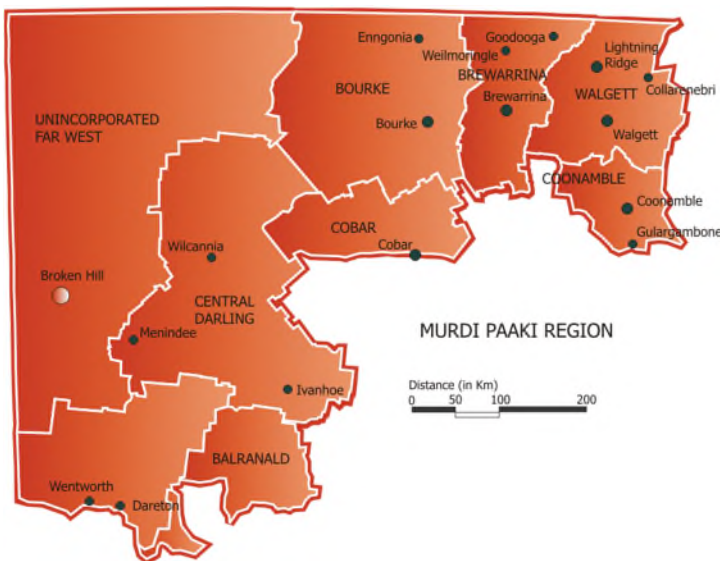
For the purposes of this Plan, an Aboriginal person is a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (person) and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Housing and Environmental Health Plan (HEHP) is prepared for the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill, the principal regional centre of western NSW. The Broken Hill community is one of sixteen larger communities within the Murdi Paaki Region as shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Murdi Paaki Region



- Give an assessment of 'wrap-around' human services;
- Determine the need for and form of tenant support and education services;
- Contribute to a review of requirements for financial wellbeing of the Aboriginal social housing sector, including where practical, new forms of investment;
- Provide an informed basis for planning for future housing need and development, and associated value-adding initiatives; and
- Report a high-level community-led approach to project master planning to shape the future of Aboriginal housing and related human services in Broken Hill.

The Plan describes the aspirations of Aboriginal people living in Broken Hill and outlines a strategic approach to achieving the community's goals. Planning is the necessary first step in a programme aimed at achieving better housing and environmental health outcomes by building and improving housing and environmental health infrastructure, together with related services and amenities in the community. The Aboriginal community of Broken Hill, and particularly existing and prospective tenant households, will benefit directly through having the foundation of a more strategic, informed and innovative approach to resourcing and managing the Aboriginal social housing sector in the community.

The purpose of the HEHP is to:

- In conjunction with data collected through the Murdi Paaki Regional Housing and Business Consortium (MPRH&BC) project and described in the *Social Housing Providers and Assets Audit Report*, establish an evidence-base to guide the way in which housing policy is set and decisions are made in respect of Aboriginal social housing provision and management, and responses to environmental risk;
- Describe the current situation in relation to housing Aboriginal individuals and families in Broken Hill;
- Gauge interest in home ownership;
- To the extent possible, report on the condition of Aboriginal social housing assets;

1.2 Governance arrangements

HEHPs are an initiative of the Murdi Paaki Regional Aboriginal Housing and Leadership Assembly (RAHLA), a partnership of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly (MPRA) and the NSW Government created through the OCHRE Local Decision-Making policy and directed by the Ministerial *Agreement to improve Aboriginal social housing outcomes in the Murdi Paaki Region*. The RAHLA sees the preparation of HEHPs in all Murdi Paaki communities as a priority project under the Agreement and has authorised Murdi Paaki Services Ltd (MPS) to carry out the project to begin the process of developing the evidence base for regional policy setting and decision making as a vital step in rebuilding the social housing sector and social and economic capabilities of the Region.

The Agreement sets a framework for the active participation of Murdi Paaki communities, through their elected representative peak bodies, in the development and delivery of better services, the creation of opportunities to raise collective skills, knowledge and competencies, and the building of individual and organisational capacity in community. In this regard, the Agreement recognises the status of the Broken Hill Community Working Party (CWP) as the principal point of contact for conducting business within the Aboriginal community and for leading the development of the HEHP planning process at community level.

1.3 Respecting Land Council autonomy

The roles and functions of Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) are defined in the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1982 (ALRA). Land Councils play a vital role in maintaining cultural practice and conserving Aboriginal heritage within their boundaries. They fulfil a critical function in NSW of restoring to the local Aboriginal population land which has been alienated by European colonisation. This land may be used for cultural or economic purposes; the rationale for each land claim is based upon the aspirations of the relevant LALC. LALCs also provide Community Benefit Schemes which may include Aboriginal social housing provision. In the Murdi Paaki Region, most LALCs are housing owners; some also manage their own housing. Individual LALCs have the inalienable right to make decisions in relation to their assets in accordance with the processes and constraints set out in the ALRA.

The Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly has made it a policy not to involve itself in matters of heritage and culture which are rightly the domain of the LALCs. Similarly, the Assembly recognises the autonomy of LALCs to make their own decisions in relation to their land and property. This Housing and Environmental Health Plan does not in any way impinge on the LALC's autonomy as a sovereign decision-maker in relation to its assets. In the interests of achieving maximum benefit for the community, the CWP invites the LALC to join its voice and hands in unity to advocate for and implement the change agenda set out in the

Master Plan.

1.4 The bigger picture

This HEHP is intended to supplement the work undertaken to date through the MPRH&BC project with more detailed and targeted development options at community level.

Plans have been produced to a similar degree of detail for all communities across the Murdi Paaki Region, providing the opportunity for MPRA to assess communities' strengths and needs both as individual communities and comparatively, in relation to each other. The Plans acknowledge the reality of the experiences of Aboriginal people living in far western NSW and form a resource for intelligent leadership and an integrated, creative response which places communities, to the greatest extent possible, as the principal drivers of sustainable local action.

Put together, it is hoped the HEHPs will:

- Reinstatement and strengthen the capacity of Murdi Paaki regional and local Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHPs) to ensure that all Aboriginal people living in Aboriginal social housing in the community can receive culturally appropriate, professional and sustainable tenancy and asset management services from ACHPs which themselves are viable and supported;
- Increase access, opportunity and choice in affordable, healthy and safe housing for Aboriginal persons and families living in Murdi Paaki communities through growing the size, mix and quality of the ACHP asset base;
- Work to ensure that assets are maintained in good condition in the long term;
- Ensure that tenants most at risk of a tenancy breach can access the services they need to sustain their tenancies;
- Provide greater opportunity for Aboriginal persons and families to engage with employment and education support that increase opportunities for housing independence;
- Establish the level of financial investment in respect of capital and recurrent costs to

- ensure sector viability; and
- Set the foundation for procurement practices and value add initiatives which respond to the 'failed market' environment and benefit the community.

2 BRIEF HISTORY OF BROKEN HILL and ITS RESIDENTS

2.1 Snapshot

Broken Hill may be characterised as a historic regional service centre located in far western NSW some 1,100 km west of Sydney and 500 kms east of Adelaide. The total population at the time of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census was estimated to be about 17,700 persons of whom 1,498 (8.5%) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The city is at the junction of overland routes between Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.

2.2 Aboriginal ownership

This Chapter owes much to published works based upon oral history as told by Wilyakali and other Baakantji elders, to Dr Sarah Martin. The writers are grateful to Dr Martin for permission to draw on this body of work.

The lands around Broken Hill, extending westwards 120 km to Olary in South Australia, are the traditional lands of the Wilyakali (also spelled Wilyali) people, a dialect group of the Baakantji language group. Wilyakali people share the same moiety and kinship systems and language with other Baakantji sub-groups from Louth, downstream of Bourke, to the Murray River. The Wilyakali group itself is divided into subgroups, and the traditional owners of Broken Hill and the surrounding country are known as the Pulali, or stony hills people. Malyangapa people lived beyond the Wilyakali northern tribal boundary around the seasonal lakes south of Tibooburra in the corner country, while Adnyamathanha and Ngadjuri peoples lived further to the west. The Wilyakali people are still the First Nations peoples in Broken Hill, though there are Aboriginal residents who come from other dialect and language groups: Ngiyampaa; Dieri, from around Innamincka; and Adnyamathanha. Regrettably, very few Aboriginal and Torres Island people living in Broken Hill report speaking an Indigenous language.

Broken Hill, and the surrounding landscapes, are the subject of a rich body of creation narratives – for example, those relating to the Bronzewing Pigeon and to the Eaglehawk and Crow. The Broken Hill itself, for example, was made by the ancestral creator spirit Kuluwiru to punish people in the area who had transgressed the rules of social organisation. Kuluwiru broke the rocks to form the broken hill so that people could not pass, laying down new rocks from the bodies of the transgressors. The Bronzewing Pigeon story is associated with the Pinnacles, just south-west of Broken Hill, Umberumberka and Mutawintji, and it was the Bronzewing Pigeon that made the spring or soak in the creek at the Pinnacles and left the deposits of quartz which were used by Aboriginal people to flake stone tools. Water sources in the area around Broken Hill are culturally significant, and are traditionally protected by Ngatji, or Rainbow Serpents.

Rivers provided a more reliable and plentiful food supply than the scrub country and mallee and the Wilyakali would spend time with other Baakantji people on the Menindee Lakes or at other locations along the Barka/Darling during drought times or through the hotter months. During winter, in more dispersed groups, Wilyakali people made use of waterholes in the Barrier Range and the Scopes Range. Early European explorers including Charles Sturt and Thomas Mitchell noted the presence west of the Darling River of small villages of huts in what they inferred were permanent settlements in use during the cooler months.

Wilyakali people's guardianship of water sources is evident from Sturt's diaries which record his anger with his guide Topar when, during his 1844 explorations, Topar guided Sturt's party away from water after having earlier shown them to waterholes in the vicinity of Broken Hill. Topar would have been concerned about Sturt's party leaving his own people short of water. Wilyakali people's guardianship of culturally significant water sources has been continuous throughout living memory.

Early European colonisation of western NSW was dictated by access to water so it was river peoples such as the Baakantji who experienced

dispossession early in the colonial period, as pastoralists arrived, while the Aboriginal people of inland regions were able to maintain their way of life longer with little European intervention. Even so, the Aboriginal peoples of the Barka/Darling River and its hinterland offered armed resistance to the theft of land and resources. An ongoing frontier war in the region persisted from 1839 and reached its climax in the Rufus River massacre in 1841. The conflict continued for some time as squatters moved onto lands bordering the Barka/Darling River. Traditional Baakantji owners, for example, were successful in routing European colonists in the area north of Polia Station (just north-west of Pooncarie) for a time during the 1850s. It was not until about 1860 that armed hostilities abated in the area of the Barka/Darling River around Wilcannia, and 1870 in the corner country around Tibooburra and Wanaaring. By the 1870s, only the Aboriginal people of the most arid areas retained a wholly traditional lifestyle but their movement across Country necessary to sustain this existence became increasingly restricted, eroding the ability to live independently.

Figure 2.1: Story poles



Mt Gipps Station was the first to be established in the Broken Hill area, in 1865, and the property included present-day Broken Hill, and country to the north. Poolamacca, Corona and Mundi were established soon after. As stations were established during the 1860s and 1870s, with traditional patterns of movement over country more and more constrained, Aboriginal people were less able to obtain a subsistence living through their customary ranging over Country: increasingly, men were employed as shearers and

cattlemen, while Aboriginal women were employed as domestic helpers in homesteads. On stations where proprietors were accommodating of Aboriginal people, populations could be substantial – for example, police population counts indicated 60 Aboriginal people as residing and, for those of working age, engaged in pastoral work at Mt Gipps Station in 1882, just prior to the discovery of minerals at the Broken Hill. Some Aboriginal people fossicked for minerals; for example, in the 1890s and 1900s, for slugs of tin from the creeks in the Euriowie Hills on Poolamacca. Droughts in the 1890s, coupled with declining food sources, adversely affected those remaining on Country and populations began to decline. Many Wilyakali people moved to Poolamacca, where the proprietor John Brougham pressured the Aborigines Protection Board (APB) to provide rations and other support. Meanwhile, government policy relating to the so-called ‘protection’ of Aboriginal people was beginning to bite. On Poolamacca, Aboriginal people were relatively sheltered from the actions of the APB and, when the Brougham family left to move to stations further north, some Aboriginal people followed. Elsewhere, the creation of Aboriginal reserves had commenced in 1909, immediately after a new Aborigines Protection Act had been proclaimed, with land set aside at Pooncarie, Milparinka, Tibooburra and White Cliffs.

The recorded Aboriginal population of the town of Broken Hill remained small, between 1 and 6 people, through the twenty-year period from the first available APB censuses until the last published data in the APB’s 1915 Annual Report. In the 1894 census returns, for example, only one Aboriginal person was counted living at Broken Hill (but 77 were recorded at Pooncarie, 104 at Tibooburra, seven at Euriowie (Poolamacca) and 33 at White Cliffs). In 1907, two were counted at Broken Hill, 56 at Milparinka, 30 at Pooncarie and only seven at Tibooburra. In 1910, five Aboriginal people were counted at Broken Hill, 12 at Menindee, 84 at Milparinka and eight at Tibooburra, and tents had been provided to Poolamacca Station. In 1913, six people were counted at Broken Hill. The Annual Reports show that rations were being distributed to one or more Broken Hill resident(s) from 1908 onwards. After 1915, the Annual Reports ceased to present census counts. Broken Hill aside, the

counts indicate that Aboriginal people remained mobile during this period, with populations varying markedly from year to year.

2.3 Aboriginal people and the City of Broken Hill

The recent history of Broken Hill itself is very much a history of mining. Following from the beginnings of pastoral activity in the 1850's, permanent European movement into the region began in earnest in the early 1880's following the discovery of lead and silver deposits at Silverton, 25km north-west of Broken Hill. Shortly after, the newly formed Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited (BHP) commenced mining of silver, lead and zinc at Broken Hill, initially as a large-scale open cut operation and then in underground workings. A 1920 history places an Aboriginal person there at the beginning: in 1884, Aboriginal stockman Harry Campbell, working for Department of Mines surveyor William Jamieson, struck the rich ore body where the Delprat Shaft on Block 12 was sunk.

The development of refining techniques by BHP allowed for growth in production such that, by 1905, the settlement was supporting a population of about 30,000. At the time, Broken Hill was the second largest settlement in NSW after Sydney. A rail link with South Australia provided a ready means of transport to and from the town for the movement of labour. The population reached a high of 35,000 in 1915.

Until the 1960s and 1970s, very few Aboriginal people lived in Broken Hill. From the 1880s through the early part of the twentieth century, the Police employed an Aboriginal tracker and the tracker's family would have lived in the town. Few Aboriginal people worked in the mines until about fifty years ago. A notable exception was Walter Newton who, as an ex-serviceman who had fought in World War I, was employed as a miner for a time. A Baakantji man, Walter Newton, had been born around White Cliffs around 1890 and had lived at Poolamacca with his mother and Wilyakali father when young. Having returned from fighting with the Australian Light Horse in Palestine, he was employed underground for a time, but later left to

return to stock work. The historical record indicates that employment was largely in the grazing industry. Historical accounts of the lives of people such as drover George Dutton suggests that Broken Hill was used as a transport hub and service centre. Until the Aborigines Welfare Act was repealed, Aboriginal people faced egregious discrimination. Their mere presence in town was more than certain to lead to arrest and imprisonment on a charge of vagrancy and there are records of people from Wilcannia camped in a vacant house being charged, and the house bulldozed. Until the 1960s, Aboriginal people with business in Broken Hill tended to camp on the outskirts. A few Aboriginal families lived in the city but they did not publicly acknowledge their Aboriginality, and therefore managed to make themselves invisible to the authorities. Broken Hill was, however, home to some girls who, part of the Stolen Generations, had been removed from their families elsewhere in the Murdi Paaki Region. It is little known that girls were sent to institutions other than the Cootamundra Girls' Home; however, from about 1930 to the 1970s, St Anne's Home of Compassion in Piper Street (originally the Central Mine Manager's residence and now an aged care facility) housed Aboriginal girls who had been removed by the APB and the Aborigines Welfare Board. This home was not solely for Aboriginal girls; children who were confined there went to school, and were allowed family visits, so perhaps they were somewhat more fortunate relative to children sent to Cootamundra.

Figure 2.2: St Anne's Home of Compassion



Aboriginal people began to work in the mines in the 1960s and 1970s. Workers tended to be men who had always been self-employed in rural contracting, on the railways or in other trades, who had managed to avoid entanglement in the welfare system and had maintained their ties to culture. Following the abolition of the Aborigines Welfare Board in 1969, construction in Broken Hill of government housing for Aboriginal people began, with enclaves developed in Tuart and Lawton Streets between Duff Street and Knox Street in South Broken Hill. This area became stigmatised as 'Vegemite Valley' in the non-Indigenous Broken Hill imaginary. Later, this estate was partly sold, partly demolished by the NSW Government, and several households removed to another population concentration at Creedon Street, on the north-western outskirts of Broken Hill in Railway Town.

Once a substantial Aboriginal population was established, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations began to form, to provide services to the burgeoning community. The Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council (BHLALC) was established under the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1984, and today provides cultural services, social housing, and delivers disability services in the far west. By 1991, Weimija Aboriginal Corporation was providing housing, health and other community services in Broken Hill, and Bugdlie Kooprih Yapijta Aboriginal Corporation had established a pre-school and childcare service. These corporations were, however, not long-lived: Bugdlie was deregistered in 2000, and Weimija ceased operating in 2007. Weimija owned several residential properties in Broken Hill; when the company was deregistered, the properties were divided between BHLALC and a mainstream housing organisation. The fact that Aboriginal-owned properties were transferred to a mainstream organisation still rankles with the community.

Other organisations have continued to thrive. In 1996, Community Development Employment Projects services commenced in Broken Hill, through Thankakali Aboriginal Corporation, and Thankakali has also operated a gallery, a tourism enterprise and other economic development activities. Perhaps the most successful Aboriginal community-controlled organisation has been Maari

Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, which commenced operations as the Far West Ward Aboriginal Health Service in 1995 and now employs over 130 people providing primary health care and health- and development-related services across far west NSW. Broken Hill is also home to Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation which, originally established in Bourke in 1999, relocated its headquarters to Broken Hill in 2003. Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation manages Aboriginal social housing in communities throughout the Murdi Paaki Region including a small number of dwellings in Broken Hill.

Mining production reached a plateau in the 1920's as the deposit was worked out. BHP ceased operations at the mine in 1939 although smaller scale operations continue at locations on the edge of the urban area. Reduced mining production has resulted in a population drift from the city; however, the Aboriginal population has continued to grow, with movement into the city by people from elsewhere in the Murdi Paaki Region and from South Australia. Mining activity has left a major environmental issue in the form of widespread lead contamination which is discussed in Chapter 11.

3 GEOGRAPHY

3.1 Location

As shown in Figure 1.1, Broken Hill is located in the far west of New South Wales near the border with South Australia. The closest major city is Adelaide, 516 km to the southwest. In contrast, Sydney is a distant 1,140 km by road to the east. Mildura is 300 km to the south. Silverton, the last, small settlement before the vast expanse of the Mundi Mundi Plains, is 25 km to the northwest of Broken Hill as indicated by Figure 3.1.

The urban area is bisected by the mullock heap formed from mine tailings. South Broken Hill and Railway Town, developed by the Silverton Tramway Company to house its workers close to the engine sheds, yards and workshops, are to the south and west of the city centre.

Figure 3.1: Broken Hill and surrounds



3.2 Access

Broken Hill is at the crossing of the Barrier Highway (A32), linking Adelaide and Sydney, and the Silver City Highway (B79) which connects Tibooburra to the north, and Mildura and Melbourne, to the south. Sealed roads link Broken Hill with Silverton and Menindee (114 km) and sealing of the extension of the Silver City Highway north to Tibooburra (330 km) was completed in 2020 to provide all-weather access resulting in fewer forced closures of the road north each year.

The history of railway services to Broken Hill is not a subject for this Plan but is, in itself, a fascinating record of political rivalry, commercial enterprise and human endeavour. The main sidings and locomotive servicing facilities for the Silverton Tramway were in the suburb of Railway Town, with sidings running to the south and north to the mines. The main passenger station was at Sulphide Street which was the terminus for services from Adelaide. It was not until 1927 that a direct service to Sydney was available from the current main passenger station at Crystal Street. Broken Hill is one of the stops of the transcontinental Indian Pacific passenger service running weekly between Sydney and Perth via Adelaide. The Broken Hill Outback Explorer train operates weekly between Sydney and Broken Hill while the daily XPT train service between Sydney and Dubbo connects with a coach service to Broken Hill. A twice weekly NSW TrainLink coach service is being trialled between Broken Hill and Adelaide and Broken Hill and Mildura. A rail freight

connection for ore exports directly links Broken Hill with Port Pirie and Port Adelaide in South Australia.

Regional Express operates air services from Broken Hill Airport to and from Adelaide, Dubbo, Griffith, Melbourne via Mildura, and Sydney using Saab 340 aircraft with a seating capacity of 30 to 36 passengers. Three flights per week are available currently to Sydney and two to Adelaide.

3.3 Topography

The city of Broken Hill is about 300 m above sea level but steep, undulating low ridges found in the western part of the city create a lumpy terrain to locally higher elevations. The town is ringed by the Barrier Range: a series of hills and higher ground which are oriented in a roughly north-east south-west direction (as evident in Figure 3.1), east of the border between New South Wales and South Australia. Mt. Robe is the highest peak in the

Barrier Range complex at approximately 472 metres above sea level.

3.4 Soils

The landscape of Broken Hill and the country around is very much influenced by the region's ancient rock types. Hard rocks outcrop in the form of ridges above long shallow slopes which give way to the surrounding steeply rolling plains. Relief in the lowlands is to 30 m. Many of the rocks and minerals are of economic importance, as evidenced by the Broken Hill silver, lead and zinc deposits. Local deposits of quartzite and silcrete were exploited by Aboriginal people for millennia for the making of tools. A feature of the range country around Broken Hill is the complex of steep-sided gorges containing small, sheltered waterholes which supported occupation in desert-like conditions.

A surface layer of rounded boulders and shallow, stony soils of partially weathered rock fragments cloak many of the low ridges. Alternating stony red desert soils and stone-free red clays or brown soils form long slopes, while soils in lowland areas: sand plains and dune areas, are deep red clayey sands. Rock outcrops on crests and in upper slopes and lower hills. Some soils exhibit a neutral/slightly alkaline surface horizon as a consequence of the presence of large amounts of calcium and magnesium carbonate. pH increases with depth to a more alkaline subsoil. Heavy cracking clays laid down in areas of flood deposition may contain high levels of gypsum and salt. Areas of sandy clay overlying rock are to be found in central Broken Hill.

3.5 Flora and fauna

Vegetation is generally thin and scrub-like: mainly scattered mulga, dead finish, prickly wattle and the lower-growing bluebush, copper-burrs, grasses and wildflower species along the ridgelines, becoming denser and more varied on the slopes where mulga and needlewood are prominent species with a sparse to locally dense understorey of bluebush, saltbush, copper-burrs, bottlewashers, tussocky grasses and wildflowers. Flats are colonised by sandalwood, rosewood, belah, white cypress pine

and black box with an understorey of copper-burr, saltbush and grasses. Plants are sensitive to available soil moisture and runoff patterns largely control vegetation distribution. Although uncleared, the composition and structure of vegetation communities has been altered because of grazing by stock and changed fire regimes.

The mallee species purple-wood wattle is unique to the Barrier Range and several other species are at risk or are rare.

Figure 3.2: Typical Broken Hill landscape



The sparseness of tree and shrub cover provides limited shelter for birds and small mammals while the stony nature of ground surfaces, and rock crevices, is ideal for reptiles. Birds are typical of those found in the semi-arid zone of NSW but diversity and numbers are said to be not high, grazing of extensive areas of habitat, mining and wood collection having led to a decline in understory plant species and cover affecting ground nesting birds and ground feeding insectivores. The low diversity of native mammals is reflected in surveys undertaken for renewable energy projects close to Broken Hill which were only able to identify echidna, red and grey kangaroos and species of bats. The distribution of native reptiles has been badly affected by habitat

degradation attributable to feral goats. Reptiles indigenous to the area include species of geckos, skinks, lizards, dragons and few snakes.

Endangered animal species include the yellow-footed rock-wallaby and Australian bustard.

3.6 Climate

Broken Hill is located within the NSW arid zone. Climate is desert-like: hot and dry. Data are, or have been, recorded at four stations in, or near the city: Broken Hill Airport (047048) from the 1947 to date and Umberumberka Reservoir (047039) from 1912 to 2019. The Patton Street weather station (047007), which provided a continuous record from 1889, closed in 2015 and the Stephen's Creek (047031) station ceased in 2019 after 128 years of operation. The following climate data is for the Airport recording station using data from 1957 onwards.

Figure 3.3: Temperatures

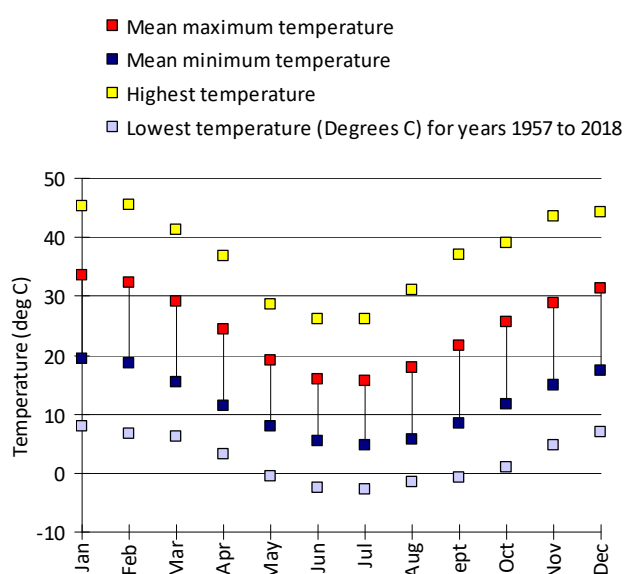


Figure 3.3 illustrates a climate of hot summers and cool winters. Over the course of the year, temperature typically varies from 4°C to 34°C but can fall to sub-zero and exceed 45°C in the extremes.

Figure 3.4 illustrates a slow gradual rise in maximum monthly temperature from 1992

suggesting that the mean number of days with extreme temperatures shown in Figure 3.5 will steadily increase if the trend continues. Figure 3.6 highlights the change in the mean number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$ over the warmer months of the year from 1957.

Although Broken Hill recorded only 11 days with temperatures above 40°C in 2020, the previous two years recorded 26 days and 25 days of extreme heat. These figures contrast markedly with the mean number of days for the period 1957 to 2018 shown in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.4: Increase in highest monthly temperatures

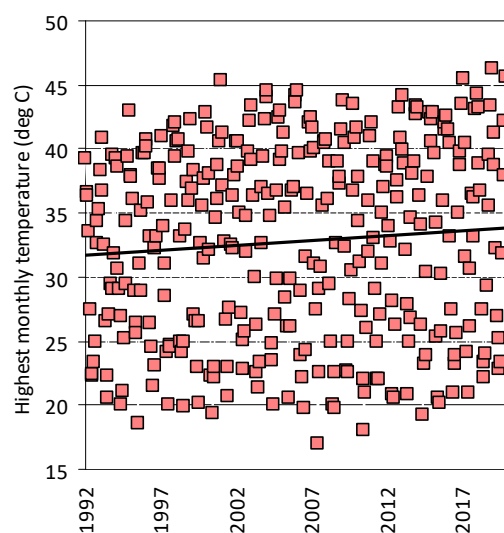


Figure 3.5: Days with extreme temperatures, 1957 to 2018

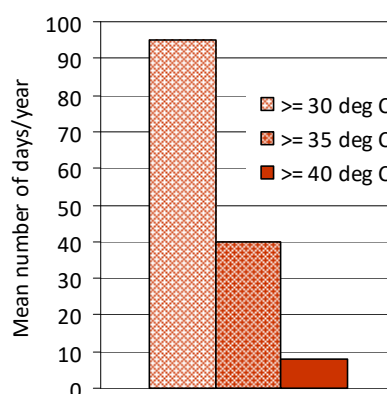
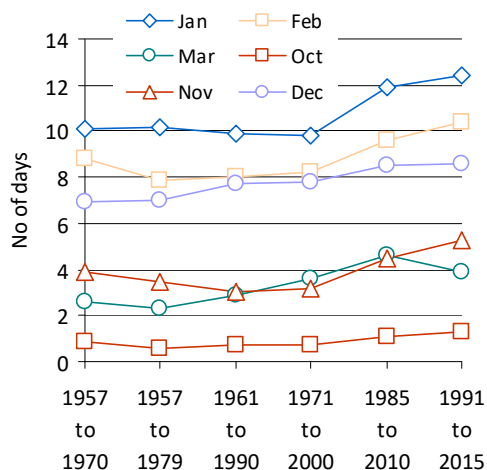


Figure 3.6: Mean number of days with temperatures $\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$, 1957 to 2015 (047007)



The NSW Office of Environment & Heritage is projecting in its report, Overview of Far West Region climate change, November 2014, the annual mean number of days with temperatures greater than 35°C to increase by between 20 and 30 by 2060-2079. This is over and above the corresponding mean of 42.3 days for the period 1991 to 2015. The inevitable conclusion is that the city can expect hotter temperatures for longer with further exaggerated extremes and a consequent effect upon the ability of residents to live and work productively for longer periods of the year.

Mean annual rainfall calculated from 56 years of record between 1947 and 2018 is 253.6 mm. Monthly distribution is shown in Figure 3.7 with average monthly pan evaporation estimated from Bureau of Meteorology evaporation mapping. Average monthly evaporation greatly exceeds mean monthly rainfall for all months.

Change in relative humidity is shown at Figure 3.8. Mean humidity is typically above 40% in the morning, the threshold accepted as ideal for human health and comfort, for most of the year, but reduces to below 40% into the afternoon. Change in mean monthly relative humidity recorded at 9.00 am for the Patton Street Station is shown at Figure 3.9. A noticeable increase in relative humidity is apparent from the early 1900s through to the 1971-2000 time period with a flattening of the trend in later years. An increase is

evident in the 3.00 pm data but is less pronounced. As the Patton Street Station ceased recording in 2015, more recent data is not available to extend Figure 3.9.

Wind is mainly from the south in the morning (9.00 am), tending to the east while wind in the afternoon (3.00 pm) is mainly from the south tending to the west. Monthly mean wind speeds and maximum wind gusts are shown in Figure 3.10 and Figure 3.11 respectively.

Figure 3.7: Rainfall and monthly pan evaporation

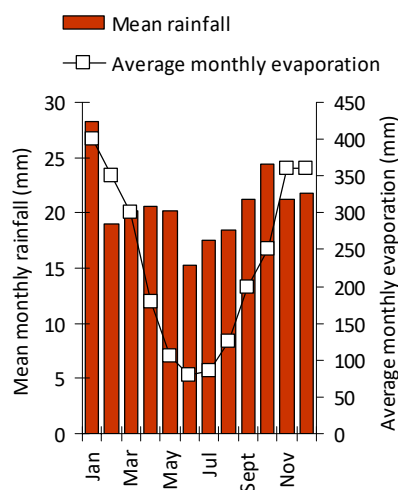


Figure 3.8: Relative humidity

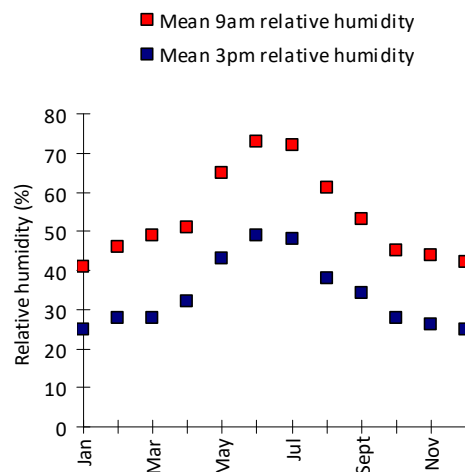


Figure 3.9: Trend in mean relative humidity, 30 year time periods, Patton Street Station (047007), 1911 to 2015

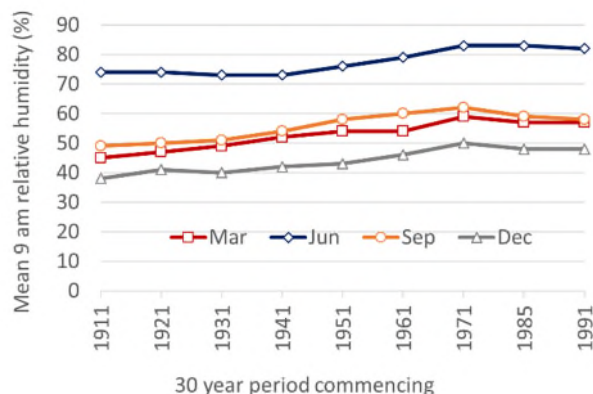


Figure 3.10: Wind speed

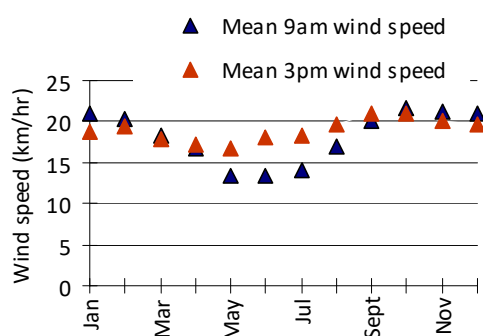
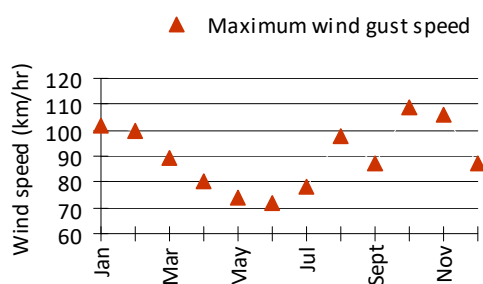


Figure 3.11: Maximum wind gusts



3.7 Flooding and drainage

There are no major watercourses present in the vicinity of Broken Hill although several ephemeral watercourses exist. These include Umberumberka Creek, Lakes Grave Creek and Lakes Creek which

flow into Umberumberka Reservoir, and Mundi Mundi Creek. Stephens Creek running to the north of the city was dammed in the early days of mining to provide a potable water supply for Broken Hill. Stephens Creek Reservoir, with a maximum capacity of 2,000 ML, was found to be inadequate soon after construction and storage volume was augmented by the building of the Umberumberka Reservoir.

In places, creeks have carved steep-sided gorges, such as Lords Gorge, where sheltered waterholes form when runoff occurs. Beyond the Barrier Range, creeks discharge to alluvial fans which can support ephemeral wetlands on the Mundi Mundi Plain in periods of lengthy rainfall.

Both urban and rural areas are subject to serious flooding in heavy rainfall events: in the past, buildings have been damaged, roads cut, rural properties isolated and stock losses incurred. The lack of topographic relief in central and eastern Broken Hill limits the installation of a piped drainage system so stormwater runoff is conveyed by a surface system of lengthy deep gutters and wide culverts as shown in Figure 3.12.

Figure 3.12: Typical stormwater culvert



These are prone to overtopping in moderate and heavy rainfall events. Flash flooding is not uncommon. Table 3.1 records the highest daily rainfall experienced by the city and the year of occurrence for each month.

Table 3.1: Highest daily rainfalls (mm) (047048)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
75.2	82.4	129.0	85.6	53.6	58.4
1961	2012	1989	1974	1968	2008
Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
29.0	44.5	78.4	48.0	57.0	49.8
2012	1973	1978	1983	1995	1962

The intensity-frequency-duration values at Table 3.2 would suggest the March 1989 event was close to or greater than the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) value or a 1 in 100-year average recurrence interval event, depending upon the rainfall pattern.

Table 3.2: Rainfall IFD (mm) (047048)

Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP)				
Duration	10%	5%	2%	1%
1 min	2.88	3.57	4.59	5.46
2 min	4.64	5.74	7.37	8.76
3 min	6.46	8.00	10.3	12.2
4 min	8.14	10.1	12.9	15.4
5 min	9.64	11.9	15.3	18.2
10 min	15.2	18.8	24.2	28.8
20 min	21.3	26.4	34.0	40.4
30 min	24.8	30.8	39.6	47.0
1 hour	30.8	38.1	48.9	58.2
2 hour	37.5	46.2	59.2	70.3
6 hour	52.0	63.7	81.0	96.0
12 hour	64.5	78.5	99.3	117
18 hour	72.5	88.0	111	130
24 hour	78.1	94.6	119	139
48 hour	89.9	108	135	157
72 hour	94.9	114	142	165
96 hour	97.9	118	146	169
120 hour	100	121	150	173

3.8 Environmental pollution

3.8.1 Lead

Efforts to ameliorate the major environmental health risk in Broken Hill have been ongoing for several years but the current Broken Hill

Environmental Lead Program (BHELP), established in 2015 with a \$13 million NSW Government commitment to address lead contamination and exposures in the town, ends in 2021 and, as yet there are no proposals for its extension. Aboriginal children are at greatest risk because of the proximity of their homes to the contamination source and patterns of outdoor play, and an unacceptable proportion of the 0-5-year population were shown in the 2017 Annual Report to have blood lead levels exceeding the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guideline figure of 5µg/dL for notification. Only 22% of Aboriginal children examined had a blood level below this threshold, unchanged from the previous year while the result for non-Indigenous children improved from 50% to 58%. Chapter 9 is devoted to the issue of environmental lead pollution.

3.8.2 Dust

The Broken Hill town area was virtually denuded of vegetation in the early days of mining operations as trees were cleared to provide mine props and fuel for smelting. The disappearance of tree cover contributed to severe dust storms from as early as 1886; over-grazing of the town common was also a factor. In the 1930s the problem had become so severe that the Zinc Corporation, in collaboration with Broken Hill Council, created revegetation belts around the windward boundaries of the urban area to reduce the impact of wind and dust. On the advice of botanist Albert Morris, these Regeneration Reserves were planted with saltbush, eucalypts, acacia and other endemic vegetation to provide lasting protection. While Broken Hill is still subject to dust storms, the reserve has been judged to be successful in abating the hazard to some extent.

Data collected by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Rural Air Quality network DustWatch programme revealed that dust storms occurred with record-breaking frequency in 2019 in the Western Natural Resource Management (NRM) Region. January 2019 was the dustiest month recorded across the Region since measuring commenced and Broken Hill experienced 115 hours of dust during that October.

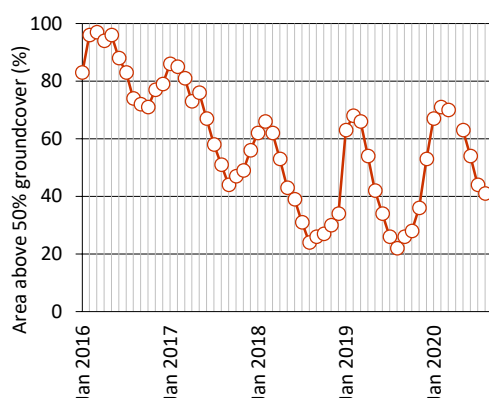
Figure 3.13: Dust storm, Broken Hill



Courtesy ABC Broken Hill

The cause of dust generation is a combination of very low groundcover resulting from prolonged dry conditions, high temperatures and increased hours of strong winds (> 40km/h) associated with the passage of cold fronts bringing with them north to north westerly winds. Figure 3.14, viewed in conjunction with Figure 3.10 which shows mean wind speeds in the range 15-20 km/hr, highlights the increasing likelihood of fine particle pollution being present for lengthy periods.

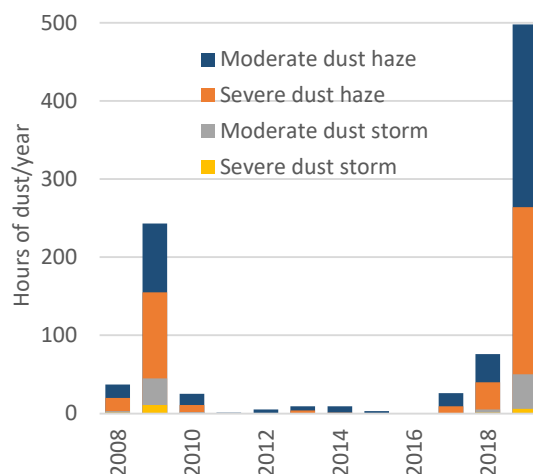
Figure 3.14: Seasonal variation in the land area with groundcover exceeding 50%, Western NRM



The adverse health effects of fine particle pollution associated with dust storms are elevated in Broken Hill as a result of increased levels of air-borne lead being present while ever drought conditions prevail.

Figure 3.15 shows the prevalence of moderate and severe dust haze and storms at Broken Hill over the period 2008 to 2019.

Figure 3.15: Prevalence of dust haze and storms at Broken Hill



3.9 Native Title

Native Title recognition was granted to the Barkandji Traditional Owners (Barkandji and Malyangapa People who comprise the descendants of the ancestors named in J150604) in 2015 to many lands in western NSW, including within the boundaries of Broken Hill City Council (Tribunal File No: NCD2015/001). Most relate to open space such as parks and gardens, recreational areas and vacant lots on the margins of the urban area. Figure 3.16 provides a snapshot of lands in central and north-western Broken Hill to which determination applies. For areas designated 'Exclusive Areas', the native title rights and interests comprise the right of possession, occupation, use and enjoyment to the exclusion of all others. For 'Non-Exclusive Areas', native title rights and interests may be summarised as:

- The right to enter, travel over and remain on the Non-Exclusive Areas, including in the company of others who, though not native title holders; are authorised to be present;
- The right to take and use the natural resources, other than water;
- With some conditions, the right to take and use the water for personal, domestic and communal purposes, including cultural purposes and for watering native animals, cattle and other stock, and watering gardens

- not exceeding two hectares;
- The right to camp and for that purpose to erect temporary shelters and temporary structures, to light fires for domestic purposes, to hunt and fish;
- The right to engage in cultural activities on the land, to conduct ceremonies, to hold meetings, and to participate in cultural practices relating to birth and death including burials;
- The right to have access to, to maintain and to protect from physical harm sites and places of importance which are of significance to the Barkandji and Malyangapa People under their traditional laws and customs; and
- The right to teach the physical, cultural and spiritual attributes of places and areas of importance.

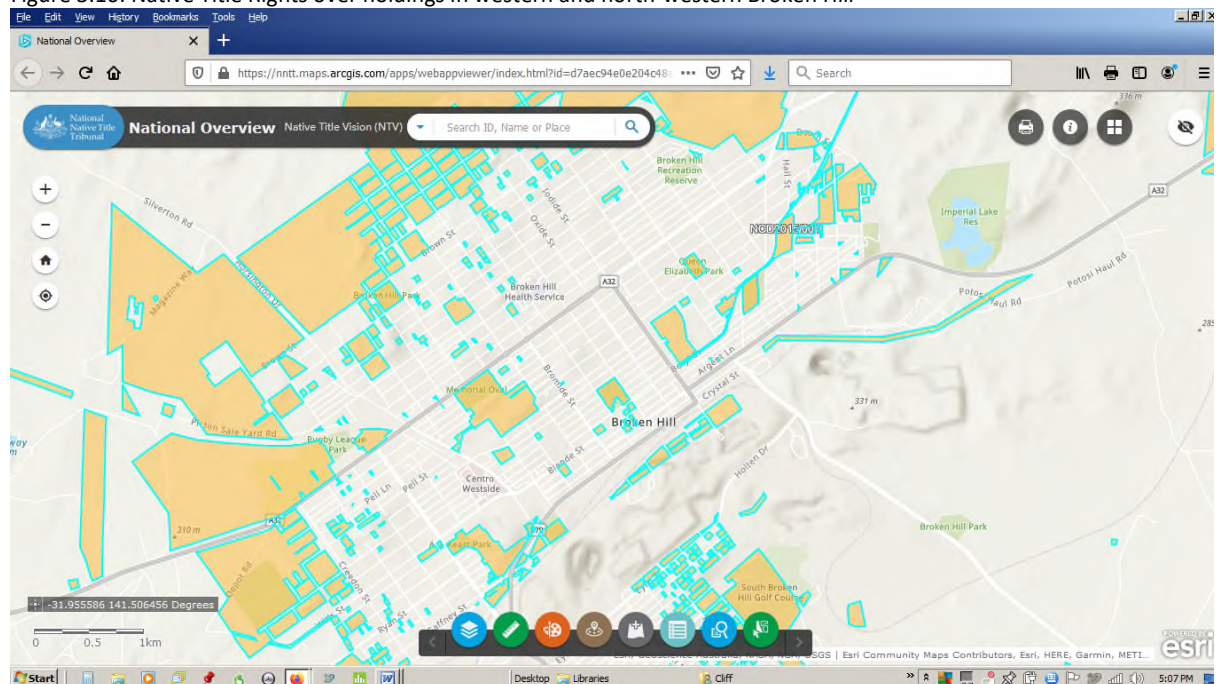
contain stone artefacts either in isolation or within the bounds of open camp sites. AHIMS is not an exhaustive inventory of sites so it is likely that numerous sites will be present within the vicinity of Broken Hill and Silverton.

In the interests of sites preservation, no details are included in this Plan.

3.11 Economic geography

Broken Hill City's gross regional product was \$997M in the year ending June 2019, a fall of 4.7% from the previous year. Mining continues to play a leading role in the regional economy: exploration and/or extraction of gold, mineral sands, iron ore, silver, lead and zinc. The Hawsons Iron Project,

Figure 3.16: Native Title Rights over holdings in western and north-western Broken Hill



3.10 Sites of cultural significance

A preliminary search of the Heritage NSW Aboriginal Heritage Management Information System (AHIMS) for sites of cultural significance within a 10 km radius of latitude 31.95°S longitude 141.45°E (Broken Hill CBD) indicates the existence of numerous recorded Aboriginal sites. These sites

Carpentaria Resources flagship project 60 km southwest of Broken Hill, has been assessed as capable of producing high quality iron ore at commercial scale, while Perilya is expanding its zinc and lead mining operations at its existing Broken Hill North mine, developing additional zinc, lead and silver reserves at the Broken Hill South mine, and conducting further exploration within a

10 km radius of the city.

The Tronox-owned Ginkgo and Snapper open cut mines, located 170 km south of Broken Hill, export mineral sand concentrate (rutile and zircon) by road to a mineral separation plant at Broken Hill for processing.

Mining contributes to the local economy through employment and contracting operations. For example, Carpentaria Resources estimates that its Hawsons Iron project will create more than 1,200 jobs in construction and 500 jobs in production. The Regional Development Australia Far West NSW Regional Plan 2013-2023 cautions that heavy dependence upon mining, because of its cyclic nature, places the region's economy at risk and strengthening of other industries and diversification are crucial to improving economic and employment stability.

With 130 years of servicing the mining industry, Broken Hill has developed the infrastructure required to skill the workforce at vocational and professional level to support local mining and fabricated metal product manufacturing activity. Nevertheless, the city still very much dependent upon importing human capital, particularly professional and managerial, from elsewhere to maintain the current level of economic activity and service infrastructure and geographic isolation is a barrier to moving to growth and new areas of economic activity.

Major renewable energy projects include the AGL 200MW Silverton Wind Farm project (\$450M), and the AGL 53MW Solar Plant project (\$150M) to the southwest of the city. The combined energy output will be sufficient, on average, to meet the power needs of approximately 158,000 households.

Broken Hill is listed as a National Heritage Place by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for its outstanding heritage value: 'a mix of architecture and mining infrastructure, set in a vast arid landscape'. These natural and man-made attributes, and the publicity generated through the film, television and arts industries, support a

tourism industry which caters for Australian and international visitors.

Agriculture is a well-established industry in the Far West region, traditionally based around pastoral activities such as wool production, but now diversified into goat and sheep meat production.

Despite a clear decline in population, Broken Hill remains a significant draw card for government human service and private sector investment with a focus on mining, agribusiness, renewable energy, screen and film and tourism.

4 THE POPULATION

4.1 Population profile

Table 4.1: Total population

17,479	persons
Estimated resident population (ERP) for 2019	
Change over 2018-19	-255

Source: ABS 3218.0

Table 4.2: Aboriginal population

10.3%	n=1,860
Total ERP for 2016	18,114
Murdi Paaki Region	23%
New South Wales	3%
Source: ABS 3238055001DO008_201609 Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016	

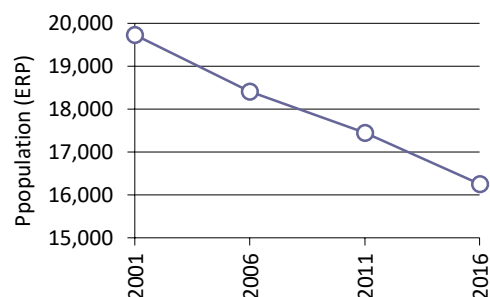
The most accurate count of the population is provided by the Estimated Resident Population (ERP). The ABS Census undercounts the Aboriginal population by 20% to 25% and the ERP corrects for this. This explains the difference between the Aboriginal population stated at §2.1 and above. Where a census form is not received from a dwelling known or believed to be occupied on census night, the ABS imputes the population and a small number of variables. At the 2016 Census, the ABS imputed populations for 337 dwellings, or 4% of the total, in the Broken Hill Local Government Area (LGA).

Where possible, the Murdi Paaki Region comparison geography used in this Plan is the aggregated 154 SA1s (ABS Statistical Area Level 1) that approximate the Region. For variables where SA1 level data are not published, either the 8 LGAs approximating the Murdi Paaki Region or the North-Western NSW Indigenous Region (N-W NSW IREG) has been adopted.

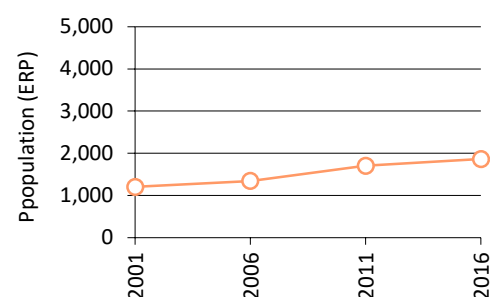
Figure 4.1 shows the change in the non-Indigenous and Aboriginal populations between 2001 and 2016, the non-Indigenous population showing marked decline while the Aboriginal population steadily increased.

Figure 4.1: Population change, 2001 to 2019

Non-Indigenous population



Aboriginal population



KEY FINDINGS

- The non-Indigenous population has fallen steadily since 2001 by 188 persons each year on average.
- Since 2001, the Aboriginal population has been increasing by 44 persons each year on average.
- The median age of the Aboriginal population is 22 years, considerably younger than the non-Indigenous population which has a median age of 47 years. The differing population age structures are shown in Figure 4.2.
- The Aboriginal population aged under 15 years is higher than for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole and slightly higher than that of NSW. It is over twice that of the non-Indigenous population of Broken Hill. Numbers are stated in Figure 4.3.
- Non-Indigenous households are twice as likely to comprise a person living alone than an Aboriginal household and slightly more than 50% above the rate for NSW.
- When compared with a non-Indigenous family, Aboriginal families living together in a household are three times more likely to be a single parent family.

Figure 4.2: Population age distribution

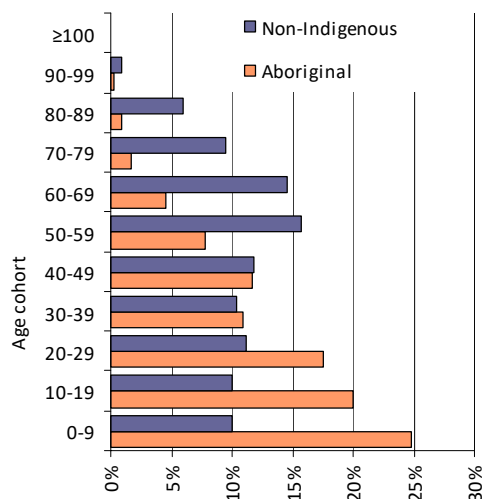
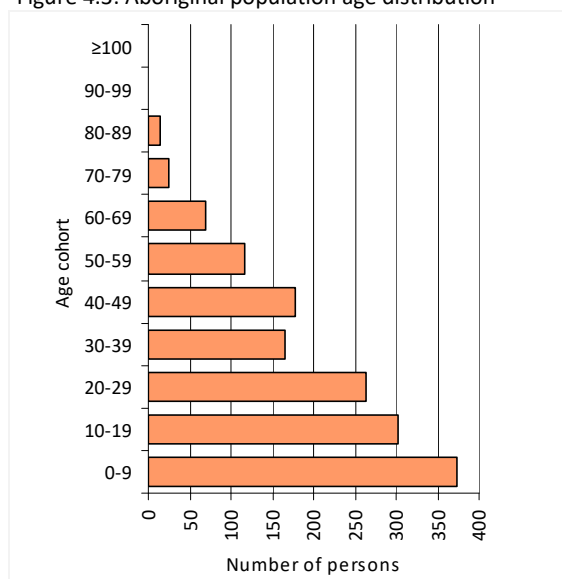


Figure 4.3: Aboriginal population age distribution



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.3: Median age of persons (years)		
	22	47
Murdi Paaki Region	26	46
New South Wales	22	38

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
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Table 4.4: Population aged under 15 years (2016)

	n=1,493	n=15,009
Of population fraction	36%	15%
Murdi Paaki Region	32%	16%
New South Wales	34%	18%

Table 4.5: Social marital status (Persons 15 years and over)

Registered marriage	17%	43%
De facto marriage	15%	11%
Not married	68%	46%

Table 4.6: Lone person households

	n=620	n=6,563
	18%	37%
Murdi Paaki Region	21%	36%
New South Wales	15%	24%

Table 4.7: Family household family composition

One parent	35%	12%
Couple, no children	12%	28%
Couple, with children	28%	20%
Other family	25%	40%

One parent families:

Murdi Paaki Region	43%	15%
New South Wales	36%	15%

Table 4.8: Multi-family households (of all family households)

	n=479	n=3,978
	2%	1%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	1%
New South Wales	4%	2%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.9: Families with resident non-dependent children		
	25%	21%
Murdi Paaki Region	25%	18%
New South Wales	25%	21%

4.2 Educational status

KEY FINDINGS

- Only about one in three Aboriginal children aged 3 years is likely to have attended a preschool compared with over half of non-Indigenous children of this age, but by age 4 years, Aboriginal children are only a little less likely to have attended preschool as their non-Indigenous counterparts.
- On Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) indicators, children commencing their first year of full-time schooling have not reached the same stage of early childhood development as their counterparts in NSW, but the gap has narrowed.
- According to the AEDC survey for 2018, children attending Broken Hill Central Public School were more likely to developmentally advanced than those attending other government schools in Broken Hill.
- Student attendance level (the proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time) lags that of non-Indigenous students by a substantial margin across all schools.
- Educational attainment at Broken Hill government schools is below or well below the average of all Australia students.
- Aboriginal students are less likely to progress beyond Year 10 than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Aboriginal people aged 15 to 19 years who have left school are 1.5 times as likely as non-Indigenous people in the same age group to have left without completing Year 12.
- Aboriginal persons aged 17 or 18 years are more than twice as likely as non-Indigenous 17- and 18-year-old not to be earning or learning.

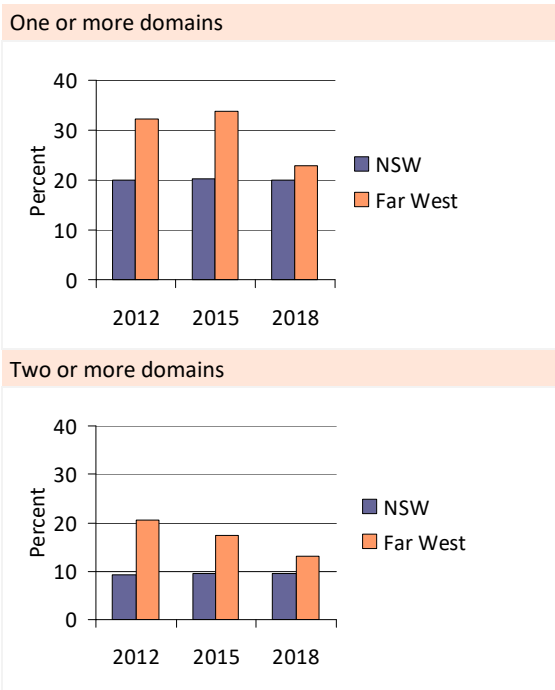
- Aboriginal adults are less likely than non-Indigenous adults to hold a post-school qualification at any level. The Aboriginal population aged over 15 years has a greater proportion of adults with a higher qualification than for the Murdi Paaki Region generally although lower than for the Aboriginal population of NSW.
- In 2018, the Country University Centre opened in Broken Hill to provide a learning and study space with free access to high-speed Internet, modern technology, and general academic support. At this stage, partnerships have been forged with UNE, CQU and CSU in social work, community services and education.

Table 4.10: Educational Institution attended by the Aboriginal population at the time of the Census

	n=1,503
Preschool	53
Infants/primary - Government	204
Infants/primary - Catholic	19
Infants/primary – Other non-government	4
Secondary - Government	140
Secondary - Catholic	5
Technical or Further Educational Institution	53
University or other Tertiary Institution	22
Other	10
Not stated	128

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.11: Pre-school attendance		
	n=15	n=83
Children 3 years old	39%	55%
Murdi Paaki Region	41%	50%
New South Wales	52%	49%
	n=37	n=118
Children 4 years old	79%	84%
Murdi Paaki Region	82%	79%
New South Wales	72%	72%

Figure 4.4: AEDC summary indicator of developmental vulnerability (all children)



Aboriginal children (n=66 or 28% of 238)

Note: Includes Broken Hill, Packsaddle and Tibooburra

Table 4.12: AEDC vulnerability indicators

	Vuln 1	Vuln 2
Broken Hill Central	16.7%	8.3%
Broken Hill North	26.7%	13.9%
Broken Hill South (Alma)	19.6%	10.9%
Broken Hill West (Railway Town)	19.6%	15.2%

Source: Australian Early Development Census, Community Profile 2018, Far West NSW

The AEDC survey collects data across five key areas of early childhood development:

- Physical health and wellbeing;
- Social competence;
- Emotional maturity;
- Language and cognitive skills (school-based);
- Communication skills and general knowledge.

Figure 4.4 and Table 4.12 show the percentage of all children in their first year of full-time schooling in Broken Hill who are at risk in one or more of the key early childhood development areas.

Figure 4.5: Student attendance level (proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time), 2019 Semester 1

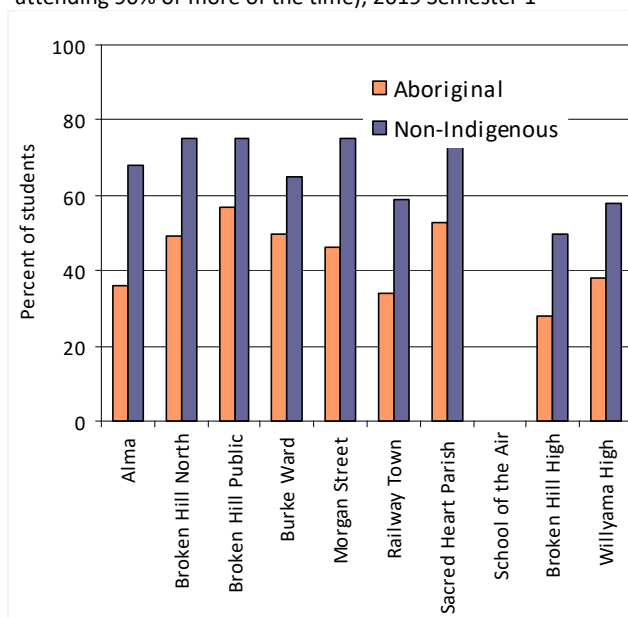
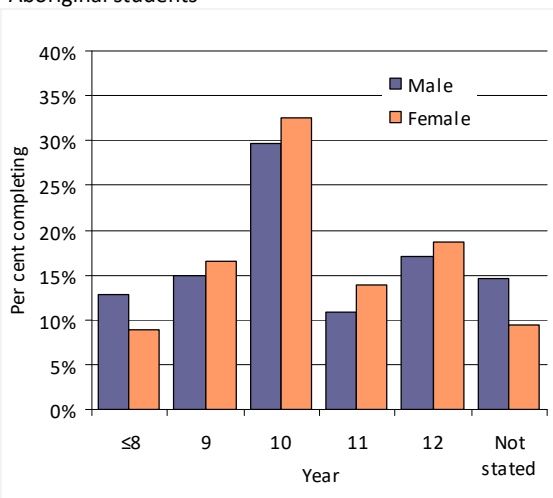


Table 4.13: Educational attainment, NAPLAN, School average when compared with all Australian students

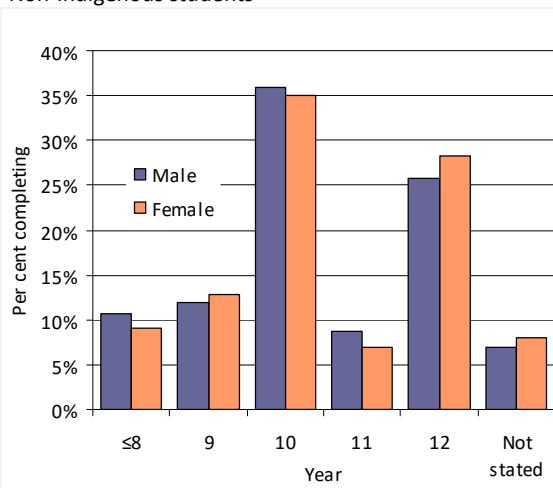
	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 5					
Alma (South)	4	5	4	4	5
Broken Hill North	5	5	5	5	5
Broken Hill Central	4	4	3	4	4
Burke Ward	4	5	5	5	5
Morgan Street	4	4	4	4	4
Railway Town (West)	4	4	5	5	4
Sacred Heart Parish	2	2	2	2	3
School of the Air	2	3	4	2	3
Year 9					
Broken Hill High	4	5	5	5	5
Willyama High	5	5	5	5	5
Legend					
Above average	2	Close to		3	
Below average	4	Well below		5	

Source:acara MySchools website

Figure 4.6: Highest year of schooling
Aboriginal students



Non-Indigenous students



Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.14: Percentage of students completed Year 12 (Persons aged 15 to 19 who have completed schooling and are no longer at school)		
	n=50	n=229
	26%	51%
Murdi Paaki Region	20%	48%
New South Wales	33%	51%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.15: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a vocational qualification		
	n=827	n=11,680
Cert I-IV	21%	27%
Murdi Paaki Region	18%	26%
New South Wales	25%	20%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.16: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with an undergraduate diploma		
	n=827	n=11,680
Diploma and Advanced Diploma	5%	6%
Murdi Paaki Region	5%	7%
New South Wales	7%	10%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.17: Percentage of persons aged 15 years and over with a tertiary qualification		
	n=827	n=11,680
Degree and higher	6%	10%
Murdi Paaki Region	4%	12%
New South Wales	8%	27%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.18: Engagement of persons aged 17 and 18 years in employment, education and training		
Fully engaged	57%	67%
Partially engaged	13%	18%
At least partially engaged	0%	2%
Not engaged	30%	12%
Not stated	0%	2%
Murdi Paaki Region	49%	74%
New South Wales	62%	84%

4.3 Economic participation

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.19: Labour force status (Percent of labour force)		
	n=499	n=7,003
In full-time or part-time work	77%	92%
Unemployed, looking for work	23%	8%
Murdi Paaki Region	76%	94%
New South Wales	85%	94%
31% of those employed worked part-time		
Table 4.20: Participation in the labour market (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
	n=951	n=12,519
In labour force	53%	56%
Not in labour force	47%	44%
Murdi Paaki Region	44%	61%
New South Wales	56%	64%
Table 4.21: Occupation of all persons employed		
Managers	6.0%	9.7%
Professionals	16.8%	16.3%
Technician/trades	10.0%	15.2%
Community service workers	22.0%	14.8%
Clerical/admin workers	11.5%	11.1%
Sales workers	7.1%	10.4%
Machinery operators	12.3%	10.4%
Labourers	13.9%	11.0%
Undefined	2.6%	1.2%
Table 4.22: Employment to population ratio, Broken Hill (C) (Percent of population aged 15 and over)		
Employment to population ratio	41%	52%
Murdi Paaki Region	34%	57%
New South Wales	47%	60%

KEY FINDINGS

- 77% of the Aboriginal population aged 15 years and over who are in the labour force were in full-time or part-time employment. 23% were unemployed or looking for work. The proportion of the adult Aboriginal population in the labour market was slightly below the non-Indigenous population.
- Aboriginal workers are more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be employed as community/personal service workers but less likely to be employed as a technician or tradesperson. Aboriginal people are equally likely to be employed as professionals.
- The health care and social assistance industry sector employs the largest proportion of the Broken Hill workforce, followed by retail, mining and hospitality.
- Aboriginal workers are employed in mining at a similar rate per population as non-Indigenous workers.
- The business sector appeared to be stable with the number of business start-ups matching the number of exits. The level of Aboriginal engagement as proprietors of business is low, with only 12 sole traders enumerated in the ABS 2016 Census. No employing or incorporated enterprises were recorded.

Figure 4.7: Hours worked by age group – total persons employed

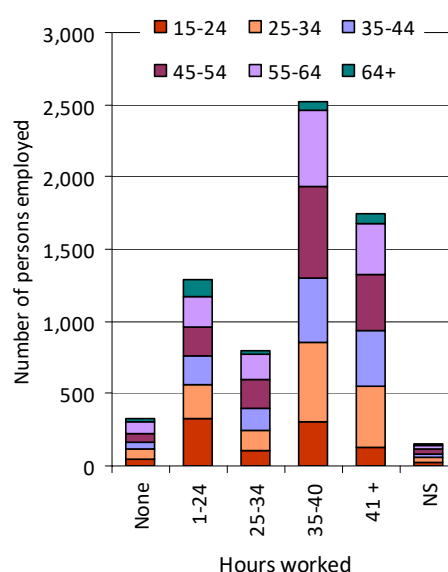


Table 4.23: Industry of employment – Total population

Industry	Aboriginal		Non-Indigenous	
	No employed	% of total employed	No employed	% of total employed
Health Care and Social Assistance	96	25%	1,165	18%
Retail Trade	29	8%	798	12%
Mining	36	10%	698	11%
Accommodation and Food Services	36	10%	624	10%
Education and Training	34	9%	540	8%
Public Administration and Safety	44	12%	449	7%
Construction	21	6%	321	5%
Other Services	10	3%	276	4%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	16	4%	248	4%
Administrative and Support Services	8	2%	198	3%
Other (< 2% by industry)	32	8%	912	14%
Inadequately described or not stated	18	5%	226	4%

Table 4.24: Number of Aboriginal workers employed in the public and private sectors

Australian Government	12
NSW Government	64
Broken Hill City Council	15
Private sector	292
Not stated	10

Table 4.25: Total number of businesses

At 30th June 2018

No of employees	No of businesses
Nil	515
0-4	333
5-19	134
20 or more	29

Table 4.26: Aboriginal business ownership, Unincorporated enterprises

No of employees	No of businesses
Nil	12

Table 4.27: Business entries and exits

At 30th June 2018

Year	Change in number
2015	+3
2016	-8
2017	+22
2018	+28

4.4 Income

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 4.28: Median total household income		
\$/week	1,029	958
N-W NSW IREG	907	1,013
New South Wales	1,214	1,498

Table 4.29: Estimate of personal income (Total population)

Median employee income (\$) (2016)	47,574
Income share of top 10% of earners (excl. government payments)	26.6%
FW and Orana SA4	44,418
New South Wales	49,256

Figure 4.8: Average annual growth in median employee income 2013-2017

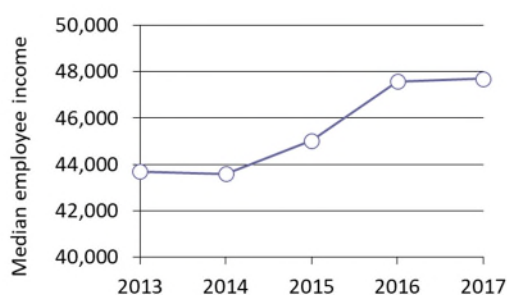


Table 4.30: Sources of income support

In 2018, percentage of total population aged 15 and over receiving:

Age pension (n=2,988)	20%
Carer payment (n=348)	2%
Disability support pension (n=1,302)	9%
Newstart allowance (n=983)	7%
Parenting payment, single (n=394)	3%
Family tax benefit A (n=1,329)	9%
Family tax benefit B (n=1,134)	8%
Commonwealth rent assistance (n=1,399)	10%

Table 4.31: SEIFA Index of disadvantage 2016

SEIFA Index (IRSD)	901
Rank in NSW	124th of 130
Murdi Paaki Region:	
Highest (Cobar)	968
Lowest (Brewarrina)	757

KEY FINDINGS

- Although the median weekly income for Aboriginal households (Table 4.27) exceeds that for other households, the Aboriginal median weekly individual income is almost 20% lower than for non-Indigenous persons. The disparity between individual and household incomes reflects higher average Aboriginal household size.
- The number of employee income earners remained constant over the period 2013-2016 at about 8,300 while the median age of employees increased from 41 years to 42 years. Median employee income in 2017 was \$47,696: data for 2018 is not available.
- In 2017, income from employment contributed 83% of the main source of income for Broken Hill employees compared to 77% for all NSW employees.
- It is well established that the Murdi Paaki Region suffers the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage in NSW. Although a major regional centre, Broken Hill reflects this disadvantage by being ranked in the lowest 10% of local government areas in NSW.

5 THE BROKEN HILL HOUSING LANDSCAPE

5.1 Housing generally

The enduring image of Broken Hill residential precincts is of simple corrugated iron clad and roofed worker cottages, some dating back to the early days of settlement and industrial exploitation. Many are small, some larger but with a soft charm that elevates the status of the city as a historic destination. That Broken Hill was an industrial city, a former stronghold of unionism and organised labour, is somehow captured by the rawness and defiance of these homes.

Broken Hill is one of the very few places in the Murdi Paaki Region where a housing market can be observed to operate, albeit with unique characteristics. Tables 5.1 to 5.13 provide a statistical overview of the residential housing landscape as recorded by the ABS 2016 Census.

Table 5.1: Dwelling types

Total number	9,606	
Separate houses	8,851	92%
Terraces, town houses	277	3%
Apartments	299	3%
Caravan, cabin	105	1%
Improvised home	15	-
Other dwelling types	10	-
Not stated	43	-

Table 5.2: Private dwellings unoccupied on Census night

		n=1,870
Private dwelling unoccupied		19%
Change since 2011	n=1,516	+354
Murdi Paaki Region		19%
New South Wales		9%
1,372 people were counted elsewhere on Census night		

Table 5.3: Households counted in a dwelling on Census night

Resident households	7,169
Visitor households	230
Non-classifiable	326

Table 5.4: Number of bedrooms per dwelling

0 or 1 bedrooms	358	5%
2 bedrooms	1,492	21%
3 bedrooms	3,902	55%
4 bedrooms	1,158	16%
5 bedrooms and more	218	3%

Table 5.5: Average household size

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Persons	2.9	2.1
N-W NSW IREG	3.0	2.1
New South Wales	3.1	2.6

Table 5.6: Average number of persons per bedroom

Persons	1.0	0.7
N-W NSW IREG	0.9	0.7
New South Wales	1.0	0.9

Table 5.7: Proportion of all households renting

Proportion of all households	52%	21%
Real estate agent	40%	40%
NSW housing authority	18%	4%
Other private	30%	40%
Other	12%	16%
Murdi Paaki Region	62%	24%
New South Wales	56%	32%

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.8: Median rent		
\$/week	200	180
N-W NSW IREG	160	150
New South Wales	270	390
Table 5.9: Home ownership (including owned with a mortgage)		
	n=281	n=4,871
Proportion of all households	45%	79%
Murdi Paaki Region	38%	76%
New South Wales	44%	68%
Table 5.10: Change in Aboriginal home ownership		
	2016	2011
Proportion of all Aboriginal households	45%	42%
Table 5.11: Median mortgage payment		
\$/month	986	950
N-W NSW IREG	950	975
New South Wales	1,733	2,000
Table 5.12: Percentage of all households with mortgage payments or rent equal to or greater than 30% of household income		
Mortgage	3.1%	
Renting	6.9%	
Table 5.13: Persons accommodated in non-private dwellings		
Public hospital	4	44
Psychiatric hospital	3	3
Nursing home	0	202
Hostel for homeless	0	0
Prison	44	39
Other	13	338

KEY FINDINGS

- The overwhelming majority of dwellings in Broken Hill are three-bedroom detached houses. This may mean that dwelling choice is limited by available dwelling types; however, it is not possible to tell from available data whether there is a demand for other dwelling types.
- Almost one in five dwellings was unoccupied on Census night. It is not possible to determine from the census data whether unoccupied dwellings are long-term vacancies or if the household was temporarily absent from home.
- Aboriginal households are larger on average than non-Indigenous households but are slightly smaller than for NSW. The ABS 2016 Census (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile) indicated that 8.5% of Aboriginal households needed at least one extra bedroom compared with 1.7% of non-Indigenous households.
- More than twice the proportion of Aboriginal households were renting compared with non-Indigenous households. While this figure is lower than the average across the Murdi Paaki Region (and NSW), the rental market is structured differently.
- In Broken Hill, 40% of tenant households were renting in the private sector through a real estate agent, compared with 17% for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole. Conversely, only 22% were renting social housing (including community housing) compared with 43% for the Murdi Paaki Region.
- The relatively high reliance on private sector rentals makes the Broken Hill Aboriginal population more vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation in the housing market from unscrupulous operators.
- The relatively low availability of social housing has implications for household rent, with private sector tenants on average paying higher weekly rents than households renting social housing.
- Households purchasing their dwelling are less than half as likely as households renting to be experiencing housing-related financial stress. This is a function of two features of the Broken Hill housing market: the relatively low purchase price of housing in Broken Hill, and

the relatively high cost of private sector rentals.

- No Aboriginal people were enumerated in residential aged care. This reflects cultural barriers to use of residential aged care in the Aboriginal community.
- The Aboriginal prison population exceeds the non-Indigenous population; a manifestation of the disproportionate incidence of incarceration in the Aboriginal community.
- The relative levels of primary and secondary homelessness are unsurprising given the cultural imperative for Aboriginal people to provide accommodation for kin who are without a roof over their head. Crowding, too, is likely to be affected by homelessness within the community.
- The one-year rate of residential mobility among Aboriginal households was double that for non-Indigenous households and 50% higher than the Aboriginal population for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole. In-migration reflects the importance of Broken Hill as a service centre for the surrounding population, including Aboriginal people living in South Australia.
- Residential mobility within Broken Hill is high. This level of churn is likely to be a function of the low level of provision of social housing in Broken Hill, poor housing quality and a greater level of movement within the Aboriginal community. The high level of 5-year mobility within the non-Indigenous community relative to NSW will be employment-related.
- Three-quarters of Aboriginal households have at least one car. This proportion of Aboriginal households is slightly greater than for the Murdi Paaki Region but less than for NSW.

5.2 Market characteristics

5.2.1 Property sales

Residential property market affordability and solid rental returns, together with low vacancy rates, have made Broken Hill an attractive proposition for investors. The median price for housing in Broken Hill has shown a steady decline in recent years as a

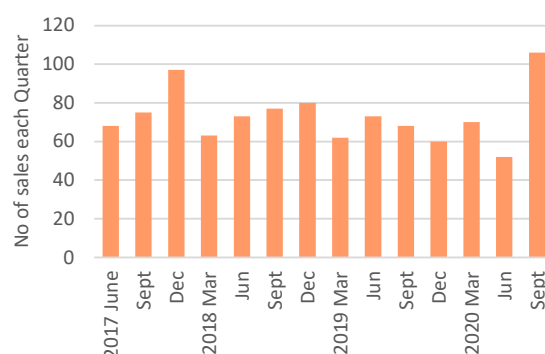
result of weak demand to reach a point of equilibrium in 2020. For example, the median price for a 3-bedroom house is currently \$135,000 to \$146,000 (realestate.com.au and domain.com.au) while, for 2-bedroom dwellings, the median is at or below \$100,000. The average time on the market is between 238 and 289 days; the larger the dwelling, the longer the duration. A total of 106 sales were recorded in the 2020Q3 as noted in Table 5.14. The low prices, even with due allowance for improvement, provide an immediate and cost-effective opportunity for the RAHLA to tackle the chronic shortage of social housing in Broken Hill through adding to the ACHP asset base with the acquisition and improvement of existing dwellings. Elsewhere in the Region, housing acquisition comes with a premium and the building of new houses, a hefty premium.

Table 5.14: Median residential property price

July to September 2020	\$126,000
No of transfers	106
Annual change in median	-10.0%
Source: https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/rent-and-sales/dashboard	

The number of sales by quarter is shown in Figure 5.1. The median number of sales over the period from March 2017 is 71 per quarter or an annual turnover of all non-strata housing assets in Broken Hill of about 3%. The latest data available indicates a jump in the number of dwellings appearing on the market which contrasts with a falling trend.

Figure 5.1: Number of non-strata property sales each quarter



Much of the housing was built well before 1970 and is of poor standard with very low asset value. It is estimated by Council that many hundreds of dwellings have been abandoned.

5.2.2 Building activity

Building activity is subdued as indicated by Table 5.15. Only seven building approvals for a new residential building were issued by Broken Hill City Council in the period 2019-2020. The value attaching to these approvals was \$2,027,000 or \$290,000 per dwelling on average. The total value of alterations and additions, including conversions, to residential buildings was reported as \$1,524,000. The value of non-residential building for the same period was \$15,132,000. Approvals to March 2021 suggest that building activity is further subdued with only three building approvals for a new residential building issued since July 2020. For the financial year to March 2021, only three new houses had received building approval.

Table 5.15: Building approvals, 2019-2020

Total building approvals	7
New houses	7
New other residential dwelling	0
Value of new residential building	\$2.027M
Value of alterations and additions	\$1.524M
Source: https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/building-and-construction/building-approvals-australia/latest-release#interactive-map	

5.2.3 Property rentals

Median market rents as of March 2021 are shown in Table 5.16 and market characteristics in Table 5.17.

Table 5.16: Median weekly rent

2 bedroom	\$243
3 bedroom	\$275
4 bedroom	\$330
https://www.realestate.com.au/neighbourhoods/broken-hill-2880-nsw	

Table 5.17: Rental market characteristics (March 2021)

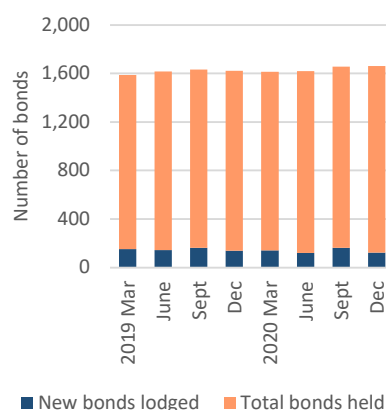
Vacancy rate	0.54%
Rental stock available	53
Return on investment	9% to 12%
https://www.realestateinvestar.com.au/Property/broken+hill	

Rents are closely linked to the fortunes of the mining industry. When the mines are open and mining employment plentiful, rents are inflated.

The NSW Department of Community and Justice Rent and Sales Report for the December 2020 Quarter records the median rent to be between \$170/week for a 2-bedroom dwelling to \$325/week for a house of 4-bedrooms or larger with the median for all dwellings to be \$250/week. The median for a separate 3-bedroom house was \$265/week while the corresponding rent at the time of the ABS 2016 Census was \$230/week.

The level of churn in rental housing is shown in Figure 5.2. Approximately 9% of rental bonds held at any one time over the past year were newly lodged, equating to between 140 and 150 new tenancies each Quarter. If the bonds held metric is an indicator, it would appear that the number of properties available for rent is trending upwards.

Figure 5.2: Change in rental bonds to December 2020



5.2.4 Social housing generally

The principal provider of social housing in Broken Hill is the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) with a total of 108 properties. A further 42 are available through one of Australia's largest

non-government social housing providers and 50 through the AHO. The number of properties owned and managed by an ACHP in Broken Hill is very few (n=19) so access by Aboriginal individuals and families to a culturally safe tenancy managed by an ACHP is severely restricted. This is particularly so for individuals and newly formed families as the number of one- and two-bedroom properties available for rent through an ACHP totals eight.

The waiting time for general applicants as of 30th June 2020 for public housing is shown in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18: Expected waiting time for general applicants	
For a studio/1-bed property	Up to 2 years
For a 2-bedroom property	5 to 10 years
For a 3-bedroom property	2 to 5 years
For a 4+ bedroom property	2 to 5 years

5.3 Homelessness

Table 5.19 provides an indication of the level of homelessness in Broken Hill and Far West as captured by the ABS 2016 Census. Homelessness is 'out of sight' in Broken Hill and actual figures are much higher, exacerbated by the lack of suitable accommodation. This issue is discussed further in at §6.8 and Chapter 12.

Table 5.19: Number of persons homeless in Broken Hill and Far West	
(After Chamberlain and MacKenzie)	
Marginally housed	9
Tertiary homeless	24
Secondary homeless	34
Primary homeless	9
Living in crowded conditions	97

Mackenzie and Chamberlain defined homelessness by the three categories shown in Table 5.19:

- Primary: as experienced by people without conventional accommodation, for example, sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings;
- Secondary: as experienced by people who

frequently move from one temporary shelter to another, for example, emergency accommodation, youth refuge, or couch surfing; and

- Tertiary: as experienced by people staying in accommodation that falls below minimum community standards, for example, boarding housing and caravan parks.

5.4 Population mobility

5.4.1 Characteristics of movement

Tables 5.20 and 5.21 show an alarming level in instability in tenure with Aboriginal households moving at a rate double that of the non-Indigenous population. Approximately one in five Aboriginal households had moved in the twelve months preceding the ABS 2016 Census and slightly under half had a different address five years prior. Most movement was internally within Broken Hill rather than attributable to in-migration.

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.20: 1-year household mobility		
All residents in the household aged one year and over with a different address one year ago		
	n=582	n=6,120
Households with a different address	18%	9%
5-year mobility	43%	25%
Murdi Paaki Region	12%	10%
New South Wales	16%	13%
Table 5.21: Number of Aboriginal households with a different address 1 year ago and 5 years ago		
Place of residence	1 year ago	5 years ago
Within Broken Hill	240	335
Central Darling LGA	9	33
Elsewhere in the MPR	6	17
Elsewhere in NSW	33	68
South Australia	11	31
Other	37	68

5.4.2 Transport

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 5.22: Access and mobility		
	n=631	n=6,559
Percentage of households with at least one car	78%	85%
Murdi Paaki Region	69%	87%
New South Wales	83%	87%
Table 5.23: Age of registered motor vehicles		
Less than 5 years	24%	
5 to 10 years	24%	
Over 10 years	52%	

Broken Hill town bus services operated by CDC Broken Hill provide reasonably good route penetration to most parts of the city although a walk of two or three blocks might be needed to reach the nearest bus stop. Residents without transport can access the city's main facilities although service infrequency does require passengers to plan their journeys with a degree of precision.

6 HOUSING: LIVED EXPERIENCE

6.1 Authority for change

The way Aboriginal social housing is managed has changed markedly since the first Murdi Paaki HEHPs were produced, that change being very much to the detriment of the Region:

- The forced retreat and discriminatory treatment of the regional and local managing ACHPs has adversely impacted management services, enfranchisement of tenants, and asset condition and preservation;
- Spatial variability of major capital works programmes, coupled with disjointed rollout, inappropriate material and equipment specification, and ineffective quality supervision, has contributed to greater variability in the quantum and condition of housing assets and infrastructure;
- The building of skills base relevant to housing and infrastructure with major capital works training programmes and the Healthy Housing Worker programme has been substantially eroded and dispersed;
- The integrity of physical infrastructure on former Reserves has declined as housing management services moved from Local Aboriginal Land Councils to managing ACHPs without adequate provision for recurrent expenditure; and
- The NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) *Build and Grow* policy created an operating and financial environment in which managing ACHPs could safely disregard requirements for planned maintenance, contributing to asset deterioration and tenant dissatisfaction

so there is a compelling need to redraw the sector landscape at community scale to reflect the status of Aboriginal housing and environmental health infrastructure in all Murdi Paaki communities and particularly the largest.

In response, a data gathering exercise was undertaken in 2016-2017 under the guidance of the Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly to provide the evidence for sector reform. Over 1,400 households took part, including 276 households in Broken Hill.

As well as tenants living in social housing, homeowners, private renters, people boarding, staying in refuges and/or couch surfing contributed to the findings of the survey. The contributions of these households are reflected in this Chapter. Data collected established that Broken Hill was experiencing the greatest pressure for Aboriginal social housing across all communities in the Murdi Paaki Region. Whereas the ratio of Aboriginal households to available Aboriginal social housing across the Region generally was between 2 and 3, in Broken Hill the ratio was 7.4 Aboriginal households to each Aboriginal social dwelling unit.

6.2 Social housing property details

Table 6.1 provides an overview of the distribution of community housing in Broken Hill. The only Aboriginal non-government organisation supplying and managing dedicated Aboriginal social housing is the Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council with an asset portfolio of nineteen dwellings of size ranging from two to five bedrooms as illustrated by Table 6.2. The NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) provides fifty properties specifically for rent by Aboriginal households managed by mainstream provider Compass Housing Services (n=43) and Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation (n=7). Details of residential holdings are provided in Table 6.3 for Broken Hill LALC properties and Table 6.4 for AHO properties.

Table 6.1: Available social housing (June 2020)		
Owner	Manager	Number
BHLALC	BHLALC	19
AHO	MPRHC	7
AHO	Compass Housing	43
Total Aboriginal community housing		69
LAHC	Compass Housing	108
Compass	Compass Housing	42
Total community housing		150
Source: NSW Aboriginal Housing Office		

A visual representation of the location of Broken Hill LALC and AHO residential land holdings in the town area is shown at Figure 6.1.

Table 6.2: Available social housing mix (June 2020)

Owner	Manager	Number of bedrooms			
		1	2	3	4+
ACHP	ACHP	-	3	10	6
AHO	ACHP	-	-	5	2
AHO	CHP	6	2	25	10
Subtotal		6	5	40	18
LAHC	CHP	48	25	24	11
CHP	CHP	4	25	13	-
Subtotal		52	50	37	11
Total		58	55	77	29

Source: NSW Aboriginal Housing Office



Table 6.3: Cadastral information for Broken Hill LALC residential properties

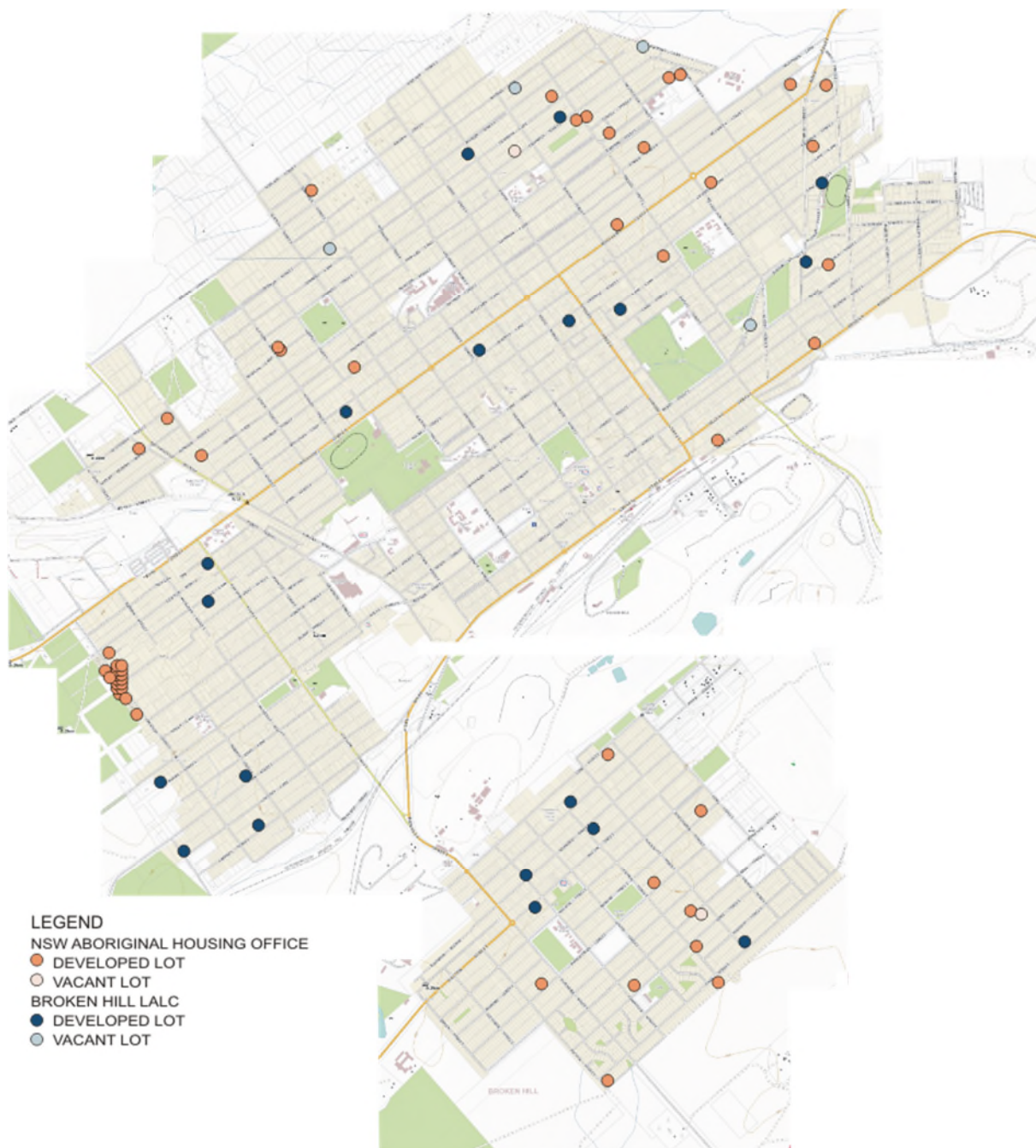
Lot	Section no	Deposited Plan no.	Registered Proprietor	Area (m2)	Property Address	Property Type	Number of bedrooms
Housing Manager: Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council							
B		320768	BHLALC		230 Chapple La	Cottage	2
1		944730	BHLALC		151 Pell La	Cottage	2
7		5991	BHLALC		94 Ryan St	Cottage	2
5802		757298	BHLALC		64 Burke St	Cottage	3
5786		757298	BHLALC		18 Griffith St	Cottage	3
C		363541	BHLALC		82 Gaffney St	Cottage	3
2		942798	BHLALC	328.8	167 Gypsum Rd	Cottage	3
3037		757298	BHLALC		467 Lane La	Cottage	3
C		386029	BHLALC	505.9	715 Lane St	Cottage	3
11		345114	BHLALC		138 Hebbard St	Cottage	3
A		321678	BHLALC		123 Patton Rd	Cottage	3
25		239290	BHLALC		4 Rockwell St	Cottage	3
2	35	758018	BHLALC		267 Hebbard St	Cottage	3
1		363298	BHLALC		63 Williams La	Cottage	4
3		33842	BHLALC		411 Chapple St	Cottage	4
1	52	758018	BHLALC		264 Piper Rd	Cottage	4
4		20853	BHLALC	674.3	393 Iodide St	Cottage	4
3348		757298	BHLALC		522 Cummins La	Cottage	4
1		610651	BHLALC		78 Buck St	Cottage	5
Vacant lots							
2471		757298	BHLALC		103 Boron St	-	-
5985		722930	BHLALC		155B Wyman St	-	-
2		1119598	BHLALC		43 Brooks La	-	-
5		27969	BHLALC		503 Wyman La	-	-

Table 6.4: Cadastral information for AHO residential properties

Lot	Section no	Deposited Plan no.	Registered Proprietor	Area (m2)	Property Address	Property Type	Number of bedrooms
Housing Manager: Compass Housing Services							
150		834476	AHO		2, 150 Creedon St	Cottage	3
150		834476	AHO		1, 150 Creedon St	Cottage	3
5		701493	AHO		622 Chapple La	Cottage	3
3457		757298	AHO	769.7	719 Williams St	Cottage	3
8		262431	AHO		719 Chapple St	Cottage	3

Lot	Section no	Deposited Plan no.	Registered Proprietor	Area (m2)	Property Address	Property Type	Number of bedrooms
Housing Manager: Compass Housing Services							
2041		757298	AHO		622 Argent St	Cottage	3
A		387954	AHO		575 Silica St	Cottage	3
5231		757298	AHO		57 Knox St	Cottage	3
3665		757298	AHO		342 Morish St	Cottage	3
8	39	758018	AHO		321 Eyre St	Cottage	3
5599		239285	AHO		235 Knox St	Cottage	3
2	139	759092	AHO		371 Bronhill St	Cottage	3
2		528363	AHO		114 Thomas St	Cottage	3
14		215270	AHO		625 O'Neill St	Cottage	3
1	231	759092	AHO		71 Newton St	Cottage	3
10		240936	AHO		354 Gossan St	Cottage	3
946		757298	AHO		337 Finn St	Cottage	3
23		243477	AHO	562.8	131 Creedon St	Cottage	3
14		243477	AHO		113 Creedon St	Cottage	3
11		243477	AHO		107 Creedon St	Cottage	3
4		243477	AHO		93 Creedon St	Cottage	3
150		834476	AHO		9, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		8, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		7, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		3, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		2, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		1, 150 Creedon St	Unit	1
150		834476	AHO		6, 150 Creedon St	Unit	2
150		834476	AHO		10, 150 Creedon St	Unit	2
150		834476	AHO		5, 150 Creedon St	Unit	3
150		834476	AHO		4, 150 Creedon St	Unit	3
3	157	759092	AHO		574 Rasp St	Cottage	3
4978		757298	AHO		584 Fisher St	Villa	3
2		546577	AHO		146 Duff St	Cottage	4
2		5538	AHO		545 Chapple St	Cottage	4
3230		757298	AHO		520 Williams St	Cottage	4
A		409975	AHO		43 Allendale St	Cottage	4
18		215270	AHO		333 Murton St	Cottage	4
11		235424	AHO		675 McGowen St	Cottage	4
9		240936	AHO		356 Gossan St	Cottage	4
20		243477	AHO		125 Creedon St	Cottage	4
4221		757298	AHO		474 Crystal St	Cottage	5
16	11	758018	AHO		74 Boughtman St	Cottage	5
Housing Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation							
1		44278	AHO		527 Cummins St	Cottage	3
27	156	759092	AHO		346 Brazil St	Cottage	3
3982		757298	AHO		516A Cummins La	Cottage	3
14	14	758018	AHO		270 Boughtman St	Cottage	3
5492		757298	AHO		261 Duff St	Cottage	3
2		240179	AHO		410 Bromide St	Cottage	4
1		240745	AHO		272 Clarke St	Cottage	4
Vacant lots							
275		1161773	AHO		275 Clarke St	Approved for 4x2-bed dwellings	
11		714284	AHO		480 Cummins St		

Figure 6.1: Locations of Aboriginal social housing



Broken Hill LALC blocks are subject to restrictions on dealing in accordance with Section 40 of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, 1983.

6.3 Land and housing assets

6.3.1 Holdings

As is evident from Figure 6.1, AHO and Broken Hill LALC properties are, except for the Creedon Street precinct, dispersed across the developed area. Creedon Street, located on the extreme western edge of the city, is the only location with a concentration of Aboriginal social housing properties: eighteen in total. Lot 150, DP 834476 is the site of a mix of twelve one-, two- and three-bedroom units and cottages. Options for future development will, most likely, require land and/or property acquisition as the two owning entities only have six vacant lots in total, with two being of insufficient size for sensible development. The AHO has received planning approval to develop two lots: 275 Clarke Street with four three-bedroom units and 480 Cummins Street with four two-bedroom units.

6.3.2 Aboriginal social housing assets

Figure 6.2 is illustrative of the general form of Aboriginal social housing construction available in Broken Hill: suspended timber floor on piers, lightweight fibro clad construction with metal roof, with some of brick veneer construction.

Figure 6.2: Typical forms of construction
Map data ©2019 Google



The level of accommodation provided by Aboriginal social housing is noted at Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Residential properties, level of accommodation				
No of bedrooms				
Studio/1	2	3	4+	Total
Owner: Aboriginal Housing Office				
Manager: Compass Housing Services				
6	2	25	10	43
Manager: Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation				
-	-	5	2	7
Owner: Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council				
Manager: Broken Hill LALC				
-	3	10	6	19
6	5	40	18	
Total				69

6.4 Housing the Broken Hill Aboriginal community – An overview

The MPRH&BC household survey carried out in 2016-17 provided informative perspectives on the way that Aboriginal social housing is managed in Broken Hill and the lived experience of households which owned, rented or were without. The various contributions of respondents participating in the survey is identified in Figures 6.2 to 6.11.

Figure 6.2: Housing mix (All households participating in the survey)

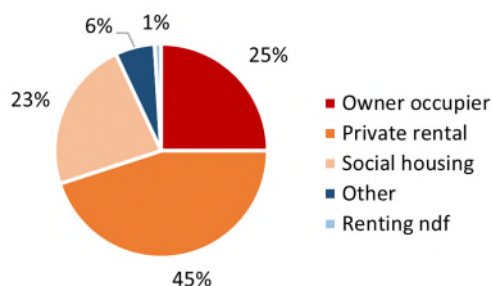


Figure 6.3: Managing organisations of respondents renting social housing

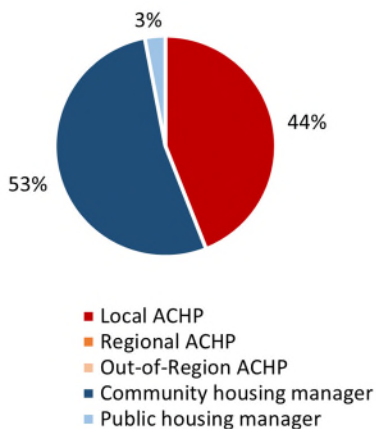


Figure 6.4: Level of satisfaction with manager

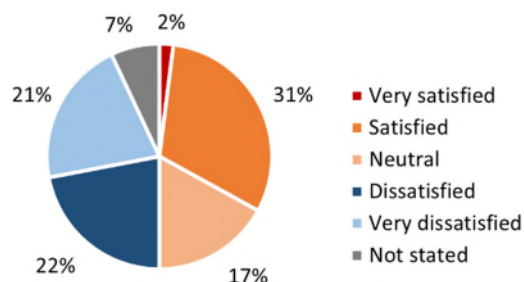


Figure 6.5: Preferred manager (Social housing tenants)

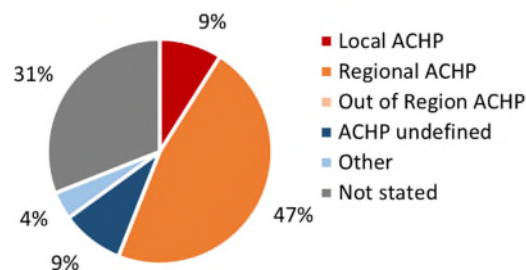


Figure 6.6: Social housing tenants with a tenancy agreement

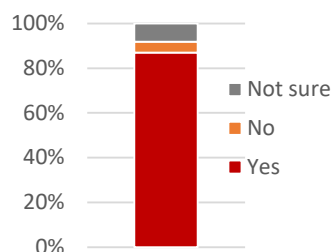


Figure 6.7: Social housing tenants claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance

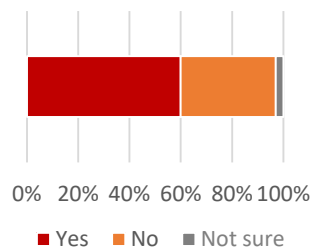


Figure 6.8: Rent levels (from ABS 2016 Census)

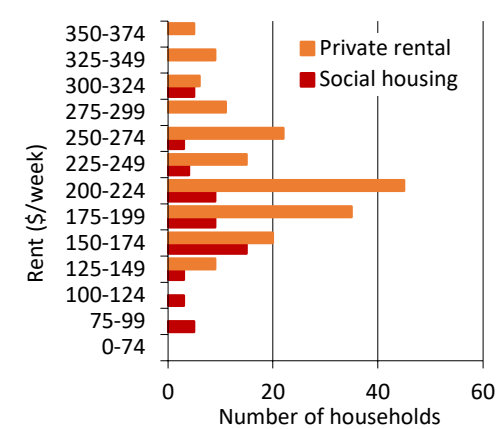


Figure 6.9: Household size range (All households)

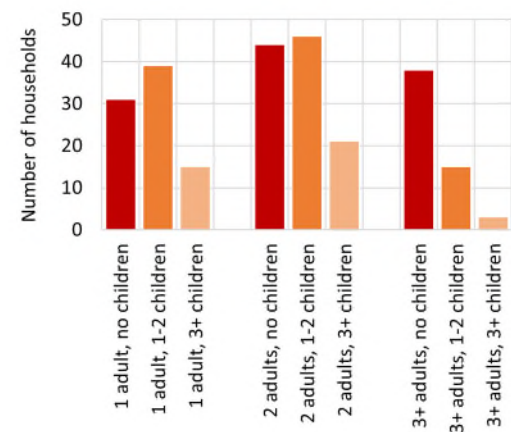


Figure 6.10: Address of tenants 5 years ago

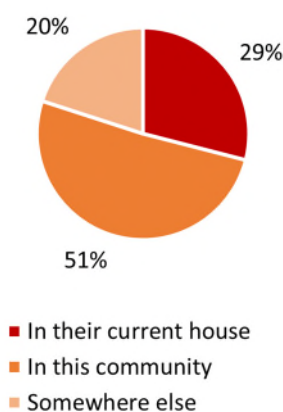
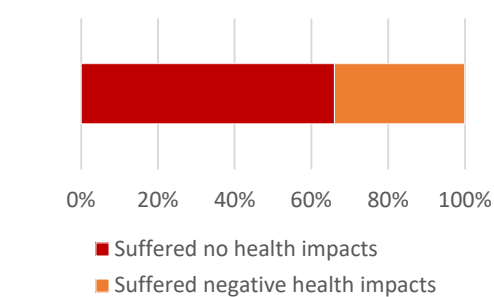


Figure 6.11: Suffered negative impacts from living conditions



KEY FINDINGS

- A quarter of respondents to the survey were owner occupiers, nearly half were in private rentals and just under a quarter were renting social housing.
- Of social housing tenants, 44% rented through an Aboriginal community-controlled housing manager while 53% of tenants lived in housing managed by a non-Indigenous community housing manager.
- On third of respondents (33%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their housing manager, 17% were neutral, while a larger number (43%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Those not stating a view accounted for the balance of 7%.
- When asked to nominate a preferred housing manager, 65% of respondents stated a choice for an Aboriginal community-controlled provider, either local or regional. Nearly one third of social housing tenants did not offer a preference.
- Most households held a formal residential tenancy agreement. Alarmingly, instances of Aboriginal households being forced by circumstance to live in unregulated tenancies were uncovered.
- Rent levels for social housing tenants were predominantly in the range \$150 to \$199/week with the median in the band \$175-\$199/week. Tenants of private rentals paid higher rents with the median in the band \$200-\$224/week. Worryingly, four out of ten

tenants stated they were not claiming Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

- Almost half of households (45%) responding to the survey stated that their families were composed of adults only. Families with one or two children accounted for another 40% of households. Single parent households made up a third of all households.
- Mobility was high with just three in ten respondents stating they were living at the same address five years ago. Half of respondent households said that they had moved within Broken Hill in the intervening period.
- One third of respondents stated they were suffering adverse health effects from living in their current rental.

6.5 The experiences of tenants

The household survey captured approximately 63% (n=188) of Aboriginal households enumerated in the ABS 2016 Census living in rented accommodation. Social housing tenants rented either AHO-owned housing, Land and Housing Corporation-owned housing, housing owned by the Broken Hill LALC or housing provided by Community Housing Provider (CHP) Compass Housing Services. AHO properties were managed by Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation and Compass Housing Services under the *Build and Grow* policy head lease/sub lease arrangement, while Broken Hill LALC properties were managed by the Land Council.

Of the total of 188 tenancies, 124 were private rentals, 64 were social housing tenancies and three were not defined. Fifty-three social housing tenants (87% of those who responded) had a signed tenancy agreement, three did not and five did not know. Ninety-seven private tenants (80%) had a signed tenancy agreement, twenty did not and five did not know. Most social housing tenants (72%) responding to the question indicated that they were aware that a limit on occupancy was imposed by the agreement whereas 48% of private renters indicated awareness of a limit on the maximum number of occupants.

The mix of house sizes occupied by Aboriginal

social housing and private rental tenants responding to the MPRH&BC household survey is stated in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Occupied housing mix by number of bedrooms				
Number of houses with:				
Studio/1	2	3	4+	
bedroom(s)				
Social housing rentals:				
5	7	36	10	
Note: Details for 6 dwellings not able to be verified				
Private rentals:				
3	36	66	12	
Note: Details for 7 dwellings not able to be verified				

The weekly rent paid by all tenant respondents is shown at Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Weekly rent		
Rent	Social housing	Private rental
≤ \$100/week	6	2
≤ \$150/week	8	8
≤ \$200/week	61	46
≤ \$250/week	15	35
≤ \$300/week	10	8
≤ \$350/week	-	1

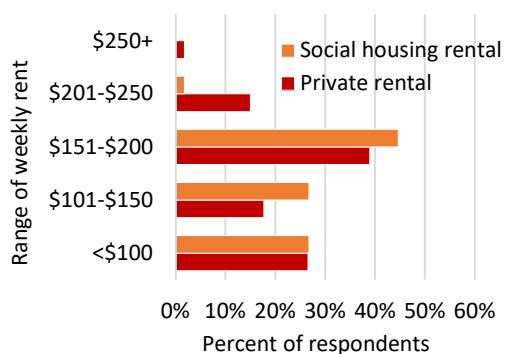
For Aboriginal social housing (n=103) and private (n=49) rentals, median rents were \$180 and \$190 respectively for a two-bedroom house, \$180 and \$200 for a three-bedroom house, and \$180 and \$250 for a four-bedroom house or larger. Overall median weekly rents were \$180 for Aboriginal social housing tenants and \$200 for private rentals. This is consistent with the rents shown in Figure 6.8 obtain in the ABS 2016 Census.

Social housing tenants who were paying up to \$150 in weekly rent thought that their rent level was fair. Of tenants paying between \$150 and \$200 weekly, slightly over half felt that their rent was excessive. Almost all social housing tenants paying rent in excess of \$200 a week felt their rent was excessive. Of private housing tenants who were paying up to \$150 in weekly rent, 80% thought that their rent level was fair. Of renters paying between \$150 and \$200 weekly, over half (53%)

felt that their rent was excessive. For private renters paying rent in excess of \$200 a week, 68% felt their rent was excessive. As evidenced by Figure 6.12, private renters were slightly more inclined than social housing tenants to accept higher levels of rent.

Twenty-one tenants indicated they were renting Aboriginal social housing for economic reasons. Affordability was the most influential issue for twelve of these, and a further nine said that they could not afford to buy their own home suggesting, perhaps, there was some interest among tenants in this alternative. Nine tenants indicated that Aboriginal social housing was the only housing available to them. Six tenants rented Aboriginal social housing because they considered it culturally appropriate.

Figure 6.12: Tenant expectations of fair weekly rent



Underlying evidence of financial stress was reflected in 77% of social housing tenants and 70% of private renters reporting trouble in paying their electricity bills. The size of house did not appear to be a material factor in contributing to the difficulty tenants had in meeting energy costs.

At the time of the household survey, there were sixty-eight young persons wanting their own accommodation of whom sixteen had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house in Broken Hill. Eight older persons interviewed were seeking aged accommodation and four older persons had applied and been accepted onto a waiting list for a unit or house in Broken Hill. Nine private renters, one social housing household and one household in a refuge

were on a waiting list for housing in a community other than Broken Hill. For those that replied to the question, the median waiting time for the unit or house the respondent was living in was seven months for social housing tenants and immediate for private renters.

Further, five respondents in rental housing indicated their households to comprise two families, two respondents reported three families living under the same roof, and five respondents reported more than three families as resident in the same household, although some residents of the latter may have been in share housing.

Later information indicates 103 households have applied for, been assessed and are on the waiting list for housing. A breakdown is shown at Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: Number of applicants approved and waiting, by bedroom category

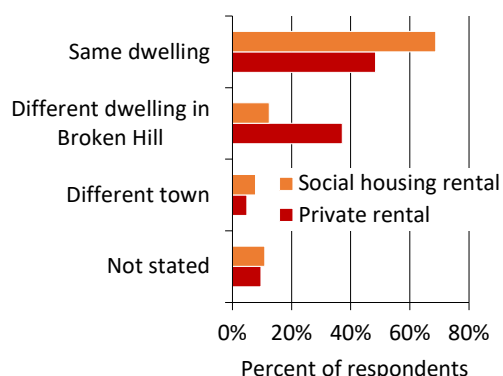
1br	2br	3br	4br	nk	Total
45	15	10	3	30	103

Source: Aboriginal Housing Office, June 2018

Of social housing tenants, 55% indicated they might consider relocating if their needs changed, the remainder indicated they did not have any intention of moving if their circumstances changed. Private renters were likely to be more mobile with 66% of respondents indicating they might consider relocating if their needs changed.

Forty-eight percent of private renters and 69% of social housing households were living in the same house one year previously as shown in Figure 6.13. Over one third of private renters (37%) and 13% of social housing households were living at a different address in Broken Hill one year previously.

Figure 6.13: Place of residence one year prior to the household survey



Of private renters, 26% moved once in the twelve months prior to the survey and 19% had had two or more moves in that period as shown in Figure 6.14. For social housing tenants, 14% had moved once and 10% had had two or more moves in the twelve months prior to the survey.

Seventeen percent of private renters and 39% of social housing households were living in the same house five years previously. Of private renters, 31% stated they had moved two or more times in the five years prior to the survey. For social housing tenants, 28% had had two or more moves in the five years prior to the survey.

Figure 6.14: Number of moves in the year prior to the household survey

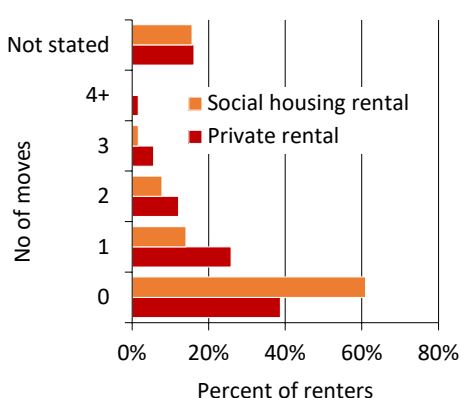
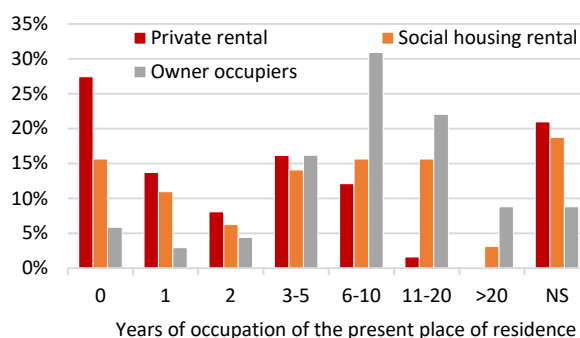


Figure 6.15: Years of occupation in present residence



The median duration of a tenancy was 1 year for private renters and between 3 and 5 years for social housing tenants but a small minority of social housing tenants had remained in the same house for 20 years and longer. Figure 6.15 indicates a high degree of mobility or instability in the private rental market in recent years, mirrored to a lesser extent in social housing.

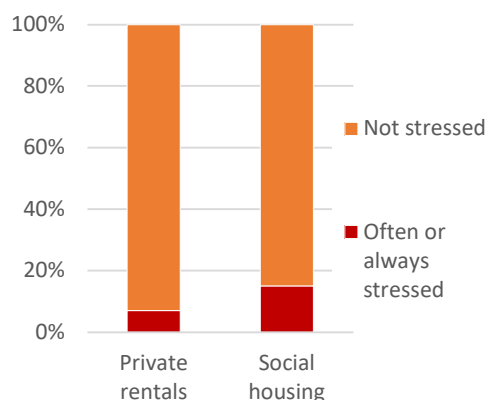
Three interviewees stated that someone in their household was paying rent on another property they rented elsewhere. Of those tenants who responded to the question, 80% of private renters and 85% of social housing tenants indicated a strong preference for tenancies to be passed down within the family.

Forty-one private renters and eleven social housing tenants had applied for private rental housing in the 3 years prior to the survey. Nineteen applicants had had a positive experience, and twenty-two a negative experience with the process. The reasons given for a negative experience were difficulty with the process, stressors and frustration, racism, waiting time, rent levels and inferior quality of housing on offer.

Crowding was a frequent stressor for the 7% of private renters and 15% of social housing tenants who said they were often or always stressed by the number of occupants in their house. Fifty-three households reported having visitors staying for longer than one week at the time of the household survey. Twelve percent of all tenants said that their house felt crowded often and/or always. In the three years prior to the survey, twenty-nine households had had one or more household

members experience homelessness. At the time of the survey, thirty-two households were giving shelter to a person who would otherwise have been homeless. Stayers with a debt or an otherwise poor tenancy record, being unable to obtain their own housing, put a tenant's tenancy at risk if a residency longer than 28 days is not declared.

Figure 6.16: Respondents stressed as a result of crowding



When asked about their reasons for living in Broken Hill, many private renters stated that they were either born in Broken Hill or wished to be close to family, relations or friends also living in Broken Hill. Living on Country was an important consideration; there is a strong feeling of belonging. Employment and being close to services were motivators for relatively few. Social housing tenants expressed similar reasons for living in Broken Hill.

Of the fifty-nine social housing tenants who responded to the question, fifty-six stated their dwelling met their cultural needs. Private renters were similarly content that their dwelling met their cultural needs.

Of 112 private rental respondents, 38% of tenants stated that their accommodation impacted negatively upon their health. Social housing tenants responded to the same level. The leading cause of concern for all renters was environmental lead contamination. Financial stress, safety and security worries, and unstable living arrangements were also mentioned as contributors. Several

tenants also reported structural and/or health hardware deficiencies, including climate control, as a reason for feeling their health had been negatively impacted by their accommodation.

Ensuring urgent repairs and planned maintenance was scheduled and carried out competently in a timely manner was uppermost in the minds of most respondents when asked how management services could be improved. Aboriginal social housing tenants noted difficulty in communicating with their housing manager and suggested an 1800 phone line.

Six Aboriginal social housing households stated a prior need for home modification and four of these had been completed. The wait for assessment was reported to be between three and greater than twelve months, with a similar duration after assessment for work to be carried out.

Few tenants offered thoughts on the need for additional services in the community. When invited to make comment on matters not specifically raised by the survey, respondents put forward a range of matters for consideration. The leading category for comment was condition of housing and inclusions, repairs and maintenance and environmental health. The lack of housing choice and availability was a focus for nine tenants and issues with housing management were also raised.

6.6 The situation of homeowners

Sixty-eight owner occupier households responded to the survey. Sixty-six owners were purchasing or had purchased detached houses, the remaining two were 'not stated': fifty-seven (86%) were purchasing and, of these, ten said that they were purchasing under a rent buy scheme. Thirty-one households had purchased or were purchasing with the aid of loans from a bank, building society or credit union, twenty-one had sourced loans from other lending institutions. Only one homeowner had borrowed from Indigenous Business Australia (IBA). Five had relied on their own savings. Of those who responded to the question, fifty-six owners were satisfied with their decision to purchase while four were indifferent

and two were unhappy. Six households failed to respond to the question.

In most instances, homeowners had long-standing attachment to the community, through having been born in Broken Hill (n=27) or through a lengthy family residency (n=29). Living on Country was an important consideration for fourteen respondents, as was a sense of belonging (n=15) and being close to other family and relations (n=43). Being close to friends was a factor for thirty-six respondents. Twenty-five chose to be in Broken Hill because they felt part of the local community and sixteen lived in Broken Hill to be close to their place of employment. Little evidence of mobility in homeowners was observed: fifty-four respondents (90% of those responding) were living in the same house one year ago while forty said they were living in the same house five years ago (69% of those responding). The median period homeowners had occupied their dwellings was 8 years.

Owner respondents valued the sense of ownership that ownership brought (n=20): freedom to modify their living environment to suit needs (n=15) and the autonomy (n=9) that ownership provided. Nine respondents saw their purchase as an investment. Disadvantages of home ownership were said to be the cost required to maintain the home, physical inability to carry out repairs and maintenance, and affordability of local government rates and charges. Twenty-one owners (44%) said they had trouble in paying their power bills but twenty owners did not respond to the question. Respondents were not asked to disclose the value of monthly mortgage repayments.

Of the fifty-nine homeowners who provided occupancy details, three required additional bedrooms. One household required two extra bedrooms while two households required one extra bedroom. Twenty-six households, or nearly half of respondents, reported a visitor staying for longer than a week and twenty-eight reported a visitor staying for less than a week. Twenty-six respondents (43%) reported feeling crowded in their home to some degree: a bit crowded (n=14), quite crowded (n=7) and very crowded (n=5).

Twenty-seven respondents (49%) said they were never stressed from crowding, ten said they were rarely stressed and eight said they were sometimes stressed because of crowding. Another six said they were often or always stressed. In the three years prior to the survey, eight households had had one or more household members experience homelessness. At the time of the survey, eight households (13%) were giving shelter to a person or persons who would otherwise have been homeless.

6.7 Quantifying crowding

Table 6.9 sets out the number of Aboriginal social housing households requiring 1, 2, 3, 4 or more bedrooms to accommodate permanent residents based on household occupancy as recorded by the survey. The numbers stated do not account for visitors or family reformations. Underutilisation can be seen to be low.

Pressure on housing generally will further increase as in-migration continues. The MPRH&BC household survey indicated that about 20% of Aboriginal households were giving shelter to one or more people who would otherwise be homeless at the time of the survey.

Table 6.9: Number of bedrooms required to accommodate permanent residents only

Size of house occupied	Number of households using				
	1	2	3	4	5+
No of bedrooms	bedroom(s)				
1	5	-	-	-	-
2	1	5	-	-	-
3	4	10	11	6 ⁽¹⁾	1 ⁽¹⁾
4	1	3	-	3	-
5	1	-	-	-	-
All	12	18	11	9	1

Note 1: Households assessed by CNOS to require an extra bedroom(s)

Occupancy levels in all Aboriginal households were assessed against the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS) for crowding.

Canadian National Occupancy Standard	
CNOS adopts the following criteria to determine the number of bedrooms required by a household:	
▪	There should be no more than 2 persons per bedroom;
▪	Children less than 5 years of age of different sexes may share a bedroom;
▪	Children 5 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 share a bedroom;
▪	Single household members 18 years or older should have a separate bedroom; and
▪	Couples share a bedroom.

All categories: owners and renters, exhibited degrees of crowding. At the time of the survey, six Aboriginal social housing dwellings exceeded the threshold criteria for additional bedrooms and required extension, five requiring one additional bedroom and one dwelling requiring an extra three bedrooms. Seven survey responses from Aboriginal social housing tenants could not be adequately assessed because of a lack of information.

The estimated number of bedroom extensions given above is preliminary and is subsequently adjusted by the evaluation of housing need once household and family composition is considered.

6.8 Homelessness

The MPRH&BC household survey captured ten respondents; individuals or families, boarding and four in a refuge. Three reported being homeless. Table 6.10 indicates ten households comprised two or more families living in a single dwelling.

Table 6.10: Number of families per household						
Number of families per household	SP	1	2	3	4	5+
Owner occupied	9	54	1	1	0	0
Social housing	10	44	3	0	0	1
Private rentals	24	89	1	1	1	3
Note: Single person households shown in Column SP						

Altogether, as noted in Table 6.11, 34 households reported that one or more household members

had experienced homelessness in the three years preceding the survey with the greater number living, at the time, in private rental housing.

Table 6.11: Number of households with household members who had experienced homelessness in the previous 3 years					
Number of persons experiencing homelessness	Households				Total number of persons
	1	2	3	4	
Owner occupied	3	2	3	0	16
Social housing	2	6	1	2	25
Private rentals	7	3	2	3	31
Total	12	11	6	5	72

6.9 Evaluation of housing need

From the MPRH&BC household survey, unadjusted housing need responses to questions are summarised as shown in Table 6.12.

Table 6.12: Reported need for new housing: Private and social housing renters	
	Number
Total number of households renting	303
Households responding	188
Young people requesting own housing	68
Older people requesting own housing	8
Multi-family households	15

A reliable estimate of need has been derived from assessment of housing composition and potential family reformation by considering each individual survey return. To generate a full appreciation of housing need, the assessment accounts for the preferences of younger and older persons to move into separate accommodation and for crowding in all rental and owner occupier households. Primary and secondary homeless persons as recorded by the survey are assigned a 2-bed unit except where a family is in a state homelessness in which case a dwelling of appropriate size is allocated. Multi-family households, composed variously of couples only and couples with children, are allocated housing of a size commensurate with family composition in accordance with the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS). As a

minimum, younger couples are allocated a 3-bedroom dwelling in the expectation that family size will increase while older couples are allocated a 2-bedroom unit.

Table 6.13 defines housing need for individuals and families living in owner occupier households. By and large, this cohort is confined to younger individuals wishing to leave the family home and two older persons living with extended family. One family unit indicated a desire to leave their parent's house and move into their own accommodation.

Table 6.13: Housing need as assessed for owner occupiers						
Cohort (n=68)	Bedrooms					
	2	3	4	5	6	
Families	-	1	-	-	-	
Older persons	2	-	-	-	-	
Young persons	13	-	-	-	-	
Total	15	1	-	-	-	

The circumstances of households living in private rental properties varied between extremes. Some were very satisfied with their living arrangements while others, at the opposite end of the spectrum, were households forced into substandard housing. It was possible from the MPRH&BC household survey to identify sixteen Aboriginal households forced into substandard private rental housing and so these households are assigned new housing.

Table 6.14: Housing need as assessed for private renters						
Cohort (n=108)	Bedrooms					
	2	3	4	5	6	
Families	-	3	1	1	-	
Older persons	4	-	-	-	-	
Young persons	12	-	-	-	-	
Sub-total	16	3	1	1	-	
Tenants in substandard private housing						
Cohort (n=16)						
Families	6	7	3	-	-	
Older persons	1					
Sub-total	7	7	3	-	-	
Total	23	10	4	1	-	

Housing need calculated from dwelling complement as reported by individuals and families living in private rentals is given in Table 6.14. This cohort is principally younger individuals but includes couples and couples with children living in slum properties.

Table 6.15 defines need for individuals and families who were homeless at the time of the MPRH&BC household survey. Persons boarding or living in share houses are deemed adequately housed except where an expressed desire to move into separate housing has been made.

Table 6.15: Housing need as assessed for homeless persons and families						
Cohort (n=17)	Bedrooms					
	2	3	4	5	6	
Families	1	2	1	-	-	
Older persons	1	-	-	-	-	
Young persons	10	-	-	-	-	
Total	13	2	1	-	-	

Table 6.16 indicates housing need for individuals and families living in Aboriginal social housing. This cohort includes five, and possibly six, families living in substandard Aboriginal social housing. For the purposes of this Plan, the assumption is made that these can be refurbished rather than replaced and so this potential need is included in the repair and maintenance budget.

Table 6.16: Housing need as assessed for renters of Aboriginal social housing						
Cohort (n=64)	Bedrooms					
	2	3	4	5	6	
Families	(1)	(4)	-	-	-	
Older persons	2	-	-	-	-	
Young persons	10	-	-	-	-	
Total	12	-	-	-	-	

Note: Properties relating to the numbers in parentheses are assumed to be salvageable and are not counted in total need

The assessment of need, including that attributable to homelessness but excluding those not fully defined (n=3), is consolidated in Table 6.17. Demand is principally for 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom dwellings driven by the younger

members of the population. It should be emphasised that Table 6.17 does not state total need arising within the Aboriginal community but only reflects need derived from the 44% of all Aboriginal households which responded to the MPRH&BC household survey.

Table 6.17: Assessed housing need					
Tenure type	Bedrooms				
	2	3	4	5	6
Owner occupiers	15	1	-	-	-
Private renters	16	3	1	1	-
Private renters (slum)	7	7	3	-	-
Social housing renters	12	5	1	-	-
Social housing renters (slum)	(1)	(4)	-	-	-
Homeless	12	2	1	-	1
Total	62	18	6	1	-

The scale of need is not reflected in any way by Housing Pathways which indicates demand from the Aboriginal and non-Indigenous communities as 71 approved general applicants and <5 approved priority applicants as of 30th June 2020. Applications for housing are now online only, excluding potential Aboriginal housing applicants who do not have access to a computer or who have low levels of literacy. The Pathways application process is exceedingly difficult to work through, creating a further deterrent. Support is available through the Murdi Paaki Tenancy Support and Education Team (TSEP) but, too often, applicants do not have supporting documentation. A widespread view within the community is that there are no rental properties available locally so why bother to apply.

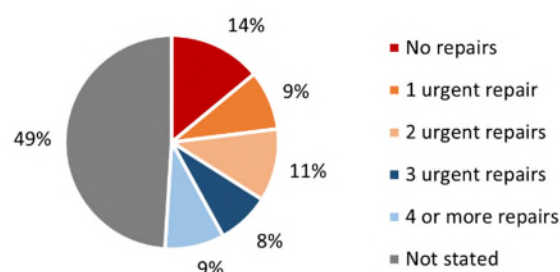
The findings stated in Table 6.17 may underestimate need. Every attempt was made to ascertain actual household composition at the time of the MPRH&BC survey but household populations may be greater than recorded, and likewise demand. It is a requirement of the tenancy agreement that a tenant notify the housing manager of any change in the number of residents housed. Observing this process is likely to lead to a rent increase which, for obvious reasons, tenants are eager to avoid and so, although this places a tenant in breach, non-disclosure of all occupants is common. Policing of

the obligation to update resident details is, according to the community, aggressively applied.

6.10 Evaluation of asset condition

The MPRH&BC household survey invited private and social housing tenants to advise about the need for urgent repairs as a general indicator of housing manager responsiveness to critical defects and, subsequently in the survey, to provide a more detailed appreciation of condition. Responses from social housing tenants to the first enquiry are shown in Figure 6.17.

Figure 6.17: Respondents reporting need for urgent repairs



For the detailed enquiry, a method of data collection and analysis similar to that employed by the National Social Housing Survey (NSHS) conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare on a two-to-three-year cycle has been used to characterise asset condition based on information self-reported by tenants: structural defects, failures of enclosing elements, and functionality of facilities. The basis of this assessment is the judgment that a house is deemed to be of acceptable standard if it has no more than two major specified structural, electrical and/or plumbing problems and has at least six working facilities. In this context, facilities are taken to be those comprising 'health hardware' in the Housing for Health terminology which characterise safety and nine healthy living practices (HLPs):

- HLP 1: Washing people
- HLP 2: Washing clothes and bedding
- HLP 3: Removing wastewater safely
- HLP 4: Improving nutrition – the ability to store, prepare and cook food

- HLP 5: Reducing the negative impacts of over-crowding (treated separately in this Plan)
- HLP 6: Reducing the negative effects of animals, insects and vermin
- HLP 7: Reducing the health impacts of dust
- HLP 8: Controlling the temperature of the living environment
- HLP 9: Reducing hazards that cause trauma

The household survey sought to establish observance of the practices using the indicators shown in Table 6.18.

Table 6.18: Indicators for meeting safety and HLPs	
Practice	Represented by functional:
HLP 1	Bath or shower, and hot water heater
HLP 2	Laundry tub
HLP 3	Toilet and wastewater disposal/septic
HLP 4	Cooking stove and oven, kitchen sink
HLP 6	Flyscreens and site drainage
HLP 7	Glazed windows
HLP 8	Heating and cooling devices
HLP 9	Electrical installations

The single divergence from the NSHS methodology adopted in this project is to increase the number of working specified facilities to seven through the addition of air-conditioning which MPRA and HLP 8 consider to be essential to managing the health of residents at risk from heat, particularly children, older people and those with long term health conditions. A means of heating the home is also included.

Classification of structural and major services faults
Sinking/moving foundations
Uneven/sagging floors
Major cracks in wall and/or ceiling
Termite damage
Roof leaking inside
Major electrical faults
Major plumbing faults
Major air-conditioning problems
Malfunctioning on-site wastewater treatment system

The results of the evaluation of tenant responses are shown at Table 6.19. Classification in this way might be considered somewhat arbitrary in that a single major structural problem could objectively

render the dwelling uninhabitable but it is to be expected that, if serious faults were present at the time of the household survey, the property would have been vacant and not included.

Table 6.19: Social housing condition as expressed by tenants	
Condition	
No structural problems, and 7 working facilities	28%
No more than 2 structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	38%
3 or more structural problems, and 6 or more working facilities	17%
None, 1 or 2 structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	14%
3 or more structural problems, and 5 or fewer working facilities	3%

Table 6.20: Social housing principal structural, electrical, plumbing and facilities problems (%)	
Problem area	Houses affected
Cracks in wall and/or ceiling	39%
Uneven floors	33%
Moving foundations	31%
Major air conditioning problems	19%
Major electrical faults	17%
Non-functional facilities	
Kitchen stove/oven	7%
Solar hot water heater	9%
Shower	6%

The principal deficiencies recorded in the quality of Aboriginal social housing are noted in Table 6.20.

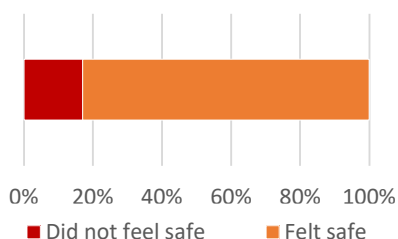
The results of the assessment against the Housing for Health safety and healthy living practices are reported in Table 6.21. Whereas Table 6.20 indicates the proportion of installed systems, appliances and fixtures which are either non-functional or not functioning well, Table 6.21 captures those households which do not have the benefit of some appliances, primarily wood or electric heaters or air conditioners. For example, eight of 29 households reported they had neither a wood heater or electric heating and nine households stated their properties were not

provided with any means of cooling.

Table 6.21: Social housing observance of the HLPs (%)		
Practice	Meeting the standard	
HLP 1	Washing people	100%
HLP 2	Washing clothes and bedding	86%
HLP 3	Wastewater disposal	97%
HLP 4	Improving nutrition	97%
HLP 6	Pest control	53%
HLP 7	Reducing impact of dust	89%
HLP 8	Temperature control (heating)	72%
HLP 8	Temperature control (cooling)	69%
HLP 9	Free of electrical hazards	83%

Tenants also reported other minor defects such as fractured verandah decking (17%), no working clothesline (6%) and the like. An inability to secure the house because entry and/or back doors could not be closed or locked was noted by one household in six, contributing to the feeling of insecurity mentioned by some tenants and reflected in Figure 6.18.

Figure 6.18: Fear for personal safety



In respect of HLP 2 and HLP 4, provision of whitegoods is a tenant responsibility. The percentage of household survey respondents stating access to a working washing machine and fridge were the same: 72% and 72% respectively.

6.11 Asset preservation

6.11.1 Methodology for budgeting

As discussed above, and in answer to a series of objective, closed questions, tenants reported a range of structural, building fabric and facilities defects in response to the household survey.

Unlike the original HEHP investigations of the early 2000's, no independent scoping of properties has been carried out to determine the scale of repairs needed to restore properties to a fully serviceable state and develop a schedule of fixes. This Plan relies on the responses to the MPRH&BC household survey to generate a profile of asset condition.

The *Social Housing Providers and Assets Audit Report* commented on the serious omission of a requirement under the AHO *Build and Grow* head leasing arrangements for a managing ACHP to carry out planned maintenance during the lifetime of the Agreement so a backlog of higher value maintenance work is to be expected.

In the absence of detailed scopes of work, this HEHP adopts an analysis of previous repair and maintenance projects to derive an 'order of probable cost'. The sample totals 98 properties spread across seven communities in the Region, large and small, and includes properties requiring little or no work to those in need of major refurbishment. The sample is grouped into five bands (quintiles) of increasing scope to generate median values for each band. No adjustment has been made for the average age of properties or type of construction, but values have been revised to account for remoteness as per Rawlinson cost guide. Costs are to September 2020.

The analysis concentrates on social housing specifically identified as available for allocation to Aboriginal households. It does not include Aboriginal tenants who might be renting a Land and Housing Corporation property or renting through a Community Housing Provider.

6.11.2 Median values

For Broken Hill, band medians are listed in Table 6.22.

Table 6.22: Median values for property repair and maintenance, Broken Hill

Band	Median value (\$)
One	8,250
Two	25,090
Three	38,800
Four	58,000
Five	86,880

The median values for repair and maintenance quoted in Table 6.22 allow for minor routine works or responsive works in the case of Band 1 and Band 2 properties progressing through Band 3 to Bands 4 and 5 which include elements of works categorised as planned: life cycle (preventative) maintenance, but which have not been attended to, by and large, under the *Build & Grow* policy regime. Band 4 and Band 5 works would include internal and external repainting; replacement of floor coverings; replacement of kitchens, bathrooms and/or laundries; replacing appliances, fixtures and fittings where these are no longer serviceable; and ensuring roofing, gutters and downpipes are brought to a satisfactory condition. A number will require structural interventions.

The values stated in Table 6.22 are median values so it is possible that repairs on the more distressed properties could exceed \$100,000 at which point the value question arises as to whether it is more cost effective to replace rather than refurbish.

6.11.3 Repair and maintenance budget

From tenant response to questions relating to property condition posed in the MPRH&BC household survey, the probable order of cost for repairs and maintenance is given by Table 6.23. Any expenditure since the time of the household survey which might influence cost projections in this HEHP is not available.

It is known that the AHO committed \$2,718 per property annually on average for cyclic maintenance between 2011-12 and 2015-2016, a total of \$720,141 across an average of 53 properties, but the amount committed to responsive and non-cyclical planned maintenance is not disclosed.

To derive an order of probable cost for all repairs and maintenance, the number of properties has been factored up in the inverse of the ratio of household survey respondents providing detailed information on asset condition to the total number of social housing properties in the community; in the case of Broken Hill, the factor is 69/29 or 2.38. The total number is an aggregate of AHO and Broken Hill LALC properties.

Table 6.23: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost

Band	Number of properties assessed in band from survey	Total number of properties for repair	Probable order of cost (\$)
One	8	19	156,800
Two	11	27	677,400
Three	5	12	465,600
Four	4	9	522,000
Five	1	2	173,800
Total	29	69	1,995,600
Average spend/property = \$28,922			

It is stressed that the cost projections are based on tenant responses to the MPRH&BC household survey and the actual scale of repair and maintenance work will be identified through scoping once regional priorities have been established. From the data analysis and as identified in Table 6.23, eleven properties of the total of 69 would appear to require major refurbishment. This might include the five or six Aboriginal social housing properties referred to as in sub-standard condition. As discussed in Chapter 9, older housing in Broken Hill will contain lead paint which will require particular attention in any repair and maintenance programme. It is probable that these houses will also contain materials with bonded asbestos in friable condition which could pose an additional long-term health risk to residents. When the poorer quality of social housing is aggregated with these additional legacy risks to health, any decision in respect of replacement or repair requires to be guided by a clearly defined policy position.

No housing manager was able to provide a current estimate of repair and maintenance costs.

6.11.4 Replacement

No properties have been recommended at this stage for replacement. As noted above, up to eleven properties are reported to be in poor condition and some may, on scoping, be recommended for replacement. In consequence, no houses are proposed for demolition.

This Plan includes a discussion in Chapter 14 about the reconfiguration of the Creedon Street flats as a means of addressing anti-social behaviour which threatens or discomforts residents of the immediate area and adds to the stigmatisation of Aboriginal people. A notional cost allowance is made for remodelling of the flats pending a decision on the future of the complex.

6.12 Entrenched structural inequity

The 2015 report, *Demand and Supply of Aboriginal Housing in Remote and Outer Regional NSW*, prepared on behalf of the AHO, examined the housing situation in twenty-two remote locations, including Broken Hill. The purpose of the report was to inform the AHO in its planning activities and to provide insights into the causes of unstable or unsuitable housing and tenure arrangements and the effect these were having on Aboriginal households. The report found, in summary:

- Without quantifying scale, substantial levels of homelessness, with secondary homelessness being prominent;
- A social housing waiting list of 128 households, from which the community said priority was to be given to single people and the elderly;
- A trend for homeless individuals and families to move from remote communities to Broken Hill in search of housing, and to stay with friends and family;
- Serious to extreme crowding as defined by 8 to 10 persons living in a 3-bedroom house;
- The private rental market was tight with few vacancies;
- A proportion of private rentals are arranged directly between the tenant and landlord without a managing agent, leaving tenants exposed to unethical practices and extortion by slum landlords;

- A range of severe social and health issues with domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol use, mental health issues, teenage pregnancy, child safety and wellbeing issues cited; and
- A specific demand for an Aboriginal Safe House to accommodate women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

The consultations provided an outline brief for appropriate housing: house designs should provide for climate, remoteness, large families, high usage and cultural appropriateness, and be air-conditioned.

While now a little dated, the report, when read in conjunction with the findings of the MPRH&BC household survey, illustrates the existence of longer term deep-seated structural and policy issues which negatively affect the Aboriginal population of Broken Hill.

6.13 Exploitation of private renters

The MPRH&BC household survey, the 2015 AHO report, *Demand and Supply of Aboriginal Housing in Remote and Outer Regional NSW*, and most recent discussions with the Aboriginal community flagged the presence of unethical practices by a small group of landlords. The AHO report did not quantify scale, but findings of the MPRH&BC household survey with respect to tenant-reported asset condition suggested such a practice not only exists but is far from isolated. A fear of eviction may have acted as a deterrent to tenants disclosing information about their poor living conditions and so the survey may not have captured the true extent of the issue.

A measure of housing stress among private renters is evidenced by, when measured against CNOS, fourteen households requiring an extra bedroom and one household requiring an extra two bedrooms. It would be reasonable to draw the conclusion that there is either an insufficient mix of private rental properties available or Aboriginal private renters are opting for smaller, more affordable dwellings irrespective of crowding. Six households did not provide sufficient data to allow determination of need. All but one household needing extra rooms included children.

Subsequent targeted investigations indicate that Aboriginal households could be subject to exploitation. It has been suggested that up to eighty households may be living in circumstances which, by any measure, would be considered sub-standard with many in houses some community members have described as 'unfit for dogs'.

6.14 The stigma of Creedon Street

6.14.1 The Creedon Street environment

Creedon Street: It's (almost) enough to make you believe in environmental determinism ...

The north-western end of Creedon Street, where the concentration of Aboriginal social housing is located, is situated close to the Wills Street Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Council's waste management facility, opposite the Broken Hill Cemetery and adjacent to the Rakow Street Light Industrial precinct. In this regard, the area is like so many former Aboriginal reserves across NSW, consigned to be fringe dwellers on the outskirts of towns. This already burdensome tally of negative externalities is compounded by the fact that Creedon Street has, within the memory of most of the residents, been designated the heavy vehicle bypass for trucks travelling between Adelaide and Wentworth.

The Creedon Street units and two of the houses were originally purchased by Weimija Aboriginal Corporation. When Weimija was deregistered in 2008, Broken Hill LALC reluctantly took on ownership of the property after coming under substantial community pressure. There had been a highly unsatisfactory concentration of Department of Housing dwellings accommodating Aboriginal families in the area bounded by Duff, Tuart, Lawton and Knox Streets in South Broken Hill. This area was stigmatised and racialised as 'vegemite valley'. The Aboriginal population of the area was decanted wholesale into the Creedon Street dwellings, creating another ghetto.

Broken Hill LALC was able to obtain grant funding from AHO to refurbish its Creedon Street dwellings but AHO declined to refurbish its own housing stock in Creedon Street. Such was the animosity

created among tenants, and the pressure applied to Broken Hill LALC as a consequence, the Land Council resolved to relinquish its Creedon Street assets to the AHO. These properties are now managed by Compass Housing.

Compass Housing established a community hub in one of the dwellings. Initially, it was proposed that this facility be under community management but the proposal was overruled by Compass. The hub has been closed during the COVID-19 pandemic; under ordinary circumstances, the hub tends not to be used for service provision or community activities and there are restrictions on entry. Some service providers characterise the purpose of the hub as a ploy to keep Aboriginal people out of town, in the same way that Aboriginal Reserves were used to do so during the days of the Aborigines Welfare Board. Maari Ma does not provide outreach services directly into Creedon Street for that reason, notwithstanding demand: it is regarded as inappropriate because the population concentration is seen as being analogous to a Reserve. It was reported that the NSW Ambulance Service will not enter Creedon Street unless police are already there.

The first impression which greets the visitor to Creedon Street is the stench from the WWTP, the vent positioned in the front yard of 101 Creedon Street, and the sewage pumping station at the junction of Creedon Street and the Barrier Highway. Then, the state of the housing hits: one boarded-up dwelling, but the Creedon Street unit block more so than the detached dwellings, has an appalling reputation in the community for antisocial behaviour and property damage. Much of the problem is attributed not to residents, but to visitors from other communities, and bored children are also blamed. Social housing tenure in Broken Hill tends to be long-term; however, the Creedon Street flats were reported to have a transitory population. This floating population of people from elsewhere contributes to social problems such as abuse of elders. Service providers have indicated that gatherings of up to 50 people are frequent occurrences. Allocation of some dwellings is felt by service providers to be inappropriate. One case cited related to a tenant from away with a mental health condition who had been referred to Compass Housing through

mainstream mental health services and placed in a Creedon Street unit because of his Aboriginality. The tenancy could not be sustained. Households on waiting lists will often refuse allocation of a property in Creedon Street because of the culture of alcohol and other drug use and rowdy behaviour, and they are then moved to the bottom of the list. As one mainstream homelessness service provider put it, "People see Creedon Street as a worse option than homelessness."

6.14.2 *Other problem areas*

Social housing multi-unit developments elsewhere in Broken Hill experience social problems in much the same way as Creedon Street, though generally to a lesser extent. Briar Court, in McGowen Street, comprises about 20 units. Six units within the property are used by Mission Australia to house homeless boys and young men. The remaining units are managed by Compass Housing but are not Aboriginal-identified accommodation. It was reported by an aged care service provider that one elder receiving packaged care indicated that they would prefer to be housed in Creedon Street than in Briar Court, such is its reputation for conflict. A multi-unit social housing property in O'Neill Street near the pool has a similarly poor reputation, as do the Williams Street flats. The latter were originally intended to house older people; when young people moved in, according to one service provider, "mayhem" ensued.

6.14.3 *Multi-unit social housing dwellings*

Community members and service providers alike are concerned that proposals to build Aboriginal social housing in the form of multi-unit developments will lead to problems similar to those experienced in the Creedon, McGowen, O'Neill and Williams Street properties. The view is that these properties, when used for social housing rental, are inherently problematic, and particularly so when young people or transitory tenants are housed within them. Service providers cited cases where younger people from away strongarm their way into units, abuse the older residents and steal their belongings. Older people are unable to resist. Unit development such as these are felt by the community to be located too far from services

such as public transport and shops, and from the city centre.

Of particular concern to human services organisations is the practice of the AHO in purchasing land and developing single or double blocks for medium density housing. Service providers see construction of multi-unit complexes and, consequently, grouping of impoverished households in inappropriate housing, as inherently problematic. At the time of writing, the AHO has commissioned construction of two developments, each of four units; one at 275 Clarke Street the other at 80 Cummins Street. Several interviewees expressed the view that engagement with the community might have led AHO to a different design outcome. The CWP has not been engaged in planning processes for such proposals currently under development.

Elders within the community draw compelling parallels between multi-unit social housing rentals and former Aboriginal Reserves:

"They're making missions everywhere. People don't want to live in mission-style houses. It isn't helping our people. Our people want their privacy – they only live there because there's nowhere else to go".

7 THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

7.1 Geographical context

Broken Hill is the largest urban settlement and only city in far western NSW. The bounds of the town align with the local government area. Figure 7.1 refers. The City of Broken Hill is classified as Outer Regional or accessible on all remoteness scales but is surrounded by country classified as Remote.

Figure 7.1: Broken Hill Local Government Area



Source: <https://portal.spatial.nsw.gov.au/portal/home/webmap/viewer.html?layers=3e1edb6861524b5490c74db81e42433a>

7.2 Council strategic interests

Council states in its *Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2022* (RAP) that, of 179 employees, four are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, equating to 2.2% of the workforce. An aspiration stated in the RAP is to work toward a 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce target by August 2022. The Broken Hill City Council *Workforce Management Plan and Report 2017* contains no specific reference to the Aboriginal community. Externally funded traineeships are offered which may support school-based trainees into other local businesses through apprenticeships and into tertiary study but numbers are not identified.

The *Broken Hill 2033 Community Strategic Plan* contains only one partial action relating to the Aboriginal community:

- Strategy 2.3.3: Target skills development amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous disadvantaged people to increase employment potential and participation

while Council's *Delivery Programme 2020-2022* records:

- Action 2.3.1.2: Continue to encourage a career path at Council and local employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Priority strategic interests expressed by Council include:

- Sustainable economy;
- Roads maintenance;
- Health, community and recreation facilities, and open spaces;
- Population growth;
- Training and education; and
- Tourism.

which, as further defined in the aspirational 2020 proposal, *Broken Hill –A Blueprint –Advocating for Our Future*, foresees a possible opportunity for Aboriginal participation in cultural and Indigenous tourism.

An evident tension between the Aboriginal community and Council in the most recent Council planning documents is an inability on the part of Council to proceed with industrial development in those parts of the city already zoned or proposed to be zoned for industrial purposes subject to the Barkandji Native Title determination or an undetermined Aboriginal land claim(s) under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983. The *Far West Regional Plan 2036* recognises this tension and puts forward a pathway for unlocking the economic potential that resides in these culturally and environmentally significant land holdings. The theme of Indigenous tourism and arts permeates the plan which notes Aboriginal culture and art as important to supporting the regional tourism

sector, local employment and social improvements for Aboriginal people. The plan emphasises the importance of Aboriginal leadership as integral to the growth and strength of tourism.

7.3 Council involvement in the Aboriginal social housing sector

Council reports that it has little involvement with ACHPs in respect of asset management. Property inspections are not undertaken unless specifically requested.

On a broader front, the *Broken Hill Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2040* highlights the strengths and opportunities associated with the city's housing sector. Key actions are:

- Increased diversification of housing types and sizes with an emphasis on 1–2-bedroom dwellings with small yards close to essential services;
- Rezoning to address the limited supply of vacant residential land; and
- Incentives and initiatives to encourage the maintenance/renovation of existing houses in need of repair, voluntary demolition of dilapidated houses especially where this frees lots for new development, or direct action where dilapidation or structural issues present as public safety or streetscape amenity concerns.

7.4 Planning controls

Areas within Broken Hill are utilised for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. Council, through the *Broken Hill Local Environmental Plan* (LEP), zones the developed residential area of Broken Hill as generally R1, General Residential, with the objectives of:

- Providing for the housing needs of the community;
- Providing for a variety of housing types and densities; and
- Enabling other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.

Within this zoning, building of dwelling houses is permitted with consent. Development controls such as building setbacks, height and floor to space ratio are set out in the *Broken Hill Development Control Plan 2016* (DCP). Minimum lot size is 230 m² in the residential area. The DCP also provides guidelines relating to development on land which is known to be or is potentially subject to lead contamination, including the management of lead contaminated buildings.

Schedule 5, Environmental heritage, of the LEP records an extensive list of heritage items which may require to be accounted for in any development. The objectives of the policy are to:

- Conserve items of environmental heritage and maintain appropriate settings and views;
- Retain evidence of historic themes of development evident in Broken Hill through the proper care and maintenance of individual items of environmental heritage and Heritage Conservation Areas;
- Provide guidelines for alterations and additions which complement and do not detract from the heritage significance of individually listed heritage items and Heritage Conservation Areas;
- Protect those items and areas of value to the local community; and
- Encourage new development which complements existing heritage items and Conservation Areas in a current day context.

Defined conservation areas are shown on the heritage mapping accompanying the LEP. It is unlikely that heritage controls will bear on Aboriginal social housing assets, existing or proposed, unless, as discussed later, adaptation of one or more of the vacant hotels for emergency or transit accommodation is realised.

7.5 Rates and charges

7.5.1 Municipal rates

General rate and waste management charges levied by Broken Hill City Council in 2020/21 are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Municipal charges (2020/21)

General rate	
Base amount	\$530.00
And variable rate based on unimproved capital value of property (currently 3.198323c/\$1.00 land value)	
Waste management	
Domestic waste base charge	\$49.00
Domestic waste service	\$282.00

Typically, residential lots to which the AHO and Broken Hill LALC have title range in size from 330 m² to 770 m², attracting an unimproved land value between \$2,800 (Creedon Street) and \$39,600 (Iodide Street). At the upper end, an annual charge can be expected to be in the order of \$2,130 in round figures.

7.5.2 Financial assistance grants

The Australian Government's financial assistance grant funding is incorporated into Council's general revenue. Council advise that services provided across the city are provided on an agreed priority basis apart from those services (waste, street lighting, parks, reserves, public toilets, road maintenance and construction, for example) which are provided at an appropriate service level. It is Council's view that the Aboriginal community is a significant demographic and as such benefits from the services provided.

The population of the Far West Region is projected to decrease by 25% between 2016 and 2041 which, if realistic, suggests the Broken Hill population could decrease from 18,100 in 2016 to 13,650 in 2041. A reduced rate base will add to pressure on household budget and the affordability of services by remaining ratepayers. It is likely also to result in a reduction of capital spending on facilities maintenance and replacement. Through the CWP, it would be highly desirable to ensure that community expectations and priorities are conveyed to Council for inclusion in its strategic planning processes so that services and facilities account for the aspirations and needs of the Aboriginal population.

7.5.3 Utilities

Water and wastewater management services are provided in Broken Hill by Essential Water (EW). Charges are set out in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Utilities charges (2020/21)

Annual water supply and sewerage service charges	
Drinking water charge	
Per customer service connection:	\$339.24
Filtered water usage charge:	\$1.86/kl
Annual sewerage charge	
Per customer service connection:	\$540.51

Households are charged a water rate (base charge) where a water service is available close to the property plus a metered per kilolitre charge for all water consumed. How much a householder pays is entirely dependent on the amount of water used. Accounts are issued on a quarterly basis.

Essential Water is classified as a major supplier (> 10,000 properties connected) in NSW and, within this classification, in FY2019-20 charged for residential water and sewerage services at a level below the weighted median (\$1,364.97 cf \$1,413.60). In the same year, the rate of new residences connected was the lowest of all twenty-six major suppliers at 0.03% of connected residential properties.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

8.1 Infrastructure asset schedule

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.1 WATER SUPPLY		Responsible Authority: Essential Water	
Works	Description		
Source	Screened offtake on the River Murray at Fort Courage, Wentworth, 270 km DN750 transfer main, four pumping stations, 720 ML bulk water storage facility (552ML balancing storage and 168ML reserve storage) 25 km south of Broken Hill		Estimated average annual demand = 18.6 ML/day Estimated peak daily demand = 37.4 ML/day
Treatment	Mica Street Water Treatment Plant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre- and post-chlorination UV disinfection for pathogen control Potassium permanganate for iron and manganese removal Activated carbon dissolved for organics, toxins and taste and odour removal Sulphuric acid for pH control Aluminium sulphate (alum) primary coagulant with polyacrylamide as flocculant aid Two stage flocculation and clarification Dual media filtration Standby reverse osmosis to control salinity and hardness when required Fluoride to meet health standards Lime for final pH correction 		Treatment capacity = 31.5 ML/day
Storage	Block 10 (services central and south Broken Hill), Wyman Street and Rocky Hill (services north and west Broken Hill). Tanks are of steel or concrete construction		Effective storage is 16.4 ML of a total constructed capacity of 40 ML
Distribution	Reticulation of various diameters and ages		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated cost
-	-	No action required	-
			-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE						
8.2 WATER SUPPLY		Responsible Authority: Essential Water				
Broken Hill filtered water quality results, 1 st January 2012 to 31 st March 2021						
Characteristics		No samples	Min	Avg	Max	ADWG
Health	E.Coli	24	< 1	< 1	< 1	0 orgs/100 mL
	Fluoride	3	1.0	1.0	1.1	0.9 to 1.5 mg/L
	Free chlorine	26	0.6	1.3	1.8	0.2 to 5 mg/L
	Lead	3	<0.002	<0.002	<0.002	<0.01 mg/L
	Arsenic	3	0.001	0.001	0.001	<0.01 mg/L
	Manganese	3	0.007	0.014	0.028	0.5 mg/L
	Cadmium	3	<0.0005	<0.0005	<0.0005	<0.002 mg/L
	Copper	3	0.001	0.001	0.001	< 2 mg/L
	Mercury	3	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	0.001 mg/L
	Trihalomethanes	4	0.084	0.107	0.120	<0.250 mg/L
Aesthetic	Turbidity	3	0.1	0.1	0.9	< 5 NTU
Broken Hill filtered water quality results, 1 st January 2012 to 31 st March 2021						
Characteristics		No samples	Min	Avg	Max	ADWG
	True colour	3	1.0	1.0	1.0	15 HU
	pH	29	7.2	7.9	8.4	6.5-8.5
	EC	3	149	164	173	<1090 µS/cm
	Iron	3	<0.01	<0.01	0.01	<0.3 mg/L
	Zinc	3	0.05	0.06	0.07	< 3 mg/L
ADWG: Australia Drinking Water Guidelines						

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.3 WASTEWATER		Responsible Authority: Essential Water	
Works	Description		
Treatment	Wills Street Wastewater Treatment Plant: inlet screening, grit removal, primary sedimentation, trickling filtration, secondary sedimentation, anaerobic sludge digestion	Average dry weather flow) = 3.90 ML/day Peak dry weather flow = 7.80 ML/day Wet weather flow = 28.08 ML/day (ADWF = 240 L/capita/day, PDWF = 2xADWF, WWF = 3.6xPDWF)	
	South Wastewater Treatment Plant: inlet screening, grit removal, primary sedimentation, trickling filtration, secondary sedimentation, anaerobic sludge digestion	Average dry weather flow = 1.01 ML/day Peak dry weather flow = 2.01 ML/day Wet weather flow = 7.22 ML/day	
Pumping stations	Total of 11 sewage pumping stations (SPS)	Refer to Figure 8.1 for Creedon Street SPS	
Reticulation	Network of 228 km of reticulation mains		
Effluent use	Pumped to Broken Hill Golf Course, mines and other minor users		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated cost
Wastewater reticulation	8.1	Negotiate the installation of effective odour control measures to the Creedon Street ventilation stack, to the Creedon Street SPS and to the Wills Street WWTP	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE				
8.4 STORMWATER DRAINAGE		Responsible Authority: Broken Hill City Council		
Works	Description			
Trunk drainage	Largely overland flow with concrete kerb and gutter channels discharging to earth channels and thence to ephemeral creeks. The only subsurface drain is the Argent Street system in the CBD		Standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none">100 year ARI protection for major overland flow paths5 year ARI underground drainage standard where a 100 year ARI overland flow path is available	
Local drainage				
Reference:	Development Control Plan No. 12: Stormwater collection, usage and disposal			
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action		Estimated cost
-	-	No action required		-


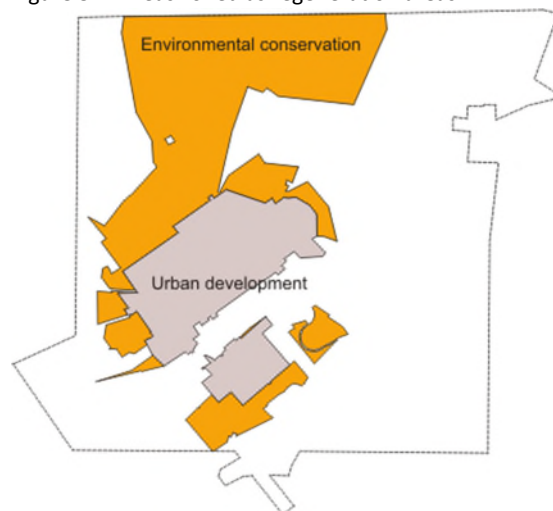
INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.5 ROADS		Responsible Authority: Broken Hill City Council	
Works	Description		
Roads	Wide, sealed carriageways throughout the city with kerb and gutter and/or graded gravel shoulders		
Speed limit	50 km/hr		
Black spots	Nil		
Heavy traffic routes	Includes Creedon Street: Permitted rigid truck and two dog trailers, 25/26m B-doubles to 50 tonnes and AB triples to 100 tonnes		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	
Heavy traffic routes	8.2	Reactivate the BHCC proposal for a western bypass to remove heavy traffic from residential streets	-

Figure 8.1: Creedon Street sewage pumping station



Figure 8.2: Areas zoned as regeneration areas




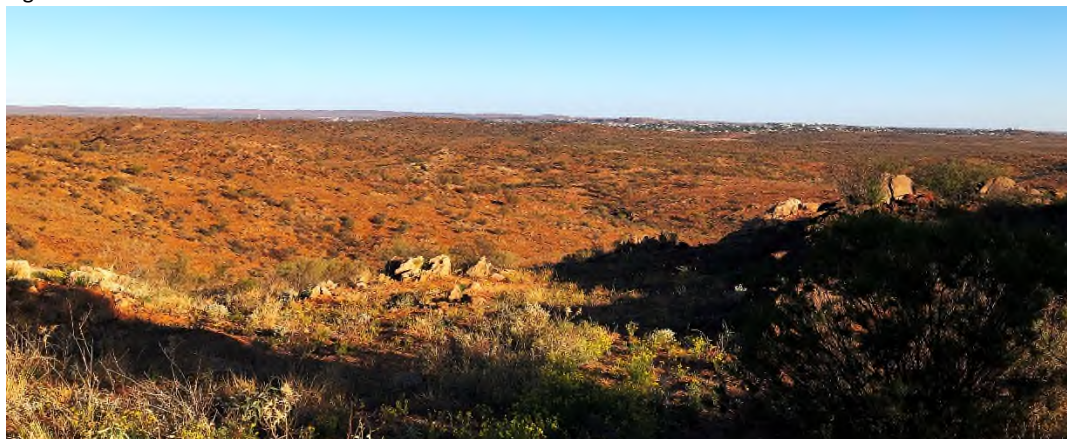
INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE					
8.6 ENVIRONMENTAL AMENITY		Responsible Authority: Broken Hill City Council			
Works	Description				
Streetscape	Streetscape plantings to all streets of flowering gums in unvegetated verge. Planning generally requires uniform tree planting within a street or block, in terms of species, age and spacing, be centred on each building lot and opposite one another. Deciduous trees preferred in east-west streets to allow solar access and summer shade for north facing houses				
Public spaces	Larger sized parks of Sturt Park, Patton Park and Queen Elizabeth Park serve as the main areas of public recreation and community activity with playgrounds, toilets, carparks, barbecues, picnic facilities and paths				
Dust	Regeneration reserves to the south, west and north-west, and norther east of the urban area. Refer to Figures 8.2 and 8.3				
Air quality	Air Quality Index (2020 and 2021 Jan – Jun)				
	Air pollution level		Good	Moderate	Unhealthy SG
	No of days of record 2020	355	344 days	7 days	4 days
	No of days of record 2021	178	178 days	-	-
	Daily AQI is based on the 24 hours average of hourly readings Good: Air quality is considered satisfactory and air pollution poses little or no risk Moderate: Air quality is acceptable but some pollutants may be of concern to people unusually sensitive Unhealthy SG: Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects https://aqicn.org/city/australia/nsw/western-ls/broken-hill				
References:	BHCC Policy 04.011: Landscaping on nature strips: visibility, access, materials and layout BHCC Tree management plan BHCC Parks and open spaces asset management plan				
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action		Estimated cost	
-	-	No action required		-	

Figure 8.3: Area to north of Broken Hill zoned as environmental conservation



INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE																					
8.7 FIRE CONTROL		Responsible Authority: Fire and Rescue NSW																			
Works	Description		<table><caption>Incidents per 1,000 households</caption><thead><tr><th>Location</th><th>Incidents per 1,000 households</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Bourke</td><td>72</td></tr><tr><td>Brewarrina</td><td>50</td></tr><tr><td>Coonamble</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>Walgett</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>Cobarr</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Broken Hill</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Wentworth</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Central Darling</td><td>2</td></tr></tbody></table>	Location	Incidents per 1,000 households	Bourke	72	Brewarrina	50	Coonamble	25	Walgett	18	Cobarr	10	Broken Hill	8	Wentworth	5	Central Darling	2
Location	Incidents per 1,000 households																				
Bourke	72																				
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Coonamble	25																				
Walgett	18																				
Cobarr	10																				
Broken Hill	8																				
Wentworth	5																				
Central Darling	2																				
Service	Response from Broken Hill Fire Station or Broken Hill South Fire Station Data opposite from FRNSW Annual Report 2019-2020																				
Fixed plant	Hydrants located throughout the area of development. Mains pressure adequate for appliance to operate effectively																				
Mobile plant	Operational appliances at both stations																				
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action																			
-	-	No action required																			

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.8 POWER AND STREET LIGHTING		Responsible Authority: Essential Energy	
Works	Description		
Generation	Single transmission feeder from Buronga, AGL Broken Hill 53 MW Solar Farm, 5 km southwest of Broken Hill, and 200 MW Silverton Wind Farm approximately 25 km north-west of Broken Hill		
Service	Supply from TransGrid's 220/22kV substation in Broken Hill. Pole mounted cabling distributed throughout developed area of town; LV distributed as single and three phase power		
Connection	Dwellings are connected via aerial cabling		
Outage	Frequency and duration not known		
Street lighting	Pole mounted luminaries		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated cost
-	-	No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE						
8.9 COMMUNICATIONS			Responsible Authority: As stated			
Works		Description				
Digital service		Telstra	Optus	Vodaphone	Number of towers providing mobile phone coverage across Broken Hill	
	3G	9	3	1		
	4G	4	3	1		
	5G	2	-	-		
NBN	Fibre to the kerb (FTTC)				All parts available for connection	
TV satellite	VAST satellite TV and Foxtel satellite TV				Free to air and pay TV services	
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action			Estimated cost	
-	-	No action required			-	

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.10 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL		Responsible Authority: Broken Hill City Council	
Works	Description		
Collection	Kerbside household waste service weekly and green waste collection once a fortnight. Yellow lid bins provided to residents with a physical disability collected from the house	CWP request the provision of skip bins at strategic locations to allow for disposal of bulk waste	
Disposal	Land disposal at the Waste Management Facility in Wills St. Charges may apply to non-recyclable waste delivered to the adjacent Waste Transfer Station	Charges and difficulties with transport are deterring or preventing some sections of the Aboriginal community from being able to dispose of bulk waste at the Waste Management Facility	
Recycling	Sorted household recyclables and designated hazardous materials accepted at the Community Recycling Centre at the Wills St waste facility. Bulk waste delivered to the Waste Transfer Station is sorted to reduce the amount going to landfill		
Clean up	Periodic acceptance of household chemical waste at the Waste Transfer Station		
Safety	Public access to the landfill area is restricted		
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated cost
-	-	No action required	-

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET SCHEDULE			
8.11 ANIMAL CONTROL		Responsible Authority: Broken Hill City Council	
Works	Description		
Services	Ranger services, pound facilities, dog refuse bins, educational, other companion animal-related activities and mandatory cat and dog registration		
Facilities	Off-leash areas at Queen Elizabeth Dog Park and Patton Park		
Domestic pets	Action in respect of dangerous and menacing dogs, restricted dogs, and nuisance dogs and cats		Council report that uncontrolled pig dogs and feral cats are a major safety concern and control orders are issued
Item	Strategy Ref	Proposed Action	Estimated cost
-	-	No action required	-

8.2 Infrastructure improvements

Environmental health infrastructure services in Broken Hill are the responsibility of Essential Water and Broken Hill City Council (BHCC). No infrastructure elements are owned, operated or maintained by any local Aboriginal community organisation.

Unlike residents of some communities in the Murrumbidgee Region, residents of Broken Hill have the benefit of a full range of municipal and essential services provided to an acceptable standard. The nature and extent of each service has been investigated and analysed where appropriate to determine the current level of service, serviceability and, where appropriate, compliance with environmental health standards. Suggested improvements are listed at Table 8.12.

Except for Creedon Street, the CWP did not propose any improvements to environmental health infrastructure. As discussed previously, the issues affecting Creedon Street residents:

- Odour arising from the transport and treatment of wastewater; and
- Noise, exhaust pollution, disturbance of soil-based lead contamination, and safety issues posed by heavy freight and through traffic using the Creedon Street heavy vehicle bypass.

seriously detract from the amenity and safety of the neighbourhood and demand attention.

Figure 8.4: Creedon Street bypass



Table 8.12: Proposed infrastructure improvements

Infrastructure element		Estimated cost (\$)
Wastewater		
8.1	Negotiate the installation of effective odour control measures to the Creedon Street ventilation stack, to the Creedon Street SPS and to the Wills Street WWTP	At the expense of the asset owner
Roads		
8.2	Reactivate the BHCC proposal for a western bypass to remove heavy traffic from residential streets	At the expense of the asset owner

9 ENVIRONMENTAL LEAD

9.1 Qualification

The issue of environmental lead contamination in Broken Hill is all-reaching and technically complex. Much research has been carried out by eminent authorities whose findings are well documented. A range of actions have been implemented by knowledge holders to reduce the health impacts of lead contamination, and effectiveness reviewed. In consequence, this Plan does not seek to revisit the science or the strategic approach to treatment and remediation but rather focusses on summarising the current situation and noting an Aboriginal perspective as recounted during community engagement.

9.2 The legacy

Blood lead levels among children in Broken Hill are of great concern to families and service providers alike. Environmental lead toxicity is a massive problem due to the legacy of lead mining and processing in Broken Hill since the 1880s (and especially of smelting in the early days), and to the continuing presence of lead-based paint in older dwellings (which make up much of the rental housing stock in the city).

Figure 9.1: Line of Lode tailings stockpile (south face)



A principal contributor to environmental lead contamination is the tailings stockpile or Hill of Mullock, shown at Figures 9.1 and 9.2, which extends along the Line of Lode, the location of

early mining activity, and from which lead has been dispersed to soils and building ceiling spaces, wall cavities and interiors. The area of highest deposition is within 400 m north and 800 m south of the Line of Lode where soil lead levels exceed 1,200mg/kg, greater than the level of 300 mg/kg requiring investigation as stated in the National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure April 2011, Schedule B1. Work by Yang and Cattle in their paper *Bioaccessibility of lead in urban soil of Broken Hill, Australia: A study based on in vitro digestion and the IEUBK model* (2015) indicated that background lead levels in soil on the outskirts of town are below 100 mg/kg.

Figure 9.2: Line of Lode tailings stockpile (north face)



Mapping has identified lead risk zones on a scale of 1 (very high risk) to 5 (low risk); the risk zones relate to proximity to, and direction from, the Line of Lode. The highest risk areas, as established through extensive field investigations by the BHELP, are situated in South Broken Hill in the shadow of the Hill of Mullock, as Figure 9.3 and Figure 4 demonstrate. The incidence of elevated blood lead levels has shown a significant correlation with proximity to the Line of Lode. More detailed ground investigation has also identified localised hotspots of environmental lead pollution which arise from a variety of causes other than lead mining and processing: other industrial land uses such as fuel depots and the Silverton Tramway route; and other causes such as sand blasting of paint from houses, and filling of sports fields. Figure 9.5 refers. Isotope studies have indicated that there is no ongoing impact of lead in

petrol. Variables other than lead in soil, including socioeconomic status of households, house condition, cultural practices and wind speed and direction, also play a role.

Figure 9.3: Risk district boundaries



Figure 9.4: Risk districts

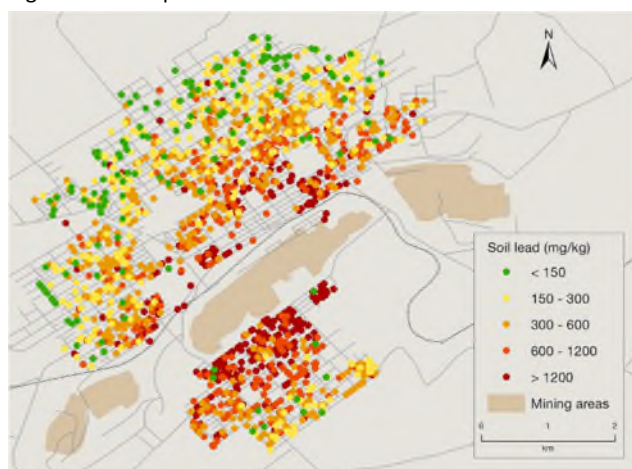


9.3 Health effects

High blood lead levels in children result from proximity of their homes (and other homes where they spend their time) to mining and former smelting sites and other hotspots, soil lead levels in the dwelling curtilage and surrounding areas, permeability of homes to dust, and the condition of residual lead-based paints. Young children are at greatest risk of lead toxicity because of their greater sensitivity: their brains and other physiological systems are still developing; they have a four to five times greater uptake of ingested lead than adults; and they are less able to self-regulate what they put into their mouths.

Lead toxicity is insidious: it can affect almost every organ and physiological system, yet often occurs without readily observable symptoms. High levels of exposure can cause brain dysfunction resulting in behavioural, learning, cognitive and attention difficulties; it can also affect blood cell development, bones, and the liver and kidneys. During pregnancy, lead which has been accumulated in the mother's bones can pass back into the blood and cross the placenta to affect her unborn child. The NHMRC recommends investigating and reducing the source of exposure for any person with a blood lead level higher than 5 µg/dL, particularly if the person is a child or pregnant. However, there is no safe level of blood lead concentration.

Figure 9.5: Hotspots of environmental lead contamination



Source: Dong, C., Taylor, M.P. & Gulson, B. (2020), 'A 25 year record of childhood blood lead exposure and its relationship to environmental sources'. In *Environmental Research* vol. 186 pp. 109357-109357.

9.4 The current situation

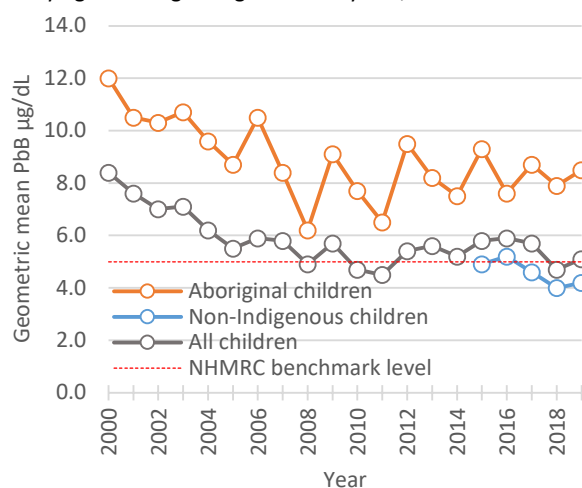
The most recent (2019) edition of the annual *Lead Report: Broken Hill children less than 5 years old*, compiled by Far West Local Health District (FWLHD), Western NSW Health Intelligence Unit and the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health and produced by the NSW Ministry of Health in December 2020, documented at a population scale the findings of blood lead test data from Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and Broken Hill Child and Family Health. The findings for 2019 can be summarised as follows:

- 159 newborn cord blood tests were conducted. The geometric mean blood lead level was 0.7 µg/dL, as it had been in 2018, with very little difference between non-Indigenous and Aboriginal neonates. All newborns had blood lead levels below the notifiable level;
- 201 children aged 6 months to <12 months were screened in conjunction with immunisation. The geometric mean blood lead level was 2.8 µg/dL (compared to 2.7 µg/dL from 156 children in 2018), but 85% of children in this age group had a blood lead level below 5 µg/dL, compared to 75% in 2012;
- 681 children aged 1 year to <5 years were screened. Blood lead levels had not changed significantly since 2012; in 2019, the geometric

mean had increased slightly from 2018 (4.7 µg/dL) to 5.1 µg/dL;

- From 2018 to 2019, the number of Aboriginal children tested increased by 19%, and non-Indigenous children, by 2%. Comparison of mean blood lead levels over time has indicated a disparity in lead concentration in Aboriginal and non-Indigenous children. The 2019 results show 60% of non-Indigenous children in Broken Hill had a blood lead level below 5 µg/dL, compared to only 20% of Aboriginal children. The geometric mean blood lead level among Aboriginal children increased from 7.9 µg/dL to 8.5 µg/dL from 2018 to 2019 and, among non-Indigenous children, from 4.0 µg/dL to 4.2 µg/dL. Figure 9.6 shows recorded blood lead levels in all children and for Aboriginal children between the year 2000 and 2019, and for non-Indigenous children since 2015. The noticeable disparity in geometric mean between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous children may be inferred between 2000 and 2015 and directly compared from 2015, while the stubborn refusal of the mean for Aboriginal children's blood lead levels to fall to below the NHMRC threshold for action is clearly illustrated.

Figure 9.6: Blood lead levels in all children and children identifying as Aboriginal aged 1 to <5 years, 2000-2019



Assessment and site remediation services are provided by the BHELP which works through formal MoUs with Maari Ma and Broken Hill Child and Family Health, and in partnership with the

Broken Hill Lead Reference Group, the Aboriginal Lead Reference Group, Broken Hill City Council and community stakeholders to abate the pollution and health impacts of environmental lead. Services are delivered under the governance of the BHELP Steering Committee which draws its members from the NSW Environment Protection Authority, NSW Health, the Broken Hill Lead Reference Group and the Aboriginal Lead Reference group. The BHELP Project Team comprises six staff members (four full-time and two part-time) and is responsible for a wide variety of tasks under the general rubrics of research and monitoring (including research into the impacts of high efficiency particulate air [HEPA] filters, airborne dust monitoring and modelling); community consultation, education through schools and in the community, and funding of community initiatives such as a partnership with Landcare to regenerate ground cover; and co-ordination of site and dwelling remediation. In 2015, the NSW Government allocated \$13 million over the period July 2015 to June 2020 to address lead exposure in children aged five years and under in Broken Hill. Since 30th June 2020, funding has continued on an annual basis, but there is concern within the community that continuity of service is at risk because of the change in the funding model. Stakeholders have identified a need to plan and resource a ten-year programme extension involving a larger team and an augmented programme scope. The view is that, at present, the BHELP is “just holding the line”.

BHELP intervention is predicated upon blood lead levels among young children rather than on direct measurement of lead levels in the environment. The BHELP focuses strongly on the needs of Aboriginal children and their families, given the very high incidence of blood lead levels exceeding the NHMRC benchmark level of 5 µg/dL. Blood tests are offered to children at 6, 9, 12 and 18 months and at 2, 3 and 4 years. Aboriginal children’s blood lead levels begin to rise before children are twelve months of age and continue to increase through early childhood. It is thought that there may be a number of reasons for high levels of detection of elevated blood lead concentration among Aboriginal children: location of dwellings relative to the high lead risk areas, inadequate dwelling quality, diet, a higher tendency among

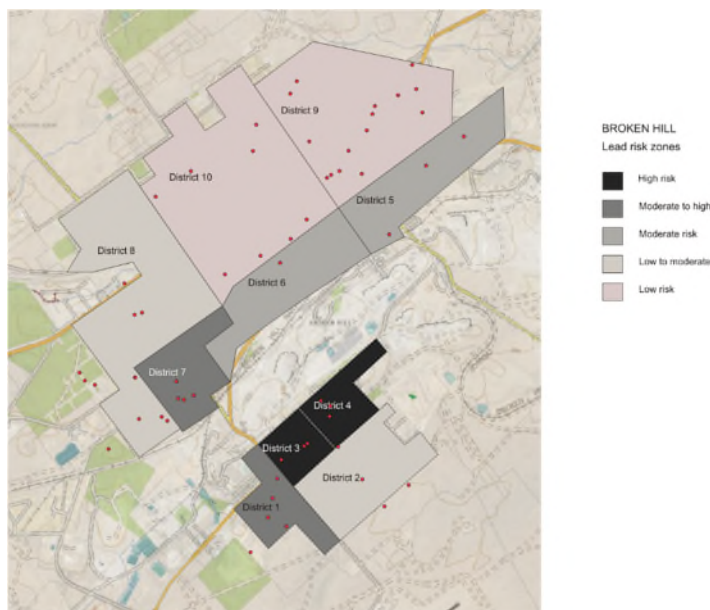
children to play outside, or greater visibility of the population; however, housing quality is regarded as the most probable cause.

The BHELP’s 2020 Annual Report indicated that 87% of children in the target age cohort participated in the screening programme in 2019, and that 1,754 tests were undertaken by Maari Ma and Broken Hill Child and Family Health in that year. The mean blood lead level in the 201 children aged under 12 months in 2019 was 2.8 µg/dL; this is concerning given that the body burden of lead is cumulative over time with continuing exposure. It is, however, encouraging that the proportion of all children in this age cohort with blood levels below the NHMRC threshold value of 5 µg/dL increased from 75% to 85% from 2012 to 2019. The BHELP aspired to take a proactive approach to investigate all properties where children’s blood lead levels exceed, or are very likely to exceed, the NHMRC benchmark level. At present, though, resources only permit action where blood lead concentrations exceed twice the benchmark level.

Despite the efforts to date, the MPRH&BC household survey revealed many Aboriginal residents remained concerned about the effects that environmental lead contamination was having on the health of their families. Figure 9.7 indicates the locations of respondents (n=60) to the survey reporting these health concerns.

Funding from BHELP has allowed Maari Ma and Broken Hill Child and Family Health to offer environmental home assessments at the time of blood lead testing, to support a case management approach to meet the individual needs of families in relation to exposure source mitigation and behavioural strategies. Where children aged under two years of age have elevated blood lead levels (10 µg/dL or over) and live in high lead risk zones, and where environmental exposure risks are revealed to be problematic, the household is referred to the Home Remediation Programme.

Figure 9.7: Location of Aboriginal households expressing health concerns attributable to environmental lead contamination



Works undertaken by the programme include capping and/or replacement of contaminated soils on the property, sealing of gaps which permit dust ingress, scraping back and sealing of unstable lead painted surfaces for stabilisation purposes, replacement of floor coverings in some cases, and cleaning of the house and soft furnishings on completion of the works. Over 80% of houses in Broken Hill were built before 1970 at which time the use of lead-based paints was discontinued.

Capping involves the application and compaction of a 75-100 mm layer of loam, cracker dust (blue metal fines) or road base to yard areas and is the more economical approach to remediation of yards. If ground levels are very high or soils are too difficult to cap, removal of soil is arranged; however, this approach involves increased cost and higher levels of dust generation. Installation of a geotextile barrier might provide an alternative solution but the cost is prohibitively high. Service providers in the health space indicated that waiting times for remediation can be lengthy (a waiting period of 18 months was mentioned) and that this is a consequence of funding constraints.

Rates of recontamination are significant and are highest closest to the Line of Lode. Recontamination is most problematic in residential

yards, then in vacant lots and nature strips. Remediation was reported to be more intact if the dwelling in question remains in the same hands than if it has changed hands. Causes of recontamination include ant activity (particularly where cracker dust has been used in capping) and dog excavation. In addition, even though the Line of Lode itself was capped in the 1990s, dust deposition from mine leases is still having an impact. Ideally, resourcing permitting, the BHELP would aspire to undertaking continual 'touch-up' remediation throughout the city while the mines continue to operate.

Residential mobility of families tends to complicate the process of responding to elevated blood levels in Aboriginal children. Health service providers indicated that very high blood lead levels are continuing to be observed, often among children whose families live in private rental housing. Frequent churn is a characteristic of private sector rental tenancies in Broken Hill. The BHELP can and does remediate private rental properties. However, service provider interviews indicated that tenants are often evicted following remediation. Social housing managers' interest in abating the lead hazard appears to be variable: it was reported, for example, that lead does not appear to be on the agenda of the majority Aboriginal social housing manager in Broken Hill, Compass Housing. Residential mobility is not the only confounding factor in terms of children's exposure. It was reported that children make frequent and lengthy visits to family members in contaminated properties, and that the gains made through making children's own homes safer is undermined when they spend time away from home in dwellings that also have lead contamination issues. Some houses have floating populations of many children and it would be beneficial if these dwellings could be identified and remediation undertaken. During the 2019-2020 financial year, programme funding was extended to include remediation of secondary dwellings where children spend a lot of time; however, resources are too limited to tackle the issue in a systematic way. Ideally, people who unofficially

care for large numbers of children, especially in the Aboriginal community, would be identified and lead issues at their dwellings investigated and, where necessary, remediated.

From a planning perspective, service providers consider that social housing provision through (preferably) construction of high-quality dwellings in low lead risk zones is an important measure to abate the lead impact. If additional social housing is to be provided on a spot purchase basis, dwelling quality and location should be prioritised in the assessment process. Relocation of families which move frequently in high lead risk areas to additional social housing dwellings in lower risk areas is seen as highly desirable. Where families are to remain in their current dwellings, a more active, systematic approach to lead paint detection and treatment is also seen as desirable. There is also the potential to improve conditions through better uptake of engagement initiatives: for example, through ensuring that house cleaning recommendations are practical, and through promotion of low water use gardens and planting of native groundcovers.

At a broader scale, progressive rather than end-of-life remediation of mining sites may prove more successful in abating the lead hazard; as might a more proactive approach by miners to dust emissions. From the perspective of remediation within the town area, the view was expressed that remediation on the basis of environmental lead levels rather than blood lead levels would produce a more far-reaching and sustainable impact; however, current levels of resource allocation are insufficient to support this approach. The BHELP aspires to undertake comprehensive, systematic remediation to all areas within the town where soils lead levels exceed 700 mg/kg, especially where soil is exposed. Lead does not biodegrade or dissipate over time so remediation measures must be exacting and permanent.

9.5 A strategy

An existential crisis confronts the most vulnerable members of the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill (and probably the non-Indigenous community) in achieving an equitable solution to housing need.

Changing climate, harsher environmental conditions, inappropriate policy imperatives and predatory landlord behaviour conspire to varying degrees against Aboriginal household wellbeing. All influences point to a fundamental rethink of the way Aboriginal families are afforded shelter in Broken Hill. As intimated by the BHELP, continuing current practice is not sufficient. This HEHP suggests a strategic, risk-based approach focussed on outcomes as set out in Table 9.1. As Figure 9.6 shows, this is very much an issue confronting the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill and this should be the target population for the BHELP with a risk evaluation matrix relevant to this population.

Table 9.1: Environmental lead strategic initiatives

Action	Measure
1	New supply
1.1	Locate all new build social housing in low risk areas as defined by Figure 9.4, but avoiding localised hot spots. Discuss with BHCC areas of suitable development
1.2	Add to housing supply through spot purchase of existing dwellings in low risk areas as defined by Figure 9.4, but avoiding localised hot spots. Remediate as a matter of course
1.3	Avoid building or acquiring new supply in risk areas designed 'Moderate' and above in Figure 9.4
1.4	Remediate surrounds where soil lead levels > 700 mg/kg prior to any new supply being tenanted
2	Existing rental properties
2.1	Develop programme of systematic interventions which address remediation of social housing, private rentals and owner occupied premises where young children live or routinely visit
2.2	Using a risk-based approach, remediate properties or relocate tenants with young children resident in areas with higher density of Aboriginal households as identified by Figure 9.8
2.3	Require owners of rental properties to carry out a lead exposure assessment and provide to tenants a disclosure statement identifying presence and risks of exposure to lead prior to agreeing to a residential tenancy. Remediate the property where internal lead levels, as determined by sampling floor dust, exceed 100 µg/m ²

Table 9.1: Environmental lead strategic initiatives	
Action	Measure
2.4	Require owners of rental properties to carry out specialised cleaning upon change of tenancy and thereafter at least once a year, this task to be certified and recorded by BHCC
2.5	Encourage amendment of the Broken Hill Development Control Plan 2016, to require owners to obtain certification of any work performed on a building. Further, any work performed on rental housing which disturbs more than 0.1 m ² of painted interior or exterior must follow a set of lead safe work practices
2.6	Resource Murdi Paaki TSEP to support Aboriginal tenants in applying for and formalising tenancies to ensure an enforceable written residential tenancy agreement is in place for longer term tenure
3	Housing management
3.1	Preference young families with children aged six years or younger in allocation of housing built in areas of low risk
4	Organisational capacity strengthening
4.1	Increase resourcing to raise the capacity of BHELP to intervene in housing arrangements of Aboriginal households with young children exhibiting blood lead levels ≥ 5.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$
4.2	Negotiate a 10-year investment predicated on the implementation of a city-wide strategic plan with a focus on abating environmental lead levels and blood lead levels
4.3	Resource Murdi Paaki Services to provide a small facilities maintenance team tasked with preserving remediation measures, servicing air-conditioning appliances and removing lead dust
5	Blood lead level testing
5.1	In conjunction with Maari Ma, consider extension of the blood lead level testing programme to eligible children who frequently visit Broken Hill from elsewhere to stay with relatives
6	Technical development
6.1	Treat measures to abate environmental lead contamination in conjunction with other technical aspects of house design which answer the other challenges noted in §9.5. Establish city-specific design requirements

Table 9.1: Environmental lead strategic initiatives	
Action	Measure
6.2	Investigate a hybrid evaporative cooler/reverse cycle air conditioning system to improve dust removal and pressurise internal spaces
6.3	Address the issue of dust generation caused by soil disturbance by heavy vehicles travelling along Creedon Street
6.4	Ensure that street sweeping is carried out methodically and effectively in high risk areas

Figure 9.8 indicates the concentration of Aboriginal households as recorded by the ABS 2016 Census. Broadly, Figure 9.8 also mirrors the density of the child population aged 6 years and under across the city. The child population enumerated in 2016 totalled 260 across all SA1s. Action 2.2 recommends an early focus, subject to a risk assessment, on tackling remediation of properties occupied by Aboriginal households living in the areas of Broken Hill with the higher densities of Aboriginal households where these households include one or more children aged 6 years and under, or relocating families to housing in a low-risk area, preferably in newly built housing. The structure of the ABS TableBuilder Basic datasets for the ABS 2016 Census does not permit cross-tabulation of the selection of variables that would allow an estimate of the number of households with children aged 6 years and under at risk but, for example, up to 114 households in South Broken Hill could be captured by the strategic approach outlined, giving an indication of the magnitude of the task at hand.

Figure 9.8: Aboriginal household distribution by SA1, ABS 2016



9.6 Financial implications

The serious lasting health, social and economic impacts arising from the presence of environmental lead contamination have been acknowledged by governments through investment in the BHELP and remediation measures directed to abating its effects since the first home lead remediation programme of the mid-1990s. That contamination disproportionately affects the Aboriginal community is undeniable and the evidence captured in Figure 9.6 points to a stubborn resistance to narrowing the disparity with non-Indigenous children.

The focus in this Chapter has, in common with most documentary sources, been on the impact of environmental lead toxicity on small children. It is important to consider, though, that small children grow to become adults, and the parents of today would likely have been exposed to higher levels of lead contamination in younger years. Lead ingested in early childhood produces a life-long burden of cognitive, behavioural and physical health issues. For example, the deficits in impulse control in adulthood which are the inevitable sequel to developmental issues created by the lead issue would almost certainly lead to problem behaviours related to gambling, alcohol and other drug use, violence and family dysfunction. The risk of consignment to poverty, removal of children,

entanglement with the criminal justice system or other radically disabling impacts on opportunities for productive social, cultural and economic engagement throughout the life course is enhanced.

Naomi Gough et al. in their paper entitled *The Impact of Lead and a Change in Lead Guidelines for Broken Hill* (2012) offered a preliminary estimate of costs saved through prevention of intellectual disability arising from environmental lead toxicity. They estimated that a family could potentially benefit to the extent of \$73,000 per year in expenditure through avoidance of the need to care for a person with a mild intellectual disability resulting from lead toxicity. In Broken Hill, this could apply to between four and seventeen families over a ten-year period. The impact for Aboriginal families, which are disproportionately affected by the environmental lead issue, is obvious.

The thrust of actions set out in Table 9.1 is, in part, founded in a stronger regulatory environment which encourages both social housing and private rental property owners to adopt a more energetic approach to restoring a safe living environment for their tenants. The outlay suggested by the BHELP ranges between \$8,000 and \$18,000 for individual homes depending upon whether soil capping is carried out in addition to the suite of 'quick fix' internal measures but zonal remediation is viewed as a more effective solution. Recontamination of remediated surfaces introduces a recurrent cost if lead levels are to be kept at an acceptable level. Uncertainty as to the scale of work precludes even a ballpark estimate of cost.

How remediation should be funded is a challenging question in that many landlords do not feel a motivation, incentive or moral obligation to engage. Some property investors see the low capital value segment of the private rental market as financially lucrative and target vulnerable Aboriginal families as tenants. For landlords to be required to spend, say, \$15,000 to remediate a property with an asset value no more than \$60,000 may be seen as a poor investment and a reason to abandon the property. While modest rent increases may provide an opportunity to recover a proportion of the costs, there is a limit to the

ability of renters, many of whom would be welfare recipients, to accommodate an additional financial burden. This course would seem to be a recipe for driving a socio-economically deprived segment of the population further into distress. In any event, on the grounds of social equity, it would be a gross injustice to require Aboriginal households to meet the costs of resolving a problem not of their making.

In the expectation that a regulatory regime which imposes further costs on owners would provoke a strong, negative reaction, governments would appear to be best positioned to underwrite sustainable policy and practice in providing funding to assess and remediate existing residential properties. Greater clarity is required as to scope before defining an order of cost but under this policy option, assessment and remediation would be mandatory for those properties assessed through the risk matrix as threatening the health of younger children. An intermediate position involving some level of joint responsibility and cost-sharing might be feasible.

Options for funding new housing as relocation housing or to increase supply are also few. Accepting that programmes such as the National Rental Affordability Scheme or Social and Affordable Housing Fund are geared to large CHPs and bring little benefit to the Murdi Paaki Region, opportunities for ACHPs through initiatives such as these are out of reach. Funding of the local MPRH&BC provider:

- Directly by the Australian and/or NSW Government under a health-related capital works programme; or
- Negotiated as a social impact investment formulated on the achievement of agreed health and social outcomes and with specialist assistance to broker third-party capital and cross-sector partnerships

would provide an avenue to additional supply purpose-built or acquired to house Aboriginal families with young children currently living in lead contaminated dwellings.

The housing and homelessness issue is complex,

wide reaching; and the province of a gaggle of agencies and not-for-profit organisations delivering myriad well-funded but poorly coordinated and, in the community's eye, largely ineffective human services. It is essential that any work through a revamped BHELP be complemented by a more accessible and effective human services sector.

The health, social and economic costs associated with supporting Aboriginal families living in lead contaminated homes, and a moral obligation to ensure this threat is eliminated, would seem intuitively to outweigh the capital costs required for a resolution. As far as can be determined, there has been no comprehensive analysis to establish the net present worth of either in the specific context of Broken Hill. This may be immaterial if governments are able to fund the measures proposed, with the question being not whether work should proceed but more the most appropriate way to ensure that work is carried out to produce measurable outcomes. But to attract social impact investment, an economic case may need to be made which might entail negotiation of a suitable project with NSW Treasury through the RAHLA.

International research investigating the cost benefit relating to lead exposure reduction programmes has established that prevention of childhood lead exposure has a high social benefit and that decreases in lead exposure can result in large benefits for the adult population. Aggressive public policy coupled with consistently funded investment would reduce long-term need for medical intervention and special education; bring about a decline in exposure to the criminal justice system; increase educational attainment; and, as a result of reduction in intellectual disability, increase prospects for economic engagement, productivity, and income over the life course for children who would otherwise be exposed to lead toxicity. Given the excess exposure of Aboriginal children relative to other children, the well-canvassed impacts of social disadvantage generally, and the fact that Wilyakali never sought the exploitation of lead on their country in the first place, a proactive approach to lead hazard control appears to be well worth the short-term value of any investment.

10 COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE

10.1 Community health profile summary

The Broken Hill Aboriginal community is significantly impacted by the social determinants of health. Overall, the underlying risks of poorer health are evident: risky birth outcomes, historically poorer access to educational opportunities, higher rates of admission to hospital, poorer health behaviours (like smoking and drinking) and more likely chronic conditions leading to death caused by these chronic conditions. The adverse effects on children of exposure to environmental lead contamination is described in Chapter 9.

Health services to the Aboriginal community in Broken Hill are provided, in the main, by Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, NSW Far West Local Health District and the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

10.2 Health status

Data for the City of Broken Hill, Far West Local Health District, the region covered by Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and NSW is presented to describe the health status of the population. Data access is an ongoing issue and the health profile described in this Chapter is to the finest level of detail possible.

10.2.1 Mother and baby health¹

In far western NSW, compared to all women:

- There is a higher proportion of younger Aboriginal women aged 10-19 having a baby;
- More Aboriginal women are having their first antenatal visit early;
- Aboriginal women are almost 10 times more likely to smoke during pregnancy;
- Aboriginal women are almost 4 times more likely to have a baby with a low birthweight (<2,500g); and
- Aboriginal women are 3 times more likely to have a baby prematurely (<37 weeks gestation).

10.2.2 Growth and development of children and young people¹

In far western NSW, compared to all children:

- There is a higher proportion of Aboriginal children who are fully immunised at 9 months and again at 5 years;
- The percentage of Aboriginal 4-year-old children attending preschool has increased by 16% in the last 5 years;
- Aboriginal children in year 5 are 2 times more likely to have a lower standard of reading assessment in the NAPLAN test; and
- Almost 40% of Aboriginal young people who complete year 10 stay at school until they are in year 12 – an increase of almost 5% in the last 5 years.

10.2.3 Morbidity

Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 (comprising Broken Hill and Central Darling LGAs and the Unincorporated Far West) are significantly more likely to present to the Emergency Department for all reasons. Overall, Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are almost two times more likely to present to the Emergency Department compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia (109,108 per 100,000 people compared to 62,109 per 100,000 people)².

In 2016/17 there were, on average more than 12,000 admissions to hospital by Far West LHD residents, of whom 17% were Aboriginal people, who form 11% of the total LHD population.³ The leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people in the Far West LHD is dialysis (45%) then injury and poisoning (7%) and respiratory disease (7%).³

The proportion of Aboriginal people in the Far West LHD admitted to hospital for dialysis is more than the three times that of the proportion expected when compared with the NSW Aboriginal population.³

Compared to all Aboriginal people in Australia, Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly more likely to be admitted to

hospital for eye diseases, asthma and chronic airways disease. There are significantly fewer admissions for infectious and parasitic diseases, endocrine, nutritional and metabolic disease, nervous system diseases, heart failure, skin diseases, musculoskeletal diseases, urinary diseases, chronic kidney disease (which is different to dialysis), childbirth and babies with malformations².

Conversely, the admission rate for all people in the Far West LHD for skin infections is significantly higher than the rate in NSW (569 per 100,000 people compared to 355 per 100,000 people).⁴

The rate of potentially avoidable admissions in Broken Hill is significantly higher than in NSW (3,494 per 100,000 admissions compared to 2,161 per 100,000 admissions)⁵. The leading cause of potentially avoidable admission in the Far West LHD is iron deficiency anaemia followed by chronic airways disease (COPD) and cellulitis.

Aboriginal people in Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly less likely to be admitted to hospital for a potentially preventable condition compared to all Aboriginal Australians (4,896 per 100,000 people compared to 5,395 per 100,000 people)².

10.2.4 Mortality

In 2018, there were 298 deaths of people who lived in the Far West LHD. For people who lived in the Far West LHD, the all causes death rate was significantly higher than the rate for all of NSW (635 per 100,000 people compared to 506 per 100,000 people)⁶.

For all Aboriginal people in the Broken Hill and Far West SA3, the median age at death is 64 years compared to 61 years in NSW². By comparison the median age at death for all people who live in Broken Hill is 81 years compared to 82 years for all NSW residents⁷.

The leading age-adjusted death rate for all

Aboriginal people in NSW is circulatory disease (189 per 100,000 population) which is significantly higher than the rate of circulatory disease death in all of NSW (145 per 100,000 population)⁸. In contrast, in the Far West LHD the leading cause of death is malignant cancers (27.6% of all deaths; 179 per 100,000 population)⁹.

In Broken Hill in 2016-2018, the death rate from injury and poisoning was significantly higher than in NSW (63.1 per 100,000 population compared to 35.6 per 100,000 population)¹⁰. In Outer Regional and Remote areas, 6.9% of all deaths are due to injury and poisoning and 1.5% are due to infectious and parasitic diseases¹¹.

The rate of potentially avoidable deaths in Broken Hill is significantly higher than in NSW (148.2 per 100,000 population compared to 99.4 per 100,000 population)¹².

Aboriginal people in Broken Hill and Far West SA3 are significantly more likely to die prematurely from respiratory diseases compared to all Aboriginal Australians (83.3 per 100,000 people compared to 26.9 per 100,000 people)².

10.2.5 Health risk factors

In NSW, 26.4% of the Aboriginal population smoked cigarettes daily. In the Far West LHD, this proportion was 18.6%; by comparison the proportion of smokers in NSW was 11.2%¹³.

In NSW, 48.7% of the Aboriginal population drank alcohol at levels that posed a long-term risk to health. In the Far West LHD, this proportion was 38.3%; by comparison the proportion of at-risk drinkers in NSW was 32.8%¹⁴.

Tables 10.1 to 10.5 and Figure 10.1 provide detailed information of the health statistics for the region.

Table 10.1: Cause of presentation to Emergency Departments, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
All causes	109,107.6*	71,135.8	62,109.4
Infectious and parasitic disease	4,939.8*	3,393.1	3,293.9
Mental health and related conditions	5,127.4*	3,649.3	3,636.7
Circulatory system diseases	2,242.0*	1,274.2	1,570.1
Respiratory system diseases	12,178.5*	7,153.7	6,340.7
Digestive system diseases	6,273.1*	3,972.5	3,500.8
Musculoskeletal system diseases	5,710.7*	3,936.2	2,910.1
Urinary system diseases	3,037.5*	2,364.4	2,263.4
Injury, poisoning and external causes	27,940.2*	16,420.0	14,458.8
Other factors requiring contact with the health system	5,660.1*	5,889.1	4,664.0
Other reasons	36,081.0*	23,097.0	19,471.0

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia

Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Table 10.2: Leading cause of admission for Aboriginal people, FWLHD, 2016-17

	% admissions: Aboriginal people in FWLHD	All NSW Aboriginal % admissions	All NSW % admissions
Dialysis	45%	27%	13%
Injury and poisoning	7%	7%	7%
Respiratory diseases	7%	7%	5%
Maternal, neonatal & congenital disorders	7%	10%	7%
Digestive system diseases	6%	7%	10%
Mental disorders	6%	5%	5%
Symptoms and abnormal findings	4%	7%	8%
Other factors infl. health	4%	7%	11%
Circulatory diseases	3%	3%	5%
Nervous and sense disorders	2%	4%	7%
Genitourinary diseases	2%	4%	5%
Skin diseases	2%	2%	2%
Musculoskeletal diseases	2%	3%	5%
Endocrine diseases	1%	2%	2%
Infectious diseases	1%	2%	2%
Malignant neoplasms	1%	2%	4%
Other neoplasms	1%	1%	2%
Blood and immune diseases	0%	1%	1%
Other causes	0%	1%	0%

Data source: NSW CAPED, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

Table 10.3: Cause of admission, all Aboriginal people, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2015/16-2017/18

	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
Infectious and parasitic disease	716.2#	759.9	1,093.5
All cancers	1,005.0	926.1	983.8
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	733.8#	704.9	1,101.0
- Diabetes	334.4	319.0	420.9
Mental health and related conditions	2,598.3	2,515.3	2,626.5
- Mood affective disorders	373.2	351.3	355.6
Nervous system diseases	638.0#	807.1	916.5
Eye and adnexa diseases	696.8*	465.4	531.6
Ear and mastoid process diseases	317.0	336.1	423.4
Circulatory system diseases	1,830.6	1,389.5	1,822.7
- Ischaemic heart disease	791.5	473.7	652.8
- Heart failure	126.0#	163.4	238.4
Respiratory system diseases	3,551.2	2,659.0	3,373.8
- Asthma	487.1*	280.6	300.4
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	947.2*	548.3	594.9
Digestive system diseases	3,141.6	2,843.6	3,099.5
Skin diseases	1,031.7#	821.0	1,370.0
Musculoskeletal system diseases	933.2#	1,415.0	1,446.0
Urinary system diseases	1,087.7#	1,460.8	1,696.2
- Chronic kidney disease	57.6#	252.7	387.3
Pregnancy and childbirth	10,411.5#	12,749.2	14,700.7
Congenital conditions	109.5#	215.0	210.3
Injury, poisoning and external causes	4,264.7	3,305.9	4,364.1

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

Significantly lower than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia

Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Table 10.4: Leading cause of death, FWLHD and NSW, 2018-19

	FWLHD (Total population)			NSW	
	Ave # deaths per year	Rate per 100,000	% deaths	Aboriginal % deaths	Total % deaths
Malignant cancers	86.0	179.0	27.6	25.3	28.3
Circulatory diseases	65.0	130.2	20.8	21.8	27.6
Respiratory diseases	32.5	70.4	10.4	11.6	9.8
Mental and behavioural disorders	29.5	56.9	9.5	6.7	6.9
Endocrine diseases	22.5	44.2	7.2	6.4	4.2
Injury and poisoning	76.5	192.7 ^(a)	24.5	13.6	5.9
All other causes				14.6	17.3
All causes	312	673.5			

Data source: NSW COC URF, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

^a Due to small numbers, the data for deaths attributable to 'injury and poisoning' in the Far West LHD has been combined with 'other causes'. Injury and poisoning deaths data for the Local Government Area is included in the text.

Table 10.5: Premature deaths, Aboriginal people aged 0-74 years, rate per 100,000, Far West SA3, NSW and Australia 2013-2017

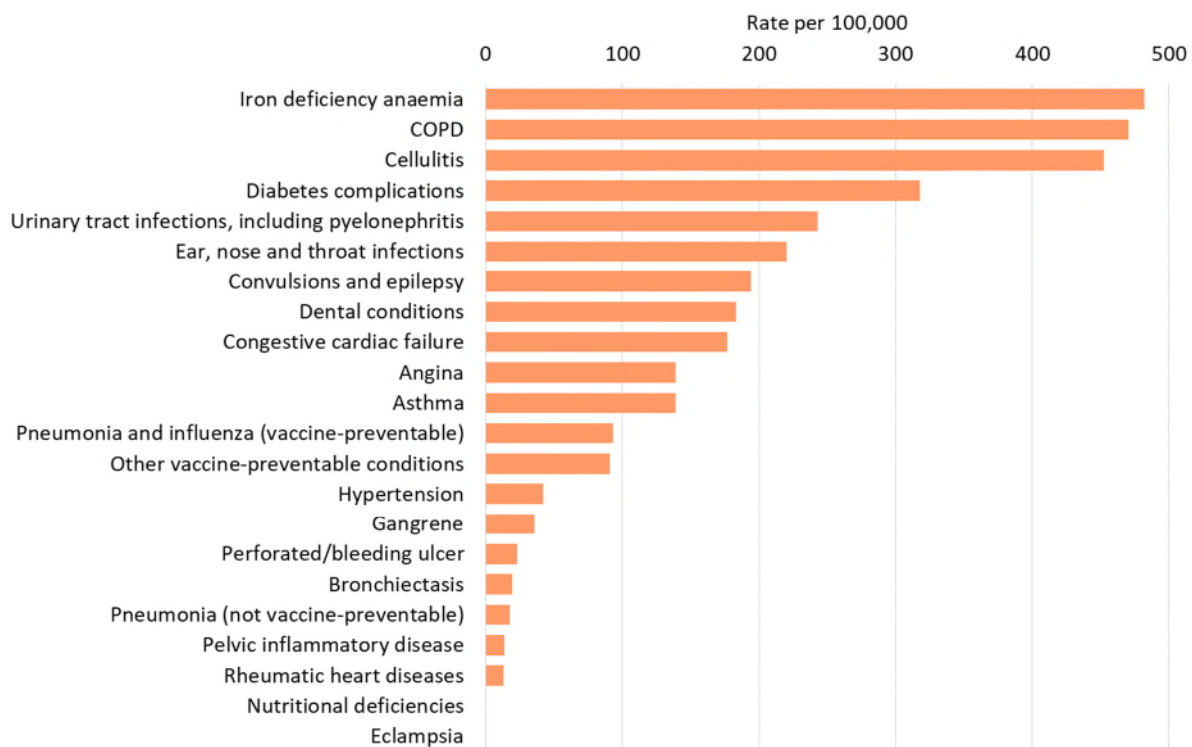
	Far West SA3	NSW	Australia
Deaths from cancer	97.4	56.3	72.1
Deaths from diabetes	37.6	10.0	23.4
Deaths from circulatory system diseases	88.2	46.1	69.8
Deaths from respiratory system diseases	83.3*	22.4	26.9
Deaths from external causes	55.7	41.5	58.1

* Significantly higher than the rate for Australia

Data source: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Health Atlas of Australia

Public Health Information Development Unit, Torrens University Australia

Figure 10.1: Potentially avoidable admissions (rate per 100,000), total population FWLHD, 2018-19



Data source: NSW CAPED, ABS (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health

10.3 Available health services

Broken Hill Health Service is a ninety-eight-bed hospital with 80 of these beds for inpatients. It is a 24-hour, 7-day facility.

Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation is the local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service. The Primary Health Care Service is located in the main street of Broken Hill and is open 9am-5pm on weekdays.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) has a GP clinic located at the RFDS Base at the Broken Hill Airport. The Clive Bishop Medical Centre is open 9am-5pm on weekdays.

There are five other GP practices in Broken Hill.

The Far West LHD (Broken Hill Health Service), Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and the RFDS provide most of the health services in Broken Hill.

Services at Broken Hill Hospital include:

- Inpatient services
- General medicine
- Surgical
- Obstetrics
- Emergency
- Paediatrics
- Intensive and coronary care
- Outpatient services
- Dialysis
- Palliative care
- Radiology
- Pathology
- Pharmacy
- Allied and community health
- Physiotherapy
- Dietetics
- Occupational therapy
- Social work
- Speech pathology
- Dental
- Child and family
- Mental health and drug and alcohol
- Women's health

- Sexual health
- Hydrotherapy pool
- Breast screening
- Sub-acute rehabilitation
- Access to visiting specialists
- Geriatrics
- Oncology
- Ophthalmology
- Cardiology
- ENT
- Gastroenterology
- Orthopaedics
- Plastic surgery
- Dermatology
- Rheumatology
- Urology
- Gynaecology
- Vascular medicine

Figure 10.2: Maari Ma Primary Health Care Centre



Services available at Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service (for Aboriginal people only) include:

- GPs (specialising in Aboriginal health and chronic disease care)
- Aboriginal health practitioners and trainees
- Early childhood nurse
- Antenatal care (and specialist GP)
- Dietitian
- Child dental
- Mental health (including primary care for psychology and drug and alcohol services)
- Diabetes specialist nursing care
- Speech pathology
- Paediatric occupational therapy
- Transport
- Access to visiting medical and allied health

specialists (endocrinology, renal medicine, cardiology, paediatrics, ENT, psychiatry, pain medicine, respiratory medicine, ophthalmology, echocardiography, smoking cessation, optometry)

Services available at the RFDS's Clive Bishop Medical Centre include:

- GP (doctor)
- Dentist
- Medical specialists (dermatology, ophthalmology, ENT, pain management)
- Drug and alcohol and mental health workers
- Aboriginal health practitioner
- Child health
- Chronic disease management

The Western NSW Primary Health Network (PHN) provides:

- Podiatry (from University of South Australia)

Other, standalone providers in Broken Hill include:

- Audiology (Hearing Australia)
- Optometry (2 private providers)
- Radiology and pathology providers
- Social and emotional wellbeing providers (headspace, LifeLine).

10.4 Implications

Community perspectives on the accessibility, safety and effectiveness of health services and the nexus between health services and housing are canvassed in Chapter 12.

11 HUMAN SERVICES

11.1 Human services target population

The sectors of the Aboriginal population which should be the target of human services are identified in Table 11.1 together with the corresponding population numbers. The figures are for 2016.

11.2 Human services in the community

Human services available to the Aboriginal community to cater for a range of needs are shown at Table 11.4 and the features of home care services are described at Table 11.5. Table 11.6 and Table 11.7 list the Australian and NSW government principal agencies providing services to Broken Hill.

Table 11.1: Service age groups, Aboriginal population

Total persons (Usual residence)	2016		2011		Change
Service age group (years)	Number	%	Number	%	
Babies and pre-schoolers (0-4)	183	12.2	175	12.7	+8
Primary schoolers (5-11)	257	17.1	226	16.4	+31
Secondary schoolers (12-17)	182	12.1	204	14.8	-22
Tertiary education and independence (18-24)	185	12.3	211	15.3	-26
Young workforce (25-34)	226	15.0	173	12.5	+53
Parents and homebuilders (35-49)	250	16.6	230	16.7	+20
Older workers and pre-retirees (50-59)	117	7.8	83	6.0	+34
Empty nesters and retirees (60-69)	69	4.6	56	4.1	+13
Seniors (70-84)	30	2.0	22	1.6	+8
Elderly aged (85 and over)	3	0.2	0	0	+3
Total	1,502		1,380		

Source: ABS Tablebuilder with age classifications as .id Consultants

Population fraction	Aboriginal	Non-Indigenous
Table 11.2: Core activity need for assistance		
	n=1,392	n=14,559
Of cohort population	7%	9%
Murdi Paaki Region	7%	7%
New South Wales	8%	6%

The proportion of the Aboriginal population requiring assistance in the core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of disability, long term health condition or old age is identified at Table 11.2, together with the non-Indigenous population for comparison. The age range of the Aboriginal population fraction is given at Table 11.3.

Table 11.3: Core activity need for assistance by age group, Aboriginal population

	Census	NDIS
0-9 years	16	
10-19 years	7	
20-29 years	5	
30-39 years	7	
40-49 years	14	
50-59 years	21	
60-69 years	15	
70-79 years	7	
80-89 years	6	
Total	98	65

The NDIS is funding a total of 441 NDIS packages across Broken Hill LGA of which 65 packages are allocated to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons

Table 11.4 Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Health services	Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation	Primary health care	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	-
	Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation	Health Wellbeing and Resilience Projects	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	NIAA
	Far West Local Health District	Emergency and inpatient care, community health	Broken Hill	General population	-
	Royal Flying Doctor Service	Primary health care, retrieval	Broken Hill	General population	-
Aboriginal social housing services	Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council	Aboriginal social housing	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	NSWALC
	Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation	Aboriginal social housing	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	DPIE/AHO
	Compass Housing Services	Aboriginal social housing	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	DPIE/AHO
Community housing services	Compass Housing Services	Public housing	Broken Hill	General population	DCJ
Boarding	Schembri Boarding House	Temporary accommodation	Broken Hill	General population	Private
	Blende Street Boarding House	Temporary accommodation	Broken Hill	General population	Private
Tenant support	Murdi Paaki Services Ltd	Tenant education and support (TSEP)	Cobar	Aboriginal community	DPIE/AHO
	Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	Tenant advocacy and representation	Dubbo	Aboriginal community	Fair Trading
Crisis/refuge	The Salvation Army (NSW) Property Trust	Catherine Haven domestic and family violence	Broken Hill	Women and dependent children	DCJ
Homelessness services	Mission Australia	Broken Hill Young People's Homelessness and Housing Support Service	Broken Hill	General population	DCJ
	Mission Australia	Far West Homeless Youth Assistance Program	Broken Hill	General population	DCJ
	The Salvation Army (NSW) Property Trust	Broken Hill Adults and Families Homelessness and Housing Support Service	Broken Hill	General population	DCJ
	Housing Plus	Opportunity Pathways	Dubbo	General population	DCJ

Table 11.4 Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Residential aged care services	Southern Cross Care (Broken Hill) Ltd: St Annes Nursing Home	Residential aged care, respite high and low care	Broken Hill	121 beds for general population	ACFI
	Southern Cross Care (Broken Hill) Ltd: Aruma Lodge	Residential aged care, respite high and low care	Broken Hill	58 beds for general population	ACFI
	Southern Cross Care (Broken Hill) Ltd: Harold Williams Home (Broken Hill War Veteran's Home)	Residential aged care, respite high and low care	Broken Hill	40 beds for general population	ACFI
	Australian Unity Home Care – Aboriginal Home Care		Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	HCP/CHSP
Home care and home support services	Australian Unity Home Care Service	Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and Home care packages (HCP), Levels 1 to 4 Refer to Table 10.5	Broken Hill	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Uniting Home Care Far West (Miraga)		Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	HCP/CHSP
	HammondCare At Home - Far West NSW		Broken Hill	General population	HCP/CHSP
	LiveBetter Community Services – Orana Far West NSW		Broken Hill	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Southern Cross Care (Broken Hill) Ltd	Social and recreational support	Broken Hill	General population	HCP/CHSP
	Uniting Healthy Living for Seniors Far West		Broken Hill	General population	CHSP
	Far West Local Health District		Broken Hill	General population	-
Social support	Broken Hill Health Service	Nursing	Broken Hill	General population	-
	St Vincent de Paul	Emergency relief, meal centre	Broken Hill	General population	-
	Salvation Army	Community welfare and social programmes	Broken Hill	General population	-
	annecto	Short-term restorative care	-	General population	-
Older persons support	NSW State Government	Broken Hill Transitional Aged Care Service	-	General population	NSW Health
Reintegration services	Community Restorative Centre	Prisoner pre- and post-release support	Broken Hill	Aboriginal men and women	DCJ/NIAA
	Housing Plus	Post-release support	Dubbo	General population	DCJ/others

Table 11.4 Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider		Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Family support services	Mission Australia	Intensive Family Preservation Programme	Broken Hill & Districts Intensive Family Support	Broken Hill	General population	DCI
	CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes Ltd	Targeted Early Intervention	Broken Hill, Wilcannia & Menindee Family Strengthening Service	-	General population	DCI
	Lifeline - Broken Hill Inc	Targeted Early Intervention	Broken Hill Family Counselling & Referral service	-	General population	DCI
	Maari Ma Health	Targeted Early Intervention	Case Management for Vulnerable Youth	Broken Hill	General population	DCI
	Mission Australia	Targeted Early Intervention	Broken Hill & Districts Family Support Service	Broken Hill	General population	DCI
	YWCA Australia	Targeted Early Intervention	Broken Hill Youth Service	Broken Hill	General population	DCI
	Far West Community Legal Centre Limited (FWCLC)		Staying Home Leaving Violence Broken Hill	Broken Hill	General population	CA-G, DCJ, Legal Aid NSW, others
DFV services	FWCLC Warra Warra Legal Service		Family violence prevention	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	
	Far West Community Legal Centre Limited		Far West Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service	Broken Hill	General population	
Legal services	Western Aboriginal Legal Service		Criminal and family law	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	CA-G
Environmental services	Broken Hill Environmental Lead Programme		Environmental lead mitigation and impact	Broken Hill	General population	DPIE
Cultural services	Barkandji Native Title Group Aboriginal Corporation		Land management and development	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	-
	Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council		Culture and heritage, land management	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	NSWALC
	Kirkala-Pithiluku Aboriginal Corporation		Young persons cultural development	Broken Hill	Aboriginal community	-
Early childhood services	Mission Australia	Brighter Futures	Orana Far West Early Intervention Programme	Broken Hill	General population	DCI
	Lifestyle Solutions		Permanency Support Program		General population	DCI

Table 11.4 Human service providers and service mix

Sector	Provider	Principal services	Resident office	Target population	Funding agency
Disability services	Australian Unity Home Care Service Pty L	Plan development, support coordination and support services	Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Benevolent Society Of NSW		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Flourish Australia		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Jeder Institute Ltd.		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Life Without Barriers		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Lifestyle Solutions (Aust) Ltd	Plan development, support coordination and support services	Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Livebetter		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Novita Childrens Services		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Silverlea Services		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Thrive Med		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Westhaven Limited	Plan development and support services	Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Thrive Medical		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Enabled 4 Life		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Ability Links (Broken Hill LALC)		Broken Hill	Aboriginal population	NDIS
	Blacksheep Care Services		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Triumph Care Pty Ltd	Supports coordination and early interventions	Broken Hill	General population	NDIS
	Silverlea Early Childhood Services Inc		Broken Hill	General population	NDIS

Table 11.5: Home care services

Services	Transport	Meals	Other food services	Home maintenance	Home modifications	Social support individual	Flexible respite	Personal care	Domestic assistance	Social support group	Nursing	Centre-based respite	Specialised support services	Allied health and therapy services	Assistance with care and housing	Transition care
Australian Unity Home Care Service - Broken Hill		Y				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y					
Uniting Home Care Far West	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y		
HammondCare At Home - Far West NSW						Y	Y	Y	Y							
LiveBetter Community Services - Broken Hill	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			
Blacksheep Care Services	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						
Southern Cross Care (Broken Hill) Ltd Home Care Packages				Y												
Far West Local Health District											Y			Y		
Uniting Healthy Living for Seniors Far West						Y				Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	
Housing Plus					Y											
Broken Hill Health Service											Y					

Table 11.6: Australian Government agency representation

Principal department and agencies	Responsibilities	Service access
Broken Hill service centre	Medicare, Centrelink and child support services	Broken Hill

Table 11.7: NSW Government agency representation

Cluster	Principal department and agencies	Responsibilities	Service access
Education	Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAFE NSW – Western Institute 	Delivery and co-ordination of early childhood, primary school, secondary school, vocational education, adult, migrant and higher education	Broken Hill Broken Hill
Stronger Communities	Department of Communities and Justice	Families, communities and disability services; public housing and homelessness services; law and justice; child protection; sport, seniors and veterans	Broken Hill
Customer Service	Department of Customer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Office of Fair Trading Revenue NSW 	Customer services: primary access point to government services; registration and licencing; payment of fines	Broken Hill Broken Hill Broken Hill
Health	Ministry of Health	Hospitals, allied health services and primary health care and prevention	FWLHD Broken Hill
Planning, Industry and Environment	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Housing Office Land and Housing Corporation Crown Lands National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW Office of Environment & Heritage 	Urban and regional planning; water and natural resources; industry; environment, energy and science; Aboriginal and social housing; and Aboriginal heritage and land use	Dubbo Dubbo Ashfield Broken Hill Broken Hill Broken Hill
Premier and Cabinet	Department of Premier and Cabinet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Affairs NSW 	Aboriginal affairs; policy development and implementation; connecting government to communities; government accountability; infrastructure; disaster recovery; arts	Dubbo Broken Hill
Regional NSW	Department of Regional NSW	Regional development; primary industry; local land services; mining and exploration; forestry	Dubbo
NSW Transport	Transport for NSW	Regional transport and roads	Dubbo
Treasury	Treasury	Management of NSW economic affairs; regional development; industry investment; employment creation; government service delivery improvement	Sydney

11.3 Overview

11.3.1 Engagement

Many service providers participated openly and candidly in the consultations necessary to inform preparation of this HEHP. Such is the frustration with the current model of human services delivery that interviewees were frank about policy and system failures and despairing of seeing change. The substance of the provider responses is contained at Chapter 13. Regrettably, several human service providers either ignored or declined requests to engage with the process, including one NSW Government principal agency referenced at Table 11.7. One or two key providers had to be encouraged through writing to the organisation's CEO, a measure of the effort needed to obtain a degree of transparency in service delivery.

11.3.2 Housing and housing services

The human services landscape is, as evidenced by Table 11.4, dense. Support services are many and would appear to provide overlapping services. Aboriginal social housing is provided by Broken Hill LALC, and by the AHO through its managers Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation and Compass Housing. Options beyond the limited number of houses available through these providers are public housing through the NSW Land and Housing Corporation managed by Compass Housing, to which there is again limited access, and private rentals. The need for, and complexion of, housing-related services is amplified in Chapter 13 but there is clearly insufficient and inadequate shelter available for Aboriginal individuals and families. Two faith-based organisations, Mission Australia and the Salvation Army, are funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in excess of \$0.8M in FY2020-2021 to deliver homelessness services in Broken Hill and Central Darling LGA variously to young people, adults and families depending upon programme design but consultations revealed that the situation is so acute that a number of other services have also assumed an unfunded responsibility to support individuals and families in desperate need of accommodation. There is no refuge for men and the Salvation Army's Catherine Haven, the sole

refuge in Broken Hill for women experiencing domestic and family violence, has only six accommodation units and only one of which has disability access.

11.3.3 Child, youth and family support

The Broken Hill Family Preservation Service auspiced by Mission Australia works with children and young people aged 0-18 and their families to help them avoid entry (or re-entry) into the statutory child protection system, or who require support with family restoration. Referrals are from DCJ. Despite service availability, a total of 40 Aboriginal children were in out of home care (OOHC) in Broken Hill as of 12th June 2020.

Mission Australia also delivers the Stronger Families, Brighter Futures programme for families with children aged 0 to 9 years or soon to be parents experiencing domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol use, mental health issues or parents with significant learning difficulties and/or intellectual disabilities.

11.3.4 Aged care and disability care

Southern Cross Care operates three residential aged care facilities in Broken Hill with a combined capacity of 219 beds in single or shared accommodation. All offer permanent residential care, residential respite low care and residential respite high care. There is no Aboriginal specific residential aged care option. The *Wilcannia-Ivanhoe-Menindee Aged Care Needs Assessment*, conducted for Maari Ma in 2008, found from interviews with management of residential aged care facilities in Broken Hill that no Aboriginal people were resident in any of the facilities. The *Assessment* found that there was not, at the time, a desire among older people and their families for residential aged care beds; on the contrary, the preference was for purpose-designed elders' dwellings in the community, supported by culturally safe home and community care services. The CWP has suggested that a Broken Hill-specific assessment be conducted with a view to pursuing an alternative, culturally safe concept for aged care which the community feels is more likely to provide an accessible service embraced by older

community members and their families.

Six providers deliver home care packages, Levels 1 to 4 to a client base it has not been able to quantify. The longest-established services are Uniting Care Miraga and Better Living, which took over the responsibilities of the former Home Care Service when aged care transitioned from the NSW to the Australian Government. As illustrated by Table 11.5, the range of supports differs between providers outside of core activities of individual social support, flexible respite, personal care and domestic assistance. It is not known the number and level of home care packages funded by the Australian Government. Australian Unity Home Care – Ngangana Aboriginal Home Care is the only Aboriginal specific home care service with a presence in Broken Hill, albeit with low visibility. Australian Unity provides care for older people (not people with disabilities).

Uniting Care Miraga provides domiciliary aged care services to approximately 100 clients in the Broken Hill and Central Darling local government areas. Uniting Care Miraga has no responsibility for direct housing provision or residential aged care services but the organisation does deliver a case managed homelessness programme for older Aboriginal people, which includes assistance to complete housing applications.

The proportion of the Aboriginal population requiring assistance in the core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication because of disability, long term health condition or old age is about 7% (98 persons), consistent with the Region as a whole, but slightly lower than the non-Indigenous proportion of 9% (1,300 persons). The proportion of non-Indigenous persons requiring assistance is almost 60% higher than for NSW, perhaps justifying the proliferation of home care, home support and disability services highlighted by Table 11.4. Information sought to describe the level of support being accessed through the NDIS has not been forthcoming so this Plan is not able to comment on the adequacy or otherwise of service access.

12 COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

12.1 Introduction

The rental housing market in Broken Hill, and its human services support structure, is beset by a number of problems which, taken en masse, produce perverse outcomes for Aboriginal people living or staying temporarily in the community who are already contending with the impacts of social and economic marginalisation and disadvantage. The impacts of these system characteristics affect several identifiable groups with greater severity: the groups include women, men and children fleeing domestic and family violence; people who are entangled in the criminal justice system (on bail or leaving custody); young homeless people; older single men; people moving from other, smaller centres to obtain access to services; and older people in need of appropriate housing. This chapter relies for its content on qualitative interviews with the CWP and from feedback from the community through the MPRH&BC household survey. Input from representatives of several organisations in Broken Hill, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous, who provide human services to the Aboriginal community, is documented separately at Chapter 13. As the interviews progressed it became apparent that the community and service providers were telling a consistent story about the peculiar housing ecology of Broken Hill and its devastating impacts on the lives of individuals, families and community.

12.2 Community priorities

12.2.1 *Framework for progress*

The Broken Hill CWP, in common with all other CWPs, prepared a Community Action Plan (CAP) (2019) to inform external agencies of the priorities of the Broken Hill Aboriginal community and to provide the foundation for improved services across the full spectrum of health and human services. The CAP is in preliminary form pending negotiation of practical strategies, in part as set out in this HEHP Master Plan, to apply to stated objectives.

Critical to its ability to achieve positive outcomes

from the CAP, Broken Hill CWP identified the need to create, among other strategic measures, Service Level Agreements to support targeted, seamless and transparent service delivery. The CWP considers this an essential requirement to permit effective community input to service design, monitoring and evaluation of outcomes by ensuring best practice, accountability and relevance. To this end, strong relationships need to be formed with governments with or without an agency presence in Broken Hill, and health and human services providers to facilitate service delivery against CAP priorities.

At a service level, relationships with NSW Government agencies are paramount and the CWP is firm in its expectation that the following key principles drawn from the Murdi Paaki Local Decision-Making Accord II will be honoured:

- Aboriginal leaders and elders understand their own community needs, and have the drive and ability to develop their own solutions (2.1.2);
- Regional and local solutions for regional and local problems, with ideas and help from outside when, where and in the form in which requested (2.1.5);
- A genuine commitment on the part of government and community to developing transformative rather than transactional relationships, with a renewed focus on developing innovative and holistic solutions and on considering different, more equal approaches to partnership (2.1.10); and
- Optimising returns on investment through better targeted, more efficient, effective and equitable forms of programme and service delivery (2.1.11).

12.2.2 *Community Action Plan*

The CWP has identified nine priority areas for action and specific goals are stated in the CAP. All areas are weighted equally in their importance to the community. Of these priority areas, the following are most relevant to this HEHP:

- Economic Development and Employment Opportunities;
- Health and Wellbeing including Drugs and Alcohol;

- Family Support, including Domestic Violence;
- Housing.

Specific CAP goals relating to each of the priority areas are stated in Table 12.1. An Engagement Protocol exists at Regional level to guide interactions between agencies, CWP's and the broader Aboriginal community and is the catalyst for the local framework which the CWP seeks to implement to advance its CAP priority areas.

private rentals were extensive and generally less than complementary: the practices of Compass Housing were the subject of criticism centred around organisational culture and the lack of cultural safety inherent in the way that Compass Housing manages Aboriginal tenancies. Management practices were said to be too inflexible leading to hardship and homelessness. This perception is captured in such comments as:

Table 12.1: Community Action Plan: Goals and actions

Priority Area 2: Economic Development and Employment Opportunities

Goal: Increased opportunity for our people as individuals to have meaningful and improved economic wellbeing that supports our lifestyle and development

Action: 2.2: To increase economic participation for members of the Broken Hill Aboriginal community

Priority Area 4: Health and Wellbeing

Goal: To continue to support and maintain a healthy, happy Aboriginal community in Broken Hill

Action 4.2: To give support to people affected by alcohol and other drugs

Priority Area 5: Family Support

Goal: Our families are strong and happy, having a strong community base

Action 5.2: To ensure our families have access to support, refuge and counselling that is culturally safe

Action 5.3: To decrease family and domestic violence

Action 5.4: To decrease the number of children at risk and from associated events

Action 5.5: To ensure services and programmes supporting families are coordinated

Priority Area 7: Housing

Goal: To secure safe, affordable and quality housing for our people

Action 7.1: To ensure there are adequate heating and cooling systems for public and Land Council houses

Action 7.2: To secure remote housing status for Broken Hill

Action 7.3: To conduct an evaluation of housing stock against State and Industry Standards

Action 7.4: To increase the availability of short-term hostel accommodation to accommodate youth waiting lists and offender re-integration

12.3 Community experiences

12.3.1 Encounters with the system

The MPRH&BC household survey invited respondents to comment on aspects of housing and human services important to them. In conjunction with contributions from the CWP, it has been possible to build a comprehensive account of community experiences and opinions across the housing and human services landscape.

With the area of enquiry firmly focussed on housing, observations about social housing and

"I'm paying for damage caused by other tenants. Hard to communicate (with housing manager) on your level. Not culturally sensitive"

"All in all, unfit landlord; very lazy for over a year, it feels as though they are discriminating. Can nitpick at me over little things while I am waiting still for an air cooler"

"All our housing manager expects is rent on time but never any maintenance done, ever"

"If I can get another house I would because I have to prove my employment every 6 months. Also, if I lose my job I will have to move out"

"Haven't had hot water for ages due to gas repairs not being carried out and there is no air conditioner"

Neither Broken Hill LALC nor MPRHC escaped adverse comment:

“Doors don't lock, repairs don't happen, don't like leaving my (Land Council) house open. Would love a new house where you pay rent and get things done when broken”

“There needs to be fairness in Aboriginal housing (allocation), not just putting their own immediate families in homes”

The strict application of AHO policy underlies the operational practices of MPRHC and Compass Housing, but Broken Hill LALC to a lesser extent. Housing allocation and management of transfers were seen as problematic. The community perception is that there is no latitude within applied processes to address the circumstances of individual applicants – all applicants are subject to a totalising system of policies and procedures administered, in the main in Broken Hill, by remote decision-makers. Transfer requests appear to be particularly problematic. It was said that Compass Housing will not action transfer requests occasioned by lack of safety: the organisation was said to be unresponsive to requests to move tenants to support operation of Apprehended Violence Orders or minimise risk of domestic violence, or to address elder abuse or social isolation.

Rents for social housing were said to be too high; small households are unable to afford to rent from Compass Housing and pay for food, medicine and other essentials. Rent reviews occur every six-months and a rent increase inevitably follows. Rent also increases if an additional person comes to stay. Compass Housing requires the person's Centrelink documentation to be provided, then the rent rises.

The subject of debt was raised by the CWP as a pressing issue. Under the policy as applied, tenants are required to pay their debts before being placed back on a waiting list. Debts can include rental arrears but also the cost of repairing damage to property. Former tenants who have outstanding debt can apply for housing but their application will not be treated as 'live' until they have made regular payments under a negotiated

payment plan for six months. This policy effectively ensures that a homeless person or family with a debt would never be able to secure social housing.

Tenants living in the more volatile areas are at greater risk of incurring debt for property damage. For example, Creedon Street tenants (especially of the units) are reported to be unable to maintain the security of their dwellings:

“They can't keep people out of the property; the door gets kicked in, then Compass Housing raises a debt against the tenant”

Costs to tenants for damage repairs carried out by Compass Housing were said to be exorbitant. The CWP alleges that local contractors tend to overcharge if tenants are Aboriginal. If this is the case, the debt attaching to a tenant will be inflated and create increased hardship. Tenants who find themselves in prison can be charged for property damage, even if caused maliciously by others, after the time of arrest if they have been unable to relinquish their tenancy because they had no way of returning keys.

The CWP questioned the integrity of management of the waiting list, citing circumstances which disadvantaged certain groups:

- People who are on the waiting list but in custody may have their application closed and their name removed from the NSW Housing Register if they fail to respond to requests relating to their application from DCJ or a community housing provider participating in Housing Pathways;
- Similarly, applicants, despite having no means of doing so, who have a high degree of mobility, either by choice or enforced, who fail to update their movements with DCJ or a community housing provider may be removed from the list;
- Prisoners who are not able to apply while incarcerated; and
- Income earners who are forcibly evicted when exceeding the income limit because of employment.

12.3.2 Private rentals

Discrimination against Aboriginal people in the private rental market was rife with real estate agents using a range of obstacles and deceptions to block Aboriginal applicants:

"Love to be able to apply and get a place for me and my daughter; finding it hard as I don't have references"

"It's hard to find a house when you don't have rental references or history"

"Being living with my parents need my own privacy, own house. It's hard to get a house because I don't have references"

"Being young and having no references to get a house or even a chance (Boarder)"

"Would like to move (into my own house) but I can't afford it (Boarder)"

For those fortunate enough to be able to find shelter, the experience may not be satisfying:

"I can't breathe because the house is too small and always brings on my depression. Within the last twelve months, the manager hasn't been answering my phone calls: the house is unliveable"

"The house is falling down around us. Its full of lead paint and my kids are sick from the lead. There are holes in the floor and splinters from floorboards. Dust blows in from the vents in the roof. He won't do anything"

"Lead dust constantly getting inside and shower not appropriate. Housing manager is ignorant, disrespectful and won't fix emergency issues"

"Landlord doesn't do maintenance. There is no air conditioning. It is horrible for myself and my children but I have no other choice but to stay here - please help"

"Paying too much rent for the quality of it. Cheaper electricity"

"He talks down to me, doesn't fix electrical problems, doesn't provide better fencing for children's safety and protection"

"I had to put up the fence myself, put batteries in smoke alarms. When I complained about a hole in the wall, the landlord left a piece of board for me to fix the problem. Toilet is not on a base – flush – water goes onto floor, under the wall into the bedroom. The water heater doesn't work"

12.3.3 Homelessness

A detailed discussion on homelessness is included in Chapter 13. Some comments from homeless persons offered during the MPRH&BC household survey were:

"Don't have a roof over my head. Hot in summer sleeping in swag on the back of a ute"

"Very hot in summer for my caravan. Feeling of imposing on others is getting harder. I'm a single dad but homeless due to separation"

The CWP is of the view that the population is larger than imagined but the level of crowding is hidden. People are not inclined to be truthful, fearing trouble with their housing provider and/or rent increases as a consequence of not declaring additional residents.

12.3.4 Owner occupiers

Most homeowners, as discussed in §6.6, are happy with their decision to purchase:

"Ownership, being able to have stability in where we live"

"My dad owns the home but now he will always have somewhere to live no matter how bad things get"

"No rental increases or depend on housing providers to receive funding for repairs and maintenance. It opens other social housing up for people needing houses. I can leave the house to family when I pass away. Able to extend when family grows"

"Best thing is not paying rent"

"It's mine to do as I please"

"That it's a stable home, no risk of being terminated"

Some saw realisable value in their investment:

"Renting out and being able to live somewhere else while it pays for itself"

"I rent my house out to help build money up for repairs"

Aspirations to ownership were reflected in thoughts such as:

"Wish I owned the house instead of paying dead rent"

"Been here 26 years and have so many memories here would love to rent buy it"

"(Should be able to) rent to buy, like old Housing Commission homes"

Homeowners did flag issues around affordability, principally the cost of property rates and utilities, and the challenge of preserving property condition, particularly with reduced physical ability in older age.

"Feel like I have no one to turn to with these (housing r&m) problems"

12.3.5 Security and safety

As mentioned in §6.9, about 17% of respondents to the MPRH&BC household survey expressed fears for their personal safety and many of these, and others, articulated the nature of their concerns. Too many tenants reported an inability to lock their houses, neighbour abuse, or socially disruptive environment as the reasons for feeling fearful:

"Doors don't lock properly. I have kids to consider (their safety)"

"It's a dump to live in. There's no secure locks on the doors and it's a health hazard"

"I don't feel safe in my house as people are always breaking in and stealing my stuff. I am dissatisfied (with my landlord) because they don't fix the problems"

"Some days this neighbourhood can be dangerous to my children"

"There is no security and drugo's that live nearby drive up and down the street fast. I've got kids and so do others who live in this street"

"Don't feel safe - bad neighbours"

"I don't feel safe. I have no security at all"

"I don't feel safe because of the neighbourhood. Would like to get my two girls down here if I had better accommodation. There is no air conditioning at all"

"Not feeling safe, neighbour's abuse. Harassment from housing manager due to neighbour being racist"

"Scared of all the break ins around the area"

"Won't leave house alone (unoccupied) for fear of break ins"

"Unsafe area of town, party all the time - drinking, fighting"

"People stealing children's bikes, scooters and searching cars and jumping the fence on a regular basis. We don't fit in this house: the house is too small and no air conditioning for the younger children"

12.4 Housing supply and shelter

The CWP were emphatic in calling for increased housing supply and easier pathways to access social housing. Priorities were for:

- Families and singles;
- Elders;
- Homes for intergenerational families;
- Transitional homes for people leaving prison;
- Dedicated refuge for families experiencing domestic and family violence;
- Crisis accommodation who those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or following an emergency; and
- Health hostel for residents of Wilcannia and Menindee when staying in Broken Hill for medical appointments.

Clearly, from the evidence presented elsewhere in this HEHP, there is demonstrated need for a major boost to Aboriginal social housing and crisis facilities in Broken Hill. There is also a pressing obligation to address the plight of the many Aboriginal individuals and families forced in sub-standard private rentals and those with young children confronted with high levels of environmental lead contamination.

While increased supply would be embraced, rents must be affordable for Aboriginal households and, to this end, the CWP asks for a rent review to establish a benchmark fair rent.

"Finding it hard as a lot of my Centrelink has to be spent on rent"

The location and style of new development must be discussed with the community. While

welcoming investment in new housing, the CWP is critical of the new AHO Cummins Street development: lumping people together on the edge of the city and away from public transport in multiple 2-bedroom units on one lot is a recipe for failure. Providing housing in this way is creating the very concentrations that characterise the former reserves. New development is to be “salt and peppered” around the city.

“Overcrowded. Always stressed. Just need a bigger house (7 occupants in 3-bedroom house)”
 “Would love to have a bigger house run by an Aboriginal organisation”
 “Looking for a single flat for someone my age”
 “Too small a house for a family”
 “Very crowded but cannot move to bigger house because I can’t afford it”
 “Overcrowded, no space to move. To have bigger house for large family”
 “Desperately need a new house. Not safe because of the condition of house - risk of electrocution”

12.5 Housing condition

The fitness for occupancy of social and private rentals is discussed in some detail in Chapter 6. Whereas the condition of social housing is, by and large, reasonable, the quality of private rentals varies from acceptable to uninhabitable. The presence of lead dust is an ongoing concern for families, as is the lack of security. Mechanical cooling of social housing currently without is being addressed by the Murdi Paaki Alternative Energy Project but this will still leave many private renters without the means to heat and cool their properties. Subjective assessments by community members indicate that humidity has increased in Broken Hill in recent years; this is driving increased demand for efficient cooling systems.

The CWP questioned why AHO felt the need to remove facilities: sheds, dishwashers and spas, from its existing properties when these were serviceable and of use to tenants.

12.6 Environmental health infrastructure

Environmental lead contamination is the top environmental health concern in the eyes of the CWP. Members feel that they do not understand the threats well enough to formulate an informed response at this point and seek to identify how best to address these concerns.

Attention is required to the problem of waste and waste disposal. Bins are inadequate for some households and an alternative means of disposal should be provided to eliminate the dumping of waste. Access to the waste management facility is limited by the user pay policy of Council and so some community members resort to other ways of disposing of bulk waste. A community clean up would be welcome, in part, to allow the community to dispose of unwanted rubbish at no cost, including dead cars.

The circumstances that give rise to the reduced amenity of the people of Creedon Street require action: smells, windblown rubbish and speeding heavy vehicles. Amenity more generally is impacted by mining activity in the city: twice-daily blasts, at 6.45 am and pm, are reported to produce anxiety among community members in relation to housing condition and value.

12.7 Human services

12.7.1 Service presence and effectiveness

CWP members, in general, can identify human services active in Broken Hill, and the services available through these providers. Some providers are relatively new and are finding it difficult to establish a foothold. Staffing and staff retention is presenting a challenge because of the limited pool of qualified personnel. As a starting point in improving service efficiency, the CWP proposes that funded providers be vetted and endorsed by the CWP in advance of letting service contracts and that the service delivery framework be subject to the procedures set out in §12.1.1. Accountability is key and the CWP wishes to participate in any service evaluation process. Commissioned services must deliver.

The CWP aspires to rebuild the Aboriginal enterprise base in the city and expresses a strong desire for local services to be funded in preference to providers headquartered in metropolitan and other regional centres.

Accessibility to services remains a barrier. The CWP flagged the following as points to action:

- Food security is a worry for some community households and steps are required to ensure reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food;
- Availability of a funded service to assist with obtaining birth certificates requires to be explored;
- A culturally safe technology hub to support those people with limited computer literacy to access services. Issues with navigating digital Centrelink processes were single out for mention: “it is all technology-based vs face to face. When people go into Centrelink, the staff do not help people”;
- Culturally safe childcare services are few and the waiting lists for preschool are too long. The CWP advised that Aboriginal people tend not to enrol in advance as required so miss a place. Preschools do not hold places for Aboriginal children;
- Youth services are few and not widely known. A coordination framework involving Broken Hill City Council requires to be created to provide an alternative supervised service for young people to engage with after school hours;
- So that the community at large is familiarised with all human services operating in Broken Hill, the CWP proposes an information expo.

A matter of grave concern to the CWP is the risk posed to children who become tangled in domestic disputes. In an environment of poorly coordinated and largely reactive support services, the CWP foresee the possibility of fathers subject to Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs) becoming sufficiently desperate to harm their children. This possibility demands a whole-of-agency and community response and the CWP is anxious that this matter be treated with urgency.

13 DEALING WITH REALITY

13.1 Housing and land economics

The 2016 ABS Census enumerated 1,870 dwellings unoccupied on Census night, of a total of 9,654 dwellings in the local government area. Corresponding figures for 2011 were 1,516 of 9,614; and for 2006, 1,363 of 9,562. Thus, the total number of dwellings enumerated in Broken Hill increased by less than 1% over the two intercensal periods from 2006 to 2016, but the number of vacant dwellings increased by 37% during the same period. Discussions with Broken Hill-based service providers indicated that many of these dwellings have been abandoned by their owners. Broken Hill City Council's estimate of the number of abandoned dwellings was about 800; other service providers consider the number to be higher: one approach using ABS Census 2016 data suggested between 1,480 and 1,490 might be in this category. Many of these houses are regarded as too dilapidated to refurbish.

Broken Hill City Council has identified land availability as a major constraint to growth of the city. The land area of the city is only 180 km² and expansion beyond the city limits for development or urban renewal is constrained by the regeneration reserve. The LEP is due for renewal; Council aims to emphasise availability of land for airport expansion and industrial development. Further land zoning for additional residential development does not appear to be proposed reflecting, perhaps, the high number of unoccupied lots available for knock down and rebuilding and minimal pressure for residential land exerted by a declining population. Available land is almost all Crown land under claim. It is a matter for Council and the Broken Hill LALC and Barkandji Traditional Owners to negotiate a solution which releases claimed land for industrial use zoning.

The characteristics of the residential property market, and the opportunities this offers, are discussed in §5.2. But attitudes to spot purchase of existing dwellings for use as Aboriginal social housing differ. Broken Hill City Council is of the view that vacant lots should be purchased and developed in preference to existing dwellings, the

best of which, in Council's view, should be saved to house personnel associated with the two major mines currently under development. Job opportunities in mines for low skilled workers have declined; thus, Council would be looking to the market to house higher skilled (and presumably more highly paid) mining employees. However, the view of human services providers is that high quality housing should be acquired for use as social housing, through purchase if possible, outside of the high lead risk zones, close to shops, schools and, given the relative transport poverty of many Aboriginal people, close to a bus route. New Aboriginal social housing developments in locations such as Cummins Street are seen as 'fringe developments' and are regarded as undesirable.

Spot purchase and refurbishment is likely to be far more cost effective than land purchase (or purchase and demolition of dilapidated dwellings) and new construction, depending on the condition of the dwelling. The magnitude of the deficit in supply may lead to the conclusion that it is far better to house Aboriginal individuals and families quickly in housing refurbished to an acceptable standard rather than commit to architect-designed new builds at far higher cost. An opportunity exists to support a local Aboriginal building maintenance team to carry out improvements.

13.2 Social housing services

Compass Housing expressed a somewhat more positive view than the CWP and community on housing management operations. While commenting that tenancy management practices were defined by the AHO and Pathways processes, flexibility is shown in cases of applicant and client vulnerability. All applications for housing are lodged online and assessed centrally. To overcome the barriers this creates, clients can visit the office in Broken Hill where a computer terminal and assistance are said to be available. Alternatively, an applicant or tenant can bring along a helper to assist in navigating the various processes. The waiting list is not extensive; applications number 5 to 10 per week. Some applicants are transient and come to Broken Hill for family support.

In addition to AHO housing, Compass Housing manages the entire DCJ portfolio in Broken Hill. Applicants are said to be housed in a reasonable timeframe; the biggest hurdle is remaining in contact with applicants who are mobile. Applications are closed if a client is not able to keep their application updated.

In large measure, centralised decision-making removes autonomy from the local office. Although the local office may be aware of an individual's or family's circumstances: risk of DFV, leaving custody, trying to regain care of children, unsuccessful efforts to meet own housing need; the ability to prioritise cases is much reduced by internal procedures. Herein may lie the explanation for the criticism of organisational culture and practices so strongly raised by the CWP and community.

It is understood that Compass Housing uses its own rent setting policy guided by the DCJ *Rent and Sales Report*. Clients apply to Centrelink for CRA but Compass Housing completes rent certification. Rent collection is said to be high and debt levels low. In case of difficulty, Compass Housing stated that it reaches repayment arrangements with a tenant, keeping evictions to a minimum. Low literacy levels are known to be an issue for some clients and effort is made to talk through any tenancy breach face to face before escalating action to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) if necessary. Notices, however, are required to be in writing which does disadvantage some tenants.

In addition to public and community housing, Compass Housing also manages a portfolio of 36 higher standard private rentals under head lease agreements. This portfolio is the residual complement of a larger private sector asset base culled in recent years following a review of housing condition. Compass Housing estimates that about 70% of the original portfolio was handed back after it determined the properties did not meet minimum standards, including safety, and owners, often Sydney and interstate investors, were not willing to contribute to repairs to meet those standards. It is possible that these sub-standard properties were returned to the market as private rentals in an unimproved condition.

Housing provided by AHO under the Employment Related Accommodation programme for the purposes of supporting eligible individuals with secure and affordable shared accommodation for the duration of their education or training, or while settling into employment, has been little utilised and left vacant for lengthy periods of time. The eight 2–4-bedroom properties have recently been made available as part of the social housing portfolio for family accommodation.

The future of the Creedon Street properties has been discussed with the AHO. Compass Housing view Creedon Street as an "environment of its own" with a range of antisocial activities which make the management task very difficult. Housing is either AHO or LAHC owned and rented almost exclusively to Aboriginal individuals and families. The units are a congregation point and the refuge for those engaging in heavy social drinking. During the interview, Compass Housing suggested a course of action could be to convert the units to duplexes or single dwellings to reduce the number of properties from twelve to four, perhaps operating as a supported tenancy model: a much easier management prospect.

The Creedon Street Hub, converted from an existing residential property, is temporarily closed because of staffing incapacity and so the usual range of services is, at the time of interview, currently suspended. Among users is HousingPlus which delivers the Opportunity Pathways programme connecting eligible people to training and employment.

Housing is quite old and could be improved with efficiency upgrades for sustainability. Compass Housing said that AHO was amenable to funding improvements and for agreeing to funding responsive and planned maintenance. A relationship is also in place with the BHELP and education sessions on the environmental lead issue are delivered by the programme. Most properties are in low lead risk zones.

When asked about policy and process improvements, Compass Housing singled out:

- The online application process as being overly

- complex and in need of replacement; and
- Processes in relation to decision-making around housing applications and tenancy assessments were too inflexible and should be devolved to local level.

Compass Housing noted that many older people were living in unsuitable homes but physically or culturally appropriate alternatives were not available. The focus of increased supply should be on elder-suitable single units and duplex dwellings. Interest had been detected in home ownership but a lot of tenants with the means to purchase their own homes are reluctant because of a fear of failure and anxiety about loss of support.

Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation, with only a few properties under management on behalf of the AHO reported a dissimilar experience to Compass Housing regarding the ease of obtaining AHO agreement to housing repair and maintenance costs.

A perspective from the primary resident Aboriginal social housing manager was not forthcoming; the Land Council declining to be interviewed.

13.3 Homelessness

13.3.1 Cause and effect

Service providers cited those local factors which contribute to homelessness in addition to the obvious lack of accessible, affordable housing: eviction, domestic violence, substance use, temporary or permanent in-migration from other localities, and release from custody or bail conditions. Several service providers indicated that there is a small core of primary homeless who are not looking to be housed. A handful of people (it was not known whether these people were Aboriginal or not) sleep rough on the streets, generally in shop alcoves, and are territorial about their pitches. For sustenance, they frequent the meal service at St Vincent De Paul Society's Bishop Fox Memorial Centre in Argent Street.

The reach of DCJ's case managed homelessness service Together Home does not extend west of Dubbo and Albury. Several providers were critical

of the Link2Home service, regarding it as ineffectual:

"People who are homeless need help now. Link2Home does nothing out here".

Minimal service is provided, and what little service is afforded is unlikely to result in placement in Broken Hill. Some service providers do refer to Link2Home but the only housing available is in Wentworth, almost 300 km away. There is only one bus service per week between Broken Hill and Wentworth. The nearest youth refuge in NSW is in Orange, over 880 km away.

Two service providers said that often, their only course of action is to give a homeless person a swag or a tent and sleeping bag and direct them to a quiet park or camp site. Those homeless persons more comfortable in the bush might establish small camps until moved on. Caravans were an option but the Salvation Army is no longer able to place clients in the city's caravan parks because of site owners' adverse experiences.

Inability to find housing impacts severely on older Aboriginal people. For some service providers, older primary homeless people are unreachable from a home care point of view because they lack a dwelling within which a service can be provided. One provider indicated that a person living in a caravan could potentially qualify to receive a service.

13.3.2 Evictions

Service providers cite evictions as a dominant cause of homelessness. Evictions from private rentals and social housing are reported to take place frequently. Common reasons for eviction include non-payment of rent, non-compliance with restrictions on housing complement or failure to advise the landlord about additions to the housing complement, criminal behaviour, and property damage.

Tenants of private sector landlords, particularly the so-called 'slumlords', express fear in relation to retributive evictions. Tenants in this situation

appear generally not to have the benefit of a written tenancy agreement, are unaware of the protections afforded them by the Residential Tenancies Act, notwithstanding they do not have an agreement, and are less willing to report defects. One service provider commented:

"It's disrespect for poor, disadvantaged, vulnerable people – they don't have legal knowledge; they just get treated like shit"

and a legal services provider indicated that tenants have limited capacity to advocate for themselves and need legal service support. Tenants in private sector rentals tend to experience high levels of mobility. It was reported that should any external party such as the Broken Hill Environmental Lead Programme contribute materially to housing improvements, such as through remediation, the tenant is then evicted to allow a subsequent letting at a higher rent.

Several service providers reported concern about Compass Housing's eviction processes, and cited instances of eviction arising from:

- Damage to dwellings caused by persons other than the tenant who were not invited onto the property (this appears particularly to be an issue at the Creedon Street flats);
- Lack of support for Compass Housing tenants who have mental health problems;
- The death of the tenant – instances were reported of the family being evicted without regard to sorry business;
- Literacy issues for tenants resulting in inability to read correspondence (including eviction notices) and consequent non-attendance at NCAT hearings; and
- Homeless family members (including people escaping domestic violence) with a poor tenancy record added to housing complement.

AHO may instruct a housing provider to evict a tenant in the event of criminal activity; for example, if the tenant is harbouring an escaped prisoner.

13.3.3 Homelessness and the justice system

The linkages between homelessness and offending are complex. Instances cited by service providers were the:

- Situation of men (especially) in relation to bail;
- Way men are discharged from the Broken Hill Correctional Centre;
- Nexus between imprisonment and obtaining and/or keeping rental housing.

Homeless people charged with offences in Broken Hill will be remanded in custody as bail courts will not release accused homeless persons into the community. There is no bail hostel in Broken Hill; there are no funded specialist homelessness services able to provide emergency accommodation to men or boys aged over 12 years so, for homeless men, the only potential alternative to rough sleeping or squatting is boarding house accommodation, if available. Rooms for single men used to be available in the Grand Guesthouse in Argent Street, but this is no longer an option. The nearest formal emergency accommodation for homeless single men is in Wilcannia, almost 200 km away. A pressing need was identified for a halfway house or bail hostel.

Service provider estimates indicate that up to 25 men per month travel to Broken Hill in compliance with bail conditions after arrest in other communities. Bail courts often impose conditions of bail which preclude accused staying in their own communities, but the wait for a court appearance in Broken Hill is generally of the order of six to eight weeks. Accused bailed in Broken Hill, too, are often barred from prescribed areas of the city. The response is often to squat in a vacant house, but this then creates the risk of a break and enter charge in addition to the original charge. Accused may couch surf if they have relatives in Broken Hill, or are reported to sleep rough in parks, by roadsides or in camps or caravan parks.

Finding temporary accommodation for men leaving custody, too, is taxing. The Salvation Army receives referrals from the Department of Corrective Services and from the Probation and Parole Service; however, prisoners are referred

only on the day of release from the Broken Hill Correctional Centre. If the prisoner does not have a home to go to in Broken Hill, or is from another town, and is released on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, no support is available to assist with temporary shelter.

The position of offenders who owe debts to social housing providers is fraught and tends to cause ripples beyond the offender him- or herself. Debts may be incurred through rental arrears or through damage to property. If a repayment arrangement is negotiated and an offender is subsequently sentenced to a custodial sentence, the offender's Centrelink payments cease, and the offender is thus unable to continue to service the debt. Instances were recounted of offenders not having the opportunity to terminate the tenancy and return the keys, and finding debt raised for damage caused to the property in the tenant's enforced absence.

The scenarios described are captured in the Financial Counselling Australia 2018 report *Double Punishment* which stated that '*people in prison frequently leave prison in a worse financial position than when they entered it because the system is stacked against them. This is a form of double punishment*'.

Figure 13.1 illustrates pathways for an individual from being housed to destitution owing to engagement with the criminal justice system which either involves a lengthy period on remand or serving a custodial sentence.

13.3.4 Exiting custody

For people exiting the criminal justice system, access to stable housing is imperative if further incarceration is to be prevented. Service providers report that there are two key needs for prisoners being released: housing and employment, but it is impossible for people to obtain employment if they are not housed. Prisoners approaching release experience a set of circumstances which almost guarantees their return to custody. Prisoners cannot be placed on a waiting list while in custody because they are not receiving Centrelink benefits and are not considered

homeless. As soon as they are released, they immediately become homeless. While in custody, they cannot formally identify themselves for the purposes of seeking support post-release because they do not have access to their personal property.

The Community Restorative Centre (CRC) which supports people affected by the criminal justice system through, among other things, providing specialist services to help men and women leaving prison to reintegrate into the community, reported that housing need impacts not less than 95% of their clients, some of whom have been waiting for housing for longer than two years. The power of access to housing is illustrated by the story of one 50-year-old client who had spent most of his adult life in custody but had, after CRC secured a private rental for him, found sufficient stability to remain free from the criminal justice system for six months at the time of writing. As the local CRC Manager observed:

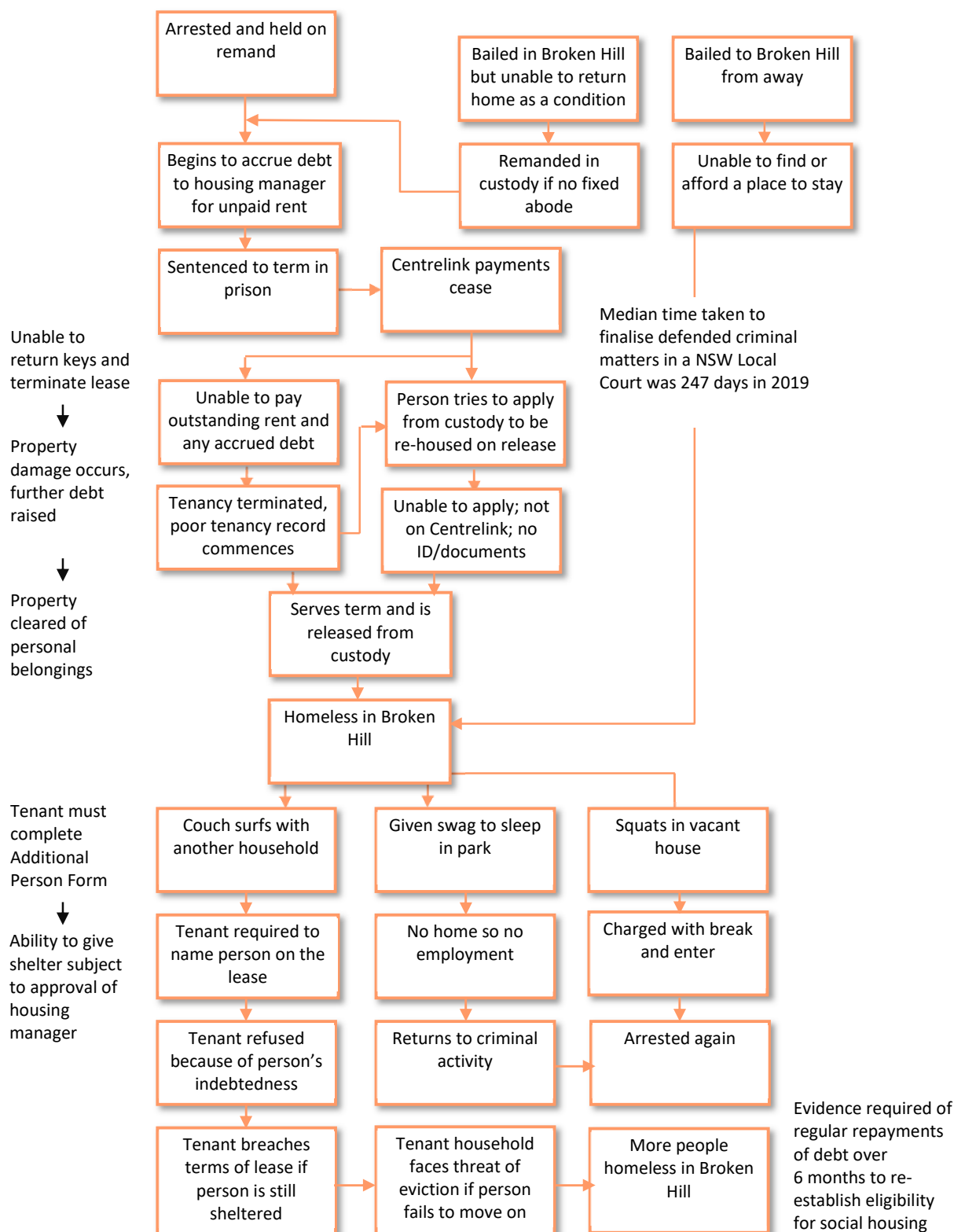
"People not housed as soon as they leave gaol will be back."

CRC proposed a Rent It, Keep It programme for people in gaol. Many people in this situation have never rented property and are not aware of their obligations as tenants.

CRC workers indicated that they had experienced more success getting clients into private rentals than social housing, because of the social housing supply issue, but that the cost of private rental housing is not affordable for people receiving only Centrelink support payments. If a prospective tenant can obtain a rental, then furnishing the dwelling is also an issue. Sourcing unwanted furniture through Facebook or through the tip shop is the usual solution.

Services for Aboriginal people leaving prison are few and those that exist are stretched by systemic inadequacies at each point of need. Service providers noted that, ultimately, the community pays for weak levels of funding for human services as people released who find themselves in difficult circumstances will revert to criminal activity to repay debts and be returned to a custodial state, at taxpayer expense, when apprehended.

Figure 13.1: Pathways to destitution



13.3.5 Crowding

Crowding in housing is reported to be common among Aboriginal households in Broken Hill, and this is clearly a function of the lack of affordable rental housing in the community. Communication barriers related to housing waiting lists is a contributing factor. As one service provider observed:

“Crowding is phenomenal, but has to happen, because where else do people go?”

Because of the barriers to establishing rental tenancies, dwellings tend to house multiple generations: this impacts on asset condition and the functionality of services. It was reported that many older people would prefer not to have to live permanently with younger relatives for fear of being caught up in the social issues affecting younger people.

13.3.6 Mobility and housing pressures

Service providers indicated in consultations that temporary and permanent in-migration to Broken Hill from other centres is a major contributing factor to housing need. Movement of households and individuals from Mildura, Wilcannia, Murrin Bridge and Tibooburra is reported to be commonplace. Such migration is often health-related: instances were cited of patients with renal failure having to move from Wilcannia because the quality of potable water is unsuitable for in situ dialysis; however, more casual in-migration is also common. Service providers indicated, for example, that people travelling to Broken Hill to attend a funeral often stay for an extended period, frequently with relatives. This leads to crowding and, consequently, eviction of tenants where the housing provider becomes aware of a breach of the declared complement.

Obstetric services are not provided in any community between Broken Hill and Dubbo, or Broken Hill and Mildura. Pregnant women living in smaller centres are required to relocate to Broken Hill a minimum of two weeks prior to their due date. Maari Ma arranges accommodation for

pregnant women in the caravan park at a cost to the organisation of \$350 per night. The IPTAAS reimbursement for eligible patients is \$43 per night but ten to twenty applicants per year are refused IPTAAS funding. Consequently, the cost to Maari Ma is approximately \$250,000 to \$300,000 per year to provide temporary accommodation, a cost that is not sustainable in the long term. This need could only be met practically by the building of a health-related hostel not only for pregnant women but also other patients requiring to obtain health services.

Within Broken Hill itself, there is a high incidence of churn in the population as discussed in §6.5. Families in private tenancies are reported to move frequently, and this is particularly problematic where tenancies are in high environmental lead risk areas. Young children, under these circumstances, are exposed to environmental threats with lasting health consequences.

13.3.7 Emergency accommodation

Several service providers cited a pressing need for more emergency housing and for structured transition to permanent housing. Specialist homelessness services are provided on a formal, funded basis by the Salvation Army, for adults, and by Mission Australia, for young people aged between 12 and 25 years. Both service providers also deliver other support services. Services are not Aboriginal identified. Because unmet need is so severe, other service organisations with no formal housing brief also act in the homelessness space as mentioned in §11.3, generally on an unfunded and ad hoc basis, to address the housing needs of their clients.

The Salvation Army provides refuge services to women and families at Catherine Haven, which comprises six units (three x 3-bedroom, two x 2-bedroom and a bedsit with disability access); and maintains two transitional units in the community. Men are not permitted on site; boys aged 12 years and over are not permitted to remain with their mothers. The service is not Aboriginal-specific. Clients are provided with accommodation for up to six months if needed; during the first three months, the client's goals are agreed and wrap-

around services put in place. In practice, clients with complex needs may stay for up to twelve months. Other service providers have described Catherine Haven as “a bottleneck”; one provider had repeatedly attempted to refer but stated that there had been no vacancies in the previous twelve months, and another had experienced no success ever in referring a client. The Salvation Army is looking to refurbish the original Catherine Haven property in Wolfram Street but the cost of doing so is high and has not been approved internally. If the project proceeds, it may be possible to provide 4 additional beds for women, with priority being allocated to women aged over 55 years. The Salvation Army may consider using this property for short term accommodation for a father with children if the property is vacant. Salvation Army personnel estimate that they receive new presentations from, on average, five new clients per week who are at risk of homelessness. The Salvation Army also provides support services to clients who cannot be provided with shelter. The Salvation Army is also, at the time of writing, commencing a Street Beat service to connect with, and provide support to, primary homeless people for whom emergency housing is unavailable.

Mission Australia provides a youth homelessness service to two cohorts: 12–15-year-old, who are DCJ child protection referrals; and 16–25-year-old young adults who self-refer or present on the advice of friends or family. For the younger cohort, Mission Australia provides the Reconnect Programme for 12- to 19-year-old people (not exclusively Aboriginal) disengaged from education, family and community. This programme aims to reintegrate young people and includes mentoring and housing components but has some potential to reduce youth homelessness. Transitional housing is provided via Compass under a negotiated arrangement. A MoU is in place which allows Mission Australia to case manage clients. Access is available to six bedsits for young men only, and to four single-bedroom units. Discussions were underway at the time of interview to obtain access to extra units for young women and young families. Mission Australia has also advocated to DCJ to resource a youth refuge in Broken Hill. Access is available to a few motels but finding beds is challenging. Motel stays consume a large part of Mission Australia’s budget but are

useful for providing breathing space for young people dealing with family breakdown, while the Reconnect Programme is initiated. Mission Australia has a relationship with local real estate agencies but there are few affordable properties available.

Uniting Care Miraga provides case management services for homeless older Aboriginal people but this service does not include accommodation provision. Uniting Care Miraga does, however, undertake advocacy to housing managers on behalf of their clients. Australian Unity is also funded to deliver services for older Aboriginal people in Broken Hill but at the time of writing was starting to rebuild its client base from a very low level.

Other organisations, while unable to provide emergency accommodation, also deliver support services to people who are homeless. The St Vincent de Paul Society, for example, is not funded to deliver accommodation services (on the basis that the Salvation Army provides it) but does assist with transport to other centres (Adelaide was mentioned) and can offer funds to cover two weeks’ rent (but not bond) and utility costs, as well as assistance to pay bills. The charity also provides meals through the Bishop Fox Memorial Centre to about 45 clients per day; the vast majority are Aboriginal people. The meals service is used by primary homeless and by boarding house residents; most of Schembri’s residents are reported to obtain their meals in this way. St Vincent de Paul indicated that 36% of their clients overall are Aboriginal people in housing stress; of these, the majority are women, and the vast majority are reliant on Centrelink benefits as their sole income. Setting aside its inability to provide housing, St Vincent de Paul staff described their service as ‘very holistic’:

“Nothing is foreign to us. If people need assistance, we provide it.”

Several service providers said they make use of motels for emergency accommodation for clients; particularly those escaping domestic violence. Three motels will accept clients from specialist homelessness services and other human services

providers for periods of not more than seven days. Motel managers are, though, reported to be reluctant to assist because of experience of property damage, and because of the need to consider the amenity of other guests. In any event, motel accommodation is not available during school holidays or the peak season (which, in Broken Hill, is during the cooler months). If a person or family experiencing domestic violence is fortunate enough to secure a motel room, once the seven-day limit elapses, they either return to the domestic violence situation or the service provider will support them to move away from Broken Hill, often to Wilcannia. A MoU between Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation and/or Compass Housing and local real estate agents was suggested as a possible pathway to supported emergency accommodation; with service providers' covering of the cost of landlord insurance as a way of encouraging property owners to participate.

13.3.8 Boarding houses and tertiary homelessness

Broken Hill has three boarding houses, of which one was not operating at the time of writing. The quality of accommodation was described by various service providers as 'appalling' and 'unsafe'. Most clients of service providers interviewed who were tertiary homeless were living at Schembri's boarding house in Crystal Street; availability of rooms at short notice was described as 'very hit and miss'. The other boarding houses are the Barrier Lodging House in Argent Street, which has 10 bedrooms and two bathrooms, and the Blende Street Boarding House, which has 13 bedrooms. All three boarding houses are registered on NSW Fair Trading's Boarding House Register. It is not known whether there are any unregistered establishments trading on an informal basis. Boarding houses are regarded by service providers as unsafe because of risks arising from sharing of facilities with others who may have alcohol and other drug issues. A few elderly men were reported as staying at these establishments; these people were described as 'vulnerable'.

13.3.9 Escaping conflict

Domestic and family violence is a frequent contributor to homelessness in Broken Hill. Broken Hill's Aboriginal community has access to an Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service: Warra Warra Legal Service which provides legal services to Aboriginal survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual assault free of charge. The issue predominantly impacts on women; however, in Broken Hill, men, too, are affected by domestic violence, and these men are often caring for children. Far West Local Health District has a Domestic Violence Unit but community service providers commented that the service is not accessible for Aboriginal people. Maari Ma general practitioners refer patients suffering the effects of domestic violence internally to the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team for support but do not screen for domestic violence because to do so would be unacceptably intrusive.

In theory, women fleeing domestic violence have access to emergency accommodation through Catherine Haven; however, lack of vacancies is an insurmountable barrier to women seeking refuge. Wilcannia and Balranald are better resourced in terms of emergency accommodation; women may be provided with transport to Wilcannia if no accommodation is available in Broken Hill. Conversely, if anyone is referred from the safe house in Wilcannia, there is nowhere in Broken Hill to stay. Service providers expressed a need for arrangements to be put in place with real estate agents to provide a rapid response to the housing need of people leaving domestic violence. It was reported that applicants for Compass Housing who tick the Domestic Violence box find that the allocation process slows considerably because of the extra assessment processes required.

Men may be made homeless as victims of domestic and family violence, or as perpetrators. One homelessness service provider indicated that their organisation has received approaches from six to seven male survivors of domestic violence, with children, in the last year. Perpetrators can be prevented from returning home or from being in certain parts of Broken Hill as a condition of AVOs so, whether victim or perpetrator, regardless of their status, service providers report that there is:

“...nowhere for men to go; no services. They’re moving them out of town; they’re squatting. There’s no counselling.”

13.3.10 Mission creep

What can service providers do if there is no emergency accommodation available? Because of the overwhelming level of need, organisations other than specialist homelessness services are profoundly involved in attempting to meet shelter-related need, generally in a way which stretches resources already under pressure. These organisations are often Aboriginal community-controlled service providers which are driven by a cultural need to provide holistic services for clients. Maari Ma, for example, which refers to the Salvation Army and to the St Vincent de Paul Society, is frequently placed in the position of having to secure and pay for motel accommodation for clients at short notice, or to provide food. Funding is allocated for crisis support from the organisation’s general budget; there is no specific funding available. Maari Ma’s policy position is to provide two nights’ motel accommodation, to fund travel to other centres if this is a preferable option for the client and/or, where possible and agreeable to the client, to secure boarding house accommodation. Maari Ma is often forced to purchase food for people whose housing stress (and other contributing factors, often behavioural) makes it impossible both to put a roof over their head and to feed themselves and their family. The need to support clients in these circumstances has a significant mental health impact for workers, who constantly find themselves conflicted. Warra Warra Legal Service, too, is not funded to provide housing-related services (being a domestic violence legal service) but management estimates that their employed solicitors are spending from 20% to 30% of their time on tenancy issues. Similarly, some mainstream housing providers are also in this situation. Uniting Care Miraga, for example, had a client with severe physical health problems: their staff advocated successfully to AHO for reallocation of an Employment-Related Accommodation dwelling and then contributed part of the cost of home modifications for the dwelling.

13.4 Housed, but barely so

13.4.1 Housing quality

The condition of much of the rental housing in Broken Hill is sub-optimal at best; this is the case to varying degrees across all landlord types. The quality of social housing is variable. Broken Hill LALC, for example, has received no capital works funding in recent years and has been unable to carry out planned maintenance. At the time of writing, only AHO houses had been provided with solar PV panels and air conditioning; however, retrofitting will take place shortly for social housing without these amenities. In the meantime, Maari Ma has been funding the installation of air conditioning in dwellings where elders and children with disabilities live because the health impact of summer heat is too problematic.

The condition of some of Broken Hill’s private sector rental housing (estimated by one service provider to be as high as 80% of the private rental estate) is described as poor. Instances were reported of dwellings with leaking roofs through which the sky is visible, dirt floors where floorboards have rotted out or been removed, non-working WCs, potentially hazardous electrical faults, holes in bonded asbestos sheet walls and a general lack of repairs and maintenance. As one service provider observed:

“Some places where these people end up, I wouldn’t put my frigging dog in them.”

Other service providers, too, condemned in less colourful terms the poor standard of this type of accommodation.

The condition of these dwellings is affecting the health of tenants to the extent that health service providers are carrying out repairs on behalf of tenants. Maari Ma staff, for example, stated the organisation had met the cost of replacing a window in a private dwelling because a six-year-old girl was sleeping in a bedroom open to the outside environment. Service providers observed that, despite charging exorbitant rents, some private sector landlords do not undertake repairs while

tenancies are in place. Rather, the ploy appears to be to progressively fund upgrades from the bond illegally withheld when the tenant moves on.

“Tenants have issues where they don’t get their bond back – there always seems to be something wrong when tenants end their lease. A bond representative needs to be there as a third party.”

It was also reported that should an external service provider such as Maari Ma undertake repairs, the tenant will be evicted once work is complete. Evictions were also reported to be commonplace following site and property remediation by the Broken Hill Environmental Lead Centre.

Broken Hill City Council observed that about 800 dwellings within the local government area have been abandoned and are standing vacant. Notwithstanding the dilapidated condition of many of these dwellings, such is the housing shortfall in Broken Hill that some of them are used by squatters, which exacerbates damage to dwellings. It was reported, for example, that at the time of the interview six people were squatting in one abandoned house in Lane Lane. Dwellings which become too hazardous or which impact excessively on the amenity of neighbours are then demolished by Council. This occurs frequently and is costly: it was reported by Council personnel that three houses had had to be demolished in the two weeks prior to interview.

Dissatisfaction was also expressed in relation to AHO actions when dwellings are acquired through spot purchase. Service providers indicated that any improvements on the site additional to the dwelling (sheds and plantings, for example) are removed on the pretext of consistency with AHO housing standards. The view among service providers is that improvements which would potentially be of use to tenants should remain.

13.4.2 Obtaining rental housing – or not

Obtaining rental housing presents an almost insurmountable obstacle for many Aboriginal people. This is partly a supply issue; partly an administrative issue; and partly an issue created or exacerbated by personal capacity. Specific groups

within the community identified as facing barriers to entry into the rental market are:

- Large families, for whom larger houses are either generally unavailable or unaffordable;
- Young people, who are unable to afford the bond plus two weeks’ rent and whose parents don’t have the resources to support them – this exacerbates crowding;
- Prisoners leaving custody – service providers indicate that Housing NSW is not accepting applications from people with a criminal record; and
- People with disabilities, for whom no adapted housing is available – existing dwellings tend to be small with tiny bathrooms and poor accessibility.

Should an applicant in these categories be fortunate enough to obtain a rental property, other barriers remain to be overcome: the property needs to be furnished, and arrangements put in place to connect utilities and to effect insurance.

There was support both from community and from service providers for the reintroduction of a ‘rent-to-buy’ model for home ownership. One provider cautioned that homeownership might not be the solution to renting:

“People may have purchased their own home but find it hard to afford insurance and other outgoings. There is massive pressure on family households which find it scary to be responsible. A policy response around support for homeowners is required”

13.4.3 Applying for social housing

Applicants for Aboriginal social housing are required to use the online Housing Pathways process. Service providers indicated that the Housing Pathways waiting list for rentals in Broken Hill is extensive, but it was also observed that the waiting list does not provide a realistic representation of housing need because of the reluctance of people needing housing to subject themselves to a procedure viewed as complex and highly bureaucratic. Potential tenants are discouraged from applying for housing by a variety

of practical and perceived barriers: lack of formal identification such as a birth certificate or Medicare card; family size (large families were reported to be unable to obtain housing); a poor rental history (including a rental debt); criminal record; physical disability; inability to pay the bond; a realistic appreciation of a likely unsuccessful outcome. Fundamentally, the Housing Pathways application process is complicated, and requires the stamina and literacy skills which are of a higher level than many applicants for social housing in Broken Hill might possess.

Application must be via the online portal. It is possible to find a downloadable copy of the form online (this is not permitted to be used for applications under the current system, though). The form comprises 19 pages of instructions and fillable fields. There is an additional 11-page document providing guidance to evidence required to support claims against the eligibility criteria. After the initial application and its acceptance, an applicant is required to submit an online form each time their circumstances change. The application identifies every person who is to live in the dwelling. The social housing provider requires to be informed of any change to the housing complement through online submission of the Additional Persons Form. The application process appears to be calculated to strip away any residual shred of dignity the applicant might retain and to discourage application in the first place. A member of the Tenant Support and Education Programme (TSEP) team observed:

"We have found a huge increase in support needed with housing applications and transfers and the leg work required with this kind of support can always prove to be ongoing and take many visits with the client. Collecting documents, following up progress of applications, prioritising applications, and changes of circumstances. Included in every application is the necessity to provide many supporting documents such as a letter of support from the TSEP worker."

DCJ publishes estimated waiting times for social housing by allocation zone online annually. This information is available for general applicants only. The estimates reported as of 30th June 2020 for allocation zone S095 Broken Hill are stated at

Table 5.18. The number of applicants on the list at that time was reported to be 71. As one service provider put it:

"Compass is full, public housing is full"

13.4.4 *Obtaining a private sector rental*

Obtaining a private sector rental is similarly fraught. Service providers indicated that private sector rentals are high, that real estate agents discriminate against Aboriginal people, and that private rentals not involving licensed real estate agents come with a variety of complications.

Real estate agents in general were described as "very racist". Several service providers cited occasions where the lighter-skinned partner in a couple attended a real estate agent's office to apply for housing and was accepted but when they brought their darker-skinned partner in to sign the RTA, the offer was withdrawn. This was also reported to occur if the partner had a surname which suggested that a member of their family had a poor tenancy record, regardless of the record of the applicant. This was described as "homelessness by association".

It was observed that prospective tenants applying for housing through a real estate agent are not permitted to view houses of interest until applications have been approved. Agents are reported to be acting as gatekeepers, making judgments about a tenant's financial ability to support a tenancy. Tenants are not being permitted to make their own judgments about affordability. It was suggested that a MoU between real estate agents, Compass Housing and Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation could be negotiated to streamline access to rental properties by applicants.

Tenants also rent properties in the private sector outside of the real estate agent network. These rentals are arranged on an informal basis with property availability spread by word of mouth. Up to 80 properties may be tenanted through this process; one manager was noted to have about 30 properties. Most of these rentals appear to be negotiated without the protection afforded by a

written Residential Tenancy Agreement. Bonds are collected and may or may not be lodged with the Rental Bond Board but, as rental payments are made by cash and because there is no formal documentation evidencing the tenancy, tenants are unable to apply for CRA. Rents for these properties are high both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the capital value of dwellings. Tenure is precarious, with tenants living in fear of arbitrary or retributive eviction. It was observed by service providers that private rental is not an option for pensioners because the cost is beyond their means.

As one service provider commented:

“We don’t encourage clients to access slum landlords but have had clients in properties way overpriced with dirt floors, no running water, no heating or cooling with massive rents. Eighty (tenants in this predicament) is conservative. Absentee landlords from interstate just hang up when you try to contact them. It’s difficult. [They] don’t follow rules of eviction – just change the locks”

13.5 Tenant education and support

The Murdi Paaki Tenant Support and Education Programme (MP TSEP), delivered by Murdi Paaki Services, is assisting tenants to maintain their tenancies, including complying with the terms of tenancy agreements. This service contributes to improved understanding by tenants of the need to use their properties appropriately, including reducing the potential for defects to go unreported and the scope of restoration to mount. MP TSEP commenced service provision to Broken Hill from October 2020. With the community becoming more aware of its presence, there has been a large increase in latent support needs being expressed. MP TSEP has become an essential service through its ability not only to meet the needs of referred clients for support with housing issues; for example, through helping with housing application and transfers, and associated documentation, but to case manage a culturally safe response to support needs which must be addressed before the client’s housing situation can begin to be improved. MP TSEP can leverage its partnerships to put in place targeted, wrap-around services to

meet support needs in a wide range of areas which include rental arrears, energy bill arrears, fines and debts with Office of State Revenue, mental health support, drug and alcohol support, gambling support, and health and wellbeing support. Once case management needs are met, MP TSEP staff work with the client to put in place arrangements for Commonwealth Rent Assistance and Centre Pay deductions. MP TSEP is the only service with capacity to address the extreme level of need arising from inadequacies in culturally relevant human services delivery and co-ordination in Broken Hill. Details of TSEP have been provided to Compass Housing to foster awareness within the ACHP and CHP network.

The Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (WATAAS) also provides services in Broken Hill but has very limited resources available to support the community. WATAAS, MPRHC and the Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association are in discussions with a view to developing a partnership in the Region, to complement the work of TSEP.

13.6 Health and wellbeing consequences

13.6.1 *Housing-related stress*

Housing related stress affects Aboriginal residents of Broken Hill for a variety of reasons; poverty, concern over environmental lead and exposure to other externalities, poor quality housing, and anxiety related to rental housing management practices all produce mental health impacts.

People with mental illness find navigating housing processes situation particularly difficult. As one health service provider observed:

“People with depression or suicidal tendency won’t get better in poor housing”

and another noted that clients:

“...can’t deal with their mental health issues while homeless”.

It was reported that discrimination against tenants with mental health issues is occurring through NCAT actions because of tenants being allocated unsuitable housing and then finding themselves unable to prevent uninvited visitors entering and then damaging their property. Service providers experience varying levels of success in contacting and then assisting people with mental health problems who are also struggling with housing issues:

"It's a challenge getting people with mental health issues into housing. Some will work with (us), some not."

In terms of access to services, mainstream human service providers indicate that clients receive effective support from Far West LHD Community Health and Mental Health services as an element of wrap-around arrangements, but Aboriginal community-controlled services reported that mainstream mental health services are alienating and judgmental, with mentally ill clients with a formal diagnosis tending to be labelled without justification as alcohol- or other drug-affected.

13.6.2 *Other negative environmental externalities*

On the day that the photograph of Creedon Street (Figure 13.2) was taken, the area was enveloped in an overwhelming blanket of odour which appeared to be emanating from the Creedon Street wastewater ventilation stack and the Wills Street WWTP which is located a short distance from this concentration of Aboriginal social housing. Community members subsequently advised that odour from the plant frequently penetrates across Railway Town, depending upon the wind direction. Broken Hill City Council also advised that the tip, the industrial area or the cemetery might be sources of the odour (although quite why a cemetery would be a source is unclear).

Figure 13.2: Creedon Street sewerage vent



Broken Hill City Council indicated that uncontrolled pig dogs and feral cats are a major health and safety issue. Other health issues were not identified.

13.7 Human services

13.7.1 *Interrelationships*

The Broken Hill community, in general, is better supplied with housing-related human services than it is with physical infrastructure to support service provision, particularly when it comes to housing. Service providers supporting homeless people note that there are no specific gaps in wrap-around services. Referral pathways among long-established service providers are generally well entrenched: Maari Ma refers homeless or impoverished clients to the Salvation Army or the St Vincent de Paul Society; the Salvation Army refers families to Maari Ma or Broken Hill Child and Family Health for blood lead testing and other health issues and so on. While referral pathways within small groups of service providers are operating, though, a broader, more comprehensive inter-agency structure is not in evidence. Some of the referral pathways and service relationships in place are viewed as perverse: for example, it was noted that DCJ do not involve the Police ACLO in programmes such as Stay Home, Be Safe; nor do they respond to family distress except in most extreme cases, leaving Aboriginal community-controlled service providers such as Broken Hill LALC, Maari Ma or MPRHC to cope, with all the financial impact that that entails. Not all service providers deliver culturally safe services to Aboriginal clients; it was reported that some

service providers discriminate on the basis of the client's surname and presumed family connections regardless of whether or not the provider knows the client.

One pressing service gap identified by the CRC is for an alcohol and other drug detoxification and rehabilitation service in Broken Hill. At present, the CRC refers to the small Footsteps therapeutic community at Port Augusta in South Australia (415 km), Orana Haven south of Brewarrina (715 km) and, for women clients, to a service located in Moree (1,040 km). The CRC transports the client to the service, losing two staff members for two days. Similarly, Mission Australia refers clients to a service based in Orange but is then required to provide transport. There are no facilities for detoxification in Broken Hill and, as one service provider pointed out, rehabilitation is unlikely to succeed unless a client has gone through the detoxification process.

In addition to provision of housing and homeless services, which are discussed in detail previously, there are other specific service sectors which support Aboriginal (and other) clients with services which impact or are impacted by the housing status of clients. These sectors include justice and legal services, and aged and disability care.

13.7.2 Reach and performance

A commentary on service objectives, successes and challenges was forthcoming from most providers and this willingness to engage is appreciated in that it assists in forming a perspective on the human services landscape: a reality check. The rigidity of housing management practice was foremost in the conversation with both community and service providers critical of organisational cultures, service responsiveness, heavy handiness, lack of cultural safety and empathy. Criticisms raised were consistent with those flagged in the MPRH&BC household survey five years ago and reinforce the conclusions drawn from the survey, principally:

- Aboriginal social housing should be managed by the local and/or the Regional ACHP;
- Service culture should recognise community

aspirations and market realities;

- The welfare of tenants should be uppermost in service design and delivery, not subordinate to commercial interests;
- Application of the rules and delivery of management services should be flexible, fair and consistent;
- Communications with tenants should be open, timely and direct;
- Need existed for a resident tenancy support and education service; and
- Relationships with and between local support services should reflect a higher level of cooperation, integration and focus on community wellbeing.

The work of most human support services, especially those providing Aboriginal-specific services, was acclaimed: the efforts of the Community Restorative Centre to assist post-release offenders into housing in numbers exceeding its funding threshold; the Warra Warra Legal Service in supporting women escaping domestic and family violence and going beyond its core business to help find accommodation for those women and families who would otherwise be homeless; Uniting Care Miraga in the ageing and disability care space and LiveBetter, which assumed the responsibilities of the former Home Care Service when aged care transitioned from the NSW to the Australian Government. Mission Australia delivers the Stronger Families, Brighter Futures programme and provision of services under this programme was viewed positively by Aboriginal community-controlled service providers.

13.8 Service fragmentation

Until a few years prior to the time of writing, Broken Hill had a highly integrated service sector with individual providers collaborating to ensure that gaps in service provision were adequately covered. Regular interagency meetings took place. Since a contestability model was introduced for procurement of human services, the sector has fragmented; providers no longer talk to each other, let alone collaborate. The promise of 'choice' used to promote the model has proven to be illusory: Broken Hill is now 'served' by a plethora of providers, some of which do not even possess a

physical office presence in the city; but these organisations are vying for the same very small pool of personnel. Ever larger proportions of the limited service budget are committed to providing for administration and fixed costs for more and more providers. New service providers appear on the scene without warning but there is no clarity in relation to their role. There are now over twenty separate NGO and private providers in the aged and disability care space for a population which, at the 2016 Census, included a total of 1,424 people who stated that they had a need for assistance with core activities. Policy insistence on competitive procurement has produced perverse outcomes for this community. In remote economic and geographical contexts such as Broken Hill, contestability is not a strategic policy; it is a fetish.

14 MASTER PLAN

14.1 Aspiration

Development of the Broken Hill HEHP marks the culmination of the second round of the MPRA's approach to sector strategic planning at a community scale. The HEHP provides clarity on the order of sector investment; makes transparent the core demand drivers that are affecting the sector; and documents an evidence base of the community's housing and infrastructure assets and how long-term trends would change their use. The lead time and long lifetime of housing infrastructure requires a long-term view so identifying, planning and prioritising a package of interventions to ensure the sector delivers sustainable long-term outcomes for the community is vital. Yet a long-term strategic approach is challenged by uncertainties, be they political, financial, social technical or environmental. And interdependencies between the housing and human services sectors add to complexity and uncertainty in the strategic planning process. Learning lessons is a central part of any project so, with the RAHLA now firmly established and evidence collected and synthesised, the community is optimistic that informed policy-setting and decision-making will lead to positive change.

14.2 Cultural influences on decision-making

The *NSW Aboriginal Housing and Infrastructure Programmes Implementation Manual*, an initiative of MPRA and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs (as was) flowing from the successful Australian Government National Aboriginal Health Strategy projects, written in 1999, placed the concept of effective community management of capital works and associated housing and infrastructure projects onto a practical footing. CWP's, working with a community-selected professional Project Manager, had demonstrated ample capacity to set community objectives, and to control and co-ordinate overall programme delivery on behalf of, and in the best interests of, their communities, and the agreed negotiated system of rules governing projects roll out was

formal acknowledgement of the ongoing position of CWP's as the local decision-making body. The Regional and local governance structures remain in place and CWP's are still well positioned to bring their local knowledge and cultural perspectives to inform the shape and substance of housing and infrastructure developments. This Master Plan evidences this decision-making in practice.

14.3 Residential development proposals

14.3.1 Status

Census data analysis indicates that the Aboriginal community of Broken Hill, in terms of most variables, is not unlike those of other settlements within the Murdi Paaki Region. The Aboriginal population fraction is 10.3% of the total population as at the ABS 2016 Census and rising while the non-Indigenous population declines. In relation to housing, there is a lower proportion of single person households compared to the rest of the Region, and nearly one quarter of families have resident non-dependent single adult children living with them. Aboriginal adults in Broken Hill have equivalent levels of labour market participation to their counterparts in the Region and the proportion of all adults in employment is about one in two, stronger than the Region and similar to the rate for NSW. Private sector activity is robust, but most employment for Aboriginal people is in human services, including health care and social assistance. The SEIFA Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage (IRSD) describes Broken Hill as highly disadvantaged relative to the rest of NSW.

Of all Aboriginal households in Broken Hill, almost half were renting. This figure is over twice as high as for the non-Indigenous Broken Hill population, but lower than for the Murdi Paaki Region as a whole. The proportion of owner occupier Aboriginal households increased slightly between 2011 and 2016 to 45%. Most Aboriginal households renting in Broken Hill were tenants of private landlords; social housing supply is weak. The median rent for Aboriginal households was slightly higher than that for non-Indigenous households. Median Aboriginal household size was slightly lower than for the ABS North-West NSW

Indigenous Region but almost 50% higher than for non-Indigenous households in Broken Hill. Tenancies are unstable; the Census recorded relatively higher rates of residential mobility at the one year and five-year horizons, with most movement being internal to Broken Hill. In terms of day-to-day movement, most Aboriginal households had a motor vehicle.

14.3.2 Expressed need for new housing

The total number of Aboriginal social housing dwellings in Broken Hill was 69 in June 2020, having reduced by five from a total of 74 as at June 2018. No growth has occurred in the Aboriginal social housing estate in Broken Hill since 2016, despite the increasing population, although work is scheduled to start on building eight two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. Existing households are generally dispersed across the city except for the Creedon Street enclave.

While the ratio of Aboriginal households to Aboriginal social housing dwellings across the Region generally was between 2 and 3, in Broken Hill the ratio was 7.4 Aboriginal households to each Aboriginal social dwelling unit. A higher dependence is placed on private rentals as the population grows unless supply is increased.

From the investigations and consultations carried out, the need for significant new development in

Broken Hill has been established, confirming the findings of work carried out years previously by the AHO. At the time of the household survey there was a waiting list for social housing in the community across all age groups. The estimates shown in Table 14.1 are derived by extrapolating the findings of the MPRH&BC household survey across all Aboriginal households to estimate need arising from those that did not participate. With family formation and in-migration, demand for social housing is expected to continue to grow.

The number of new dwellings required exceeds the number of applicants accepted onto the NSW Housing Register because, as discussed in §6.9, with little prospect of securing a tenancy, individuals and families do not apply.

The number of families stated in Table 14.1 includes those living as extended families or multi-family households in owner occupied and privately rented dwellings who might otherwise be accommodated in social housing if it were available. Also included in Table 14.1 are households living in private rentals in crowded conditions. Rightly or wrongly, the estimate excludes individuals living in owner occupied properties and private rentals because these persons are already housed and will be of lower priority in the assessment process. This decision could affect up to 90 individual young adults and older persons seeking independent living.

Table 14.1: Unmet demand for new Aboriginal social housing, number of dwellings

		From MPRH&BC household survey				Factored for whole community			
		Number of bedrooms				Number of bedrooms			
Tenure type	Ratio	2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5
Owner occupier	283/68	15	1	-	-	-	4	-	-
Private rental	208/124	16	3	1	1	-	5	2	2
Private rental (sub-standard)	208/124	7	7	3	-	12	12	5	-
Homeless	596/273	12	2	1	-	26	4	2	-
Social housing renters	69/64	12	5	1	-	13	5	1	-
Total		62	18	6	1	51	30	10	2

Note: Ratio is derived from ABS Census 2016 total number of properties by tenure and landlord type and the total number of properties enumerated in the MPRH&BC household survey by tenure type, excluding those 'not stated'. For the homeless category, the total for all tenure types has been adopted.

The size of dwelling stated in Table 14.1 is matched to household size, subject to the minimum size being two-bedrooms, and does not include an additional bedroom. It is anticipated that entitlement to one more bedroom than the minimum number of bedrooms required for the household will be a matter for determination on a case-by-case basis as part of an allocation process.

A breakdown of social housing waitlist numbers by bedroom capacity as of June 2018 provided by the AHO is shown at Table 14.2 for comparison purposes. Dwelling size for about one third of approved applicants was not stated and remained to be determined. Requests are for smaller houses for individuals and probably, without knowing the breakdown, for older people consistent with the findings of the MPRH&BC household survey.

Table 14.2: Estimated number of dwellings by bedroom size

	Number of bedrooms					Σ
	1	2	3	4+	NK	
2018 waitlist	45	15	10	3	30	103

Feedback received from the community and summarised in §12.4 reinforces the need for additional housing on the scale and with the mix proposed. Spot purchase may be a solution in view of the large number of unoccupied dwellings and declining non-Indigenous population but quality of private housing likely to be offered for purchase will be at the lower end and purchases will require refurbishment and extension.

Table 14.3: Estimated cost of new builds (GST excl)

Number of bedrooms	GFA (m ²)	Unit cost (\$/m ²)	No	Estimate (\$)
2	120	3,240	51	19,828,800
3	160	2,660	30	12,768,000
4	185	2,660	10	4,921,000
5 and more	200	2,660	2	1,064,000
Total				38,581,800

Table 14.3, which puts an order of cost against unmet need, does not account for relocating households from areas of environmental lead

contamination classified as high risk or the potential repurposing of the Creedon Street flats. Allowance is made for addressing the plight of households trapped in slum tenancies.

The actual effect on demand will only become apparent once an accessible application process is established. It is worth restating that the number of slum tenancies is estimated to range between 30 and 80 households and possibly higher so this cohort is not insignificant. The above budget makes provision for 29 households living in sub-standard housing.

The AHO has no undeveloped sites remaining while Broken Hill LALC has four urban lots, three being on the northern fringe of the city. These lots are serviced with road access and utilities although only two are considered suitable for residential development. New builds should be 'salt and peppered' across the urban area on currently vacant lots acquired for the purpose: multi-unit development is to be avoided. Land purchases are assumed to range from \$30,000 to \$150,000 including legal fees and other statutory charges, depending upon size and location. In the context of the increased supply indicated by Tables 14.1 to 14.3, any land acquisition programme will be of a major scale. At the lower range quoted above, the budget for 93 new sites is \$2,790,000.

With so many factors at play, it is clear that the systemic failures across the housing and human services sector will inhibit achievement of the long-term strategic aspirations of the CWP as discussed in §14.1. Notwithstanding the rhetoric of co-ordination which has dominated Aboriginal Affairs discourse since at least 1990, and which permeates the OCHRE Local Decision-Making process, the same siloed, wilfully blind approach to meeting human service needs continues to stifle the ability of individuals and families to live their best lives. Government is not making the mental connections necessary for reliable attribution of causality; unless this critical capacity is developed, a comprehensive, strategic response cannot be conceived and initiated. This being the case, this woeful situation is edging closer and closer to becoming a wicked problem. Indeed, obsession with ideology and contestability has made the situation worse. That children live with the

prospect of diminished mental capacity; that families are forced into 'housing' unfit for dogs; that the only response service providers can provide to homelessness is to issue a swag; that offenders have little hope of re-entering society; and that there has been no response to remedy the living conditions which have set up social dysfunction at Creedon Street and Briar Court is a scandal and a disgrace.

Clearly, the scale of the response required to tackle the challenges, in terms of both number of dwellings and costs estimated above, is extraordinary but it is a fair reflection of the consequences of the neglect the sector has suffered over the years. The decision by the AHO to divert a large portion of the NPARIH budget from the Murdi Paaki Region is brought into stark focus by this planning process. Demand has always been present as evidenced by the 2018 waitlist but ignored by decision-makers to the detriment of Aboriginal families left to experience a catalogue of misery. This HEHP is not blind to the assumptions made in deriving the order of unmet need, such as at the full projection may not be realised as family formation will occur between individual men and women on the waitlist, but the challenge is of such a magnitude that any programme of works will not satisfy other than just a few households in the short term. The nature and scale of this project necessitates a strategic and carefully planned response with CWP participation so that the community is reassured that the plight of the community is being treated seriously and comprehensively at last.

14.3.3 Replacement housing

No dwellings are recommended for replacement as stated in §6.10.4. It is possible that scoping of existing social housing properties will identify some which are beyond economic repair and it will be necessary to determine a suitable course of action at that time. Neither Compass Housing nor MPRHC considered this point had been reached with properties under their management. Broken Hill LALC declined to discuss housing issues so insights into the need for repair and maintenance could not be ascertained.

14.3.4 Housing extensions and modifications

The expressed need for housing extensions identified in §6.7, projected on the same basis as Table 6.22, is stated in Table 14.4. A budget of \$35,000/extension is allowed for extension and \$3,000 for home modification.

Table 14.4: Requirement for housing extensions and modifications to Aboriginal social housing

Extensions	Number of bedrooms		
(Factor 2.38)	1	2	3
Number of bedrooms	1	-	-
Total number of bedrooms	1	-	-
Modifications			
Number of dwellings	-	-	5

Estimated budget to attend to extensions and modifications quantified in Table 14.4 is given in Table 14.5.

Table 14.5: Estimated budget for housing extensions and modifications

	Estimate (\$)
Extensions	35,000
Modifications	15,000
Total	50,000

14.3.5 Infrastructure

All elements of infrastructure investigated in Chapter 8 are serviceable and adequate except for:

- Inadequate management of the sewerage system by Essential Water which permits the escape of odours from the ventilation shaft in Creedon Street, the Creedon Street SPS and/or the Wills Street WWTP. For the SPS and vent, either dosing the wastewater system with activated charcoal and/or installing odour control equipment are solutions; and
- Routing heavy through traffic along Creedon Street, bypassing the CBD.

No cost is attached to either action as both measures are the responsibility of utilities.

14.4 Asset preservation

All social housing properties are subject to planned inspection cycles. Under their Strategic Asset Management Plans, MPRHC and Compass Housing prepare plans for asset maintenance so there is a clear programme and scope of work for each property. Responsive maintenance for time-critical repairs will continue to be undertaken on an 'as needed' basis to reinstate a property or appliance to a safe or functional level of service. The practices of Broken Hill LALC have not been disclosed as the Land Council declined to participate in the project.

Compass Housing reported that its maintenance of AHO properties was consistent with the requirements of the AHO and no special provision need be made for heavy use. The relationship was such that repairs to \$5,000 could be made routinely and work above this amount negotiated with the agency. In contrast, financial constraints limit the flexibility which MPRHC has to carry out repairs of a more substantial nature and approval from the AHO is not necessarily forthcoming. This being so, it remains a challenge for MPRHC at times to comply with health and safety, legislative and duty of care obligations. It is anticipated that MPRHC's integration into the MPRH&BC management framework will provide a more assured and sustainable financial footing and offer tenants greater certainty that their properties will be maintained in good condition.

Estimated costs for routine repair and maintenance required to attend to immediate restoration and asset preservation are summarised in Table 14.6. Average spend/property is approximately \$28,950.

Table 14.6: Repair and maintenance, probable order of cost	
	Cost (\$)
Responsive and planned maintenance	1,995,600
Particular repairs	-
Total	1,995,600

14.5 Tenant support and education

MP TSEP has become an essential provider of support in the social housing space in Broken Hill, owing to its key role in supporting community members to establish and maintain tenancies, negotiate application and compliance processes and leverage partnerships to deliver wrap-around services. It also plays an increasingly strategic part in support of CWP and MPRA initiatives. Funding is, at present, committed by AHO on an annual basis. At the time of writing, application has been made for an extension of the initiative for twelve months to October 2022. Given the complexity of the housing and related human services landscape from a community perspective, ongoing resourcing of MP TSEP is considered critical to the sustainability of gains which are made because of implementation of this Master Plan.

14.6 Home ownership

A larger number of respondents to the householder survey were owners, and some interest in transitioning to home ownership was expressed among social housing tenants and private renters. The CWP has not expressed any great enthusiasm for pursuing this form of tenure on behalf of tenants but this HEHP does contain a recommendation for an information session for those tenants who might wish to consider this option further.

14.7 Emergency accommodation

Broken Hill is endowed with a scattering of vacant hotels falling into disrepair, as shown in Figure 14.1.

One or more of these could be adaptively reused for emergency accommodation: as a bail hostel, accommodation for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence, for men in need of respite, emergency accommodation for the homeless or as temporary accommodation for young persons.

Figure 14.1: Former hotel, Railway Town



With the right person managing the facility, service providers are convinced of its success. The concept of adaptive reuse of former hotels in Broken Hill is not unusual: Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation has converted two (the former Silver King and Miner's Arms Hotels) for administrative and service delivery use; and the Far West LHD Child and Family Health operates from the former Crown Hotel. The Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum is an adaptively reused former bond store, and the former Masonic Club Hotel has become a church.

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CAP-2.2	12.1 12.7	To increase economic participation for members of the Broken Hill Aboriginal community	<p>With MPS support, negotiate a package of economic initiatives relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded service to assist with obtaining birth certificates Transition from school to work and further learning Targeted training and related employment initiatives Greater participation of Aboriginal people in delivering services provided to the community Culturally safe technology hub to support people with limited computer literacy to access services Support to transition to small business start-ups Tourism industry infrastructure and promotion Establishing a Broken Hill asset maintenance/building unit as a post-release employment initiative for ex-prisoners with building trade skills 	The CWP aspires to improve the economic situation of the community in an holistic and integrated way by increasing the level of active participation in the labour market. The proportion of Aboriginal people aged 17 and 18 years disengaged from employment, education and training at the time of the 2016 Census was 2.5 times that for non-Indigenous people the same age. The employment to population ratio for Aboriginal people aged 15 years and over was 21% lower than for non-Indigenous people. There were no Aboriginal-owned and operated private businesses other than self-employed sole traders
CAP-4.2	6.11 12.1 13.5	To give support to people affected by alcohol and other drugs	<p>Advocate through MPRA for a comprehensive review of Aboriginal alcohol and other drug residential and counselling services across NSW with a view to developing a strategy and the infrastructure to address the unmet need for services in the Region and locally</p> <p>Promote Broken Hill as the location for a dedicated, Aboriginal community controlled alcohol and other drug rehabilitation centre for the Far West</p>	Access to alcohol and other drug services, particularly early intervention and prevention services, for Aboriginal people living in far western NSW is extremely problematic. There are no residential services within sensible reach and counselling services are primarily delivered by mainstream providers: FVLHD and the RFDS which has partnered with the Lives Lived Well outreach initiative based in Dubbo to deliver counselling interventions and referral services to Broken Hill but these services are not Aboriginal specific. Service providers in the justice space, in particular, cite lack of culturally safe alcohol and other drug services as a barrier to permanent exit from the criminal justice system
CAP-5.2	6.11 12.1 12.4 12.7 13.2	To ensure our families have access to support, refuge and counselling that is culturally safe	Advocate with DCJ and other responsible departments for review of the current service response to domestic and family violence with the aim of supporting Aboriginal parents and children who are survivors of domestic and family violence to remain in their home where it is safe to do so or providing alternative housing options, including Aboriginal-specific safe houses for women with children, and men with children, where it is not safe	The 2015 AHO report, <i>Demand and Supply of Aboriginal Housing in Remote and Outer Regional NSW</i> , documented a specific demand for an Aboriginal Safe House to accommodate women and children escaping domestic and family violence. This need was echoed loudly by the CWP and service providers in consultations to inform this HEHP. Existing 6-room capacity at Catherine Haven is overwhelmed. Service providers indicate a steady flow of men with children escaping violence as well. Aboriginal community controlled service providers in the

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CAP-5.4	6.11 Chapter 9 11.3 12.1 12.7 13.3	To decrease the number of children at risk and from associated events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the environmental lead action plan set out in Table 9.1 Advocate for the construction of a local Aboriginal-specific “time out place”, with appropriate counselling, for men in need of respite as a result of anger and frustration Advocate with DCJ and other responsible departments to review the need for safe accommodation for children and young people unable to live at home 	domestic and family violence space devote substantial unfunded resources to addressing housing needs of clients Blood lead levels in many young Aboriginal children remain stubbornly above the NHMRC threshold for action, posing a long lasting threat to health and welfare The CWP holds grave concerns for the safety of children in DFV situations involving violent fathers, proposing that a men-only facility be provided to allow children to remain in the family home safe with the mother. Restricting access by the father without providing an alternative safe place for men is not viewed as sufficient Despite the well-regarded service provided by Mission Australia, a substantial number of Aboriginal children and young people are in out-of-home care at any point in time. While Mission Australia has access to crisis accommodation for boys and young men, there is a shortage of shelter for girls and young women, and also for young families
CAP-5.5	12.1 12.7 13.5 13.6	To ensure services and programmes supporting families are coordinated and accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster a closer relationship between the CWP and all tiers of government to drive improvements in human services including a tighter focus on cooperation, integration and community wellbeing. Negotiate formal Service Level Agreements to clearly define service objectives, operational practices and accountability measures Include the CWP in any decision-making process relating to procurement and evaluation of Aboriginal-specific human services delivery to the community Challenge the implementation of contestability-driven procurement and programme management processes in the light of sector fragmentation and inefficiencies Evaluate and review the role and operational objectives of the proliferation of human services providers in addressing Aboriginal homelessness, particularly in relation to NSW Government homelessness strategy, including practices of Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice Seek MPS assistance in conjunction with TSEP housing staff 	CWP input indicates that community awareness of availability of various human services, and of the presence of some providers, is patchy at best. Service providers of long standing in the community report having observed interagency forums and collaborative arrangements between organisations break down as procurement decisions by governments have resulted in arrangements for service delivery becoming atomised. Apart from the Regionally-based Aboriginal organisations and BHLALC, which operates by statute, there are no operating Aboriginal community controlled enterprises. The CWP sees this as a barrier to community being able to access culturally safe services. The number of operators in the disability and home care and home support services sectors strongly suggest that services are not being delivered cost-effectively

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<p>to mount a multi-service expo with representation from all service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inform FWLHD and DCJ of community needs currently unmet which are identified in the CAP but not directly relevant to the strategic basis of this HEHP. Of particular concern to the community are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lack of dedicated spaces at the hospital and medical centres for community to gather - Access to culturally safe renal dialysis services - Poorly targeted travel arrangements (IPTAAS) for patients discharged from hospital - Weak engagement of community in sporting activities - Absence of suicide prevention services targeted to young people - Ready access to early childhood services, particularly preschool and before school services 	
CAP-7.1	3.6 6.9 12.1	To ensure there are adequate heating and cooling systems for public and BHLALC houses	In conjunction with Strategy BH-08, provide reverse cycle split system type air conditioning and draught proofing measures to all Aboriginal social housing	The MPRH&BC household survey established that about 30% of Aboriginal social housing dwellings in Broken Hill had neither heating or cooling appliances installed. With the duration of extreme temperatures increasing, it is essential for reasons of personal health and general wellbeing for air conditioning to be provided to each household
CAP-7.2	12.1	To secure remote housing status for Broken Hill	Support MPRA and MPS to develop a Region-specific Remote Area Housing Strategy which meets the needs of the Broken Hill Aboriginal community now and in the longer-term	Given that Broken Hill is surrounded by tens of thousands of square kilometres of arid zone rangeland, its ARIA+ classification of Outer Regional is clearly anomalous if this classification is being used to define policy and practice in relation to housing and other human services. This classification fails to account for contextual issues around personnel recruitment and retention, economic market characteristics, paucity of affordable transport links, and other remoteness-related confounding factors which, in aggregate, produce perverse outcomes when metrocentric policy is imposed. The SEIFA IRSD gives Broken Hill a ranking of 124 out of 130 local government areas in NSW
CAP-7.3	12.1	To conduct an evaluation of housing stock against State and Industry	Undertake Property Asset Surveys to determine the extent to which properties meet FACS Asset Performance Standards and	The CWP is concerned that social housing provided by the AHO and BHLALC is not being maintained to an acceptable standard.

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
CAP-7.4	12.1 12.4 13.2	Standards To increase the availability of short-term hostel accommodation to accommodate youth waiting lists and offender re-integration	provide oversight in preparation of asset maintenance plans to repair or replace stock deemed to be below standard, including planned and cyclical maintenance and improvement Advocate for provision of a safe house, refuge and/or secure crisis accommodation/hostel and related support services in Broken Hill. Consider acquisition and repurposing of closed hotels and similar properties for purpose-specific managed hostels. Target groups will include homeless persons generally, people bailed to Broken Hill, offenders exiting custody, and people travelling to Broken Hill to access health services. Provide for a managed transition to permanent housing where relevant. Advocate for programmes to support transition, including for offenders pre-release. Explore negotiation of a MoU between MPRHC, Compass Housing and local real estate agents as a pathway to supported emergency accommodation	The results of the MPRH&BC household survey bear out the CWP's perception of housing condition There are currently very few options in Broken Hill to accommodate and support individuals or families escaping violence or otherwise requiring emergency accommodation. The CWP and service providers alike see the lack of crisis accommodation as being a barrier to effective service delivery. It cannot be acceptable that service providers are offering swags to clients, or that the only available crisis accommodation is located in Wilcannia and Wentworth. Lack of crisis accommodation is contributing to crowding in dwellings, and consequent evictions. It is also contributing to unacceptable rates of reoffending among people exiting the criminal justice system who are working to put their lives back together and find a way to participate in the economy
BH-01	5.2 6.1 6.3	Land acquisition	Commence building a land bank through a rolling programme of acquisitions of vacant and suitable abandoned blocks to provide sites for future residential development. Title to rest with BHLALC and/or MPRHC as a step to rebuilding the local ACHP property portfolio	The AHO has no vacant blocks remaining for development while BHLALC has title to four undeveloped blocks, two of which (2471/757298 and 2/1119598) are unlikely to be suitable for residential development. With a waiting list of in excess of 100, it is clear that new builds will be required to satisfy, in part or whole, the growing needs of the community. A rolling programme is suggested to match supply with demand, and capacity to deliver new homes. It is further suggested that discussions be held with BHCC to determine the programme, extent and timeframe for new land releases
BH-02	6.10	Demolition	Subject to scoping to determine existing asset condition, no Aboriginal social housing dwellings are recommended at this stage for demolition	-
BH-03	6.5 6.11 9.5 13.1 13.2	New housing	Greatly boost Aboriginal rental housing supply through new builds and/or acquisitions in low lead risk zones. Priority to be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single young people Elderly persons 	This HEHP shows clearly the housing status of Aboriginal individuals and families is dire by any measure. As of June 2018, there were 103 households approved for housing on the Housing Pathways waiting list. The MPRH&BC household survey alone identified 20 families, 68 young people and 8 elders as in

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes for families living in crowded households or, alternatively, intergenerational families Homes for families living in substandard private accommodation Persons and families who are assessed as homeless <p>Engage the CWP in the planning and design process for all new developments and assign ownership to MPRHC and/or BHLALC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-unit developments larger than a duplex are not acceptable 	need of accommodation which, when factored to reflect need across the whole community, would exceed Pathways approvals by a margin. The number of housing units swells again when accounting for families with children subject to environmental lead exposure, to be rehoused from slum tenancies, and as a result of the Creedon Street flats repurposing
BH-04	6.10	Replacement housing	All existing Aboriginal social housing is deemed serviceable although up to eleven are reported by tenants to be in a poor state of repair and some may be candidates for replacement when scoping is carried out	-
BH-05	5.1 6.7	Housing extensions	Provide additional bedrooms where needed to alleviate crowding where it remains in existing dwellings after any family dispersal resulting from BH-03	The ABS Census 2016 identified that 8.5% of Aboriginal households required at least one extra bedroom to accommodate residents while the MPRH&BC household survey recorded six households in need of additional bedrooms which, across the full Aboriginal social housing portfolio equates to 12 x 1 bedroom extensions and 2 x 3 bedroom extensions
BH-06	5.3 5.6 6.5 6.8 12.3 13.2 13.3	Permanent accommodation for homeless people	<p>In addition to provision of additional housing as per Strategy BH-03 and the crisis accommodation response as per Strategy CAP-7.4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an interim measure until additional housing is developed to meet need, introduce a moratorium on evictions and refocus social housing tenancy management to case manage difficult tenancies. In particular, suspend all disciplinary action relating to housing complement even if this means accepting degrees of crowding Erect flat pack natural disaster temporary housing to house families until permanent accommodation becomes available 	<p>There is no value in providing co-ordinated services where there is nowhere for the services to place homeless people.</p> <p>Homelessness is a 'hidden' consequence of the lack of housing in Broken Hill and so the number of individuals and families without adequate shelter is difficult to quantify. The ABS Census 2016 indicated a total of 63 persons across Broken Hill and the Far West while the MPRH&BC household survey recorded 40 persons being provided shelter by those owner occupiers and renters who responded to the survey. Adding those in boarding houses and refuges, it is possible the number could exceed 100 persons</p>

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
BH-07	6.10 12.4	Housing repair and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit adequate investment to restore asset condition, amenity and longevity Investigate health hardware and design solutions to increase the functionality of crowded houses and reduce the impacts of crowding, with a focus on healthy living practices and reducing the disease impact of crowding (as opposed to just maintaining houses at standard) Ensure that security and safety measures are regularly maintained in functional condition 	Tenants reported on asset condition as at the time of the MPRH&BC household survey. Reports, as might be expected were mixed, ranging from favourable to not so favourable. Under the AHO <i>Build and Grow</i> policy, asset condition has deteriorated and decline in condition requires to be reversed. Survey responses indicated that landlord responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act may not be being complied with
BH-08	6.5	Energy affordability	Install residential solar PV panels to all dwellings not currently provided with solar power and include associated energy saving measures	Energy poverty is rife in communities across the Region, including Broken Hill. Previous energy affordability measures have not addressed the needs of all Aboriginal social housing tenants so this proposal is a step to an equitable solution to those households which have not benefited so far with the objective of reducing the burden of electricity bills
BH-09	6.12	Equity and dignity in access and service	Discreetly extend the work of this HEHP to research the extent of slum tenancies with a view to identifying and invoking a coordinated consumer protection response to unscrupulous landlords who are exploiting Aboriginal individuals and families in the private rental market	Appalling evidence has emerged of systematic exploitation by a cartel of private landlords who are providing the 'housing of last resort' to Aboriginal individuals and families in need of shelter at unconscionable rents. Described by some community members as unfit for dogs, houses are dilapidated, dangerous and unfit for habitation
BH-10	6.4 12.2 12.3 13.2 13.3 13.5	Tenancy management of Aboriginal social housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the completion of the AHO/Compass Housing service agreement, transfer management of AHO properties to MPRHC in line with the preferences of the community for a local or Regional ACHP housing manager Examine the relevance and/or accessibility of DCJ Housing Pathways as an appropriate application process in view of its complexity and inability to generate accurate housing demand data and replace with a simpler and more flexible Region-specific process. Remove barriers which prevent currently ineligible groups applying for social housing Investigate whether housing application, allocation and transfer processes are fair, flexible, and consistent across social housing providers, including use of appeals and complaints procedures 	The community, through the MPRH&BC household survey, the CWP, and human service providers consistently flagged a series of concerns in relation to tenancy and asset management services. Particular issues were raised in relation to organisational culture, accessibility, communications, and rigid management processes; responses to which are itemised in detail in the Strategy column

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritise tenant welfare over commercial interest and ensure sector resourcing is consistent with the need to secure the wellbeing of disadvantaged tenants in a suboptimal housing market ▪ Conduct a rent review as the CWP considers rent levels are not consistent with housing condition and level of amenity ▪ Advocate with housing managers for improved responsiveness to tenant circumstances, perceptions of safety, enquiries and requests for assistance ▪ Support locally relevant, culturally sensitive tenancy management approaches which have the objectives of supporting community aspirations for sustainable social housing tenancies, and preventing Aboriginal individuals and families sliding into homelessness ▪ Maintain the role of TSEP in supporting tenants at risk of breach to retain their tenancies and assisting with access to human services ▪ Work with social housing providers to help build their capacity to work with tenancies experiencing crowding ▪ Consider ways in which barriers to access to formal private sector tenancies, including absence of a rental history and agent discrimination, can be removed. Look at the possibility of negotiation of a MoU between MPRHC, Compass Housing and local real estate agencies to streamline access to mainstream rental properties ▪ Investigate the allegation that Aboriginal social housing tenants are being scammed by building trades carrying out tenant damage repairs 	
BH-11	11.3	Residential aged care	Investigate the potential for an Aboriginal owned and operated residential aged care service committed to providing quality care services to all residents in a setting which ensures continual monitoring and review of care and service delivery while maintaining individual privacy	Previous research in the Region's far west communities has indicated that older Aboriginal residents in need of care prefer to remain at home in community rather than move to a residential facility. The CWP is of the view that this preference may result from the perception of care being provided in a large, somewhat impersonal, residential aged care facility whereas a clustered, domestic model of residential aged care with

Table 14.7: Master Plan

Strategy	Chapter reference	Action area	Strategy	Justification
BH-12	6.13 8.1 8.2 12.6	Infrastructure and municipal services	<p>Provide or negotiate with Essential Water and BHCC to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install effective odour control measures to Creodon Street ventilation stack, the Creodon Street SPS and the Wills Street WWTP to eliminate offensive odours in Creodon Street in particular and across Railway Town more generally Re-route heavy through traffic away from Creodon Street Negotiate with BHCC for regular clean-up of rubbish and unwanted bulk items 	<p>Increasing emphasis on care in home-like environments might find greater support. As a consequence, the CWP would like to promote the opportunity to undertake a study to examine the possibility of establishing a facility guided by the work of Dyer S.M. et al in the paper <i>Clustered domestic residential aged care in Australia: fewer hospitalisations and better quality of life</i>, 2018, which concluded that “<i>Clustered domestic models of residential care are associated with better quality of life and fewer hospitalisations for residents, without increasing whole of system costs.</i>”</p> <p>Odours from the Creodon Street ventilation stack, the sewage pumping station, the Wills Street Wastewater Treatment Plant and the waste management facility individually and collectively produce strong, offensive and unacceptable odours across the residential area and require controlling</p> <p>Creodon Street, although largely residential, is a heavy vehicle route designated for vehicles up to 100 tonnes, with consequent amenity, health and safety ramifications. BHCC, in conjunction with the mines, proposed a city bypass network in 2010 but the project failed to gain interest and has lapsed</p> <p>Cost barriers to the waste management facility contributes to illegal dumping which, in turn, produces an accumulation of rubbish in residential areas</p>
BH-13	6.6 13.5	Home ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate to MPRA for a culturally and geographically relevant model and process for increasing home ownership among Aboriginal people in Broken Hill as part of the Co-Design process Examine the feasibility of rent/buy schemes as a means of moving to home ownership Consider a strategy to support elderly home owners maintain their properties to an acceptable standard 	<p>The MPRH&BC household survey and the CWP identified some interest in home ownership but the CWP has reported that community feedback in relation to IBA's role in assisting community to home ownership has been unfavourable</p> <p>Some home owners who responded to the MPRH&BC household survey stated that the have trouble in maintaining their properties because of physical incapacity and requested consideration be given to some form of home assistance</p>

14.8 Probable order of cost

Probable orders of cost for each strategy are shown in Table 14.8. The estimates were prepared on the following basis:

- Costs for building-related work are derived from industry standard cost information and/or for project costs for similar work in the Murdi Paaki Region;
- Prices are current to September 2020;
- An index appropriate to locality is applied;
- Building costs assume that construction takes place in accordance with MPS procurement practice. Projections may need to be re-evaluated if training schemes are integrated;
- Allowance for project management has been assumed to be generally between 10% and 15% of the construction budget depending upon the nature of the work involved and the degree of investigative work required;
- Estimates are stated as GST exclusive.

Table 14.8: Probable orders of cost, housing and environmental health infrastructure		
Strategy	Description	Order of cost (\$)
Housing		
	Planning and development	232,600
	Land acquisition	2,790,000
	Infrastructure	-
	New house building	38,581,800
	Replacement housing	-
	Housing extensions	50,000
	Repair and maintenance	1,995,600
	Sub-total	43,650,000
	Unquantified risk allowance	2,182,500
	Project management (10.0%)	4,365,000
	Programme admin (3%)	1,309,500
	Total for housing and infrastructure	51,507,000

No costs have been assigned to improvement in and extension of human services for the reason that these services are already the subject of government programme planning and resource allocation processes. Performance monitoring of

government services is a key area of focus under the OCHRE Murdi Paaki LDM Accord II and Accord processes should be brought to bear on areas of underperformance.

14.9 Funding sources

Funding for the project will need to be negotiated through the RAHLA as the principal decision-maker on matters of Aboriginal social housing in the Region. Neither ACHP is in a sufficiently robust financial position to contribute to these extraordinary costs from revenue derived from property rents and subsidies and is dependent upon grant funding from governments. Table 14.9 is a notional income/expenditure statement for AHO Broken Hill properties based on typical property information for FY2020-21, Council charges as shown at Table 7.1, and an unimproved land value of \$35,000. The calculation optimistically assumes 100% rent collection.

Table 14.9: Notional income and expenditures relating to Broken Hill Aboriginal social housing		
		Amount (\$)
Income	Rents	563,112
	Subsidy	82,500
	Total revenue	645,612
Outgoings	Rates/charges	82,471
	Administration	125,000
	Property costs	337,224
	Other costs	80,000
	Total outgoings	624,695
	Balance	20,917

A fair assessment would be that both Compass and MPRHC would be at or close to breakeven with the current financial structure. If the Land Council properties are added, the local Aboriginal social housing sector is not sustainable.

Viability of the service to the Broken Hill community is subject to the on-going financial support in the form of government grants and subsidies from the Aboriginal Housing Office. Alternative financial investment models such as social impact investing may provide solutions to funding capital and/or recurrent costs in relation

to, say, households subject to elevated levels of lead contamination.

14.10 Staging of works

Priorities for new housing are to be found in every segment of the community. A strategic approach is thus required to address multiple determinants of housing disadvantage. Arranging for repair and maintenance to existing social housing properties is an activity independent of considerations relating to new housing and can proceed as a matter of course. Repair and maintenance work should be programmed to proceed as one integrated contract, subject to local building sector capacity, with building extensions included within the scope of the contract.

Such is the scale of need described in this Plan that it will be necessary to insert a feasibility step into the process of operationalising the activities recommended in this Master Plan. Feasibility analysis should focus on timing and funding; the actual scope of activities is not in question.

To the extent that staging of works can be determined given the scale and scope of housing need, initial focus should be on meeting the needs of primary, secondary and tertiary homeless (including tenants of slum landlords who, on the whole, could not be presumed to be adequately housed), and families with children aged under five years old whose living conditions place them at elevated risk of lead toxicity.

Negotiation of a collaboration with Broken Hill City Council and NSW Government stakeholders around land acquisition should occur at the earliest stage to ensure preliminary planning can consider the availability for redevelopment of existing abandoned lots; any proposals Council has for residential zone expansion; and the way in which infill development can take place.

The Master Plan does not provide a budget for emergency or transitional accommodation. This, again, is subject to discussion with Council and service providers. Investigations for this Plan indicated a need, at the very least, for hostel-style accommodation for people temporarily resident in

Broken Hill for reasons of access to health services; for accused on bail; as a halfway house for former prisoners on release; and to meet the needs of people (women, men and children) escaping domestic and family violence.

In view of the reputational damage being caused to the Aboriginal community by the housing problems of Creedon Street, the continued use of the Creedon Street flats requires to be resolved quickly.

In conjunction with development of a strategic approach to addressing the housing crisis, consideration needs to be given to the aspects of human services procurement and service delivery set out in the Master Plan. At the core of this will be advocacy with DCJ and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to re-work policies and practices in the light of findings about the unintended adverse consequences of insistence on contestability models in an environment of market failure. The human services delivery framework exhibits the same poor performance characteristics as the Aboriginal social housing sector.

14.11 Value-adding initiatives

For a larger community such as Broken Hill, integrating training initiatives with building activity should not be problematic in that works, because of scale, can be programmed to be of long duration. Given the scale of development outlined in Table 14.1 and Table 14.7, and documented community aspirations for integrated employment and training outcomes, a substantial employment and training programme is not only possible but essential. Such initiatives have been successfully implemented in the Region in the past at scale in conjunction with Western Institute of TAFE. For example, under the National Aboriginal Health Strategy project at Namatjira Avenue, the Mildura and District Educational Council (Australia) and Sunraysia Institute of TAFE were contracted to coordinate and deliver accredited competency-based on-the-job training in specified trades and other areas of endeavour to nominated apprentices, trainees and others within a training framework centred on building and infrastructure projects. Murdi Paaki Services Ltd has the capacity

to work with the CWP to develop a suitable employment and training framework and negotiate its implementation. This task should be an essential feature of negotiations for investment into the community's Aboriginal social housing sector.

Sight should not be lost of the role that the Broken Hill Environmental Lead Centre is required to play in relation to supporting the improvement in child blood lead levels. The CWP would wish to see adequate resourcing flow to the organisation to allow it to continue its essential work.

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