

Homelessness

What we are asking

Crisis accommodation

- \$10M to build 22 purpose-built safe dwellings for women and children in Rosebud.

Community support centres

- \$500K funding for our three overstretched local centres.
- \$70K to continue the Functional Zero Program supporting rough sleepers on the Peninsula.

Social housing

- Investment in social housing to address 2,624 applications currently on the waitlist.

Outreach workers

- \$300K to fund three outreach workers to provide local homeless people with support, to find housing and address complex social challenges in their lives.



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KEY POINTS

- Highest recorded homelessness figures in Victoria – over 948 people experienced homelessness on the Peninsula in the last year
- Highest proportion of rough sleepers of all councils in the Functional Zero By Name List program
- More local women sleeping rough (35 per cent)
- Urgently needed crisis accommodation, comparable to metropolitan Melbourne facilities
- Community support centres overstretched - struggling to meet demand
- Urgent funding for outreach workers to support residents living through homelessness
- At risk of losing critical programs and frontline services already at breaking point.

What makes this unique

The Mornington Peninsula receives little funding for homelessness services, despite having the highest number of people sleeping rough in Victoria – greater even than Melbourne City Council. In June 2025, there were 110 people sleeping rough, in tents, cars and along foreshore reserves. A large proportion were women, youth and people over 55.

There is no dedicated crisis accommodation on

the Peninsula. Inadequate public transport makes accessing crisis accommodation and services outside the Peninsula unrealistic.

We have a higher proportion of people on low incomes than Greater Melbourne – 28.6 per cent of local households were in the lowest income quartile at the last census, compared to 22.6 per cent in Greater Melbourne.



**Mornington
Peninsula Shire**

With a comparatively small rental market within a high amenity coastal area, the Mornington Peninsula is a national hot spot for short-stay tourism rentals, with over 5,000 properties. This presents a further challenge of balancing our tourism economy with our communities housing needs, at a time of unprecedented affordability pressures.

More than a third of households in private rentals are suffering housing stress – higher than Greater Melbourne at 26.8 per cent. The median rent for a home on the Peninsula is \$50 higher per week than the Greater Melbourne average. Only 3.5 per cent of local rental properties and 2.4 per cent of houses sold are affordable to those on a low income.

The interplay between our municipality's mix of regional and metropolitan areas, population growth, the lack of affordable housing and the importance of our tourism economy, has resulted in complex housing challenges and significantly reduced the availability of affordable homes – all contributing to alarming increases in the rates of homelessness.

Why this is important

The extent of local homelessness continues to increase and is worsened by a funding crisis for local services. Statistically, homelessness has remained among the highest in Victoria since the Shire formally declared a housing crisis in 2021.

Crisis accommodation is our most urgent need. Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Housing Choices Australia and Good Shepherd, have partnered to develop crisis social housing on four Council owned parcels of land on the southern Peninsula, where need is acute and growing. Following strong collaboration, the project is shovel ready, but won't happen without \$10M government funding.

We need increased funding for our community support centres, housing support programs, outreach services and provision of crisis accommodation so low-income, vulnerable individuals and families receive the critical support they need. Our centres are the largest providers of emergency relief on the Peninsula. They ensure those who cannot access mainstream government-funded services due to their circumstances can still access specialist support.

Outreach workers are providing support to acutely homeless people across the Peninsula. Funded through community donations, they are overwhelmed by demand. We have no government funding for assertive outreach workers.

Without recognition and immediate funding from other levels of government, our community risks losing already stretched frontline services that provide a lifeline, for our most vulnerable residents.

The benefits – supporting evidence and strategies

The 2016–2021 Census showed a 37 per cent increase in people classified as homeless locally. In December 2024, Council teamed up with Launch Housing and local service providers to develop a 'by-name list' (BNL) of people who are sleeping rough.

There were 948 people who sought help locally for homelessness through independently funded services in 2024–25. Over 100 local people sleep rough in tents on the foreshore and in cars each night. Of those on the Mornington Peninsula's BNL, 75 per cent were sleeping rough on 30 June 2025. This is the highest proportion of all municipalities involved in the BNL project, including the City of Melbourne.

While Council contributes \$1 million annually to subsidise the operation of community support centres in Rosebud, Mornington and Hastings, Vinnies Kitchen and Peninsula Community Legal Centre, services are overwhelmed by demand and there is a significant funding shortfall.

Thousands of people are waiting for social housing on the Mornington Peninsula – approximately 2,624 applications for the Port Phillip and Western Port side of the Peninsula.

Alignment to Council Plan 2025–2029

Strategic Objective 2.1: A safe, accessible, inclusive, and healthy community.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Valued partnerships and empowered community groups and volunteers.