

Media release – 16 September (embargoed until 6am Monday 17 September)

## Heat Map reveals true picture of homelessness in regional Victoria

### Peak body releases ‘blueprint’ for ending Victorian homelessness

The Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) has released a [Homelessness Heat Map](#) which reveals that the state electorates of Shepparton, Geelong and Wendouree (Ballarat) have higher numbers of homeless than the median metro figure.

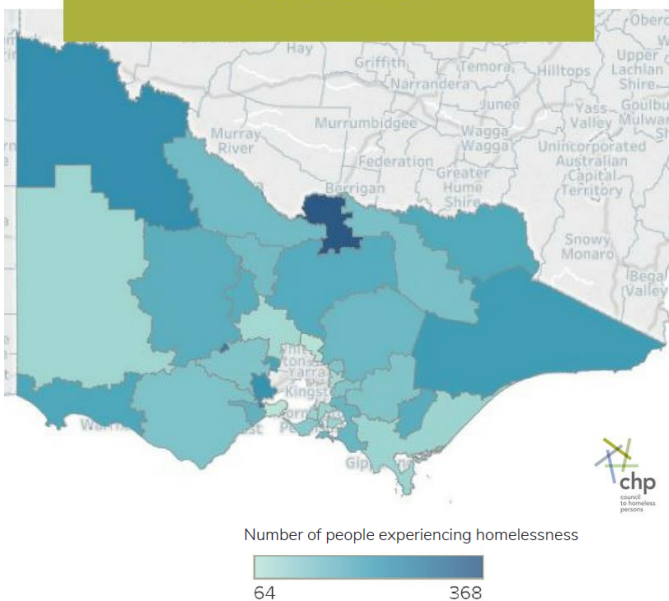
The analysis also reveals that Wendouree ranks first in regional Victoria for the number of people living in rooming houses.

The map, based on ABS data and analysed by State electorate, goes live on Monday to coincide with the launch of CHP’s [Victorian Homelessness Election Platform](#), a ‘blueprint’ for ending homelessness in Victoria.

In the election platform, CHP says that the 69 per cent increase in stamp duty collected over the past five years (\$2.8 billion), could be directed towards solving Victoria’s homelessness and affordable housing crisis.

(NB. Digital editors : map embed codes available upon request or [here](#)).

### Homelessness in Regional Melbourne



### Top 10 worst regional electorates for homelessness

	Electorate	Number of people counted as homeless
1.	Shepparton	372
2.	Geelong	295
3.	Wendouree	293
4.	Mildura	255
5.	Lara	246
6.	Gippsland East	224
7.	South-West Coast	205
8.	Morwell	202
9.	Benambra	197
10.	Bendigo West	192

In the lead-up to the November election, CHP will be calling on the major parties to adopt its recommendations. Among the 17 actions called for in the platform are:

- HOUSING: 3,000 new social housing properties per year for 10 years, with 1,500 being one and two bedroom homes for singles, couples or small families

- PREVENTION: Stop renters being evicted into homelessness by helping to pay back rental arrears and providing more legal advice and support
- PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK: Helping people exiting prison and psychiatric units to get into housing to prevent them exiting straight into homelessness
- ROUGH SLEEPING: Providing dedicated housing stock for Housing First programs for rough sleepers, like they do in Finland
- YOUTH: Greater focus on youth homelessness, which makes up 40% of all homelessness in Victoria. Recommendations include rent subsidies for young people leaving refuges, support for young couchsurfers, raising the age young people exit state care from 18 to 21 and more youth refuges.

***Key insights from CHP's Homelessness Heat Map :***

- Wendouree has the greatest number of people living in rooming houses in all of regional Victoria because of the shortage of affordable accommodation for single people
- More than half of the top 20 worst electorates for rough sleeping are in regional areas.
- The electorates of Shepparton, Geelong and Wendouree have higher numbers of homelessness than the metro median number

Quotes attributed to Kate Colvin, Acting CEO, Council to Homeless Persons:

*"This data makes it clear that homelessness is not just a city problem. Skyrocketing rents and a lack of social housing is driving homelessness in every electorate in Victoria. But there are solutions to overcome the crisis."*

*"With the right measures in place, we know we can prevent most homelessness, quickly rehouse people who do lose their homes, and keep people housed long-term."*

*"We've developed a blueprint for solving homelessness and now we're looking for the political leadership to implement it."*

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