



# Housing that Works In Search of the Gap

## Discussion Paper

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homelessness and affordable and safe housing have been identified by The Public Good Society of Dartmouth (TPGSD) board as areas for involvement. TPGSD has hosted two workshops related to housing as well as receiving feedback on housing from the Connections that Work Outreach Facilitator. In addition, the housing issue has been a subject of ongoing discussion at board meetings and also at several special meetings. The challenge is to identify an appropriate role for TPGSD in an arena that is complex and already has many organizations involved. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the current situation with a special focus on our geographical area of interest.

The report includes a statistical review that shows Dartmouth Centre<sup>1</sup> seems to have a number of challenges that distinguish it from other parts of Dartmouth and more so compared to the overall Halifax situation. There are more people living alone, especially seniors, and there are more single parent families existing on low incomes. In fact, incomes for all categories are lower than the earnings of those in HRM. There is a large part of the population not even in the work force. With a high rate of rental units, the population is more mobile.

All of these differences can affect a person's health and well-being. These statistics provide us with a better understanding of our population. They help in defining appropriate initiatives for the TPGSD geography of interest.

Appendix A lists 12 agencies that are involved in housing and related services with a Dartmouth base as well as 8 agencies in Halifax. There are many more agencies, organizations, and facilities than those shown, but an exhaustive list is beyond the scope of this overview report. The Appendix provides an overview of what each of these groups provides in the way of programs and services. The actual work of these groups is quite extensive and many of their websites provide amazing stories and hope in the face of tough situations.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> The new HRM District 5 covers most of this area and is referred to as Dartmouth Centre. A key part of Dartmouth North is excluded from HRM District 5. For purposes of this paper Dartmouth Centre is considered to include all of Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway as well as those areas just beyond it at Woodside and Dartmouth North.

Section 4.2 and Appendix B provides a selected overview of federal, provincial and municipal government involvement in housing.

Three federal government agencies/programs are highlighted:

1. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency. CMHC is Canada's premier provider of mortgage loan insurance, mortgage-backed securities, housing policy and programs, and housing research to sustain a vibrant housing market in Canada. Under CMHC, federal, provincial and territorial ministers worked together to develop an Affordable Housing Framework 2011 – 2014. Under this agreement, Nova Scotia receives \$10.2 million for each of the three years of the agreement. Nova Scotia matches these funds which have the intended outcome of reducing the number of Canadians in housing need by improving access to housing that is sound, suitable and sustainable.
2. Human Resources Skills and Development Canada funds The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) which is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to communities across Canada. HRM is one of 61 communities supported.
3. National Housing Research Committee (NHRC) brings together representatives from all levels of government, social housing organizations and the housing industry as well as academics and consumers to pursue four objectives:
  - Identifying priority areas for housing-related research and demonstration;
  - Encouraging cooperation and partnership in research without duplication of effort;
  - Fostering broader support for housing research; and,
  - Promoting the dissemination, application and adoption of research results.

The Department of Community Services is responsible for housing programs and services for the provincial government. The department's 2012-2013 Statement of Mandate shows two housing related priorities:

- Supportive Housing - to provide improved supports and delivery model with an increased number of units for people with disabilities.
- Housing Strategy - The strategy will be developed in partnership with partners and stakeholders. It is portrayed as a potential vehicle to improve both the quality and affordability of housing.

One of the outcomes that the department hopes to achieve is : " Improved health and diversity of people living in affordable and public housing".

HRM's Planning Services web site makes the following statement about HRM's role in housing:

"Housing is fundamental to HRM's quality of life, social inclusion, future growth and the development of vibrant and sustainable communities. The need for shelter is universal, and housing is a powerful determinant of health, safety, and access to public amenities. Although HRM is not responsible for the delivery of social services and social housing, HRM planning processes and regulations can help to provide for a suitable supply of housing in a range of types and locations to meet the needs of HRM's diverse population. HRM can also contribute to partnerships formed to address homelessness and the shortage of safe and affordable housing."

This report shows that the housing issue is huge and has many dimensions. The role that was envisioned for TPGSD has been one of co-ordination, partnership building, public education, and advocacy. Three situations have arisen to give impetus to a formal assessment of what TPGSD might do in the housing area:

- Potential access to Christ Church rectory
- Potential Dartmouth presence for HHH
- Potential funding opportunity through United Way.

These opportunities as well as information about the Homelessness Partnering Strategy are discussed in Section 5.

The Public Good Society and the Metro Non-Profit Housing Association have formed a partnership to establish a Dartmouth based satellite office for Halifax Housing Help. Funding and other resources for the establishment and operation of this office is being sought.

In addition to releasing this report for comment and feedback, The Public Good Society of Dartmouth is initiating additional research to show the positive value that social housing and services can have on a neighbourhood.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

“When I sit down in solitude to the labours of my profession, the only questions I ask myself are: What is right? What is just? What is for the public good?” Joseph Howe 1835

In 2004, *Joseph Howe's* words inspired a group of local residents to form The Public Good Society of Dartmouth (TPGSD). This non-profit group has a mission: "To work together and share our resources and knowledge to better address complex social issues facing our community."

Committed to informed decision-making, developing partnerships, and building on what's working in the community, The Public Good Society is becoming a catalyst for positive change. Not only is the group raising awareness and understanding about selected social issues, it is helping to identify gaps in service and policy and to broaden support services for vulnerable persons. Improved coordination of community-based services delivered by all levels of government and the voluntary sector is a more efficient use of human and financial resources.

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth is committed to:

- raising awareness and understanding of complex social issues.
- helping identify gaps in service and policy in order to broaden support services.
- advocating on behalf of people living in vulnerable circumstances in our community.
- building on what's working in the community.

TPGSD is currently responsible for two community based programs:

- Connections that Work; and
- Dartmouth North Community Van.

Connections that Work (CTW) is a program that builds bridges between already existing service providers in Dartmouth and a target population of clients using emergency services, such as Margaret's House, the local food banks, Dartmouth Family Centre, and Freedom Foundation. This program assists those who feel disempowered to begin to feel a sense of confidence and productivity by facilitating access to existing services. CTW is based on the identified understanding that people are having challenges accessing employment related services. The end goal is to enhance employability by increasing capacity and readiness to attach to the labour market. This initiative has been very effective in complementing existing services and connecting clients to existing services. It

ensures people reach out to the most appropriate services and assists them to overcome barriers to labour market entry. Its uniqueness is the on-the-ground presence of the CTW Outreach Facilitator.

The Dartmouth North Community Van is managed through a co-operative agreement of the Public Good Society of Dartmouth and The Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia. The purchase of a “Community Van” was made possible by an HRM capital grant provided by former District 9 Councillor, Jim Smith. The van is primarily for the use of qualified organizations serving the residents of Dartmouth North. The van fills a gap for non-profit organizations who could not justify a van for full-time usage. This van is available at an affordable cost and allows these organizations to provide enhanced program opportunities involving mobility of clients who are otherwise isolated due to transportation limitations. The Freedom Foundation and two food banks have made effective use of the van with over 1,600 passengers having been helped as of the end of October 2012.

Homelessness and affordable and safe housing have been identified by board members as an area of concern and interest. The challenge is to identify an appropriate role for TPGSD in an arena that is complex and already has many organizations involved. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the current situation with a special focus on our geographical area of interest. The potential opportunity around access to a former parish residence as well as partnerships with relevant Halifax based organizations has added a sense of urgency to move forward on this issue.

As one of the board members observed:

"as a Board or as a housing committee, or as a community, we need to spend some time defining the housing issue in front of us".

We believe that housing is a fundamental right and that it be maintained in high standards for building quality and repair as well as community safety. Individuals should be supported to live their lives to the fullest and where healthy communities are allowed to grow and prosper.

## 2. TPGSD HOUSING INVOLVEMENT

TPGSD has hosted two workshops related to housing as well as receiving feedback on housing from the Connections that Work Outreach Facilitator. In addition, the housing issue has been a subject of discussion at board meetings and also at several special meetings to examine a potential role for TPGSD. The following is an overview of the results of these initiatives.

### 2.1. “No Place Like Home”

An open discussion led by TPGSD in July, 2010, resulted in a workshop hosted by TPGSD on October 15, 2010. At the workshop, “No Place Like Home,” participants further defined how TPGSD could best support the already considerable housing work that is being done in Dartmouth. The role that was envisioned for TPGSD is one of co-ordination, partnership building, public education, and advocacy. The recommendations that came from this workshop are summarized as follows:

- Coordinate effort:
  - Unify the “Ask” - Reduce Fragmentation.
  - Work collaboratively/together.
- Build partnerships:
  - Provide leadership for a housing strategy in Dartmouth.
  - Facilitate a discussion with key players, discover lessons learned.
  - Help at soup kitchens and food banks.
- Advocate:
  - Develop partnerships with politicians and public service.
  - Hold government accountable.
  - Follow up.
- Educate:
  - Develop a “ Dream Team” for speaking to the community.
  - Speak to various groups - hear stories, share stories.
  - Individuals can speak to the problem in their everyday contacts.
  - Show business people how housing issues affect them, and everybody.
- Provide training:
  - Build capacity and awareness.
  - Do community asset map with housing providers, look at strengths, where can we combine/pool resources to better deliver service.

The workshop identified the following summary of housing issues and conceptual points for discussion faced in Dartmouth Centre, which is defined as being the area within the Circumferential Highway.

- Specific On-the-Ground issues:
  - Limited Supportive Housing
  - Need supports in the community
  - Gaps in shelters for youth
  - Need increase in allowances for social assistance
  - Gap between transition housing and community living
- Big Picture policy issues:
  - Housing Strategy for Dartmouth
  - National Housing Strategy
  - Concerted long-term/sustainable housing strategy
- Discussion points:
  - Develop a livable model of housing
  - Grassroots up
  - Sustainability: homeless vs. housing strategy
  - Allocation of resources – long term housing, short term shelters

## 2.2. Round Table on Housing Action

On May 6, 2011, TPGSD hosted a Round Table on Housing Action. A statistical profile of households and housing characteristics were presented by TPGSD to review where we are now and provide a common starting point from which to move forward.

The purpose of the roundtable was to look for opportunities for improving housing affordability in Dartmouth with two objectives:

- Co-ordinate and follow-up discussion to move the housing affordability issue forward.
- Identify specific actions for a co-ordinated approach.

The following situations and solutions were discussed:

- Observations of building permits, trends and data suggests a market change in central Dartmouth. This could bring in more people and businesses increasing. These changes will push low income people out.
- With losing affordable housing stock in central Dartmouth and a higher vacancy rate at Highfield Park, clients may be encouraged to move into Highfield Park.

- As with Killam Properties, other rental owners should be encouraged to propose similar initiatives as the “250 homes”.
- Lobby to permit people to live together without losing financial benefits.
- Safety issues are as important as affordability and should include areas with a bad reputation and significant barriers. For example, the neighbourhood in north Dartmouth created a video about that community. It is accessible on computer and is revealing.
- Create more co-operatives, giving people the opportunity to invest as did Affirmative Housing.
- Follow through on correspondence from HRM last April when the mayor said the Affordable Housing Functional Plan was being developed.
- Develop a strategy to repair deserted buildings.
- How do we have a mixed neighbourhood and create a balance?
- Partnering with non profit and the business sector.
- There is a need for a minimum standards officer which would mean re-employment to ensure standards are met.
- There is a difference between affordable housing and supportive housing, e.g. initiatives for mental health clients, single mothers should allow for tax exemptions. A definition of supportive housing would reinforce the value of the non-profits who assist members of the community.
- There has been a collaboration with Community Action on Homelessness with the departments of Justice, Health and Community Services. Prevention and efficiency means the cost of supportive housing versus shelters versus hospitalization. A system can be in place that offers three levels of support at cost savings.
- There are no shelters in Dartmouth, no emergency housing units. How much need is there? CMHA will share data with other non profits. Frontline people need a pamphlet which provides information for emergency and housing options.

At the Workshop the following actions and priorities were proposed:

- Lobby for a minimum standards officer to protect tenants from substandard living conditions.
- Advocate to provide services of life skills training and other supports for individuals on the margins.
- Lobby for supportive housing tax exemption.

- Send letter to mayor regarding the Affordable Housing Functional Plan and copy to provincial departments with data from Community Action on Homelessness with cost/benefit analysis.
- Attend and participate in building the Nova Scotia Housing and Homelessness Network.

### 2.3. Connections that Work

<b>Connections That Work</b>			
<b>Selected Client Statistics</b>			
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-2013 (Apr to Sept 2012)
Clients			
New	148	195	80
Previously Assisted	277	291	194
Enquiries/Referrals			
Employment	117	158	104
Housing	89	95	37
Mental Health	96	85	77

As shown in the above table, housing was the second most common issue dealt with in 2011-2012 by Kevin Little, CTW's Outreach Facilitator. It continues to be a strong part of the 2012-2013 work load. From his experience Kevin has provided three vignettes:

- A man, living in the woods, dropped in to Team Work, an agency I work with. The Executive Director calls me and seeks help. I contacted EJ Davis, the HRM Navigator, who used to work at the Metro Turning Point Centre moving formerly homeless men into apartments. EJ worked with this man to find him an apartment.
- A man who was living in a car called me. He had applied for Income Assistance (IA) but was turned down because he had no address. Halifax Housing Help was able to get him into an affordable apartment from where he applied to IA and got on. He is now working.
- A woman with a small child who had multiple health challenges called. She was in Preston and needed to be closer to the IWK. The Adsum housing support worker worked with this woman to find her a place near the IWK.

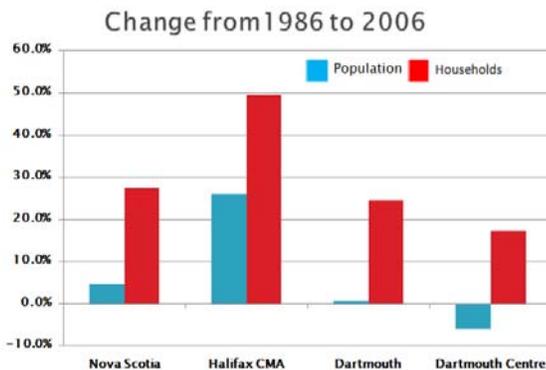
Halifax Housing Help (HHH) is one of several groups that Kevin works with in trying to meet the needs of the people he works with. Kevin reports that HHH staff are doing a wonderful job - responsive, and most, most helpful. They refer him to other housing support staff (for instance Adsum has a housing support worker for persons with children) when the need is outside their mandate, i.e. single adults." They work with reliable landlords in HRM to find affordable units for clients with barriers to housing. In other words, most of their placements are with private landlords.

At an HHH evaluation meeting with the community (about 40 people were there), Kevin was one of the few people working in Dartmouth. HHH staff expressed frustration that, while they had landlord contacts in Dartmouth and clients in Dartmouth, they had no "on the ground visible presence in Dartmouth". Kevin believes that with appropriate training and communications, it may be possible to improve the process in a way that enables more effective use of HHH resources to the benefit of both HHH and Dartmouth.

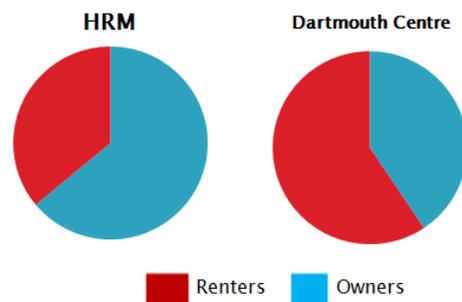
### 3. HOUSING NEEDS CONTEXT

Most of the statistics in this section were presented at the Round Table on Housing Action hosted by TPGSD on May 6, 2011. The background statistical work completed for the roundtable showed that the housing challenges in Dartmouth were concentrated largely within the Circumferential Highway, referred to here as Dartmouth Centre<sup>2</sup>. In the following charts, Halifax CMA, Halifax and HRM all represent the same area. Dartmouth statistics are included in these. Dartmouth Centre statistics are included in the Dartmouth numbers. If the Dartmouth Centre numbers were removed from the larger geographies, the differences would be even greater than those shown, especially for Dartmouth.

In 2006, Dartmouth Centre had a population of 36,435. This was a decline of 6% over the previous 20 years. This contrasts sharply with an overall growth rate of 26% for HRM. In the same time period the number of households in Dartmouth Centre increased by 17% to 17,955. This increase is much lower than the 49% increase for HRM.



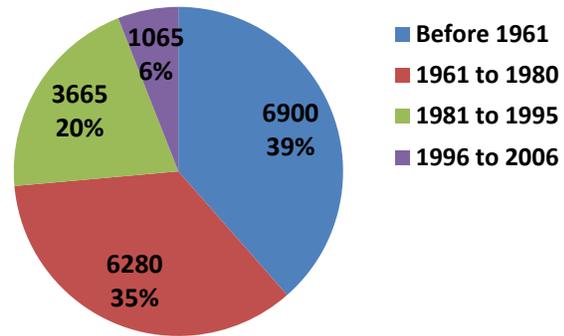
In Dartmouth Centre, 41% of households are owners, while 59 % of households are renters. The level of renters in Dartmouth is much higher than the 36% of households which are renters in HRM. In Dartmouth Centre, almost 44% of renters have rental payments that are greater than 30% of their income. Only 15% of owners have home payments greater than 30% of their income. The relative percentages are virtually the same for HRM.



<sup>2</sup> The new HRM District 5 covers most of this area and is referred to as Dartmouth Centre. A key part of Dartmouth North is excluded from HRM District 5. For purposes of this paper Dartmouth Centre is considered to include all of Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway as well as those areas just beyond it at Woodside and Dartmouth North.

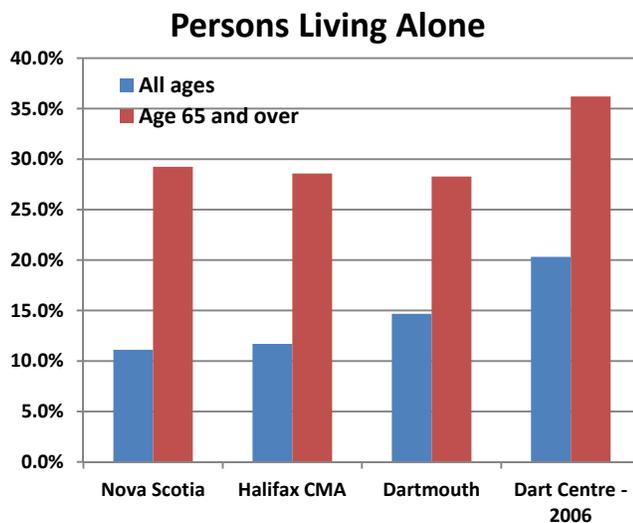
In Dartmouth Centre in 2006, 8.2.% of households identified that their dwellings were in need of major repairs. In HRM, the rate was 6.8%. Many dwellings are in need of major repairs because the housing stock in Dartmouth is relatively old. The chart below shows the period of construction for dwellings in Dartmouth.

Dartmouth Centre's housing stock is aging with 74% of the dwellings being built prior to 1981 and only 6% built between 1996 and 2006. This compares with 56% and 17% respectively for HRM. This is significant, because older housing requires more maintenance, which equals time and money. Often, households are considered to



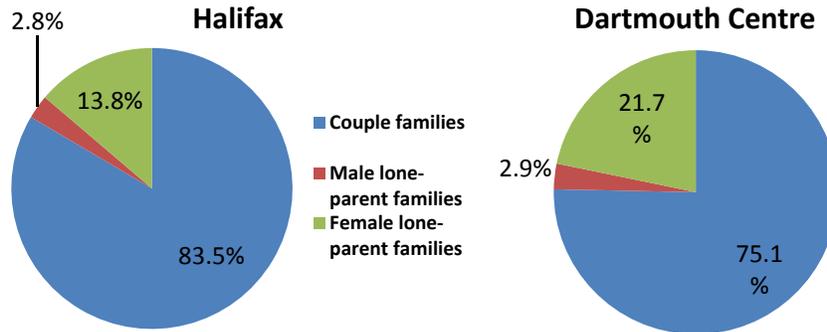
be in core housing need because they do not have the money to maintain their homes. However, if these homes are owned and are fully paid for, they may be the only housing that the home owners can afford. If these homes are rented, the landlords may choose not to maintain their properties, leaving tenants in housing that requires major repairs.

The living circumstances of Dartmouth Centre's population differs from HRM in several other respects. Persons living alone, family composition, and average incomes are three other factors that are worth considering.



Dartmouth Centre has over 20% of its population living alone which is approaching double HRM's rate of 12%. Thirty-six percent of those over 65 years of age in Dartmouth Centre were living alone.

A much larger share of families are headed by female lone parents in Dartmouth Centre. At almost 22% they represent seven times as many male lone parent families and more than one and half times as many as in Halifax. The share of male lone parent families is almost the same in both Halifax and Dartmouth Centre.



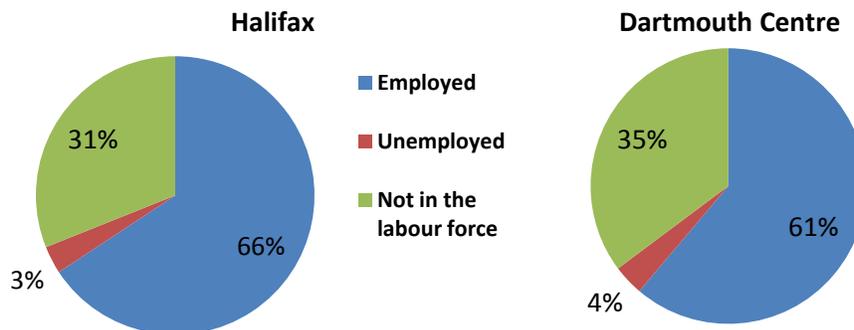
The average incomes in Dartmouth Centre are lower than in other parts of Dartmouth and much lower when compared with Halifax. In 2005, Average

	2005 Average Income (\$)		
	Halifax	Dartmouth	Dartmouth Centre
Individual	35,031	33,975	31,262
Household	66,325	61,054	51,784
All Families	79,868	76,130	67,713
Couples	87,280	85,602	77,918
Male Lone Parent	56,807	57,773	54,935
Female Lone Parent	40,532	36,187	32,986

individual income was almost \$4,000 less than Halifax. Family income was \$13,000 less and Household income was almost \$14,500 less. For individuals, average salary is based only on those who are 15 and over with income. Individuals living alone

are included in the household data but not the family data. The high percentage of individuals living alone in Dartmouth Centre would contribute to the lower household figures. For families, the higher percentage of lone female parent families would affect these numbers.

Thirty-five percent of Dartmouth Centre's population over the age of 24 were not in



the labour force, compared to 31% for HRM. Four percent of this population was not employed compared to 3% for HRM.

Another measure often used to look at the stability of a neighbourhood is the mobility rate of its residents.

	One year mobility status			Five year mobility status		
	Halifax	Dartmouth	Dartmouth Centre	Halifax	Dartmouth	Dartmouth Centre
<b>Persons included</b>	365,625	64,200	35,495	351,015	61,740	34,220
<b>Non-movers (same address one/five year(s) ago)</b>	85.0%	84.4%	82.0%	59.1%	58.1%	54.3%
<b>Movers</b>	15.0%	15.6%	18.0%	40.9%	41.9%	45.7%
Moved within HRM	10.8%	11.9%	14.0%	27.3%	30.6%	33.3%
Moved from within Province	1.3%	1.3%	1.7%	3.8%	3.5%	4.0%
Moved from within Canada	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%	7.5%	6.4%	6.8%
Moved from outside Canada	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	2.3%	1.2%	1.4%

People living in Dartmouth Centre are more mobile than other residents of Dartmouth and Halifax. Eighteen percent had moved within the last year compared to 15% for HRM, and 46% had moved in the last 5 years compared to 41% for HRM.

Based on the data, Dartmouth Centre seems to have a number of challenges that distinguish it from other parts of Dartmouth and more so with the overall Halifax situation. We have more people living alone, especially seniors, we have more single parent families existing on low incomes. In fact, incomes for all categories are lower than those in HRM. We have a large part of the population not even in the work force. With a high rate of rental units, our population is more mobile.

All of these differences can affect a person's health and well-being. They also provide us with a better understanding of our population. This could help in defining appropriate initiatives for our geography of interest.

## 4. CURRENT HOUSING RESOURCES

### 4.1. Local Non-Profit Agencies

Appendix A lists 12 agencies that are involved in housing and related services with a base in Dartmouth as well as 8 agencies in Halifax. There are many more agencies, organizations, and facilities than those shown, but an exhaustive list is beyond the scope of this overview report. The Appendix attempts to provide an overview of what each of these groups provides in the way of programs and services. The actual work of these groups is quite extensive and many of their web sites provide amazing stories and hope in the face of tough situations.

Demetreous Lane is an example of a neighbourhood that has come together to provide a safer and supportive environment to alleviate the conditions of poverty for the people that live there.

People transitioning from prison, mothers with children, youth, individuals living with poverty or mental health challenges, and people that nobody else will accept are among those served by these groups. In spite of the many groups, there simply is not enough resources to meet the needs. Among them, there are many working relationships: some are independent, others have varying levels of partnerships and networking to share ideas. The Nova Scotia Housing and Homelessness Network is a strong attempt to get a more formal interaction, sharing, and coordinated effort to improve the housing situation in Halifax and Nova Scotia. Volunteers, funding agencies, the business sector and all levels of government are part of current efforts and are essential to overcoming a desperate state of affairs.

### 4.2. Government Agencies

#### **Federal Government**

A search on "housing" on the federal web site produced over 99,000 results. Appendix B provides an overview of three of these - each brought to our attention in meetings described in the next section of this report.

#### **Human Resources and Skills Development Canada**

Human Resources Skills and Development Canada funds The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), which is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to communities across Canada. HRM is one of 61 communities supported. More information is provided in Section 5.3 and Appendix B of this report. The strategy

for HRM is managed under a contract between Service Canada and the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia.

### **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

On July 4, 2011, federal, provincial and territorial ministers, responsible for housing, announced a \$1.4 billion combined housing investment under a new Affordable Housing Framework 2011 – 2014.

The Framework recognizes the diversity of affordable housing needs of Canadians and that a range of solutions — from existing programs to new approaches — is the most effective in meeting local needs and priorities. It is also recognized that under this Framework provinces and territories have responsibility for the design and delivery of affordable housing programs in order to address their own specific housing needs and priorities in their jurisdictions.

Under this agreement, Nova Scotia receives \$10.2 million for each of the three years of the agreement. Nova Scotia matches these funds which have the intended outcome of reducing the number of Canadians in housing need<sup>3</sup> by improving access to housing that is sound, suitable and sustainable.

### **National Housing Research Committee (NHRC)**

Since 1986, the NHRC has brought together representatives from all levels of government, social housing organizations and the housing industry, as well as academics and consumers, to pursue four objectives:

- Identifying priority areas for housing-related research and demonstration.
- Encouraging cooperation and partnership in research without duplication of effort.
- Fostering broader support for housing research.
- Promoting the dissemination, application and adoption of research results.

The NHRC has four Working Groups with a focus on:

- Distinct Needs
- Housing Data
- Homelessness
- Sustainable Housing and Communities

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<sup>3</sup> core housing need are those households that fall below adequacy, suitability or affordability standards

## Provincial Government

The Department of Community Services is responsible for housing programs and services for the provincial government. Housing is one of three core business areas for the department.

The department's 2012-2013 Statement of Mandate shows two housing related priorities:

**Supportive Housing** - To provide improved supports and delivery model with an increased number of units for people with disabilities. The budget for services for persons with disabilities has increased to \$261 million for 2012-2013. This is an increase of \$5.8 million over 2011-2012 budget, but only \$1.6 million over 2011-2012 actual expenditures.

**Housing Strategy** - The strategy will be developed in partnership with partners and stakeholders. It is portrayed as a potential vehicle to improve both the quality and affordability of housing. The Housing Services budget was reduced in 2012-2013 to \$105 million. This is a budget reduction of \$19 million from 2011-2012. The 2011-2012 budget of \$123 million was under spent by \$11.2 million.

One of the outcomes that the department hopes to achieve is: " Improved health and diversity of people living in affordable and public housing". They list four measures and targets for assessment of this outcome:

- Number and % of households unable to access acceptable housing - In 2006, 43,800 households (13%) were in this group. The target is to reduce the number and percent.
- % of co-operative housing organizations that move from a default position (project in difficulty) to a healthy, functioning co-op - In 2010-11, 28% were in default. The target is to reduce this to 19% in 2010-11 and 10% in 2013-14.
- Number of households assisted with health and safety related home repairs - In 2005-06, 2,429 households were assisted. The target for 2011-2012, and forward, is 2,000. Although the number is reduced, the intent is to provide more extensive coverage for fewer households.
- Public housing vacancy rate – The base rate is to be determined, while the target rate has been set at 3%.

The Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation owns 12,000 senior and family public housing units which are administered and managed by Housing Authority offices throughout the province. The Housing Authority offices also administer the

Rent Supplement Program of approximately 800 units, and the Rural and Native Housing Program of some 1,200 rental and homeowner units. Combined, these programs provide housing to approximately 30,000 Nova Scotians.

Appendix B provides additional details and web links for many of the programs offered through the provincial government.

## **Municipal Government**

HRM's Planning Services has a web section "[Housing and Homelessness in HRM](#)". The site makes the following statement about HRM's role in housing:

"Housing is fundamental to HRM's quality of life, social inclusion, future growth and the development of vibrant and sustainable communities. The need for shelter is universal, and housing is a powerful determinant of health, safety, and access to public amenities. Although HRM is not responsible for the delivery of social services and social housing, HRM planning processes and regulations can help to provide for a suitable supply of housing in a range of types and locations to meet the needs of HRM's diverse population. HRM can also contribute to partnerships formed to address homelessness and the shortage of safe and affordable housing."

In recent years HRM's involvement in social housing has diminished considerably. The last update to the housing section of the web site was in 2008. They no longer have staff dedicated to this issue. HRM council has passed bylaws that appear to make it virtually impossible to create additional social housing opportunities in some parts of the municipality. More detail on this is provided in Section 5.2 and Appendix E of this report.

At a mayoralty candidates meeting<sup>4</sup>, HRM mayoralty candidate<sup>5</sup>, Mike Savage, had stated that the municipality cannot opt out of the housing portfolio. It must be engaged in the housing problem. He said that an HRM housing strategy is needed and should be focussed on fostering and supporting broad partnerships of all involved. Mr. Savage was chair of United Way's Opportunities Strategy working group. Housing is a key part of this strategy.

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<sup>4</sup> Christ Church, Dartmouth, N.S. September 17, 2012

<sup>5</sup> Mike Savage is now Mayor of HRM.

## 5. CURRENT OPPORTUNITY

### 5.1. Halifax Housing Help

On September 5, 2012, Sally Doucette and Dennis Pilkey met Tess Warner and Bryce Thibodeau of Halifax Housing Help (HHH) and Carol Charlebois of Metro Non-Profit Housing. The purpose of this meeting was to explore mutual interest and respective expectations and responsibilities in forming a partnership to establish a Dartmouth base for HHH. The following provides background on HHH and an overview of discussions at the meeting.

Halifax Housing Help was formed in 2008 by a partnership between Metro Non-Profit Housing and Direction 180. Since its formation, HHH has helped over 600 people with their housing problems. They focus on helping people with urgent housing needs, as well as working with clients to keep them in more stable housing situations. Maintaining very good working relationship with landlords is a key part of their operations.

HHH programs provide a unique holistic response to the desperate need of people who require access to longer-term housing and housing supports. Their work prevents evictions, and stabilizes people who have been at serious risk of homelessness. Most HHH clients are single person households, although their status sometimes changes. HHH programs are client centred and participant focused.

HHH tries to help with whatever clients need. They have provided assistance to clients of the CTW program. HHH does not have anyone "on the ground" in Dartmouth and has expressed an interest in developing a Dartmouth based partnership. In his July 2012 report, Kevin Little notes the increasing trend of housing requests, and suggests that TPGSD invite Tess Warner to a future Board meeting to discuss ways HHH and TPGSD can team and work more closely together.

A strong component of HHH's success is its Trustee Program with over 200 clients engaged. Clients have a formal arrangement with HHH, who is responsible for paying their rent and power bills from revenues received by HHH on behalf of the individual clients. The balance of the funds is given to the clients each month in the form of a cheque. When clients pick up the cheque, HHH staff have a chance to determine how they are doing and if they have any particular needs.

The bulk of funding for HHH comes from a multi-year agreement with Service Canada through the Homelessness Partnership Initiative, which expires in 2014

(four staff). Community Services provides funding for one additional staff person under an annual contract agreement. Additional fund-raising activities provide emergency funds for clients.

The rapidly increasing expense of housing in downtown Halifax results in many clients being housed outside of the Halifax core in places such as Dartmouth, Spryfield and Fairview. It is estimated that about half of HHH's clients are from Dartmouth. As a result, HHH is interested in determining the potential for having a satellite office in Dartmouth. Another idea being considered by HHH, to address this dispersed need, is a mobile unit which could travel to the various areas being served.

This satellite office would ideally have room for two to three staff (some combination of new, transferred or shared staff to begin) and include space to meet with clients. Office furnishings would include computers, printers, phones and other standard office amenities. There is potential for Kevin Little to use this space, also, for Connections that Work. It should be located in a "store front" location rather than within a larger building. A location within walking distance of client service hubs is ideal. Albro Lake area, Dartmouth Shopping Centre and Downtown Dartmouth were discussed as possible locations. Two full time staff would likely be required to work from the office. An additional program support person could be shared with the Halifax office.

HHH is willing to consider a partnership arrangement with TPGSD for a Dartmouth office. They would run such an office as a satellite of the Halifax office. This would include such things as:

- recruitment, training and supervision of staff;
- bookkeeping and accounting;
- payroll;
- financial reporting; and
- program management and supports.

TPGSD would take the lead on finding suitable office space and setting up the office. It would also lead in initial fund-raising activities, i.e. United Way, and participate in other fund-raising activities as appropriate. TPGSD would participate in any oversight or management groups as needed. Appendix C shows the draft Memorandum of Understanding for a partnership of TPGSD and HHH.

## 5.2. Christ Church

On July 10, 2012, Margie Vaughan and Dennis Pilkey met with Rev. Stephen Laskey of Christ Church in Dartmouth to explore the potential of forming a social housing partnership with the church.

The church has a four bedroom rectory on the church grounds that has not been used by the clergy for about the last 25 years. It is currently being rented and provides a modest income to the church. The house is a sound structure but has only had emergency maintenance carried out on it over the last few years. It is somewhat dated and any long term use would need to consider such upgrades as roofing, electrical and plumbing. There are no known issues needing immediate attention. Zoning by-laws and regulations applicable to any specific use of the building would need to be considered.

Established in 1817, Christ Church will be celebrating its 200th anniversary in five years. The rector and wardens are interested in exploring how the church could give back to the community in a way consistent with such a milestone. At the same time many of the church's facilities are dated, not meeting the Parish's needs, and limiting its growth and full utilization potential. Partnership with a suitable developer would be one possible approach in redeveloping the church's resources and providing a strong base for a sustainable future. Key among the options to be considered are:

- facilities that will meet the church's current needs and well into the future;
- strong social commitment with related facilities for the community;
- minimal or no direct cost to the parish; and
- long term income stream.

The church is open to any reasonable use of the rectory provided it is not exclusive or discriminatory. It must have a social contribution and rationale to the benefit of the community. It is unlikely that the church would be able to directly fund either capital or operating costs related to rectory use. Any program considered for the rectory would likely be considered as part of any larger capital development planning.

Zoning for 54 Wentworth St is DN which means Downtown Neighbourhood. As the zoning is already "downtown institutional", the use of the rectory with a respite and palliative care focus seems to fit in with church work for which it is zoned. The use of the Rectory for broader social housing and social housing services may not fit with the current application of zoning by-laws. The following section and

Appendix E provide additional information about zoning that may affect options for the Rectory.

### 5.3. Zoning By-laws

Zoning issues in Dartmouth may limit the types of uses for the former rectory. The zoning was changed in 2005 and other non-profits were considered "grandfathered". There have been a number of instances where support facilities for people with mental health or housing challenges have either been closed or not allowed to open.

Appendix E - Downtown Dartmouth Zoning includes selected extracts that seem relevant to the zoning in this area. Use of phrases such as "vigorous enforcement of HRM's land use and other by-laws" to maintain the residential character of the neighbourhoods may be the policy lever that is used to restrict the type of usage being considered. It is also possible that the consequences of these policies are behind the recent closures of mental health support facilities.

The adoption and application of these zoning restrictions may be a result of "not in my back yard (NIMBY)" thinking. There are broadly held beliefs that social housing and social services offices will lower neighbourhood house values as well as being disruptive of neighbourhood decorum. Research, as well as local experience, has shown that, contrary to this belief, social housing has positive effects on the neighbourhood. Social housing properties are generally well-maintained. People living in them have a variety of supports and are not a burden on their neighbours. Many neighbourhoods actively support the initiative in many ways, showing that their neighbourhood is a welcoming community that embraces diversity. Housing values are not affected and may actually increase.

The provincial government's "Discussion Paper on A Housing Strategy for Nova Scotia" recognizes the past approaches based on segregation and isolation have not succeeded. The paper cites several communities in Canada and other countries where a mixed, diverse community has resulted in transforming and revitalizing neighbourhoods.<sup>6</sup>

Review of the by-laws and understanding the assumptions underlying them may be required for developing a workable housing solution in Dartmouth.

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<sup>6</sup> "Discussion Paper on A Housing Strategy for Nova Scotia", Government of Nova Scotia, Nov 7, 2012, Halifax

## 5.4. Community Action on Homelessness

On July 19, 2012, Margie Vaughn and Monique Mullins-Roberts met with Claudia Jahn, Program Facilitator of Community Action on Homelessness (CAH) to explore the viability of a partnership and housing initiative. CAH saw the need for, and were looking for, a special place: an older home that would be a safe haven for people who need a quiet safe place for a short time. Such a home would help them to feel safe and would lift them spiritually, with the chance for volunteers to spend time with them there.

The situation with the rectory at Christ Church was explained. Claudia felt it was a very exciting opportunity and offered her support to TPGSD. The need is great. One example of having a home available in the community would be to provide a safe place for those who need hospice/palliative/respite care. If the house was used as a rooming house Department of Community Services would pay \$230.00 per person or for an apartment they would pay \$530 per month.

She informed TPGSD that there is Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding which provides \$1.6 million for Halifax every year –although we may not be able to apply until 2014. This money could be used for programming and services and for renovations to the house. This funding also covers capital costs, renovations, upgrades and services for programs.

There are many community groups who could partner or offer support to this initiative. Potential discussions should occur with the Elizabeth Fry Society, Alice Housing, Department of Community Services, etc. Other community organizations such as Rotary Club do renovations for non-profits and this process allows for community involvement. United Way (Day of Caring) also do projects to assist with initiatives like this.

Next steps for the board, as suggested at the meeting:

- Access statistics and information on best practice from Community Action on Homelessness.
- Develop a cost benefit analysis – understanding the full costs and benefits of this project.
- Build a business case.
- Identify partners.
- Determine what kind of housing best suited for this initiative – short term transitional housing, long term supportive housing (for men, women, families, youth, etc.).

The role of safe and affordable housing and the link with health is well established. CAH's latest report, issued in 2009, makes this link through statistics and stories. The report includes a series of recommendations, with specific action items. The recommendations are:

- Address the Poverty that Underlies Homelessness:
  - Increase social assistance rates.
  - Improve access to Income Assistance & Disability Support.
  - Increase minimum wage.
- Provide Affordable and Appropriate Housing:
  - Develop an affordable housing strategy for Nova Scotia.
  - Increase availability of affordable and adequate housing in Halifax.
  - Increase availability of supportive housing units.
  - Provide long-term program funding for programs that effectively deliver housing support in HRM.
- Improve Quality of Life:
  - Improve quality in emergency homeless services in Halifax.
  - Provide an ombudsman/field officer for the homeless.
- Reduce Barriers to Health Care Access:
  - Increase alternative care & outreach programs to improve primary health care delivery to the homeless population.
  - Improve services to homeless patients who are in need of primary and follow up care.
  - Increase data and information sharing within government agencies and between the government and the non-profit sector.
  - Improve access and quality in hospital care.
  - Improve access to MSI Cards and other identification documents.
  - Provide more options to people with addictions who are seeking help.
  - Make homeless people a health priority.

The report included an explanation of key terms used in homelessness and affordable housing discussions. It is included here in Appendix D.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Advisory Board has included four priorities in its Community Action Plan 2011-2014. These priorities are:

- Supportive housing for homeless individuals and families.
- Housing placement and housing retention for youth, individuals and families.

- Community coordination and partnership development.
- Renovations to aging shelters and service providers' spaces.

TPGSD could consider having representation on the Community Advisory Board.

As of the end of September, 2012, the CAH project has ended and is being wrapped up. The Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS) has been contracted by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to manage the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for Halifax Regional Municipality. Staff of CAH have been hired by AHANS to carry out this work.

## 5.5. **United Way of Halifax Region**

Effective August 2012, United Way of Halifax Region has adopted a new approach to funding projects. The approach is based on four strategies aimed at more focussed work with an increased community impact: Opportunities, Healthy Living, Social Capital and Neighbourhoods. The Opportunities Strategy includes housing as a focus area with the following planned outcomes:

- early: Our community has an achievable housing strategy.
- mid-term: Our community has a range of supportive and affordable housing in all neighbourhoods.
- later: People are comfortably housed.

United Way's funding priorities for 2013 - 2015 include innovative housing programs so that our community has a range of supportive and affordable housing in all areas. The funding process includes two steps: an expression of interest to be submitted by September 21, 2012; and a detailed funding proposal to be submitted by October 26, 2012. Successful applications will have funding commence on April 1, 2013. TPGSD met the eligibility requirements for the funding and submitted an expression of interest in partnership with HHH. On September 27, 2012, United Way advised TPGSD that the Expression of interest was accepted by the review committee and was invited to submit a detailed proposal. The collaborative approach put forward by TPGSD was of particular interest to United Way and fits well with their new strategy. One hundred different organizations submitted Expressions of Interest to United Way. The total amount requested is three times more than the available funds.

The proposal was developed in collaboration with HHH and was submitted to United Way on October 21, 2012.

## **6. FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1. Project/Program Costing**

Whatever project is determined, costs will have to be considered under four broad categories:

- capital purchase and renovations
- facility operating costs
- program operating costs
- program management

### **6.2. Funding Sources**

There seem to be many potential funding sources which will need to be explored and documented as we move ahead. Some areas to consider:

- Federal Government
- Provincial Government
- Foundations
- Organizations
- Business partnerships
- Private fund-raising

## 7. DISCUSSION

The housing issue is huge and has many dimensions. TPGSD is not likely to solve the housing problem in Dartmouth no matter what we do. As one board member observed: it is so big that even if we duplicate what others are doing, it all helps. The role that was envisioned for TPGSD has been one of co-ordination, partnership building, public education, and advocacy.

The purpose of this report is to give a sense of the dimensions and alternatives in looking at a housing role for TPGSD. The Society has been looking at, and involved with, this topic for over two years, but has not yet defined a more definitive role for itself. Three situations have arisen to give impetus to a formal assessment of what TPGSD might do in the housing area:

- Possible future access to Christ Church rectory
- Potential Dartmouth presence for HHH
- Potential funding opportunity through United Way.

These three situations are mutually exclusive. At the same time, they also provide a good synergistic opportunity. The TPGSD Board meeting of September 6, 2012, focussed on the HHH Dartmouth office potential and agreed to move forward with it at this time. This agreement is predicated on developing a workable partnership with HHH, as well as being able to secure the required funding. The Christ Church rectory was recognized as a longer term project and the Board agreed that we should continue to work with the church and other partners to explore the possibility of this opportunity.

A key value-added component that TPGSD brings to housing is the focus on Dartmouth Centre, defined as the area largely within the circumferential highway. Its two current programs - Connections that Work and the Community Van - are both complementary to a housing initiative.

The following sections provide an overview of the type of involvement that could be considered in a long term strategy for TPGSD.

### 7.1. Program Areas

- supportive housing - provides external supports to residents that allow them to function better within and outside of their home.
- co-housing - this is different from co-op housing. It encourages people currently living alone to share a living situation to achieve economical housing as well as provide mutual support. Government regulations, at all

levels, as well as social assistance programs, need to allow for co-housing to happen without penalties. Seniors and lone parent families could benefit from this model.

- co-op housing - facilities are owned, managed and maintained by the residents under a formal co-op arrangement. Amounts paid for rent are often based on ability to pay. Some government and other funding may also be provided. There are many different models/arrangements for housing co-ops - some more successful than others.
- safe and healthy housing - people have both the right and the need to enjoy safe access and egress from their homes as well as being assured of a healthy environment while in their homes. Adequate heat and cleanliness (especially mold and pest issues) should be a given.
- emergency housing (including homelessness) - facility based short-term housing.

## 7.2. Advocacy Areas

- social assistance rate gap
- local bylaws that limit supports and facilities for the less well off
- housing strategy for Dartmouth
- community based supports
- life skills training and other supports for individuals on the margins
- supportive housing tax exemption
- permit people to live together without losing financial benefits
- HRM's Affordable Housing Functional Plan
- minimum standards officer for HRM
- investigate provincial/national housing incentives/models that are community based and have proven successful

## 7.3. Partnerships

- Halifax Housing Help
- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
- Join the Community Advisory Board for Homelessness Partnering Strategy
- Attend and participate in building the Nova Scotia Housing and Homelessness Network.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS/NEXT STEPS

At its meeting of September 6, 2012, the TPGSD Board approved the following motions:

- The board support pursuing a partnership with Halifax Housing Help and that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be developed to outline the terms of the partnership.
- TPGSD send an expression of interest for \$50,000 for funding to be submitted to the United Way by September 21, 2012.

At the same meeting, the Board agreed to the following:

- Acceptance of Dennis Pilkey's offer to lead the housing portfolio for the Board.
- Continue developing this report.
- Share the draft report with United Way and Christ Church and get feedback on it. In particular pursue ideas and opportunities related to housing.

The MOU, developed in collaboration with HHH and the Metro Non-profit Housing Association, is shown in Appendix C. The MOU has been approved by the MNPHA and TPGSD boards. It was signed by Frances Drolet-Smith on behalf of TPGSD and Carol Charlebois on behalf of MNPHA on October 19, 2012.

United Way accepted the Expression of Interest and TPGSD was invited to submit a detailed proposal. The proposal was developed in collaboration with HHH and was submitted to United Way on October 21, 2012.

Christ Church Rectory is not viable, at this time, as an office for HHH, for the following reasons:

- zoning by-laws are a potential impediment to its use in any social housing or housing service situation; and
- requires considerable upgrading and would likely require a high office preparation and maintenance effort.

A partnership with Christ Church on a social housing initiative has good future potential.

Social Housing NIMBY seems to be a factor around the initiation of relatively recent changes to and enforcement of the Downtown Neighbourhood zoning by-laws. It is recommended that work begin on a report entitled "Social Housing and the NIMBY Experience". The report should cover at least the following:

- overview of NIMBY and its general characteristics including strategies for working effectively with neighborhoods to engage in meaningful dialogue around local concerns and issues.
- collect and document cases where the zoning has caused issues
- document stories where social housing has faced and overcome NIMBY situations;
  - describe the situation and experience of organizations moving into new neighbourhoods.
  - describe the current situation of these organizations after having settled into the neighbourhood.
- engage other organizations and political leaders to develop a strategy that will show Dartmouth to be a welcoming and socially responsible community.

It is recommended that this, Housing that Works – Discussion Paper, be released at the TPGSD Annual General meeting on November 19, 2012, for discussion, comment and input.

- It should be sent to at least all groups that are referenced in it.
- It should be posted on our web site, with the feedback form posted separately and enabled for on-line completion and submission.
- A proposed feedback form is included as Appendix F.

## 9. APPENDIX A - HOUSING SERVICES PROVIDERS WITHIN DARTMOUTH (HALIFAX)

The following are some of the agencies involved in housing and related services in Dartmouth. An exhaustive list is beyond the scope of this overview report.

- Adsum for Women & Children
- Affirmative House - Dartmouth
- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
- Alice Housing
- Community Action on Homelessness
- Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada
- Dartmouth Non-Profit Housing Society
- Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre
- Demetreous Lane Tenants Association
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia
- Halifax Housing Help
- HomeBridge Youth Society
- Metro Community Housing Authority
- Metro Non-Profit Housing Association
- MOSH: Mobile Outreach Street Health
- New Beginnings - 250 Homes program in Dartmouth related to mental illness.
- NS Housing and Homelessness Network (NSHHN)
- Phoenix House
- Shelter Nova Scotia
- Saint Paul's Home Board

### 9.1. Adsum for Women & Children

For the past 28 years, Adsum has been meeting women and children and female youth where they are, without judgment, offering a range of services and support during periods of homelessness. Adsum operates out of four locations in the Halifax Regional Municipality: an emergency shelter, second-stage housing and two affordable, supportive housing buildings for women and children. Adsum Court, one of the affordable housing buildings, is located in Dartmouth. It has 23 units and an office that is staffed approximately 35 hours a week to provide advocacy, referrals, group programming and individual supportive counseling.

Since 1983, the doors of Adsum have been open for women, children and female youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Adsum is a non-profit,

community-based organization working to improve the quality of life for individuals and families who are marginalized in our community.

Adsum programs and resources offer safety and an opportunity for growth; and advocates for women and children and works to eliminate poverty and the societal conditions that create homelessness. Adsum's vision is to be a recognized community leader devoted to reducing homelessness and promoting independent living for women and children and youth.

Contact:

Sheri Lecker, Executive Director  
[sheri.lecker@adsumforwomen.org](mailto:sheri.lecker@adsumforwomen.org)  
Tel: (902) 425-3466

Source: Adapted from [Adsum](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.2. **Affirmative House - Dartmouth**

Affirmative House is a project of Affirmative Industries. Affirmative Industries is an innovative non-profit business organization that assists mental health consumers and other persons with disabilities achieve economic independence.

They have a successful track record of creating social enterprises that generate employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, helping them grow personally and professionally. Their success is based upon the appropriate blending of client special needs with the creative application of sound business principles.

The Building for Independence project, Affirmative House, provides mental health consumers a stable, affordable home of their own, allowing them to participate as productive members of society. It also gives them an opportunity to build equity and to gain independence through a co-operative housing model.

Mental health consumers who are at work, or acquiring an education, may be tenants of Affirmative House, a 10 unit apartment building owned by Affirmative Industries. This model enables them to pursue their goals while they earn equity in their apartment. When they leave, the equity is available to help buy a home or return to school.

Goal is to build community and help mental health consumers achieve economic independence .

Contact:

Lori Edgar  
Supported Work Coordinator  
Affirmative Industries

261 Pleasant Street, Unit 3  
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 3S1  
Telephone: 902-225-2130  
Fax: 902.464.3018  
[Lori.Edgar@cdha.nshealth.ca](mailto:Lori.Edgar@cdha.nshealth.ca)

Source: Adapted from [Affirmative House](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

### 9.3. **Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia**

The mission of the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS) is to promote and support access to decent and affordable housing throughout Nova Scotia.

AHANS pursues this goal through supporting research, facilitating dialogue across sectors, and broadening public and government awareness about the needs and realities of affordable housing.

Currently, AHANS is taking a leadership role in creating opportunities for partnerships between the non-profit sector and private developers. AHANS also continues to lobby government to influence policy and programs and is developing a strategy to change the public's perception of affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS) has been contracted by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to manage the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for Halifax Regional Municipality. The contract is to the end of March 2014. Staff of CAH have been hired by AHANS to carry out this work.

AHANS has submitted an Expression of Interest to United Way to carry out detailed research on the housing situation and demographic context for neighbourhoods in HRM.

Contact:

Claudia Jahn, Program Facilitator  
[cjahn@ahans.ca](mailto:cjahn@ahans.ca)

Jim Graham, Program Facilitator  
[jgraham@ahans.ca](mailto:jgraham@ahans.ca)

2020 Gottingen Street  
Halifax NS B3K 3A9  
[info@ahans.ca](mailto:info@ahans.ca)

Phone: 902-406-3122

Fax: 902-406-3229

Source: Adapted from [AHANS](#) web site as of September 24, 2012 supplemented by information provided by staff of AHANS.

## 9.4. Alice Housing

Alice Housing provides safe second stage housing and supportive counselling to women and children leaving domestic abuse. With 18 units located in the Halifax Regional Municipality, Alice Housing has provided a wide range of services to over 900 families in crisis from violence since 1983 and is one of the largest and oldest second stage housing organizations in Canada. Alice Housing has received the Donner Foundation "Excellence in the Provision of Basic Necessities Award" seven times in the last nine years. The October 2012 award placed Alice Housing as one of the top nine selected from the 554 organizations who applied.

By providing safe, affordable housing and counselling for up to two years, families are able to recover from abuse so that violence does not have to frame their future or define their legacy.

Alice Housing has two overarching goals to realize the mission:

- To provide women and children the support and counselling needed to recover from the effects of abuse and trauma; and
- To decrease the chance that women and children will return to abusive households.

To achieve these goals Alice Housing:

- Provides women with safe, affordable housing so they do not have to make the difficult decision between remaining in abusive relationships and becoming homeless;
- Provides safe, non-judgmental housing for women, with or without children, leaving abusive situations that have identified their own need for on-going support and counselling;
- Increases women's well-being and self-sufficiency;
- Ensures women and children feel safe and no longer live in abusive environments;
- Provides the opportunity for women to develop increased positive coping skills, enabling them to deal with a variety of personal issues and become aware of the cycle of abuse; and
- Provides children with the opportunity to heal from trauma in a safe environment.

Contact:

Phone: 902.466.8459

Fax: 902.466.9808

[livesafe@alicehousing.ca](mailto:livesafe@alicehousing.ca)

Source: Adapted from [Alice Housing](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.5. **Community Action on Homelessness**

Community Action on Homelessness (CAH) was an umbrella group that promotes partnerships to build a community's capacity to address issues associated with homelessness and affordable housing. CAH was guided by its mission: “to work in partnerships within our community, to advance community solutions that address homelessness, and the right to a home as a key to the ‘quality of life’ for everyone in our community.” CAH was funded by Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), a program of the Government of Canada, and supported by other government and community partners.

As of the end of September, 2012, the CAH project has ended and is being wrapped up. Staff of CAH have been hired by AHANS to manage the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for Halifax Regional Municipality under a contract with HRSDC.

## 9.6. **Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada**

CHF Canada is the nation-wide umbrella organization for co-op housing and Canada’s link with co-op housing around the world. As spelled out in their mission and values, they exist to unite, represent and serve the co-op housing community across Canada. The co-operative housing movement consists of housing co-operatives, whether occupied or under development, the people who live and work in them, and the organizations and individuals that support and serve them.

CHF Canada opened its Nova Scotia office in 2002 to provide services to CHF Canada members in the province. A Nova Scotia advisory committee made up of co-op members from across the province, meets on a quarterly basis. The committee gives feedback to CHF Canada on issues affecting co-ops in the province.

Services provided by the Nova Scotia office:

- Advocacy
- Education events
- Workshop handout: [Housing Subsidies in a Post Operating Agreement World](#) (Halifax, May 12, 2012)
- Commercial insurance programs and MemberGuard contents insurance
- Co-op housing investment program (CHIP)
- Co-op Cost-Cutters
- Nova Scotia Newsbriefs newsletter published twice a year
- Help for co-ops in difficulty
- Toll-free line
- And all the other CHF Canada services

Contact:

Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada

202 Brownlow Avenue

Tower 1, Suite 300

Dartmouth, NS B3B 1T5

phone: (902) 423-7119

fax: (902) 423-7058

toll free: 1-866-213-2667

Debbie Hamilton [email](#)

Karen Brodeur [email](#)

Source: Adapted from [CHF Canada](#) web site as of October 27, 2012

## 9.7. **Dartmouth Non-Profit Housing Society**

The Dartmouth Non-Profit Housing Society is a private organization that provides permanent, affordable and secure housing for single individuals, seniors and families. They own over 100 rentable units with very low turnover rates and high demand. There is a waiting list for their units. By choice, they maintain a low public profile and do not provide any printed or electronic information about their operation.

Contact:

53 Ochterloney Street

Dartmouth, NS B2Y 1C3

Phone: (902) 469-0543

## 9.8. **Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre**

Since 1976 the Dartmouth Seniors' Service Centre has been providing activities and services which may not otherwise be readily available in the community. The Centre offers various social, physical, and educational programs.

Mission:

To enhance the well-being and quality of life for older adults living in our community by providing a safe, welcoming, positive, learning environment for everyone.

Their programs include:

- Daily Hot Lunches
- Daily Activities
- Catering
- Meals on Wheels
- Medical Transportation
- Home Helpers

Contact:

45 Ochterloney Street  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

T: 902.465.5578

F: 902.465.2755

E: [info@dartmouthseniors.ca](mailto:info@dartmouthseniors.ca)

Source: Adapted from [Service Centre](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.9. **Demetreous Lane Tenants Association**

The Demetreous Lane Tenants Association exists to be a voice for the community and with those agencies that they have dealings with. Through monthly meetings, which are open to all residents, they discuss issues and possible resolutions. The association is proactive in seeking improvements in their community and better services especially for their youth.

Demetreous Lane is a community in Dartmouth. It has a population of about 150 people in 60 townhomes that run off lanes that connect to Demetreous Lane, their main street. They have been there a long time - since the 1950's. The community has a Community Centre and a Food Bank, both run with local volunteers. They also have a Community Policing Office on site.

In 2011, they received a Minister's Award for Leadership in Crime Prevention. As noted on the Department of Justice web site:

"The Demetreous Lane Tenants Association is committed to bettering the lives of its residents in North End Dartmouth. The programs offered by the Association have engaged individuals in the community, helped them to develop life skills, and opened doors to positive opportunities. Since the establishment of the Demetreous Lane Tenants Association, crime rates in the community have dropped and residents are more engaged in community activities."

Contact:

Community Centre  
27 Demetreous Lane  
Dartmouth, NS  
Phone:466-0987

Source: Adapted from [Tenants Association](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.10. **Elizabeth Fry Society**

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia, formerly known as the Elizabeth Fry Society of Halifax/Dartmouth, has been in existence since November of 1982, and is an affiliate of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies.

Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia works with, and on behalf of, women in conflict with the law. The Society identified the need to raise public awareness on related issues. They were interested in how the Nova Scotia criminal justice system depicted, and treated women.

The Society's mission is to:

- Respond to the needs of women in prison;
- Develop community services and supports for women who have been charged with offences or are at risk of coming into conflict with the law;
- Improve the quality of life for the children by assisting the mother in overcoming barriers to meeting societal expectations;
- Raise public awareness by publicizing issues of women and the law;
- Lobby for improved penal facilities for women;
- Lobby for changes in criminal justice.

The term "at risk of becoming in conflict with the law", allows the Society to offer their services to women in general, not only those involved with legal issues. Thus, the Society provides services to women - young or old - who have the potential to come into conflict with the law. It also provides support to women who are experiencing physical, emotional or financial difficulties that may be the result of addictive behaviors or living in abusive situations.

The Elizabeth Fry Society is an organization dedicated to serve women from all walks of life, not only those in prison. It provides a safe, healing environment for strength and regrowth. It defends the rights of women, while working to ensure fair treatment in the criminal justice system. Above all, the society views women not as objects to be dismissed, but as human beings who can make a positive contribution to our society.

The Society manages Holly House in Dartmouth which provides safe supportive housing for up to eight women. Holly House also provides an office for community support staff. Our Thyme café continues to enhance their training program and assist more women to attain the training. In addition the Society provides many other programs to support their clients.

Contact :

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia  
2352 Gottingen Street,  
Halifax, N.S., B3K 3B9  
Telephone 454-5041, or toll free outside of HRM1-877-619-1354.  
Fax: 1-902-455-5913

Source: Adapted from [Elizabeth Fry Society](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.11. **Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia**

The Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia is a not-for-profit organization which was established in 1988 by a group of concerned men and women. In 1989 the Foundation opened the doors of a transition home to assist recovering alcoholic men from age 19 and over. Our mandate has broadened to include individuals addicted to drugs and gambling. We frequently find that our clients have multiple addictions.

The mission of the Freedom Foundation is to provide services which foster recovery from addictions and a development of a positive self-image and self worth in a secure and caring environment. Our goal is to help the individual build a solid foundation by meeting with our family physician to address any health needs, providing resources for clothing, providing nourishing meals, shelter and other basic necessities. This is followed up with assisting him in receiving addiction treatment programs, along with addressing any mental health issues that he may have, as roughly 80% of our clientele suffer from mental health issues along with their addictions.

Finally, we work with the individual in creating a proper resume, developing job search techniques, assisting him with registering for trade schools, employment counseling, budgeting and finding suitable and affordable living accommodations. A typical stay lasts an average of 9 months. We have housed over 900 men since we have opened our doors with a success rate of well over 25%.

Contact:

Joe Gibson,  
Freedom Foundation of Nova Scotia  
P.O. Box 23027  
SC-RPO  
Dartmouth NS B3A 1N7

## 9.12. **Halifax Housing Help**

Halifax Housing Help (HHH) programs provide a unique holistic response to the desperate need of single individuals who require access to housing supports and

eviction prevention, and who have experienced homelessness or been at serious risk of homelessness.

Since 2008, HHH has increased the number of participants with the aim of providing trusteeship to 150 individuals and housing supports and eviction prevention to over 200 individuals. HHH provides intensive case management and enables participants to receive a vast array of services through collaboration with community and governmental agencies. HHH also provides referrals to needed services that the community can offer beyond the scope of the program, such as intensive mental health services, brain injury programs, and community clubhouses.

Halifax Housing Help continues its involvement with the Out of the Cold Shelter, providing resources to the individuals staying there, along with assistance in finding housing and navigating through the Department of Community Services. The program has also responded in emergency situations such as the closing of rooming houses and apartments, one due to an oil spill, one as the result of a fire and another due to flooding.

Halifax Housing Help has been developing formal policies to identify and track the barriers participants face in housing, as well as developing and implementing formal policies for intensive case management.

Contact:

**Tess Warner** – Coordinator

Halifax Housing Help

2350 Gottingen Street

Halifax, NS B3K 6R4

e-mail: [halifaxhousinghelp@gmail.com](mailto:halifaxhousinghelp@gmail.com)

phone: (902) 423-8475

(Source: Adapted from information provided at

[http://homeatmnpha.ca/?page\\_id=144](http://homeatmnpha.ca/?page_id=144) - as of July 11, 2012)

### 9.13. **HomeBridge Youth Society**

HomeBridge Youth Society (renamed in June 2005) was incorporated in 1977 and known as The Association for the Development of Children's Residential Facilities (ADCRF) for 28 years. This non-profit organization was established by front line social workers who identified a need for residential care in the child welfare system. HomeBridge administers six residential, youth caring facilities throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality and a school program. Forty high risk youth between the ages of 12 and 18 years old can be served in community settings at one time. Approximately 180 young people reside in their facilities annually. All the young

people are in the temporary or permanent care of the Minister of Community Services.

HomeBridge Youth Society operates with the ongoing commitments of the Nova Scotia Departments of Community Services, Education and Transportation and Public Works, St. Paul's Home Board and other public support. HomeBridge provides progressive therapeutic program opportunities for young people and operates with a multi-disciplinary approach to residential youth care.

Contact:

Linda Wilson  
Executive Director  
HomeBridge Youth Society  
270 Pleasant Street  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia  
B2Y 3S3  
Phone: (902) 466-1439 ext:222  
Fax: (902) 466-0466  
[lwilson@homebridgeyouth.ca](mailto:lwilson@homebridgeyouth.ca)

Source: Adapted from [HomeBridge](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.14. **Metro Community Housing Association**

Metro Community Housing Association is a non-profit, community based agency providing support and residential services to persons who have experienced mental health difficulties.

Their Mission Statement:

"To provide a range of community based services to individuals who have experienced mental health difficulties."

Our Objectives:

- To provide supportive living environments.
- To enable individuals to enhance their capacity for determination.
- To support individuals in achieving their personal goals.
- To provide advocacy services on personal and social policy levels for persons who have experienced mental health difficulties.
- To work in collaboration with other community resources that can be of assistance to our clients.
- To provide our services on a not-for-profit basis.

Metro Community Housing Association offers a variety of residential and support services:

- delivers range of community based services enabling people to live in the community and maintain or improve their mental health.
- operates group homes in the Halifax / Dartmouth area which provide twenty-four hour staff support for the eight to ten people who would reside in each of the homes.
- supports clients in four-bedroom houses in the Halifax and Dartmouth Area.
- provides services to clients who reside independently in their own apartments, flats or houses.

Contact:

7001 Mumford Rd  
 Tower 1, Suite 215  
 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4N9  
 Phone: (902) 453-6444  
 Fax: (902) 453-1188  
 E-mail: info@mcha.ns.ca

Source: Adapted from [Metro Community Housing](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.15. **Metro Non-Profit Housing Association**

The Metro Non-Profit Housing Association is a private, charitable organization that provides permanent, secure housing and support to low income, single individuals. Their mission is to assist single adults who have been homeless or at risk of being homeless to create and maintain their homes.

- The Association's purpose is to assist low-income adults to make their homes through:
- The provision of safe, affordable, stable, long term housing in a supportive environment.
- The management of quality housing with a participatory style.
- Engaging in individual support, advocacy, referral and access to community resources for single adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Participating in the community to advocate for safe, affordable housing and for other related poverty issues, and participating in research related to these activities.

The Association owns and manages six apartment buildings in Halifax and Dartmouth. Tenants are actively engaged in the care and development of their homes. The Association also runs the Housing Support Centre which provides drop-in opportunities, medical supports and social activities. The Shining Lights

choir and cooking classes are examples of these. Halifax Housing Help is one of the projects that the Association oversees.

Contact:

Carol Charlebois, Executive Director  
Metro Non-profit Housing Association  
75 Primrose Street, #101,  
Dartmouth, NS B3A 4C9  
e-mail: [mnpha@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:mnpha@ns.sympatico.ca)  
phone: (902) 466-8714

Source: adapted from the [Metro Non-Profit Housing Association](#) web site as of August, 2012.

## 9.16. **MOSH: Mobile Outreach Street Health**

Over the past year, funds were awarded from Capital District Health Authority, Department of Health and a charitable donation from Frontline Health for the **Mobile Outreach Street Health Program (MOSH)**.

MOSH provides accessible primary health care services to people who are homeless, insecurely housed, street involved and under served in our community. The MOSH team is a collaborative primary health team of 2 full time nurses, 0.5 occupational therapist, 12 hours of physician care per week, and 0.5 administrative support.

MOSH brings primary health care services to shelters, soup kitchens and other areas of congregation for at risk groups. Many organizations who serve people who are street involved or homeless have worked to create MOSH, and many partners are needed to make it work. For example, the outreach team works closely with the health team at the North End Community Health Centre. There are several homeless shelters that provide space for regular visits by the outreach team. The team has a street presence over extended hours, six days per week and complements already existing outreach services like Stepping Stone and Mainline Needle Exchange.

Contact:

North End Community Health Centre  
2165 Gottingen Street  
Halifax, NS  
B3K 3B5  
Telephone: (902) 420-0303  
Fax: (902) 422-0859  
Email: [comms@nehc.com](mailto:comms@nehc.com)

Source: adapted from the [MOSH](#) web site as of August, 2012

## 9.17. **New Beginnings - 250 Homes**

Capital Health's 250 Homes - a safe, affordable housing and case management initiative for individuals living with Mental Illness - was launched in 2007 as a pilot project in partnership with Killam Properties and Capital Health's Mental Health Program.

Today, Capital Health's 250 Homes program is thriving: five partner landlords are subsidizing 83 units, 43 of which are provided by Killam; many more people are realizing their dream of living independently in the community and staying well; and model tenants are capturing the imagination of commercial property owners on how to keep their occupancy at sustainable levels.

The success of Capital Health's 250 Homes initiative has encouraged Killam to structure partnerships with other affordable housing agencies, e.g. Shelter Nova Scotia (formerly St Leonards) which operates local shelters and housing including Metro Turning Point. Killam and other Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia members are providing over 100 units to these agencies, with a growth rate of 4-5 per month.

Contact - Elizabeth Cleary [elizabeth.cleary@cdha.nshealth.ca](mailto:elizabeth.cleary@cdha.nshealth.ca)

## 9.18. **NS Housing and Homelessness Network (NSHHN)**

The Nova Scotia Housing and Homelessness Network hosted its first annual conference in Halifax in November 2011. For this historic event, 140 enthusiastic participants from all sectors came together and explored how to grow the newly founded provincial Network from its infancy to an effective organization; one that has the ability to achieve its set goals of ending homelessness and strengthening the affordable housing sector in Nova Scotia. Participants left with a sense of optimism that through collaboration and proper planning things can get better for the homeless and housing sector in NS.

The two days provided an incredible opportunity to combine the collective skill, creativity and determination of participants and achieve results that they could not have reached alone. Participants commented that there were many new faces in the room, and realized the benefit of building relationships with all players.

Planning for a second conference on November 22 & 23, 2012 is underway.

Contact:

NS Housing & Homelessness Network  
201-2030 Gottingen Street  
Halifax, NS

B3K 3A9  
phone (902) 420-6026  
[conference@nshousingnetwork.org](mailto:conference@nshousingnetwork.org)

Source: Adapted from [Housing and Homelessness Network](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

## 9.19. Phoenix House

Phoenix House is a non-profit, community based organization located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. They offer at-risk and homeless youth, ages 12 - 24, the opportunity to break the cycle of homelessness and find a path from the street. Since its inception in 1987, Phoenix has developed an extensive variety of programs and services to address the individual needs of each client.

Their primary innovative feature is the continuum of care provided throughout the ten programs and services including: prevention, crisis assistance, emergency shelter, long-term supportive and structured living, independent living, personal skill development, education, health services, and after care services.

Phoenix has become known in the community as the authority regarding issues of youth homelessness: poverty, housing, discrimination, literacy and the many other social issues that are embedded within the challenge of addressing the needs of the youth being served.

Contact:  
6035 Coburg Road  
P.O. Box 60006 RPO Professional Centre  
Halifax NS B3H 4R7  
Tel: (902) 422-3105  
Fax: (902) 422-7656

Source: Adapted from [Phoenix Youth](#) web site as of September 28, 2012

## 9.20. Shelter Nova Scotia

Shelter Nova Scotia provides a home for people who need somewhere to stay. They offer care to people who can find it nowhere else. They support people who can use a helping hand.

In 2010, Shelter Nova Scotia provided over 44,000 warm and safe nights to people who needed somewhere to sleep. Shelter Nova Scotia is passionate about accomplishing two things:

- Helping men and women make the change from prison living to community living

- Ending homelessness one person at a time

Shelter Nova Scotia helps individuals maximize their inherent greatness. They believe, they can connect positively with the men and women they serve in ways that help them experience a better life. They do this by aiming high, reaching far, and working tirelessly.

Shelter Nova Scotia oversees the operation of:

- two Community Residential Facilities that help men and women make the change from prison living to community living
- two facilities for men and women experiencing homelessness
- a supportive housing program for men and women moving from shelter living to community living
- a Community Trustee Program for individuals in the community

In 2009, Metro Turning Point, a shelter for men experiencing homelessness, merged with Saint Leonard's Society. In 2011, Saint Leonard's Society of Nova Scotia reinvented itself as Shelter Nova Scotia.

Source: Adapted from [Shelter Nova Scotia](#) web site as of September 24, 2012

Contact:

Shelter Nova Scotia  
101-5506 Cunard Street  
Halifax, NS  
B3K 1C2  
Telephone: 902.406.3631  
Fax: 902.406.3477

## 9.21. **Saint Paul's Home**

St. Paul's Home is a Christian organization that has been entrusted with the resources and the mission to provide practical support to disadvantaged young people in the Halifax area.

In 1867, just prior to Confederation, nine parishioners from St. Paul's Church in Halifax, concerned about the welfare of young girls, each donated 10 pounds sterling to establish the St Paul's Alms House of Industry for Girls. A mortgage, financed by Enos Collins through Collins Bank, Historic Properties, allowed the purchase of the original house on Tower Road in 1872 (now the Phoenix Youth Shelter). The Collins Bank forgave the interest each year.

In 1887, St. Paul's Alms House of Industry for Girls was incorporated (through an Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature) as a separate entity from the parish. Then, in 1903, the name was changed to "St. Paul's Home for Girls". In 1982, the name was

degendered to St. Paul's Home. The objectives of the organization were redefined and a more aggressive style of management was adopted. By this time St. Paul's Home had acquired significant capital strength and was in a position to purchase buildings in response to requests from groups operating programs serving youth in need.

Currently St. Paul's Home owns eight houses in residential areas (including the original Tower Road building) within which specialized programs for disadvantaged youth are run by Phoenix Youth Programs, HomeBridge Youth Society and Regional Independent Students Association. The houses are provided rent-free to these organizations. The properties owned, with dates of purchase in brackets, are as follows:

- Phoenix Youth Shelter (1872)
- Jubien House (1981)
- Phoenix House (1986)
- Sullivan House (1990)
- Phoenix Youth Centre (1994)
- Cogswell House (2003)
- Genesis House (2004)
- Mary Brockwell House (2008)
- Open Door Church in Spryfield (2009)

Source: Adapted from a brief history of St. Paul's Home written by Kathleen Flowerdew. The history is entitled "A Legacy of Community Commitment 1867 to Present".

Contact:

Mary Lynch, Chair  
St Paul's Home Board  
1749 Argyle Street  
Halifax, NS, B3J 3K4  
[mary.lynch@dal.ca](mailto:mary.lynch@dal.ca)

## 10. APPENDIX B - GOVERNMENT HOUSING RELATED AGENCIES

### 10.1. Federal

A search on "housing" on the federal web site produced over 99,000 results. The following are selective overviews.

#### **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency. Established as a government-owned corporation in 1946 to address Canada's post-war housing shortage, the agency has grown into a major national institution. CMHC is Canada's premier provider of mortgage loan insurance, mortgage-backed securities, housing policy and programs, and housing research.

CMHC works to enhance Canada's housing finance options, assist Canadians who cannot afford housing in the private market, improve building standards and housing construction, and provide policymakers with the information and analysis they need to sustain a vibrant housing market in Canada.

On July 4, 2011, federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for housing announced a \$1.4 billion combined housing investment under a new Affordable Housing Framework 2011 – 2014.

The Framework recognizes the diversity of affordable housing needs of Canadians and that a range of solutions — from existing programs to new approaches — is the most effective in meeting local needs and priorities. It is also recognized that under this Framework provinces and territories have responsibility for the design and delivery of affordable housing programs in order to address their own specific housing needs and priorities in their jurisdictions.

Under this agreement, Nova Scotia receives \$10.2 million for each of the three years of the agreement. Nova Scotia matches these funds which have the intended outcome of reducing the number of Canadians in housing need<sup>7</sup> by improving access to housing that is sound, suitable and sustainable.

Source: Adapted from CMHC's [Investment in Affordable Housing 2011 – 2014](#) web site as of September 29, 2012.

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<sup>7</sup> core housing need are those households that fall below adequacy, suitability or affordability standards

## **Human Resources and Skills Development Canada**

### Homelessness Partnering Strategy

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to communities across Canada. HRM is one of 61 communities included in this program.

The HPS provides structures and supports that help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness achieve self-sufficiency and full participation in society. The HPS seeks to address homelessness by working in partnership with the provinces and territories, other federal departments, as well as with communities and the private and not-for-profit sectors.

For more information, see:

[About the Homelessness Partnering Strategy](#)

[Funding](#)

[Working Together](#)

[Understanding Homelessness](#)

[Related Links](#)

[Homeless Individuals and Families Information System \(HIFIS\)](#)

Source: Copied from HRSDC's [Homelessness Partnering Strategy](#) web site as of September 29, 2012

## **National Housing Research Committee**

Since 1986, the NHRC has brought together representatives from all levels of government, social housing organizations and the housing industry as well as academics and consumers to pursue four objectives:

- Identifying priority areas for housing-related research and demonstration
- Encouraging cooperation and partnership in research without duplication of effort
- Fostering broader support for housing research
- Promoting the dissemination, application and adoption of research results

The NHRC is led by a Full Committee that directs various Working Groups dedicated to specific issues. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) co-chairs Full Committee meetings and three of the four Working Groups and provides the Secretariat that operates the NHRC.

The NHRC's current Working Groups focus on:

- Distinct Needs
- Housing Data
- Homelessness
- Sustainable Housing and Communities

Source: Copied from [NHRC](#) website as of September 29, 2012.

### **Statistics Canada**

Statistics Canada and CMHC are the major sources of data, including many analytical reports, on housing and homelessness. The following two publications were considered to be of interest for this report.

- [The dynamics of housing affordability](#)
- [Measuring housing affordability](#)

## **10.2. Provincial - Department of Community Services**

The following is copied from the Community Services website, as of September 24, 2012 and the NSHDC Business Plan:

### [Affordable Housing & Repairs](#)

The provincial government offers a number of programs to help lower income households maintain, acquire or rent safe, adequate and affordable housing. We also have grants and loans for home repairs and additions, as well as mortgage funds to purchase or build modest houses.

Our programs will be of interest to low-income households, seniors and persons with disabilities.

Programs and resources

### [Public Housing and Other Affordable Renting Programs](#)

Programs to provide safe, adequate, and affordable rental accommodations for families and seniors on fixed or low incomes.

### [Financial Assistance and Grant Programs for Homeowners](#)

Programs to help lower income households maintain, acquire or rent safe, adequate and affordable housing.

### [Housing Programs for Seniors](#)

Programs to help seniors stay in their homes.

### [Housing Programs for Persons with Disabilities](#)

Programs for low-income persons with disabilities.

### [Programs for Landlords](#)

Programs to help landlords offer safe, adequate and affordable housing for lower income households.

### [Programs for Developers of Affordable Housing](#)

Programs to promote the development of affordable housing for people with low to moderate incomes.

### [Affordable Housing Projects](#)

Between 2002 and 2012 Nova Scotia and its partners will be investing over \$196 million dollars in affordable housing.

### [Shelter Enhancement Program](#)

This program supports shelters for women, children and youth who are victims of family violence.

### [Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust Fund Programs](#)

These funds are being delivered through various Aboriginal off-reserve groups.

## **Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation**

The Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation (NSHDC), created in 1986, provides financing for government's social and supported housing programs. It is responsible for holding the province's social housing assets and consolidating the revenues and expenditures associated with operating these assets.

Staff of the Department of Community Services carry out the management and administration functions of the corporation, but are not direct employees of the corporation.

The strategic goal of the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation is to ensure a range of assets and financial tools are available and used effectively to improve the health, diversity and sustainability of affordable, public and social housing.

The Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation owns 12,000 senior and family public housing units which are administered and managed by [Housing Authority offices throughout the province](#). The Housing Authority offices also administer the [Rent Supplement Program](#) of approximately 800 units, and the Rural and Native Housing Program of some 1,200 rental and homeowner units. Combined, these programs provide housing to approximately 30,000 Nova Scotians.

The five Housing Authorities in the province are responsible for the administration and management of the [rental housing](#) units. HRM is served by the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority

Contact:

**Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority**

MacDonald Building

2131 Gottingen Street, 5th Floor

Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 5Z7

24-hour Switchboard: (902) 420-6000

For Applications: (902) 420-6017

Toll Free: (902) 800-565-8859

Fax: (902) 420-6020

E-mail: [MRHA\\_Info@gov.ns.ca](mailto:MRHA_Info@gov.ns.ca)

### 10.3. **Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)**

HRM's Planning Services has a web section "[Housing and Homelessness in HRM](#)".

This site includes a resource guide that provides contact information and links to other sites and agencies of interest to people with housing and homelessness issues. Resources listed are extensive and varied. The site also includes a [Housing and Homelessness Research Library](#). There is some evidence that the site is not maintained as well as it once was since the most recent dated material seems to be about 2008.

The site makes the following statement about HRM's role in housing:

"Housing is fundamental to HRM's quality of life, social inclusion, future growth and the development of vibrant and sustainable communities. The need for shelter is universal, and housing is a powerful determinant of health, safety, and access to public amenities. Although HRM is not responsible for the delivery of social services and social housing, HRM planning processes and regulations can help to provide for a suitable supply of housing in a range of types and locations to meet the needs of HRM's diverse population. HRM can also contribute to partnerships formed to address homelessness and the shortage of safe and affordable housing."

# 11. APPENDIX C - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

## Memorandum of Understanding October 2012

Between

**The Public Good Society of Dartmouth  
and**

**Halifax Housing Help/Metro Non-Profit Housing Association**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is intended to facilitate a positive working relationship between The Public Good Society of Dartmouth and Halifax Housing Help/Metro Non-Profit Housing Association.

It has been mutually agreed that an opportunity exists for these two parties to work together to provide a satellite office in Dartmouth for HHH services.

Both parties agree to work together in an open, honest, and timely manner.

### **The Public Good Society of Dartmouth (TPGSD) will:**

- ✓ Work with HHH to determine operational requirements for a Dartmouth office
- ✓ Take the lead in locating, furnishing and setting up an office in Dartmouth
- ✓ Support the ongoing physical functioning of the Dartmouth office
- ✓ Provide background research and professional expertise on outcome measures and statistical indicators
- ✓ Work with HHH to develop funding proposals and secure the necessary incremental funding for the Dartmouth office
- ✓ Work with HHH to establish the best way to engage the Connections that Work program and use the Community Van in the Dartmouth HHH services
- ✓ Participate on appropriate oversight boards

### **Halifax Housing Help (HHH) will:**

- ✓ Manage the program and services offered through the Dartmouth office, including:
  - recruitment, training and supervision of staff
  - book-keeping and accounting
  - payroll
  - financial reporting
  - program management and supports
- ✓ Work with TPGSD to develop funding proposals and secure the necessary incremental funding for the Dartmouth office
- ✓ Work with TPGSD to establish the best way to engage the Connections that Work program and use of the Community Van in the Dartmouth HHH services
- ✓ Invite TPGSD to participate on appropriate oversight boards
- ✓ Provide TPGSD with appropriate, non-confidential, statistics on Dartmouth clients

Each party agrees not to make commitments (financial, communication, public meetings, etc.) on behalf of the other party without prior consent.

Both parties agree to share information that would help achieve mutually shared goals and objectives.

**Signatures**

By signing below, the parties to this MOU indicate their agreement, in good faith.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Frances Drolet-Smith, Chair

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth  
P.O. Box 262  
Dartmouth NS B2Y 3Y3

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Charlebois, Executive Director

Metro Non-profit Housing Association  
75 Primrose Street, #101  
Dartmouth, NS B3A 4C9

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 12. APPENDIX D - TERMS<sup>8</sup>

**Absolute homelessness:** The absolute homeless are those who live on the street, in temporary shelters, or in locations not intended for human habitation. This group may also include those who must move continuously among temporary housing arrangements provided by strangers, friends or family. The absolute homeless have no home to return to.

**Affordable housing:**

**A.** Dwellings costing less than 30% of before-tax household income. Costs include [for renters]: rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water, and other municipal services; [for owners] mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes and/or any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water, and other municipal services.

**B.** Public housing intended for low-income people and/or people with disabilities, or specific groups who cannot afford to rent a place to live at market prices.

**Emergency shelter:** A facility providing temporary and short term accommodation (from a few days up to six months) to homeless individuals or families who would otherwise sleep on the street. Typically, these facilities provide single or shared bedrooms or dormitory-type sleeping arrangements.

**First Voice:** The name given to persons who are homeless or live at risk of homelessness. This includes persons who live in inadequate or over-crowded conditions and persons living in poverty. Community Action on Homelessness recognizes the invaluable contribution that First Voice makes to community solutions that work. There is First Voice representation on the Steering Committee and on sub-committees. An honorarium model – perhaps the first of its kind in Canada - recognizes the First Voice expertise and participation!

**Harm Reduction:** A non judgemental approach to providing persons with supports and services that recognizes some individuals may never cease harmful behaviours. The goal of harm reduction is to minimize negative impacts of drinking or drug use.

**Supportive housing:**

**A.** Long-term or permanent accommodation for people who cannot achieve or maintain housing stability independently and who require long-term or permanent services to help them maintain an appropriate level of safety and stability, while moving toward greater independence and quality of life.

**B.** Safe, affordable housing for individuals and families that includes supports and services integrated into the housing and no length-of-stay duration.

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<sup>8</sup> Source: Community Action on Homelessness (2009) Health and Homelessness in Halifax: A report on the health status of Halifax's homeless population; Halifax, NS

## 13. APPENDIX E - DOWNTOWN DARTMOUTH ZONING

Downtown Dartmouth zoning appears to be governed by the "[SECONDARY PLANNING STRATEGY FOR DOWNTOWN DARTMOUTH](#)". The following is extracted from this planning document (selected parts of pages 15 to 17):

The Downtown Dartmouth plan area encompasses five distinct neighbourhoods which surround the business district and house three quarters of the downtown's population.

The Park Avenue neighbourhood (also known as the "downtown neighbourhood") forms part of the northern boundary of the original 1750 town plan, and is next door to the Dartmouth Common. It is one of the oldest downtown neighbourhoods, and still retains many historic houses. The other four neighbourhoods are: Harbourview, Austenville, Hawthorne, Hazelhurst.

Through a series of public meetings and workshops in spring of 1998, area residents were asked to provide direction on how they wish to see their neighbourhoods grow and develop.

Within the neighbourhoods, the consensus is to preserve the character, scale and mix of housing and amenities. Dramatic changes in this housing mix are not desired. The community would like to build upon traditional housing stock in the downtown in an effort to attract more families and young people into the area. This will help offset an increasingly aging population and declines in school enrollments.

The plan seeks to promote neighbourhood stability through the creation of the "Neighbourhood" land use designation and zone. The predominant form of housing enabled by the Neighbourhood Zone is lower density housing consisting of single, two unit dwellings and small scale townhousing. This plan also sets out a strategy for five "residential opportunity sites" within the neighbourhoods, to encourage innovative housing opportunities that would not be otherwise enabled by the zoning.

### **Policies**

**Policy NB1:** This plan establishes a "Downtown Neighbourhood Designation" to recognize and protect the character of residential neighbourhoods surrounding the downtown business district. Within the designation, a Downtown Neighbourhood Zone will control future development to ensure it is consistent with the traditional lot and housing patterns in the neighbourhoods. Lower density housing types such as one and two unit dwellings, small scale townhousing, and limited conversion of existing dwellings will be encouraged throughout the neighbourhoods. Proposals for medium density townhousing and low rise apartments that are not enabled by the zoning may be considered on designated "residential opportunity sites" in accordance with Policy N-5.

**Policy N-2:** This plan encourages the retention and creation of dwelling units suitable for families with children in an effort to diversify the population and maintain area schools. This shall be achieved through the following means:

- a) specific targets for family housing on the residential opportunity sites (Policies N-5, B-6 & W-6);
- b) standards set out in the Land use by-law for conversion of units to family type accommodation;
- c) policies which encourage incentives for renovation of existing housing (Policy N-3).

### **Housing Renovation**

There is a desire to see older housing stock in the neighbourhoods renovated and upgraded to improve the image of the area and stimulate further investment and repopulation. Housing renovation will be encouraged through several means. Additional development opportunities will be provided to encourage re-use of older housing, with added incentives for registered heritage properties. Other means include vigorous enforcement of minimum standards by-laws, public/private partnerships, and new incentive programs to be developed at the provincial level.

**Policy N-3:** This plan shall foster the renovation of existing housing stock and improvements to the condition of properties within the neighbourhoods to enhance neighbourhood stability and image. The following means should be used to achieve the intent of this policy:

- a) vigorous enforcement of HRM's land use and other by-laws, including the Noise and Minimum Standards By-laws. Where needed, such by-laws shall be revised or strengthened to ensure residents reasonable enjoyment of their properties.
- b) incentives to upgrade older housing, in particular registered heritage properties (refer to expanded provisions for heritage properties in Policy H-11).
- c) partnerships with the private sector and senior levels of government and to encourage the development of HRM owned parcels for residential purposes and to explore other creative incentives aimed at fostering residential investment and renovation.

## 14. APPENDIX F - FEEDBACK

This report has been written to help The Public Good Society of Dartmouth determine the options and scope of an appropriate housing related role for the Society. Your comments and feedback will help the Society as it continues in its planning and subsequent action. Please respond to the following questions and send your feedback to Dennis Pilkey at [pilkeydw@eastlink.ca](mailto:pilkeydw@eastlink.ca) or mail to:

The Public Good Society of Dartmouth  
P.O. Box 262  
Dartmouth NS B2Y 3Y3

**What did you like about this discussion paper?**

**What else needs to be considered?**

**What do you think needs to happen next?**

**How do you see yourself or your organization being involved?**

**Are there any other comments you would like to make about this discussion paper?**