

Mapping the Australian Social and Affordable Housing Network

Final Industry Report, Project 1.61



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Cover Photo Source: BGC Australia





Preface

The Sustainable Built Environment National Research Centre (SBEnc), the successor to Australia's Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Construction Innovation, is committed to making a leading contribution to innovation across the Australian built environment industry. We are dedicated to working collaboratively with industry and government to develop and apply practical research outcomes that improve industry practice and enhance our nation's competitiveness.

We encourage you to draw on the results of this applied research to deliver tangible outcomes for your organisation. By working together, we can transform our industry and communities through enhanced and sustainable business processes, environmental performance, and productivity.

John V. McCarthy AO
Chair
Sustainable Built Environment
National Research Centre



Dr Keith Hampson
CEO
Sustainable Built Environment
National Research Centre



The Industry Challenge

Housing is an integrated network of social and economic infrastructure with multiple owners and access points. Improving the overall suitability and provision of housing infrastructure (for example incorporating new typologies to suit changing demographics) is needed to address the central issue of affordability and access for all.

SBEnc social and affordable housing research undertaken since 2014 has investigated key issues for this sector, as defined by government, industry, research and not-for-profit partners. Through this research, aimed at building the evidence base to support policy-making and housing delivery, the complexity of this system has been highlighted. Understanding the inter-relatedness of various aspects of housing provision in a person-centred, place-based policy environment has also been further advanced.





Source: BGC Australia

In this current project, *Mapping the Australian social and affordable housing network*, the need for a long-term, bi-partisan strategic approach was identified by government, industry and research partners which:

1. Helps integrate activity across the public, private, and not-for-profit (NFP) sectors, in order to provide the next generation of social and affordable housing as part of an integrated housing system.
2. Addresses diverse needs to improve housing outcomes and lifetime impacts.
3. Fosters community understanding of the need for, and benefits of, a strong and effective housing system.
4. Recognises housing as an integral part of extended social, environmental and technology-based systems.
5. Builds understanding of the social and affordable housing network in a changing market.
6. Helps those delivering social and affordable housing sector assets and services to 'get ahead of the game' and to keep up with the changing needs for housing.

The network maps which have been developed for Queensland and Western Australia, and associated findings and recommendations, can be used to inform housing policy making and delivery across Australia.



SBEnc Social Housing Research Program

This is the fourth consecutive project in the SBEnc's ongoing program of research in this field. Earlier research projects include *Rethinking Social Housing*¹, *Valuing Social Housing*² and *Procuring Social and Affordable Housing*³.

This earlier research identified that, having access to safe and secure housing brings broader productivity benefits to society, rather than being considered an expenditure or cost. It also highlighted how to leverage greater investment in social and affordable housing through social procurement.

This previous research established a productivity-based conceptual framework which highlighted potential benefits through four lenses: the individual; macroeconomic; fiscal; and non-economic such as social and environmental capital. It also provided the methodological underpinning for considering outcomes/impact across the nine domains illustrated to the right.



¹ <https://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-31/> (2015)

² <https://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-41/> (2017)

³ <https://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-54/> (2018)



Source: BGC Australia

Nine Impact Domains



**Community
& culture**



Economy



Education



Employment



Environment



**Health &
wellbeing**



Housing



**Social
engagement**



**Urban
amenity**

This industry-led research aims to ensure its uptake and ongoing impact through working collaboratively with government, not-for-profit and private sector partners. Organisations which have used research outcomes to contribute to policy and delivery include:

- Western Australia Department of Communities
- Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
- Queensland Treasury
- National Affordable Housing Consortium
- Access Housing
- Y Care
- QShelter
- Keystart Home Loans
- BGC Australia, and
- Creating Positive Futures.

Mapping the Australian Social and Affordable Housing Network

Research outputs aim to contribute to improvement in the productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of this network in Australia. The maps, findings, and supporting materials have been brought together to facilitate a high level strategic yet pragmatic understanding of the complexities and associations in this network. This has been done to help organisations better leverage outcomes for those in need of social and/or more affordable housing.

The maps are a snapshot in time, at July 2019. As such they are intended to provide a base-line overview of this network, to inform current understanding and future analysis and decision-making. They cannot be comprehensive due to the expansive nature of the network (and limited project resources), but aim to provide a foundation for decision-making. For example, they could help guide a living process to assist organisations identify and engage with partners and stakeholders, to better address the changing nature of the housing need.

The following steps have been undertaken to produce: (i) the network maps; and (ii) findings and recommendations:

1. Identify the two focal actors: (i) the Western Australian Department of Communities (formerly the Western Australia Housing Authority); and (ii) the Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works
2. Establish the 13 elements to be used to help articulate the breadth of the network and to facilitate map clarity
3. Identify the network participants including the links between them (e.g. flows of funding, knowledge); activities they undertake; the connections and interactions between them and the focal participant; and links to the person/household
4. Consolidate information into the supporting reference tables
5. Develop draft maps
6. Conduct expert panel workshops with key participants to test the draft maps
7. Consolidate the network maps
8. Undertake the analysis phase and highlight key findings and recommendations

The final analysis and findings stage was based on: (i) knowledge gathered in the previous SBEnc social and affordable housing program of research; (ii) desk top research of the network; (iii) a review of literature (e.g. network mapping and international housing systems); (iv) input of expert stakeholders in the workshops held from May-July 2019; (v) feedback on draft maps from the expert stakeholders; and (vi) insights and reflections from the research team throughout the process of developing these maps.



The 13 elements identified draw on previous SBEnrc research and the expertise of the SBEnrc Project Working Group and Project Steering Group which comprises government, industry, research and not-for-profit stakeholders:

1. Policy drivers and players
2. Funding
3. Financing (private, institutional and individual)
4. Procurement and delivery
5. Metrics, indicators and data
6. Labour market dynamics and housing
7. Changing demographics
8. Housing typologies
9. Social and environmental systems
10. Integrated, shared and disruptive technologies
11. Housing asset management
12. Production supply chain
13. Skills, knowledge and capacity building

Twenty-six network maps in total have been developed. This comprises 13 maps for each of Queensland and Western Australia. Importantly, the person and/or household also plays a central role in these maps, as it is for these people that the focal participant and others provide services. They have been shown in the centre of the maps grounding the focal agency, in recognition of this (with flows to key network participants other than the focal highlighted).

Source: BGC Australia
















The Network Maps

The two reports containing the network maps are available at the project webpage:⁴

- **Queensland Network Maps**
- **Western Australia Network Maps**

To assist map development and legibility, the identified network participants were sorted into 11 groups (right) and 3 sectors to enhance map clarity. The 3 coloured sectors represent government (orange), industry (green) and community (blue) as shown on the maps. In the Commonwealth and State Government sectors researchers sought to identify all current participants as at July 2019. In remaining sectors, where there are a large number of participants, representative examples of participating organisations are provided.

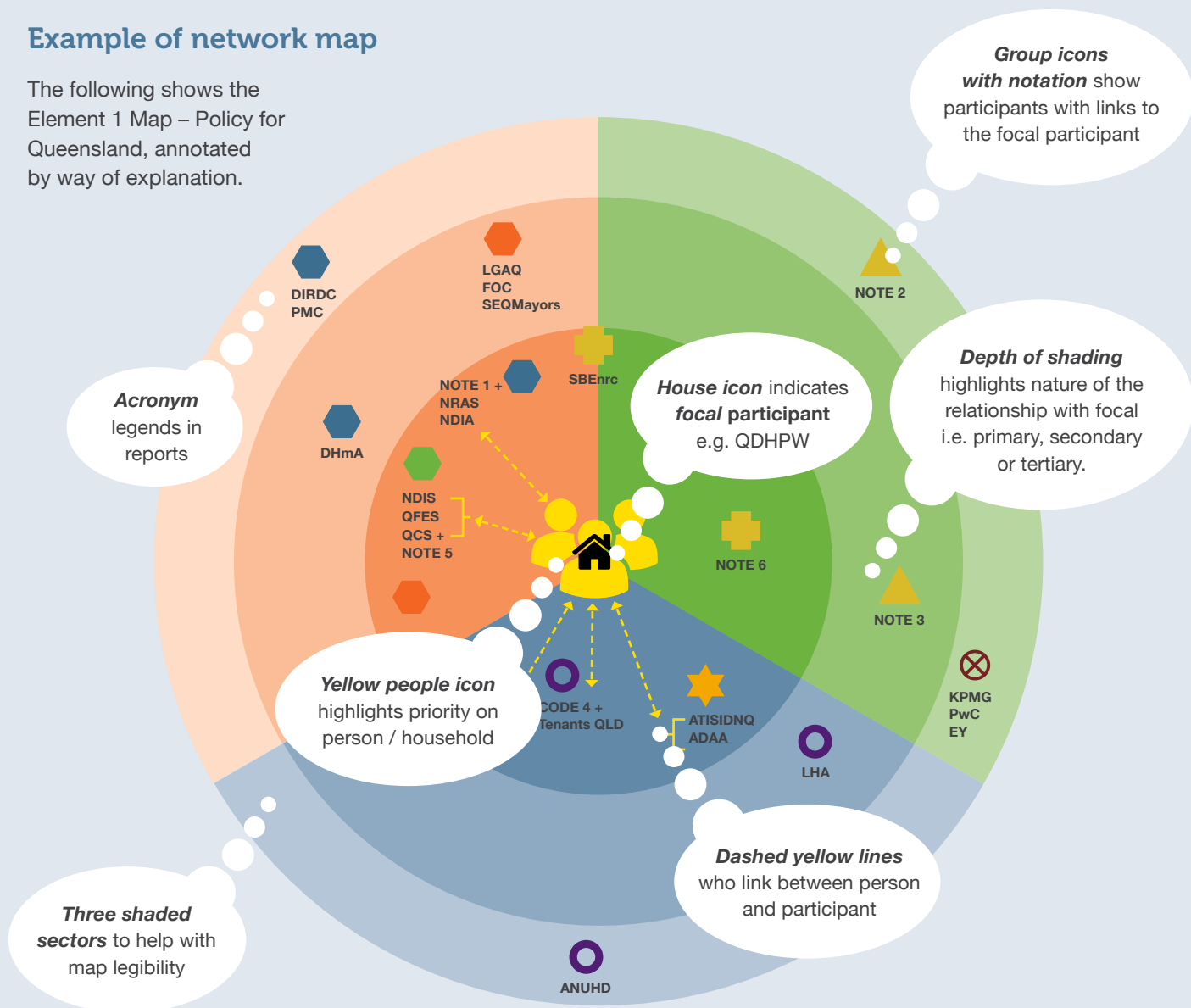
	Person/Family
	Focal Government Agency
	Commonwealth Government
	State Government
	Local Government
	Peak/Industry Association
	Advocates
	Community Housing Providers
	Not-for-Profit Providers
	Research
	Industry
	Philanthropic
	Informal



⁴ <https://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-61/>

Example of network map

The following shows the Element 1 Map – Policy for Queensland, annotated by way of explanation.



NOTE 1	NOTE 2	NOTE 3	NOTE 4	NOTE 5	NOTE 6
AIHW	PH	NDS	Q Shelter	DSDMIP-EDQ	AHURI
PC-Treasury	REIQ	AHI	ACOSS	DSDMIP-HSEP	CRI
COAG	MBA	PCA	QCOSS	DATSIP	THP
PMC	AIA	UDIA	NCAFP	DCDSS-NDIS	SLIC
ABCB	EA	NS	Tenants QLD	Treasury	
NAHA	MA		QDN	DoH	
IA	CCA			QMHC	
AIFS	HIA			RTA	
RBA				QCS	
NHHA					

Refer to acronym listing for full titles

SECTOR	RELATIONSHIP TO FOCAL		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
GOVERNMENT			
INDUSTRY			
COMMUNITY			



Key Findings

To reveal opportunities and cast new light on current challenges, this research has identified network participants in the social and affordable housing network, in Queensland and Western Australia.

The final research report presents the key findings highlighted opposite, along with recommendations which have emerged from this process

- Analysis and Findings—Mapping the Australian Social and Affordable Housing Network - Queensland and Western Australia.⁵

Through expressing the complexity and expansiveness of the social and affordable housing network in Australia, these maps help highlight why single issue, short-term policy and decision-making will struggle to provide effective solutions to Australia's critical social and affordable housing issues. The diffusion of policy creation, and asset and service delivery across the public, not-for-profit and private sectors; a lack of bipartisan policy making; the commodification of housing; and the continued focus on a lean government all further compound the challenges faced by those working in the housing network.

As a result, this research thus aims to contribute in two key ways. Firstly, through contributing to a greater understanding of the complexity of the housing network and required policy responses. And secondly through helping to build a more rigorous evidence base which can bring together both expert knowledge and lived experience via a focus on the 13 elements of the maps. If achieved, this has the potential to help us better understand current and potential risks, and better leverage outcomes and impacts from a limited investment.



⁵ <https://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-61/>



Source: BGC Australia

Key Findings

Strengths, weaknesses and critical junctions in the network	Opportunities for system improvement	Policy, research and skills development priorities	Improving network and community understanding
Single issue policy development is not a tenable or effective solution	Housing as critical social and economic infrastructure	Need for national, longitudinal datasets to inform participants across the network	There is a need for better clarity and stronger understanding of the complexities of the housing system in Australia
Addressing niche needs is vital	Recognition of changed policy and economic levers	Longevity in policy making needed	National peaks exist for industry, government and not-for-profit organisations, but not for the individual in need of housing
Need to better leverage investment to produce outcomes across multiple elements	Recognition of housing as part of functional urban, economic and social systems	Change is slow in the network, yet socio-environmental changes are occurring more rapidly	Build the evidence base to support continuing investment
Lack of bi-partisan national housing strategy to support the most vulnerable and tenants and homeowners generally is a weakness	Provide a home not a house	New ways of working are required in a place-based, person-centred policy environment	Housing needs to be considered as social and economic infrastructure in a similar way to hospitals, schools and roads
	Improve data accessibility and effectiveness of use		
	Improve understanding of a complex and fragmented network		
	Partnering and alliances are vital		
	Address cross disciplinary complexity in knowledge, skills and capacity building		

Moving Forward

This research has provided a unique and important overview of the social and affordable housing network as a whole, rather than one of siloed parts. This provides the opportunity for people and organisations from across the sector to come together with a united understanding and language, to add value both within and across the network.

Further research in this area is recommended, to build on these baseline maps. Follow-up one on one interviews with expert stakeholders could enable a further, more detailed quantitative analysis of the network using online mapping software to further describe, analyse and quantify relationships and interactions.

WA Communities quote

"The network maps are a useful point in time representation of the complex interactions between the different levels of government, the not-for-profit sector and industry, who all play important and interlinked roles in the social and affordable housing system."

BGC Australia quote

"BGC Housing Group delivers nearly eighty percent of Western Australia's affordable housing projects. Through our involvement in this SBEnrc research project, we have been able to provide insights into the discussion around affordable housing which will help guide our industry moving forward."
Michael Bartier Executive General Manager,
BGC Housing Group

Future research in the SBEnrc Social and Affordable Housing Program of Research will take place through new project *1.71 Liveable Social and Affordable High Density*. Liveability and accessibility in medium to high density urban housing and precincts is critical to maximise investment returns and minimise future risks to our community. This research will deliver a *Liveability Framework for Medium to High Density Social and Affordable Housing* with an innovative, value-focused set of quality standards. These will help drive adoption of better outcomes and promote community acceptance of delivering whole-life-solutions.





Source: BGC Australia



Find out more:

Project webpage (including link to YouTube video)
– <http://sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-61/>

Twitter – [@Rethinksocialhousing@DrJAKraatz](https://twitter.com/Rethinksocialhousing)

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