

November 2022

Strong Family, Strong Communities Phase Two

Strong Family, Strong Communities (SFSC) is the AHO's 10-year strategy to improve the well-being of NSW Aboriginal families and communities through housing.

The strategy is focussed on the following pillars:

- **Housing Solutions** — delivering housing solutions with Aboriginal families based on demand for social and affordable housing.
- **Client Outcomes** — achieving better outcomes with Aboriginal tenants and clients through partnerships with Aboriginal organisations, human services agencies, and by creating study, work and business opportunities.
- **Growing the Sector** — strengthening and growing Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHP) through sector investment, regulation and the transfer of housing and property management.
- **Data and Evidence** — improving data collection, evaluation and analysis to plan and invest in the future.

SFSC Phase One ran from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2022 and resulted in a range of achievements including:

- 1,217 clients supported through Services Our Way
- 280 new AHO homes
- 5,257 solar panel upgrades for AHO homes
- Property management transfer of 1,500 AHO homes to Aboriginal providers
- 33 Aboriginal Community Housing Providers supported to achieve registration through the National Regulatory System for Community Housing
- 101 Aboriginal students supported to undertake tertiary studies and improve their employment opportunities

SFSC Phase Two Implementation Plan

The SFSC Phase Two Implementation Plan will tell you what you can expect from us over the next four years (1 July 2022 through to 30 June 2026) focussing on:

1. what we expect to deliver through key programs as well as our ongoing commitment to improving housing outcomes for Aboriginal people through our core business and when we expect to deliver it
2. how we will work with and strengthen our partnerships with Aboriginal tenants/clients and communities and increase our ability to improve.

It is updated quarterly and focusses on the following areas:

- Keeping Aboriginal culture at the centre
- What we are delivering
- Accountability and governance
- Demonstrating change

Keeping Aboriginal culture at the centre

The AHO Aboriginal Cultural Framework underpins our commitment to placing Aboriginal culture at the centre of everything that the AHO does. Elements of the framework include:

- the AHO Engagement Framework, which seeks to ensure respectful communication with clients, tenants, and the broader Aboriginal communities and the stakeholders we work with
- the AHO Aboriginal Employment Strategy, which focuses on recruitment, support and development for Aboriginal staff
- our commitment of the NSW Government's Aboriginal Participation in Construction Policy and Aboriginal Procurement Policy
- identifying and measuring the impact we have on individuals, Aboriginal communities and the sector by using Aboriginal Impact Statements, surveys, consultation and feedback loops.

Our Aboriginal Cultural Reference Group provides cultural oversight of all aspects of our work, ensuring our business is culturally respectful, appropriate, responsive and in line with the AHO Aboriginal Cultural Framework.

What we are delivering

Our Core Work

The AHO is a statutory body established under the *Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 (NSW)* to ensure that Aboriginal people have access to quality, affordable housing. The AHO delivers housing solely for Aboriginal people and is a key provider of Aboriginal-specific housing services.

Our Key Programs

SFSC Closing The Gap Program: This program is made up of the following streams

- 1) **AHO Economic Recovery 23** which comprises two projects for new supply of homes by June 2023.
 - a. ACHIF new supply will deliver 51 new homes by end June 2023.
 - b. AHO new supply will deliver 45 new homes by June 2023.
- 2) **Closing the Gap — Housing Solutions Program** which will provide 200 new Aboriginal homes, 256 significant upgrades and over 4,440 Solar and Air-conditioning upgrades.
- 3) **Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) Flood Recovery Program** which will provide \$70m of grants to Aboriginal Housing Providers to repair and upgrade flood damaged properties in flood affected regions in NSW. For properties to be eligible for funding they are required to be located in the following seven LGA's (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Tweed, Kyogle).
- 4) **AHO LAHC Transfers Project** which will transfer 3,325 homes from LAHC to AHO, starting with Tranche 1 (500 properties in May 2023), Tranche 2 (500 homes Nov 23), Tranche 3 (2,325 homes August 24).

Redfern-Waterloo Housing

Infrastructure NSW (INSW) has transferred funds to AHO from the Redfern-Waterloo Housing Contributions fund. These funds can be used for a combination of:

- Purchase of existing dwellings/buildings
- Refurbishment of established dwelling/buildings for the purpose of providing additional affordable housing
- Purchase of newly constructed dwellings
- Construction of new dwellings.

SFSC Strengthened Sector And Communities Program: The NSW Government has provided \$67.2M in funding over four years. The program is focussed on continuing and further developing a range of initiatives that commenced in the first four years of SFSC.

Key Outcomes

An overview these initiatives and expected outcomes and funding is summarised in the following table.

Initiative	Outcomes
Home Ownership Options	320 home ownership opportunities over 4 years
Tertiary Accommodation Grants	300 students enrolled in tertiary studies supported with the cost of housing over 4 years
Finding Your Way Transitional Housing Options	20 properties repurposed over 4 years supporting 40 families in transitional housing each year
Sustaining Aboriginal Tenancies	SATP supports 260 families over four years, 1 Leading Community Demonstration Site for FY23 and 3 years funding for a new site to FY 26, 2 Client Experience Initiatives supported each over four years
Aboriginal Housing Management Transfers	650 AHO property management transfers to ACHP sector and evaluation
ACHIA and Sector Workforce Development	167 staff trained and 16 community events over 4 years
Sector Capability Fund	125 ACHPs supported over four years to achieve and maintain registration and/or build capacity
High Cost Community Support	Ongoing support payments for 1,805 properties in remote areas where there is significant revenue-cost shortfall
Commissioning Insights and Evidence	Biennial and tenant provider surveys, update of demand and supply model, cultural wellbeing framework and an SFSC evaluation

Services Our Way: This program provides tailored responses to individual client needs, and supports vulnerable Aboriginal families to engage with funded programs and services including health, education, justice, housing, and community services, as well as State Revenue and Service NSW. The program operates from seven locations: Campbelltown, Coffs Harbour, Armidale, Nowra, Penrith, Dubbo and Tamworth, with outreach services in Pilliga (Narrabri) and Moree.

Services Our Way has an annual target of supporting 600 clients in the 2022/23 financial year.

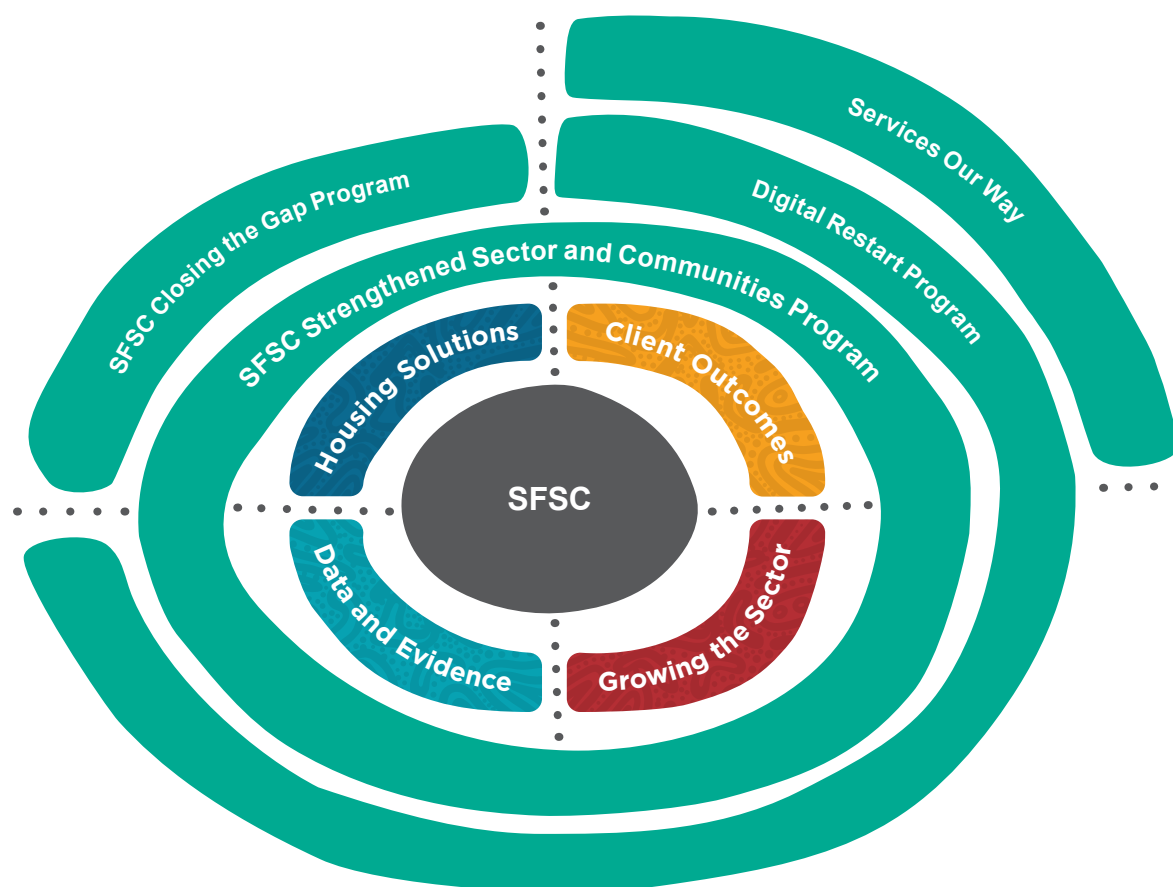
Digital Restart Fund (DRF): The DRF includes a number of developments which will support both ACHPs and tenants and will build on Ngamuru, the AHO/ACHP online platform. Developments include:

- *Market Rent and household income rent calculator*, which will enable ACHPs to calculate rent based on household income, consistent with the AHO Rent Policy
- *Tenants mobile housing application*, which that will allow ACHPs and tenants to keep each other up to date on rent and maintenance issues
- *Digital housing management agreements* for housing portfolios managed by ACHPs.

Accountability and Governance

Strong Family, Strong Communities Interconnectedness

All our work is interconnected with every AHO staff member supporting each SFSC pillar. For example, our Home Ownership Team supports the *Housing Solutions* pillar by making home ownership a reality for Aboriginal families. As part of their work, they will collect data on where the opportunity was realised, what strategies were successful and what needed adjusting. In doing that they are supporting the *Data and Evidence* pillar. Purchasing a home may see the family exiting the social housing system, freeing up accommodation for another family in need, contributing to *Client Outcomes*.



Demonstrating Change

We want to ensure that our work will communities makes a lasting and sustainable improvements. Our commitments under Pillar Four: Data and Evidence, focus on developing an evidence base of good practice. As well as positively impacting on communities, this will provide the necessary base for future funding requests. Regular quarterly reporting progressively paint a picture of the practical impact of our work.