

Building our communities, together

Town Camps Reform Framework 2019-2024

Progress report 30 June 2019



Introduction

In March 2019, the Northern Territory Government approved the *Building our communities, together* Town Camps Reform Framework 2019-2024.

Building our communities, together presents a medium to long term commitment that addresses key reform areas across the town camps and community living areas.



The framework has five outcome areas to support community change to occur.



Outcome 1

Residents and their community are independent, safe and thriving.



Outcome 2

Housing choices and support services are people centred, flexible and suitable to town camps.



Outcome 3

Strengthen and develop the Aboriginal Community Housing sector through capacity building, regulation and transfer of housing and asset management.



Outcome 4

Land tenure, infrastructure and leasing arrangement are fit-for-community purpose.



Outcome 5

Create local jobs and support the local economy.

An annual progress report will be provided to Government by 30 September each year on the progress of the outcomes achieved through the five year action and investment plans.

An overview of the key achievements since the establishment of the Town Camps Futures Unit in August 2018 is outlined across the five outcome areas of this report.

Please be aware that this document may contain images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have passed away.



Outcome 1

Residents and their communities are capable, safe and thriving.

- Housing and infrastructure upgrades are being scoped and prioritised through engagement with local residents to ensure informed local decision making throughout the projected works.
- Underpinned by the principles of local decision making, work has commenced on the development of community-specific action plans. Community action plans are being developed in partnership with town camp owners, residents and key stakeholders. They will provide an accountable and clear way in which government, community and key Aboriginal controlled organisations will partner together to see social and economic improvements. The Town Camps Futures Unit is supporting and driving the development of each action plan.
- The Town Camps Futures Unit participated in a number of local decision making forums in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.
- The Town Camps Futures Unit facilitated the removal of unsafe tin shelters and ablution blocks located in Tingkarli and Wupa camps in Tennant Creek.
- The Town Camps Housing and Infrastructure Program has focused on immediate works to ensure the health, safety and security of town camps residents.

Graph: percentage of homes made safe as at 30 June 2019



Case study

Upgrades to Bagot community

Through the Town Camps Futures Unit, the Northern Territory Government recently upgraded 36 houses in the Darwin's Bagot community. Community resident and President of the Bagot Advisory Group Helen Fejo-Frith was excited to receive her keys after the upgrades. She said her house was like a palace compared to what is used to be.

"After being in the house for 20 years and then all of a sudden you come up with a brand new house, and that's what it is, I'm really over the moon about it."

As well as housing, other infrastructure improvements occurred including new bollards around parks in the community, arboreal safety clean up, repair and upgrades to all street lighting, refurbishment of the administration building, resealing of all internal roads and the removal of old water mains that contained asbestos with new water infrastructure.

Jerry Rice from Dice Australia, who carried out the housing upgrades said that homes received new electrical work, plumbing, painting, windows, fly screens and security screens and doors, using local and Aboriginal tradesman.

"We virtually rebuild the whole house, it's brand new" he said.



Helen Fejo-Frith and Jerry Rice



Outcome 2

Housing choices and support services are people centred, flexible and suitable to town camps.

- The Town Camps Futures Unit commissioned a service model and funding review in the Bagot community. The consultant worked closely with the Bagot Community Incorporated Representative Committee to better understand:
 - the service profile footprint within the community
 - map out the funding agreements of services operating in Bagot community
 - identify opportunities to improve service delivery efficiency and effectiveness
 - identify good practice models
 - alternate funding and/or service delivery models.

Case study

Saving 140,000 litres per day in Mallai Brumby, Katherine

The Power and Water Living Water Smart team partnered with the Kalano Community Association (supported by the Town Camps Futures Unit) to save water in Mallai Brumby, Katherine.

The first step was to install a data logger on the main water meter, which allowed the Living Water Smart team to track water use in real time and to gain a better understanding of water use on the site.

To support Kalano with reducing their water use, the Living Water Smart team and the Town Camps Housing and Infrastructure Program provided and installed more than 70 water meters and isolation valves throughout the community.

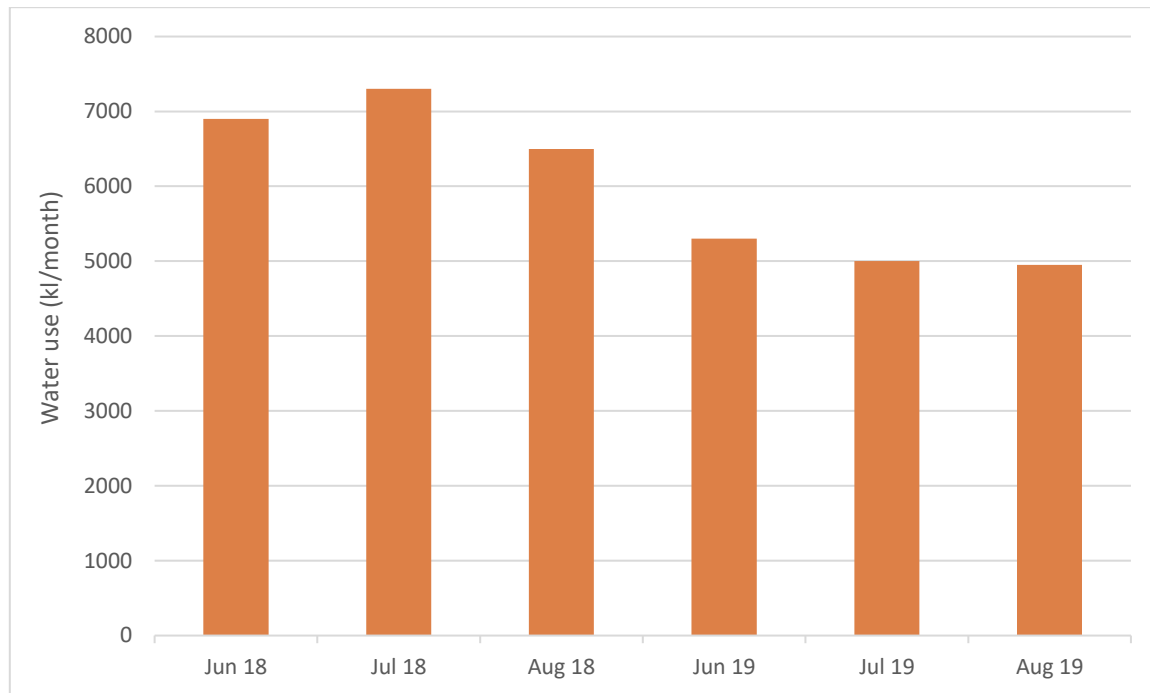
Further works undertaken by the Living Water Smart team include:

- organised for specialist leak detection to investigate the whole site
- developed a water use management plan to track down the location of the leak
- organised local plumbers to further investigate leaks with use of isolation valves and sub-meters.

This work has resulted in an overall reduction of approximately 140,000 litres or \$280 a day. This represents savings of more than \$100 000 a year if these leaks had continued.

Recent information from the data logger indicates a reduction of close to 25% in water usage for the three months June - August 2018 when compared to the same period in 2019.

This can be seen in the graph below.



Outcome 3

Strengthen and grow the Aboriginal community housing sector through capacity building, regulation and transfer of housing and asset management.

- The Town Camps External Advisory Group was established by the Town Camps Futures Unit to build relationships, connections and capacity of key leaseholders and Aboriginal controlled organisations, and to guide the critical reforms across the 43 town camps and community living areas. The advisory group met in November 2018 and June 2019.
- Membership of the advisory group comprises representatives of ACHOs who have a significant role in reforming town camps. These are:
 - Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation – Darwin
 - The Pine Creek Aboriginal Advancement Association – Pine Creek
 - Kalano Community Association – Katherine
 - Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association Incorporated – Borroloola

- Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation – Tennant Creek
 - Tangentyere Council and Central Australian Affordable Housing – Alice Springs
 - Aboriginal Housing NT.
- To build the capacity of the Aboriginal controlled housing sector, the Town Camps Futures Unit supported Yilli Rreung Aboriginal Housing for registration under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing, which was granted on 31 March 2019. There are now two registered Aboriginal Controlled Housing Organisations (ACHOs) under the national scheme with a further two ACHOs interested in becoming registered.
 - Working with key Aboriginal community housing organisations and leaseholders, support the establishment of housing reference groups and local community rules to improve community safety and housing.
 - Commence a water reduction pilot in partnership with Power and Water and Kalano Aboriginal Corporation to see sustainable water use by residents and upgrade critical water infrastructure.

Case study

Yilli Housing becomes third registered community housing provider

Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation (Yilli Housing) has become the third registered Community Housing Provider in the Northern Territory (NT).

Yilli Housing is an Aboriginal based organisation that offers housing management, maintenance and construction services in the NT.

“We currently provide and manage over 200 affordable and community housing properties in six town camps, four outstations and two communities across the Darwin region,” said Leeanne Caton, CEO Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation.

“To also have Tier 2 registration as a community housing provider included in our portfolio, is a great milestone on its own.

It means we have successfully met seven performance outcomes and are just as qualified as any other community housing provider in the NT,” she said.

This now brings the total of registered community housing providers in the NT to three, alongside Venture Housing Company and the Central Australian Affordable Housing Company.



CEO Leeanne Caton and NT Community Housing Registrar George Timson celebrated the official registration



Outcome 4

Land tenure, infrastructure and leasing arrangements are fit-for-community purpose.

- The department is establishing a five-year housing lease over housing assets in the Elliott town camps and Marlinja community and will hold financial responsibility to deliver property and tenancy maintenance while sub-lease arrangements are in place.
- In addition to a \$5.5 million housing and infrastructure program in Elliott to address the most urgent works, the Town Camps Futures Unit is supporting the development of an ACHO in Elliott, which over time could hold the lease over the town camps and assume the repairs and maintenance and tenancy support services.



Outcome 5

Create local jobs and support the local economy

- \$40.4 million has been committed to the Town Camps Housing and Infrastructure Program to complete the most urgent upgrades across 14 town camps.
- Funding has been provided predominately to the Aboriginal controlled housing sector via a grants program who have in turn focused on contracting local Aboriginal businesses. Across the 14 town camps, real jobs have been provided for local Aboriginal people.
- Key achievements from the Town Camps Housing and Infrastructure program include:
 - 235 projects completed
 - \$38.4 million invested in housing and infrastructure
 - 83% of primary contractors are Aboriginal controlled organisations
 - 50% of local sub-contractors are Aboriginal controlled organisations

Case study

Supporting employment opportunities for local residents

Jonathon is proud to be upgrading homes in his community of Amangal Indigenous Village, just outside Adelaide River, as part of the Town Camps Housing and Infrastructure Program.



"I just want to show that I am proud of what I am doing here. It's a good feeling," Jonathon said.

Jonathon's employer was impressed with how much he'd learnt since starting and as a local business is seeing the positive impact the investment into town camps is making.

Jonathon is now employed full-time with Dice Electrical undertaking work in other town camps across the top end.

Jonathon at Amangal Indigenous Village