



**#EndHomelessnessWA**

## **The Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness**

### **Statement July 2022**

We're writing to share some exciting news about the future of the Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH).

#### **The New Alliance Steering Group**

First of all, we'd like to introduce ourselves as members of the Alliance Steering Group. The Steering Group acts on behalf of the wider membership of the Alliance to End Homelessness.

The Steering Group is made up of Co-Chairs Philippa Boldy (Anglicare WA) and Allan 'Big Al' Connolly (Lived Experience) as well as members Stefaan Bruce-Truglio (YACWA), Paul Flatau (CSI-UWA), Michelle Mackenzie (Shelter WA), Michael Piu (St Pat's), Mark Slattery (Ruah), Chrissie Smith (Vinnies), Leah Watkins (Housing Choices Aust), and Jacqueline Clay (Sisters of St John of God).

#### **The WAAEH Team**

The Sisters of St John of God (SSJG) have agreed to support the work of the WAAEH over the next four years. This is a transformative opportunity for the WAAEH and the Steering Group in collaboration with Shelter WA who together have appointed the following team to lead the efforts of our Alliance.

- David Pearson – Executive Officer
- Michala McMahon – Director of Practice and Improvement
- John Berger – Director of Engagement and Strategic Projects
- Royceton Hardey – Social Media Co-ordinator
- Sarah Quinton – Manager of Communications and Events (starts in September)



*(Left: John Berger, right: David Pearson, and middle: Michala McMahon)*



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David is the CEO of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH), and his appointment to this role alongside his national role provides the opportunity for greater alignment of the work of both the AAEH and the WAAEH. This will offer enormous opportunities to bring into WA in real time the shared learning from around Australia and the world about what it takes to end homelessness.

Michala comes to us, having led the Zero Project at Ruah for the last few years. She brings enormous expertise about the implementation of the [Advance to Zero](#) homelessness methodology, including housing first, improvement, collective impact, service coordination and much more.

John, who has been a constant in the work for the WAAEH, will continue to lead the Alliance's engagement activities and support a strong continued focus on the implementation of the various efforts outlined to deliver the outcomes of the 10-year Strategy.

Sarah is a former journalist turned political campaigner, community organiser, media adviser and strategic communications specialist and has worked for Government Ministers and Senators, unions and the not-for-profit sector. Most recently she campaigned for greater funding into community mental health supports managing the Prevent Support Health campaign for the WA Association for Mental Health.

Further background below on each of these new team members, and our operation to date.

We'll have more updates for you regarding our plans to redouble our efforts to implement our 10-year strategy to End Homelessness in WA soon. We can only end homelessness if we all work together and we encourage you if you're not familiar to learn more about the strategy and how you can get involved with the WAAEH on our website [here](#) and below.

We look forward to working with you towards our shared goal of ending homelessness in Western Australia.

Sincerely,

**Philippa Boldy and Allan 'Big Al' Connolly**



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### **The operation of the WA Alliance to date**

Since the publication of the WA Alliance's Ten Year Strategy to End Homelessness in 2018, the WA Alliance has been working to implement the Strategy, supporting people and communities who share the common vision of ending homelessness in their efforts. The Alliance worked closely with the Western Australian Government in developing All Paths Lead to a Home, the WA homelessness strategy.

This work has resulted in creating many strong partnerships with a range of individuals and organisations including with the Sisters of St John of God (SSJG). The SSJG has a strong history of supporting key developments within the Homelessness sector having provided critical funding to the 50 Lives and 50 Homes Housing First project. The SSJG took a keen interest in the work of the WA Alliance as it sought to work across the whole community with a focus of ending homelessness. They were interested in supporting those developments that would result in systems reform. After an invitation to submit a proposal, we have been successful in securing funding for the next 4 years. This is an exciting development that allows us to remain independent and focus on the change process needed to reform the system and build on the support of the community towards ending homelessness.

To assist us in achieving this outcome, the [Governance Framework](#) has been updated and the Alliance Steering Group has been appointed.

The new funding also provides us with an opportunity to employ a small dynamic team who will implement and support the work of the Alliance with Shelter WA continuing to act as the auspice agency.

These new arrangements will strengthen the capacity of the WA Alliance to implement its strategy by supporting those evidence-based projects that end homelessness while engaging key partners across government, not for profits and the broader community.

We know that homelessness can only end when the whole community is aligned in its efforts to support a range of solutions that will end homelessness

### **About the Team**

#### David Pearson

David recognises that ending homelessness is possible and has worked towards this goal in a range of roles in the community, government, university and philanthropic sectors, including currently as the Executive Officer of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness and the CEO of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness.

Before this he helped lead the establishment of the Adelaide Zero Project, a collective impact initiative of over 45 organisations all working together to end street homelessness in Adelaide's inner city. David was a 2020 Kenneth Myer Innovation Fellow, a 2021 Churchill Fellow and is a Senior Advisor for the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH). In 2019 David was recognised as one of the top 40 Under 40 leaders in South Australia.

Prior to this David was the Senior Policy Adviser to several South Australian Premiers and Commonwealth Government Ministers in a range of portfolio areas including mental health, health, homelessness,



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housing, child protection, social inclusion, education, innovation, the arts, treasury, planning and urban development, public sector reform and others.

### Michala McMahon

Michala has been working in the homelessness sector for over a decade, most recently responsible for The Zero Project (led by Ruah Community Services) providing backbone support to the Housing First Homelessness Initiative and overarching sector collaboration and homelessness responses in Western Australia. Michala has been helping to lead the State-wide movement to End Homelessness in WA, supported by and aligned with the National and International Advance to Zero Movement and WA's 10-year strategy.

Michala is a results-driven collective impact coach, guiding and supporting communities across the region, working to address and advocate for systemic change. A collaborative visionary with practical skills in action research, service delivery, project development, and management, Michala is passionate about building the collective capacity of the homeless sector and engaging people in conversations about social disadvantage and the complexities of homelessness.

Michala has driven the Advance to Zero Methodology and Housing First approach in WA and is focused on continually improving the service system to enhance positive outcomes for vulnerable people and to demonstrate that ending homelessness is possible.

### John Berger

John is the Director of Engagement & Strategic Projects of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness. He has worked in leadership positions in Not for Profits for over the last 3 decades. It has been noted by many that his leadership and ecosystem thinking have allowed for completely new ways of approaching change in the field of homelessness in the West Australian context. He is passionate about working with the community, particularly those who are vulnerable and ensuring their voice of lived experience is central to informing change.

He has held many Executive Positions including CEO (St Bart's) and General Manager (Anglicare WA).

He was also the inaugural member of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness and held the role of Chair and then Executive Officer until 2022.