

Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa



Alliance to  
End Homelessness  
Ottawa

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Ottawa is located on unceded Algonquin, Anishnabek territory, and also the home of many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people.

Put simply, these lands were stolen from the traditional keepers for the purposes of settlers. Dispossession of land is just one form of ongoing colonization that has led to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people disproportionately experiencing homelessness. Research shows that Indigenous Peoples account for 20-50% of the total homeless population.

## Statement of Reconciliation

**We are grateful for the work of Métis scholar Jesse Thistle in defining homelessness as experienced by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. The 12 dimensions of Indigenous homelessness make clear the connection between historical and ongoing colonization and the over-representation of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness.**

To truly have an impact on homelessness in our community, we must lead with this knowledge. Embracing Indigenous leadership and collaboration is crucial to ensuring the prevention, reduction, and ultimate end of homelessness. We support the call for a fully-funded Indigenous Housing Strategy with an Indigenous-led governance structure.

**This acknowledgment is a reminder of the responsibility we have to Indigenous Peoples and a commitment to reconciliation.**

# Chair and Executive Director's Message

**Ending homelessness is possible.** Communities across the country and world are seeing reductions in homelessness and we can too. We know that reducing homelessness means tackling the system-level challenges that cause homelessness in the first place.

**This year, we've made major strides in getting solutions to the housing and homelessness crisis on the radar of our local elected officials. The Starts With Home campaign for the municipal election garnered significant support, with 16 elected Councillors supporting the platform.**

Building on that success, we released the Scaling Up Non-Profit Housing report to Council in May 2023. We had the opportunity to meet with 23 Council members, including the Mayor's Office, and found widespread support for our recommendations.

**We've also spent much of this year focusing on how we can support stronger coordination and system-planning across the sector. This has meant ongoing engagement with City Councillors through meetings and deputations. Additionally, we have supported the development of a governance structure that drives strategic outcomes for reducing homelessness. This is based on community-wide consultations conducted by a consultant hired by the City, with a report to be released in the Fall.**

Through this all, it's become clear that driving big-picture change is not only about policy and funding. It's about mobilizing a culture shift. The Alliance is working to build a movement focused on ending homelessness in our community. Part of this work means co-designing solutions with the Expert Steering Team (EST) - Alliance staff who bring their lived expertise of the homelessness system. Additionally, we are bringing on new partners outside of the sector who are advocating for affordable housing for all through the Starts With Home campaign and other public events.

**We are continually inspired by the dedication and tireless work of our member agencies and partners as you also continue to work towards that critical goal.**

**Together, we can end homelessness. We are grateful to work alongside you to do so.**

**Catharine Vandelinde**

Chair



**Kaite Burkholder Harris**

Executive Director



## Starts with Home Campaign

Leading up to the municipal election last year, the [Starts With Home campaign](#) brought housing and homelessness issues to the forefront. The campaign consisted of three simple messages on affordable housing. [Stop the loss.](#) [Build more.](#) [Preserve the quality.](#)

Through the campaign, the Alliance [hosted a debate](#) with the top three Mayoral candidates about housing and homelessness in our city. **Over 150 organizations endorsed the campaign, along with hundreds of individuals. We had 16 elected Councillors, including the Mayor endorse the campaign.** Going forward, we want to use the Starts With Home campaign as a central component of our advocacy.



## Scaling Up Non-Profit Housing Report

Building on the Starts With Home campaign, we partnered with Dr. Carolyn Whitzman to develop [a report](#) on using public, government-owned land to build more non-profit housing at scale. This report focused on the Starts With Home platform action of “Build More” non-profit housing, and provided recommendations for how the City of Ottawa could do this.

We received widespread support from Ottawa City Council including the Mayor’s office, key stakeholders, and our members, when we presented it to the [Planning and Affordable Housing Committee](#) on May 3rd. **There were over 20 deputations in support of the report and a motion was passed that the report’s recommendations be considered for the Housing Accelerator Fund application to the Federal Government.**

## #Ottawa Needs More

As members know well, this year the provincial government only increased Ottawa’s share of the Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) funding by 0.4% compared to other communities in Ontario. We spearheaded an emergency letter-writing campaign to Members of Provincial Parliament called [#OttawaNeedsMore](#). In the first 24 hours of the campaign launch, we sent over 700 letters to MPP’s! By the end, we sent almost 1000 letters.

The Minister of Housing’s Office contacted the Alliance directly and engaged on what was needed in our city. We stressed the need for operational funding for more supportive housing. We are grateful to see that the advocacy of community partners and City Council led to the Province providing over \$20 million to our community for affordable housing.



Watch TVO's The Agenda with Steve Paikan on the Scaling Up Non-Profit Housing Report.

Frankly if you can spend over \$2 billion on license plate rebates, you can provide \$18-20 million to the City of Ottawa."

- Kaite Burkholder Harris



View our Rogers TV interview with Derek Fage on Daytime Television about the Report Launch.



"Toronto will receive \$48 million. That's almost 60 times as much, despite Toronto's population being approximately three times larger than Ottawa," Sutcliffe wrote in an open letter to Clark and Premier Doug Ford. "Based on Toronto's allocation, Ottawa's share should be in the range of at least \$16 to \$18 million."

Read CTV's article on the provincial funding gap which inspired #OttawaNeedsMore



Our monthly newsletter.



Listen to Carolyn Whitzman's CBC interview on All in a Day with Alan Neal.

## All in a Day with Alan Neal



Carolyn Whitzman's report comes after a three-year State of Emergency on Housing & Homelessness

## All in a Day with Alan Neal



Ottawa is only getting 0.4% of Ontario's \$202 million in additional funding for supportive housing and homelessness programs

Provincial funding gap.

"We have almost a 400 percent overcapacity rate for our family shelter. We now have a waitlist for families to get into shelter, not even a housing waitlist, that's how bad the housing crisis is in Ottawa and this kind of funding cut shows this is not a priority for the provincial government."

- Kaite Burkholder Harris

# Social Media & Analytics


**Leahora Fremont** (she/her) · 2w  
President & CEO, Shepherds of Good Hope and Shepherds of Good Hope ...  
8d · 🌐

Real solutions towards solving the housing crisis in Ottawa. We need the political will to make it happen. 🙌

Great leadership from the [Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa](#)  
[Kaite Burkholder Harris](#) [Catharine Vandelinde](#) [Stephen Bartolo, eMBA](#)

**Carolyn Whitzman** (She/Her) · Following  
Adjunct Professor and Housing Researcher, University of Ottawa  
2w · 🌐

Great coverage of [Ottawa Alliance](#) report to [City of Ottawa](#) on Scaling Up Social & Supportive Housing on government owned land. Now onwards to completed homes!



City urged to use government-owned land for affordable housing | CBC News  
cbc.ca · 3 min read



**Architects DCA** @ArchitectsDCA · Mar 15  
Increase the municipal budget to house 1,000 households each year, committing 30% as part of a For Indigenous, By Indigenous Housing Strategy.  
🗨️ 1 🔄 2 ❤️ 3 📊 230 📌

**Architects DCA** @ArchitectsDCA · Mar 15  
Create a non-profit housing acquisition strategy, supported by City purchases of private market residential properties, for the purpose of turning them over to non-profit housing providers.  
🗨️ 1 🔄 4 ❤️ 5 📊 271 📌

**Architects DCA** @ArchitectsDCA · Mar 15  
Together, we can end homelessness in Ottawa. We've got the tools. We just need the will. To find out more information visit Starts With Home: [endhomelessnessottawa.ca](http://endhomelessnessottawa.ca)  
🗨️ 🔄 4 ❤️ 3 📊 358 📌

# Deputations



During this past year, we continued to present deputations at key City Committee meetings, mostly focusing on the Community Services Committee and Planning and Housing Committee. Councillors consistently engage the Alliance with numerous follow-up questions and we are seeing a growing understanding of the issues that members face in working to reduce homelessness.

As the Alliance becomes more known to Councillors through deputations, we have also had the opportunity to meet one on one with more members of City Council and build relationships. We have met with 23 of 25 members of Council this year and are increasingly meeting regularly with several Councillors passionate about ending homelessness.



## The Empathy Project: Telling the Policy Story of Homelessness

In 2021, the Alliance received a grant to build and organize an experiential learning activity, in which participants navigate the system from the perspective of a service user (previously called the Poverty Challenge). Throughout 2022, this was developed in partnership with people of lived experience through the Expert Steering Team. The EST co-developed eight original profiles, capturing a range of experiences from different perspectives.

The purpose of this initiative is to help people understand in a small way the system challenges that people face who are struggling with homelessness or housing insecurity. It is a key tool in helping us to mobilize stakeholders towards taking action to end homelessness.

In February of 2023, we did a trial run of the event with representatives from the housing and homelessness sector, funders, government workers and more. Our goal was to receive feedback from participants about how we can strengthen the event. Feedback collected following the event was overwhelmingly positive, with all participants indicating they would recommend the event to others.

We've since been approached by the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine to run the event as part of their curriculum. Our hope is to run this event with government leaders, funders, businesses, and other community partners. We look forward to continuing the development and growth of this important education initiative next year.

# RESEARCH

## System Inventory and Partnership with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition

The City's 10-Year Plan on Housing and Homelessness identified the need to conduct a system inventory to define our current capacity as a baseline for system change. The Alliance began pursuing this goal in 2021, in partnership with Algonquin College. In 2022, the Alliance received a United Way grant and retained a consultant to complete the project and prepare a final report.

In total, 193 organizations and programs were interviewed, representing 50% of the housing and homelessness sector. Seven more Indigenous organizations will be a part of a dedicated Indigenous System Inventory, currently in development in partnership with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition.

The final report is expected to be published in the Fall of 2023. We intend to bring the results to our members and the City of Ottawa for review. The Indigenous System Inventory remains in the data collection phase, with a final report expected to be complete by 2024.

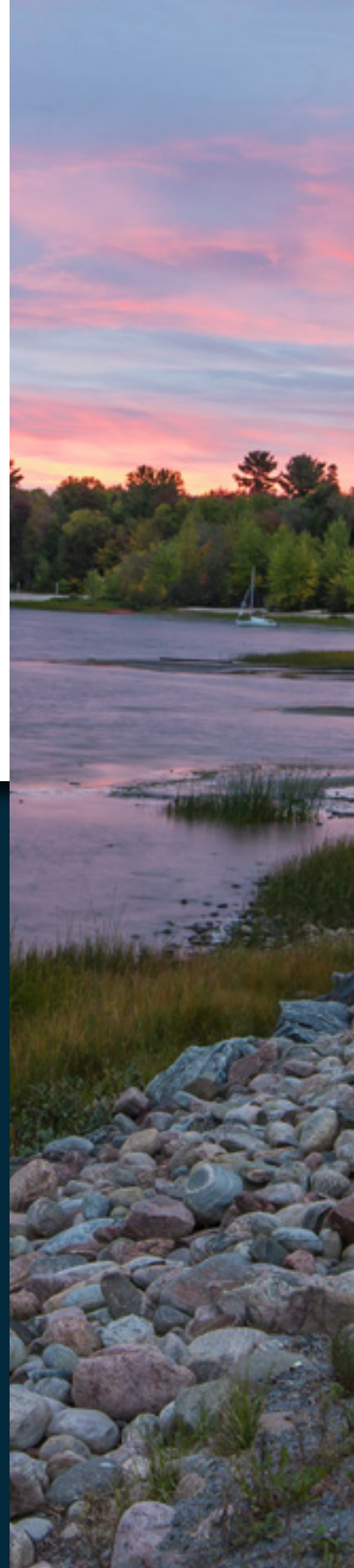
## Research and Evaluation Working Group

We spent the Spring reimagining the direction and focus of the Alliance Research & Evaluation Working Group (REWG) through a series of workshops facilitated by Natalie Duchesne.

Three key themes emerged from these sessions and will become the focus of the REWG moving forward. These include:

- Engaging service providers in the coming year to develop a clear understanding of the information needed to enable data-driven decision-making in the sector;
- Ensuring that people with lived experience are engaged in co-developing research work about homelessness, and;
- Becoming a convening space for researchers and community partners to come together.

We will be engaging members in the Fall to join the REWG as we develop a workplan to tackle these priorities.





# Collaborative Research with Refugee 613



Over the summer, we are proud to have supported the work of [Refugee613](#) on an environmental scan of services for refugee claimants in Ottawa. This includes examining what resources are available, where claimants are going for services, and gaps and challenges in service areas. The project has included thirteen interviews of agencies providing services for claimants.

The results show interesting trends so far; **the most obvious is the need for more funding to work with refugee claimants. Many people are willing to do the work and are eager to expand the capacity of their organizations to support more claimants, yet limited funding allows them to do so.** Challenges refugee claimants face include not accounting for overseas family members in accessing housing, facing barriers to accessing care for complex health issues, and a lack of preventative or early intervention care.

Organizations have highlighted the need for an overarching, regularly updated systems map or information hub that provides information to refugee claimants on where to go for what services, and where to find support in their mother tongue. The goal of the report is to have clear information on the needs of this group in order to advocate with each level of government. The report will be released in the Fall by Refugee613 and we look forward to sharing with our members.



# Expert Steering Team

Since its creation in 2021, the Expert Steering Team (EST) has been a vital part of the work of the Alliance. The EST works from a systems-level perspective, using their diverse expertise to ensure all aspects of the Alliance are centering on lived experience.

They offer expertise to membership and the community to help reduce, prevent, and end homelessness.



## This year, highlights include:

- Several consultations with member agencies, including advising on a new harm reduction program and reviewing a reconciliation action plan.
- Partnering with the Federal Housing Advocate on gathering testimonials from people living in encampments.
- Assisting in research with Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa.
- Contributing to the Alliance's systems inventory.
- Representing the Alliance at various events, including the City's Poverty Reduction Roundtable.
- EST representation on the Governance Subcommittee, which is working on developing a new governance structure for the housing and homelessness sector.
- Developing The Empathy Project (formerly known as System Storytelling) as a key advocacy and engagement tool moving forward.

“Working with the Expert Steering Team was tremendous. After working with them earlier this year, I plan to seek their input on all our projects. They provided advice and insight that could not have been gained elsewhere, helping us refine our plans and avoid potential roadblocks.”

- Operation Come Home

Operation Come Home  Opération rentrer au foyer

# Suzanne Gregoire



Despite the exemplary work achieved this year, it was marked with grief as one of the founding members, Suzanne Gregoire, died suddenly in December. Suzanne was a champion for her community and a tireless advocate.

She helped develop the EST's founding principles including community guidelines and values. The EST team will carry her passion with them as they continue her work.



“Suzy was a tireless warrior when it came to helping others who were let down by the system. Having experienced it herself, she never wanted anyone else to have to go through what she had and did her best to ensure that anyone she knew who needed help in accessing benefits, grants, medical care, and affordable housing got that help. This is why she was so happy and excited to join the Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa and be part of their amazing work to help support the community and battle homelessness. Right to the end it was something she cared about so passionately and never gave up on, and I know she would never want any of you to give up either!”

- Amy, Suzy's eldest daughter

# THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS!



United Way  
East Ontario



OTTAWA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

invested for good



## Alliance Board of Directors 2022-2023:

### Executive:

Catharine Vandelinde - Chair (*Options Bytown*)  
Tyler Fainstat - Vice-Chair (*John Howard Society*)  
Mark MacAulay - Treasurer (*Ottawa Salus*)  
Joyce Potter - Secretary (*Community Member*)

### Directors:

Allan Reesor-McDowell (*Matthew House Ottawa*)  
Cathy Robinson (*Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa*)  
Darren Graham (*Youth Services Bureau*)  
Keshia Mukobelwa (*Community Member*)  
Melany Chrétien (*Ottawa Community Housing*)  
Nathalie Maione (*Action Logement*)  
Pete Cranston (*Community Member*)  
Sarah Davis (*Cornerstone Housing for Women*)

We could not do the critical work of advocacy and pushing for system-level change in our community without the incredible support of our agency members and funders. We also have a growing number of individual members and are grateful for their engagement and support.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this work.

We can prevent, reduce, and end homelessness together.

# Our Member Organizations



Action-Logement/Action-Housing | Anglican Diocese of Ottawa-Community Ministries | Belong Ottawa / Centre 454 / St. Luke's Table / The Well | Bruce House | Cahdco | Caldwell Family Centre | Canadian Mental Health Association - Ottawa Branch | Capital City Mission | Capital Rainbow Refuge | Carlington Community Health Centre | Carty House | Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) | Causeway Work Centre | Centre 507 | Centre des services communautaires / Vanier Community Service Centre | Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services, University of Ottawa | Centretown Churches Social Action Committee (CSAC) | Centretown Citizens Ottawa | Corporation (CCOC) | Centretown Community Health Centre | Community Legal Services Ottawa (CLSO) | Cornerstone Housing for Women | Daybreak Housing | Eastern Ottawa Community Resource Centre / Centre de ressources de l'est d'Ottawa | Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa | Ellwood House | FAM Network | Gloucester Housing Corporation | Helping With Furniture | Housing Help | Interval House | ISisters | Jericho Road Ministries | Jewish Family Services (JFS) | John Howard Society of Ottawa (JHS) | LiveWorkPlay | Lowertown Community Resource Centre | Matthew House | Minwaashin Lodge | Oshki Kizis Healing Lodge | Montfort Renaissance Inc. | Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) | Nepean Housing Corporation | OMRA | Operation Come Home | Options Bytown Non-Profit Housing Corporation | Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) | Ottawa Food Bank (OFB) | Ottawa Inner City Health | Ottawa Innerscity Ministries (OIM) | Ottawa Pastoral Counselling Centre | Ottawa Salus Corporation | PAL Ottawa | Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre | Restoring Hope Ministries | Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre | Royal Ottawa Health Care Group (ROH) | Sandy Hill Community Health Centre | Shepherds of Good Hope | Social Housing Registry of Ottawa | Somerset West Community Health Centre | South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre | St. Joe's Women's Centre | Stepstone House | The Ottawa Mission | The Salvation Army Ottawa Booth Centre | Tungasuvvingat Inuit | Upstream Ottawa | Wabano Centre For Aboriginal Health | Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre | MCA-YWCA, National Capital Region | Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa



Alliance to  
End Homelessness  
Ottawa

[www.endhomelessnessottawa.ca](http://www.endhomelessnessottawa.ca)

PO Box 22021, Ottawa, ON K1V 0W2  
343-552-0202  
[info@endhomelessnessottawa.ca](mailto:info@endhomelessnessottawa.ca)