



Homelessness Action Plan

2022 - 2024



**CITY OF
PERTH**

COVER IMAGE

Abdel Myassar

Infinity (2022)

Acrylic on canvas

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

"I am originally from Morocco. Due to problem gambling I lived on the streets in Sydney for several years. I came to WA to get away from poker machines. My passion is now creating art."

The attributed artworks in this document are from artists who have previously experienced homelessness. Each artwork is accompanied by a statement from the artist.

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Acknowledgment of Country

The City of Perth kaditj kalyakool moondang-ak kaaradj midi boodjar-ak ngala nyininy, Wadjak Noongar yoongar wer bandany Aboriginal yoongar yooarme boodjar-ool.

Ngalang woola Boorloo wer Derbal Yerrigan kalyakoorl, wongin kadadjiny wer, wirn-yoodan.

Ngalang kaditj Birdiya koora wer yeyi moondang-ak kaaradjiny.

The City of Perth acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land we are situated on, the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation and Aboriginal people from other lands.

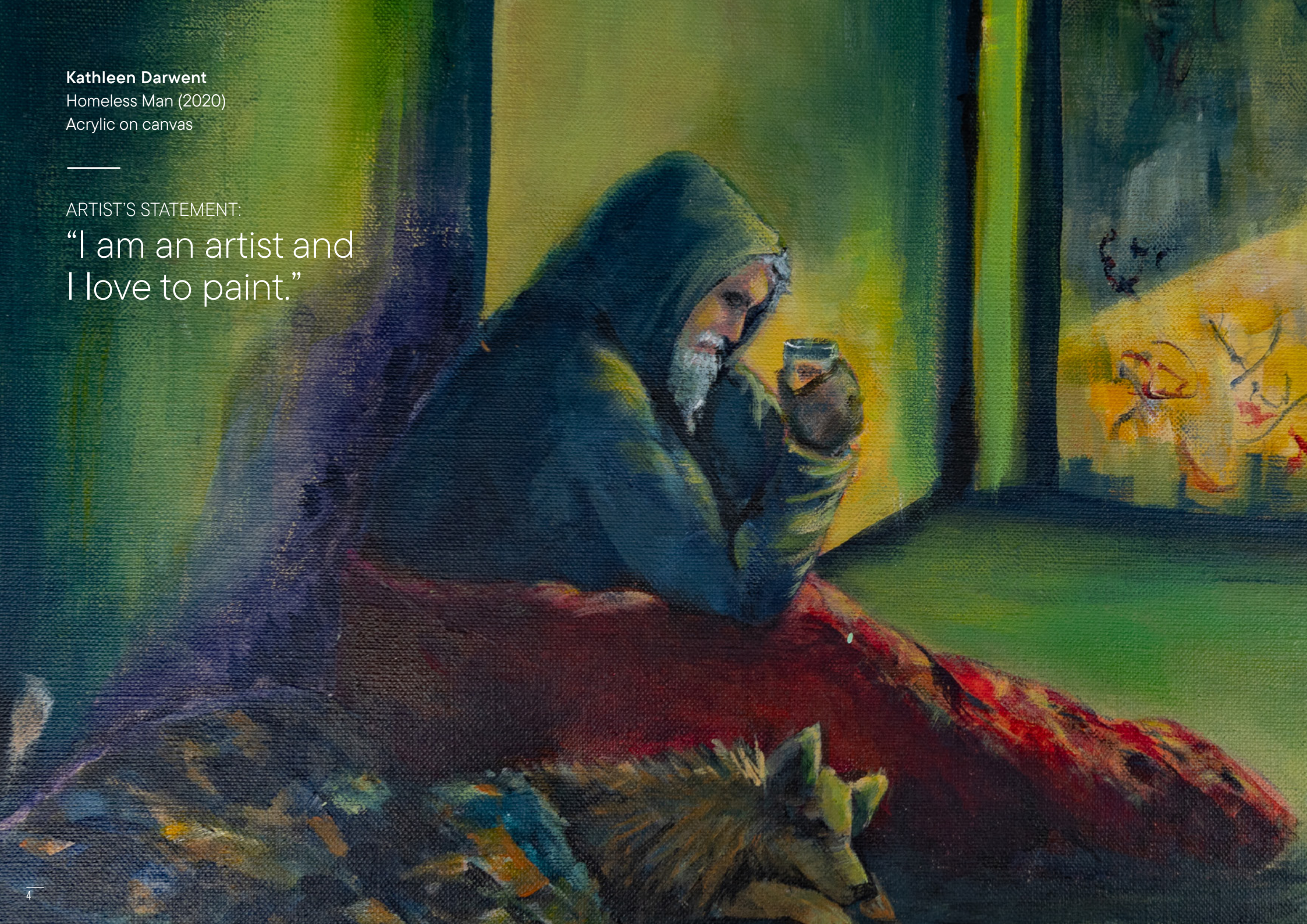
We celebrate the continuing traditions, living culture, and the spiritual connection to Boorloo (Perth) and the Derbal Yerrigan (Swan River).

We offer our respects to Elders past and present.

Kathleen Darwent
Homeless Man (2020)
Acrylic on canvas

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

“I am an artist and
I love to paint.”





1. City of Perth's strategic approach to homelessness

‘By defining and understanding our respective roles, we can achieve greater clarity about how we will work together to reach our vision and where we can affect the greatest positive change’

(Department of Communities, *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030*, p 17.)

Homelessness is a complex social issue with underlying, interrelated factors such as the lack of low-cost housing, family breakdown, addiction and insufficient mental services^{1,2}. It is therefore appropriate that the various causes of homelessness are addressed by the agency best placed to do so, in a coordinated manner.

In Western Australia, the lead agency to deliver and coordinate the actions to address homelessness is the Office of Homelessness within the Department of Communities. Their *'All Paths Lead to Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020 – 2030'* outlines the roles of the stakeholders working to reduce homelessness.

The City of Perth has a long experience of working with stakeholders to reduce the incidence, and impact of homelessness, and will continue to do so, either as a partner, facilitator and advocate.

The following sections of this plan outlines:

- The role of local government in addressing homelessness (Section 2)
- Facts on homelessness in Western Australia (Section 3)
- The specific actions the City commits to (Section 4)
- Data on homelessness in Western Australia illustrating the main contributing factors to homelessness (Appendix)

¹ Mago, V.K., Morden, H.K., Fritz, C., Wu, T., Namazi, S., Geranmayeh, P., Chattopadhyay, R., and Daddaghian, V., 2013. Analyzing the impact of social factors on homelessness: a Fuzzy Cognitive Map approach. *BMC Med Inform Decision Making*, 13(94). doi: 10.1186/1472-6947-13-94

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-monthly-data

2. The different roles (as per the Department of Communities homelessness strategy)

The following dot points outline the roles that State Government has provided for the different stakeholders in their 10-year strategic plan.

State Government

- Department of Communities (DoC) is the lead agency for homelessness in WA (particularly DoC's sub-departments: the Office of Homelessness and the Housing Authority)
- Other state departments that intersect with homelessness, such as the Departments of: Justice, Education and Health (physical and mental health services) and WA Police

Local Government (City of Perth)

- Make information on local services and supports available and accessible
- Ensure front-line staff are informed and supported to interact with people experiencing homelessness and, where appropriate, refer them to local services

Community Services Sector

- Service design, delivery of homelessness services and advocacy

Community and volunteers

- Develop and deliver specialist homelessness services
- Work with government to better design and deliver services

Private business and philanthropy

- Increase the overall resources available
- Create opportunities for innovation

Commonwealth Government

- Responsible for: welfare and income support systems, immigration, housing market and tax system
- Contribute funds to the homelessness sector through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement

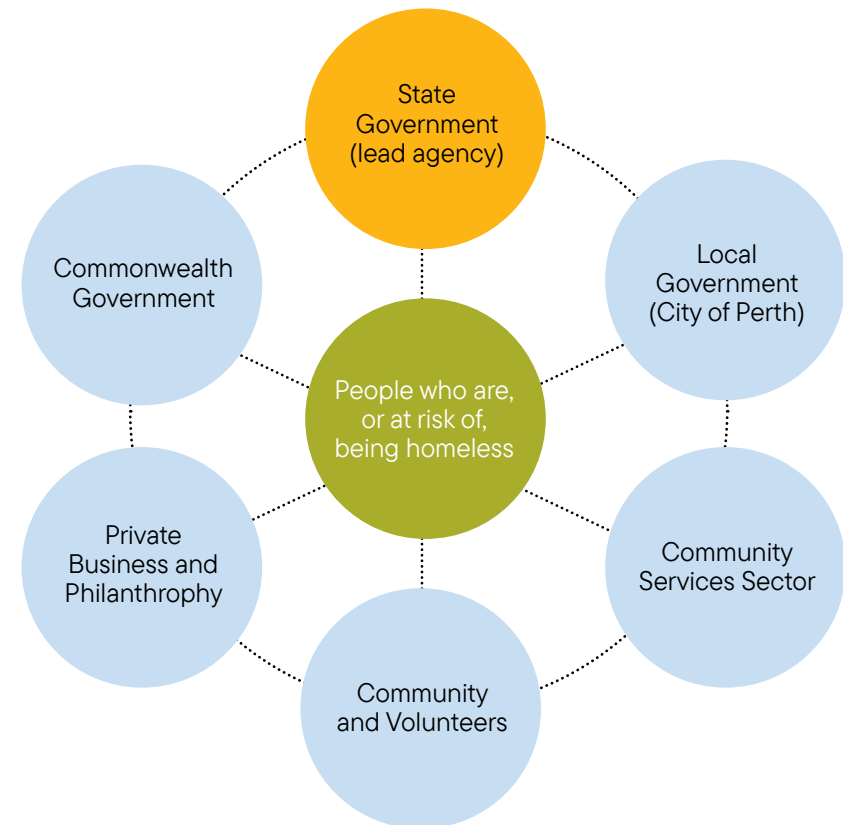


FIGURE 1 Those involved in reducing the extent and impact of homelessness
Adapted from Department of Communities, All Paths Lead to a Home:
Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030, p 17-21.



Len James

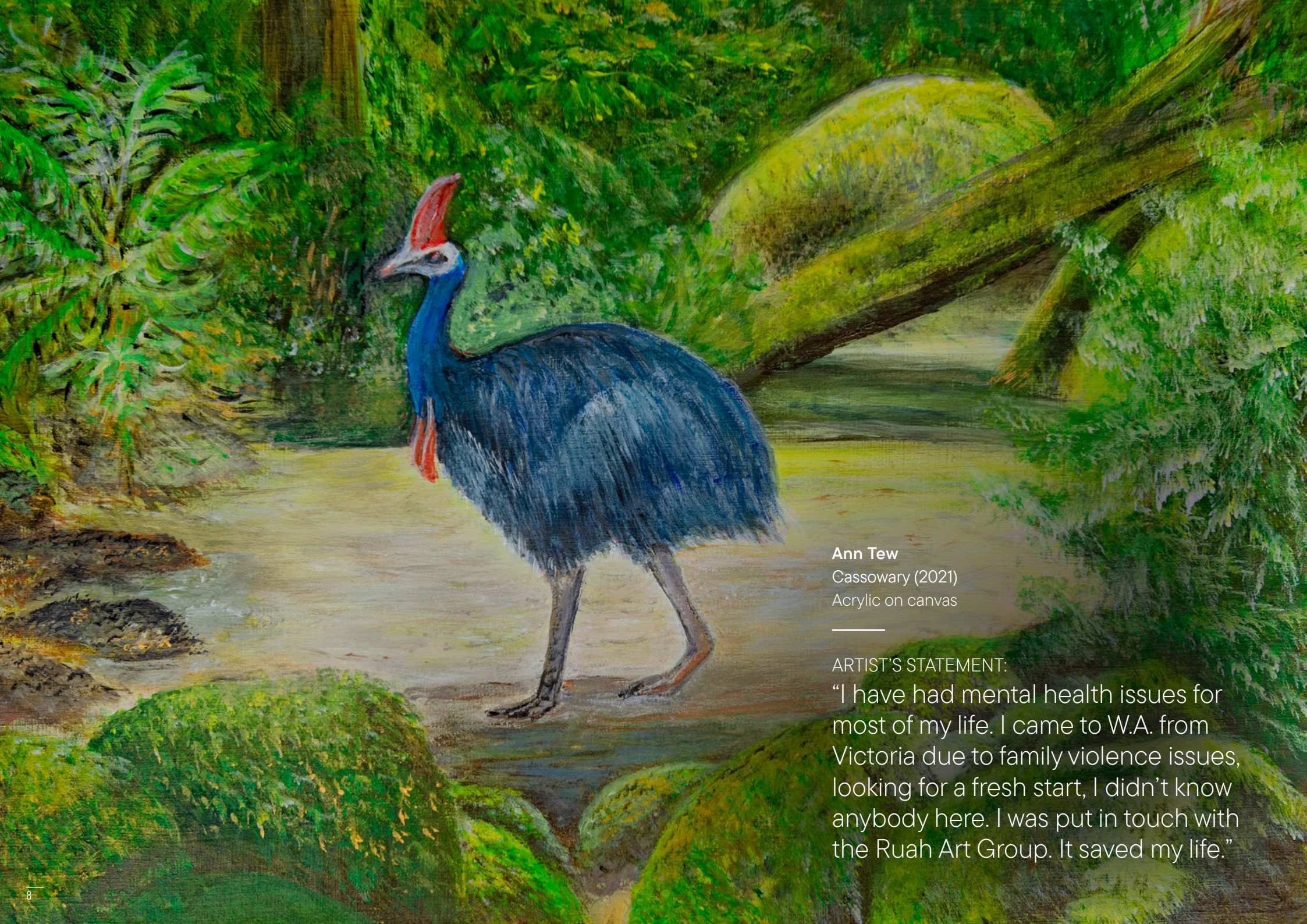
A Man's Head (2018)

Charcoal and chalk

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

"I have a lived experience of homelessness. I became homeless when I was 58, and was a rough sleeper for two years in Perth. I am now housed, which gives me the stability to move ahead with my life. I have been with Ruah Art Group for about five years."





Ann Tew

Cassowary (2021)

Acrylic on canvas

ARTIST'S STATEMENT:

"I have had mental health issues for most of my life. I came to W.A. from Victoria due to family violence issues, looking for a fresh start, I didn't know anybody here. I was put in touch with the Ruah Art Group. It saved my life."

3. Homelessness in the City of Perth

The Australian Bureau of Statistics states that a person is homeless when he/she does not have suitable accommodation alternatives and the person's current living arrangement³:

- Is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or
- Has no tenure, or their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or
- Does not allow the person to have control of, and access to space for social relations.

There are approximately 9,005 people in Western Australia who are homeless. The City of Perth area had the second highest number of people experiencing homelessness (464 people) compared to other local governments in Western Australia, and Inner Perth had the sixth highest from a regional perspective⁴.

Safe Night Space for women

\$3.3 million*

Cost to the City to provide the Safe Night Space to women experiencing homelessness (2020/21 – 2022/23).

* Establishment of the service and delivery to May 2023



Providing shelter for up to

30 women per night

Moore Street Accreditation Site

\$462,000*

Cost to the City to provide the Moore Street Accreditation Site, Mon-Fri 4.30 – 8.30pm, and Sun 8 – 11am (2021/22 – 2022/23).

* Operating costs and minor infrastructure costs to June 2023

This open-air site facilitates accredited services to provide people experiencing homelessness with necessary support, such as:



food



street doctor



laundry



showers

FIGURE 2 Two key City of Perth homelessness actions and outcomes

³ABS, 2012. Information Paper– A Statistical Definition of Homelessness (cat. No. 4922.0)

⁴ Department for Communities (2020). All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030 (2016 Census data)



4. City of Perth's actions to address homelessness

The City works with agencies and stakeholders to reduce the incidence and impact of homelessness. We will continue to support State Government, as the lead agency, in their priorities (Figure 3).



Housing First

The first and primary goal is to provide people access to safe and stable housing without preconditions or judgement. Once housing is secured, individual supports can then be provided as required, to address other needs. To enable this approach, the system must be supported by low-barrier and low-threshold accommodation and housing options as well as flexible and appropriate services that are tailored to individual needs, acknowledging that for some people may be needed long-term.



No Wrong Door

We will create and implement a No Wrong Door approach, where people experiencing or at risk of homelessness can get help to find appropriate long-term housing and support regardless of which service or agency they connect with.



Place-based response

Homelessness looks very different across Western Australia and between metropolitan, regional and remote areas. Appropriate place-based responses need to be developed, which are informed by local needs, context and capacity. Enhancing the role and capacity for regional and local decision making is important to help make sure the right responses are delivered in the right places.



Whole-of-community approach

By collaborating and co-designing with people with lived experience, the community services sector, business and philanthropy, the community and other levels of government, we can better design and deliver appropriate and flexible housing options and services that respond to the diverse needs of vulnerable people in our community.



Rough sleeping

We will initially target rough sleeping, as the most vulnerable cohort, with the intention that future action plans across the ten years will have an increase focus on prevention and embedding system changes to improve and sustain our efforts to end homelessness.

FIGURE 3 Department of Communities priorities ('All Paths Lead to Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020 – 2030': p 10)

The following outlines the City's commitments over the life of this plan.



Partner

We will build relationships with others to assist in the delivery of services and programs to the community.

CITY OF PERTH ACTIONS:

- P1: Provide the Safe Night Space (SNS) for Women:
- The City of Perth continues to provide the facility and continues to engage a reputable provider to run the service to 31 May 2023 (end of contract with the provider).
 - Review the City's continued involvement in the direct delivery of a homelessness shelter.
- P2: Review the expansion the Safe Night Space for Women by an additional hour per day (i.e. opening the facility at 6pm rather than 7pm).
- P3: Investigate options for how the City may work with others to provide transport to day centres, shelters or services.
- P4: Partner with relevant member organisations, including WA Alliance to End Homelessness and Shelter WA, working to end homelessness through collective impact.
- P5: Partner with the 'On My Feet' program to provide traineeships to enable up to ten people experiencing homelessness to become self-sufficient.
- P6: Collaborate with other agencies to share information in a timely manner (e.g. the Homelessness Working Group with direct service providers of outreach and homelessness services, the Department of Communities and WA Police, research and advocacy groups and neighbouring local governments).
- P7: Work with the Department of Communities and police to enhance our 'Outreach First' response (i.e. a welfare and support approach).



Advocate

We will advocate on behalf of the community to influence the delivery of services and programs to meet the needs of the community.

CITY OF PERTH ADVOCACY POSITIONS:

- A1. The City of Perth advocates to State and Federal Governments to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping through the below.
- Preventing homelessness:**
- Enacting evidence-based preventative policies/programs to mitigate the risk of individuals or families becoming homeless.
 - Increasing Commonwealth income support (e.g. the Newstart Allowance).
- Responding to current need:**
- Urgently increasing the amount of crisis and transitional accommodation, social (public) and affordable (private) permanent housing.
 - Ensuring adequate resources for culturally appropriate, wrap-around services and case-management.
- Capacity building and coordination:**
- Creating a system to make real-time data available to the sector.
 - Increased collaboration (strategic and operational) between the departments responsible for addressing homelessness, housing, health, justice, physical and mental health.
- A2. The City of Perth educates the community (residents, businesses and visitors) regarding the complex factors in relation to homelessness.



Facilitate

We will facilitate others to deliver services and programs to the community.

CITY OF PERTH ACTIONS:

- F1: Continue the accreditation process to improve the capacity of mobile volunteer services, charity groups and homelessness service providers to provide meals, street doctor services, laundry services etc in a safe and sustainable manner.
- F2: Investigate how the City can provide improved support at the Accreditation Site, considering items such as improved storage, lighting, traffic management, power supply, shelter and seating.
- F3: Coordination of mobile volunteer services and charity groups through place-based approaches that better meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- F4: Using City of Perth land and assets to create places that are inclusive and can support vulnerable people.

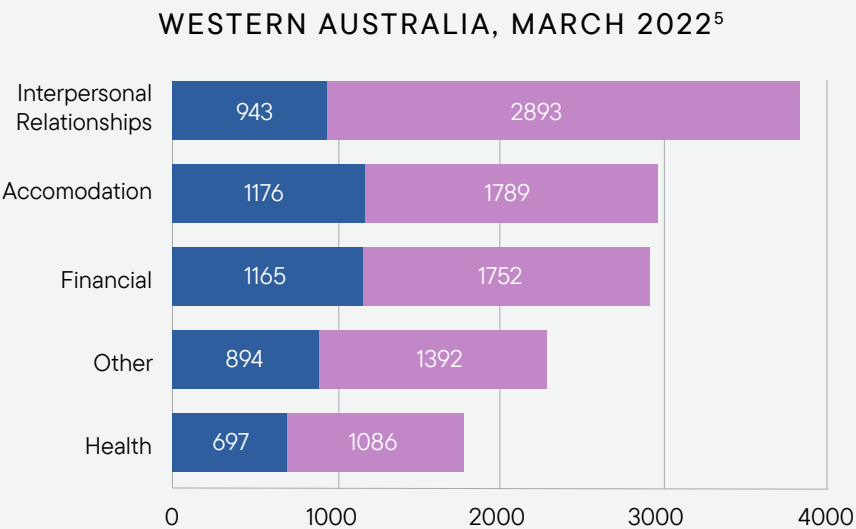


5. Appendix: Underlying reasons for becoming homeless and demographic data

The main reasons that people seek assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS)

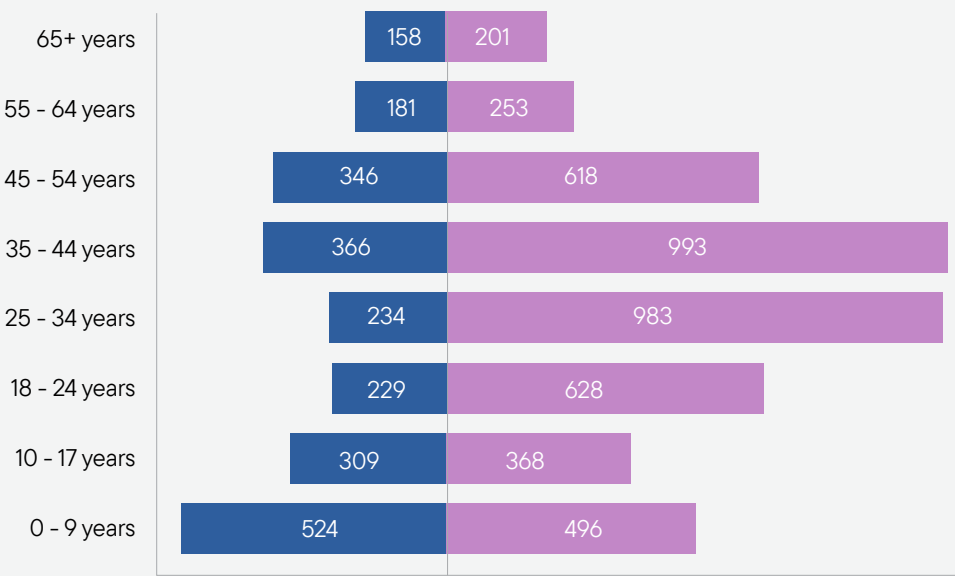
Notes:

- 1. SHS are the emergency and short-term accommodation such as refuges and crisis shelters
- 2. Clients may have more than one reasons for seeking assistance



SHS clients by age and sex

WESTERN AUSTRALIA, MARCH 2022⁵



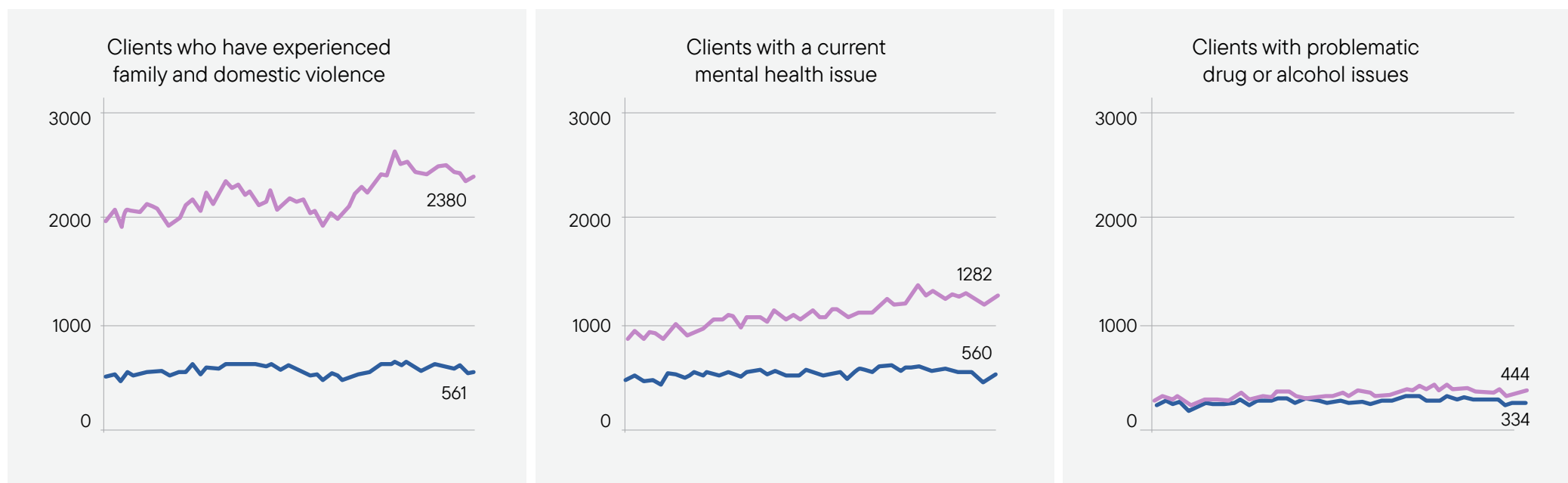
● Male ● Female

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-monthly-data

Trend data: Specialist Homelessness Services clients, by client group

- Note: The client groups are not mutually exclusive (i.e. a client may experience several issues at any one time).

WESTERN AUSTRALIA, JULY 2017 – MARCH 2022⁶



⁶ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-monthly-data

This publication is available in alternative formats and language upon request.



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