



# DOM'S PLACE

## Evaluation Report

OCTOBER 2025

### Abstract

This report evaluates the social and economic impact of the Dom's Place wrap-around homelessness service between July 2024 and June 2025. Using a mixed-methods approach with service data, economic modelling, and interviews with clients, staff, and volunteers, it assesses outcomes across housing, health, wellbeing, and social participation. Results show substantial individual benefits and cost savings, offering evidence to support the sustainability and scaling of wrap-around models in homelessness services.

# 1. Executive summary

Dom's Place is a safe, welcoming community hub in Northern Sydney that provides practical help and pathways to stability for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This evaluation measured both human and economic impact across twelve months, combining service data, stakeholder interviews, and conservative economic modelling.

## What we delivered in the last 12 months

- 5,000+ visits
- 6,000+ meals
- 1,000+ showers
- 2,000+ laundry services
- 700+ housing interventions
- 600+ mental health supports
- 400+ alcohol and other drug (AOD) interventions
- 400+ financial discussions
- Provision of clothing and toiletries

## Financials

- **Inputs:** \$0.385m
- **Gross value:** \$1.73m
- **Net value:** \$1.12m

## Social Return on Investment

Based on the investment and outcomes, CatholicCare Broken Bay generated an SROI Ratio of 1:2.9.

### Why it works

Clients consistently identified safety, dignity, trust, and belonging as the conditions that enabled engagement. Basic supports opened the door; relationships sustained the next steps into housing, health, and stability.

#### Inputs

\$385,000  
Volunteers,  
donations,  
partnerships and  
facilities

#### Services

Meals, showers,  
laundry, housing,  
AOD and finance

#### Outcomes

Stability,  
engagement,  
safety, dignity, trust  
and belonging

#### Economic Impact SROI

\$1 → \$2.90

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## 2. Background and context

Housing instability in Australia increasingly intersects with health and cost-of-living pressures. Homelessness is not a single-cause issue; it is the product of structural, economic, and personal factors that often compound over time. A crisis bed or a referral alone will not resolve the complexities of a person’s life. Community-based services like Dom’s Place fill a crucial gap by offering practical help and a culture that restores confidence and connection.

Dom’s Place allows people to address immediate needs such as food, hygiene, and clothing, while forming relationships that open pathways to housing, healthcare, financial stability, and social participation. This model complements clinical, housing, and government services by creating a safe front door to the broader system.

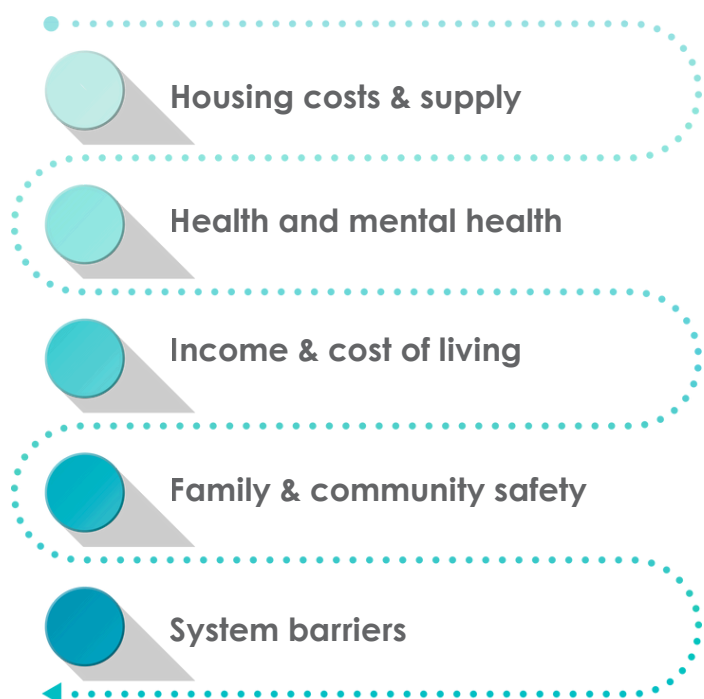
### Homeless in Australia Key Facts

**122,494 people** were estimated to be experiencing homelessness on Census night 2021.

Young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and older women are disproportionately affected.

[ABS \(2023\), Estimating Homelessness: Census, 2021; AIHW \(2025\), Specialist homelessness services annual report 2023–24.](#)

### Structural drivers of homelessness in Australia



# 3. About Dom's Place

The concept of wrap-around service delivery emerged in the late 1980s as a response to fragmented care for children with complex needs in the United States (VanDenBerg & Grealish, 1996). Its core principle is that individuals achieve better outcomes when multiple services, including housing, health, justice, employment, and social support services, are coordinated around their needs rather than delivered in silos.

## What we do



### Pathways

- Housing assistance (applications, viewing & advocacy)
- Health (GP links, mental health, AOD)
- Financial and legal discussions



### Immediate supports

- Meals, showers, laundry services, clothing and toileteries



### Community and trust

- A safe space where people feel known, heard and connected



### Volunteers

- Skilled and supported contributors who extend capacity and community reach

## Who we serve

- Adults and young people experiencing homelessness or housing stress
- People with chronic health or mental health conditions
- Those navigating domestic and family violence
- Individuals facing unemployment, debt, or social isolation, and
- People seeking reconnection and belonging



*They actually listen.*  
- Client



*It's not just about me getting stuff. I help out sometimes. It feels good to help out.*  
- Client



# 4. The evaluation

We used a mixed-methods evaluation to capture activity, experience, and value:

- **Service data:** volumes of visits, meals, showers/laundry, and pathway supports (housing, health, AOD, financial and legal discussions).
- **Stakeholder interviews:** clients, staff, and volunteers, exploring what enables engagement and progress.
- **Economic modelling (SROI):** inputs, outcomes, financial proxies, deadweight and attribution assumptions, and sensitivity testing.

We triangulated these sources to test whether the story the numbers tell aligns with what people experience. The answer was yes: quantitative outputs and qualitative themes converged, explaining how practical supports and relationships combine to produce outcomes.

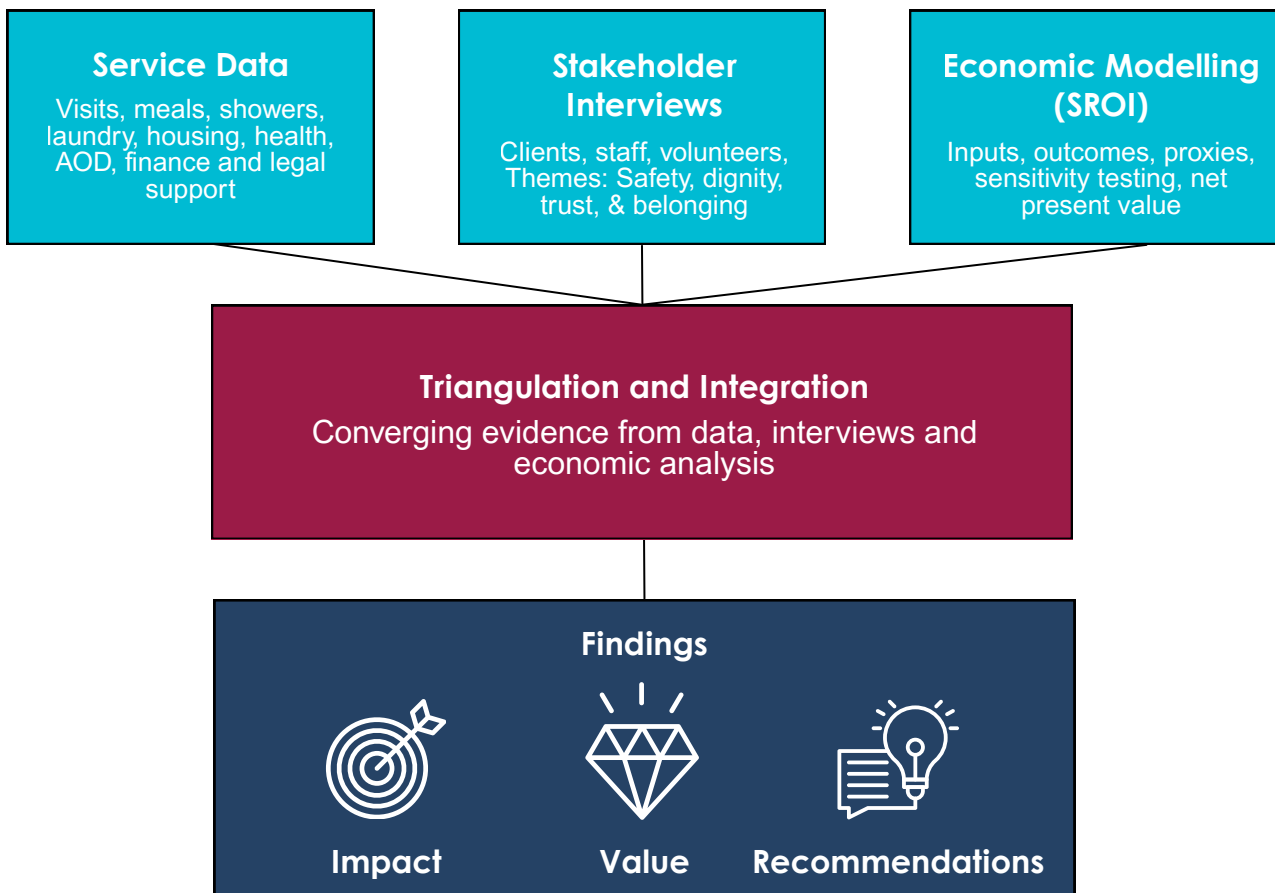
## What is SROI?

Social Return on Investment (SROI) translates outcomes into monetary value using transparent assumptions and published proxies. It accounts for what would have happened anyway (deadweight), the contribution of other services (attrition), and the risk of over-claiming.

**An SROI of 2.9:1 means \$2.90 of value is created for every \$1 invested.**

(Social Value International, Standards & Guidance; Social Value UK, Starting Out on SROI)

## Mixed-methods evaluation overview



# 5. Service reach and activities

Numbers tell the scale; the service tells the story.

Over twelve months, Dom's Place provided basic services at volume while maintaining capacity for deeper pathway work.

These services matter. Basic supports build daily stability, while trust and community create pathways for change. This mix is what makes the model effective.

## Basic supports (immediate needs)



## Pathway supports (change over time)



# 6. Client experience

Clients consistently described Dom's Place as a safe and welcoming environment.

They emphasised that they felt respected and at ease from their very first visit, often contrasting this with past experiences of feeling judged or excluded in other services.

## Safety

Predictability and a non-judgemental culture reduce anxiety and make it possible to return.

## Dignity

Being treated as a person of value; staff remember names, ask before advising, and honour choices.

## Trust

Follow-through on small things leads to confidence in bigger steps like housing or health referrals.

## Belonging

Community connection rebuilds identity and the motivation to keep going.

*'Here, it's different. You walk in and you feel like you matter.'*  
- Client

*Food gets someone through the door; respect brings them back.*  
- Staff member

*'It's amazing to see someone who once felt hopeless start to believe they can work again.'*  
- Volunteer

*At first I just came in for the food, but after a while I realised they could help me with housing. I never would have asked anywhere else, but here I felt comfortable.*  
- Client



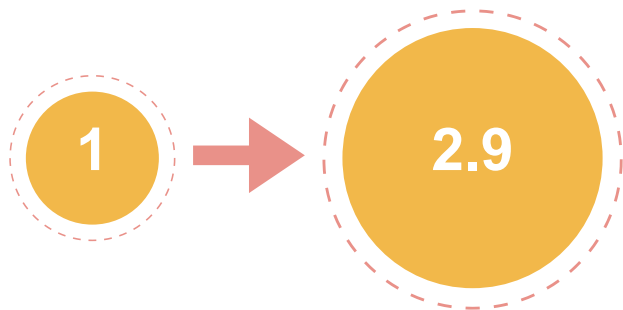
# 7. Economic impact

### Headline Results

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <br><b>Inputs \$0.385m</b><br>Direct funding & resources | <br><b>Gross Value \$1.73</b> | <br><b>Net Benefits \$1.12m</b> |
|---|--|--|

## SROI Ratio

Based on the investment and outcomes, CatholicCare Broken Bay generated an SROI Ratio of:



**For every \$1 invested in Dom's Place, \$2.90 of social and economic value is created.**

### What's included

- Valued outcomes with reliable benchmarks (health, housing stability, reduced risk, volunteer contributions).
- Adjustments for deadweight (what would have happened anyway) and attribution (the contribution of other services).

### What's not over claimed?

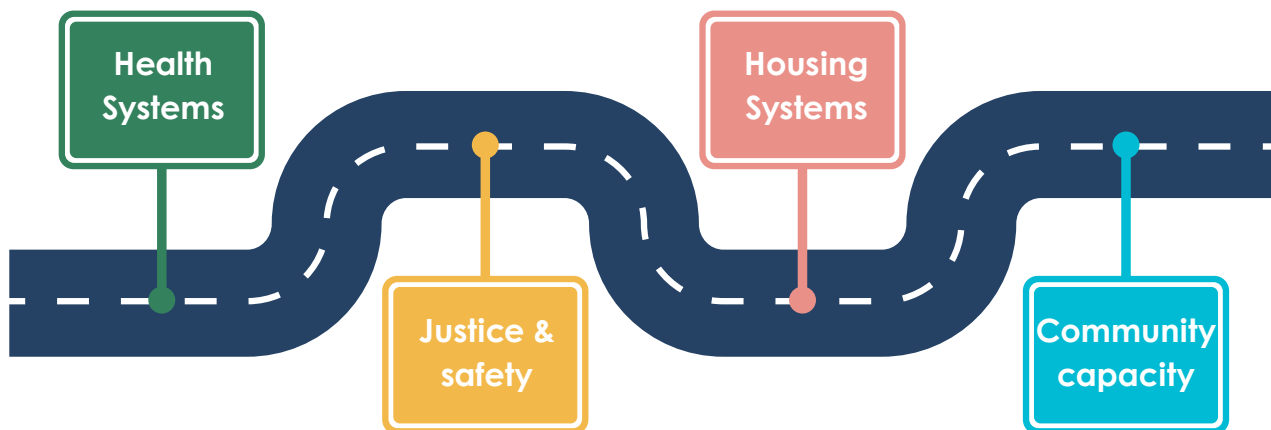
- Intangible but essential outcomes like dignity, belonging, and community connection were described in the findings but not monetised, keeping estimates cautious.

### Sensitivity testing

- Even under stricter assumptions (higher deadweight or lower attribution), the ratio remained above 1:2, confirming the robustness of value creation.

# 8. Wider benefits

Dom's Place creates ripple effects beyond the individual



## Health systems

A lower risk of avoidable emergency presentations through earlier support and coordinated referrals.

## Justice and safety

Reduced risk of behaviours and contact with the justice system through stability and connection.

## Housing systems

Fewer returns to crisis accommodation, and better tenancy sustainment when people are supported in the community.

## Community capacity

Volunteers gain skills, civic participation grows, and stigma decreases as community members engage meaningfully.

# 9. Recommendations

## Preserving relational culture

Staff continuity, respectful language, and non-intrusive entry points were repeatedly identified as enablers of trust. As the service expands, it will be crucial to maintain these practices, ensuring that efficiency does not compromise the quality of relationships.

## Volunteer engagement

Volunteer training in cultural safety, trauma-informed practice, and bystander awareness would strengthen capacity and ensure that service values are upheld.

*'I started helping out in the kitchen, and it gave me purpose. Now I'm looking at doing a TAFE course.'*  
- Client

## Training and employment pathways

Invest in the establishment of suitable training and employment opportunities for clients seeking to engage in the local economy. This could take the form of social enterprise businesses and/or relationships with external training providers and employment services.

*'They asked me what do you want to do next? No one had ever asked me that before.'*  
- Client

## Systematic tracking

Building capacity to capture medium- and long-term outcomes would provide a more comprehensive evidence base for both internal learning and external advocacy. Data improvements should remain client-centred, minimising burden and preserving the sense of trust that characterises engagement.



## 10. Conclusion

Dom's Place shows that accessible, dignity-driven services can create outcomes that extend far beyond immediate relief. By providing a trusted environment where people feel respected and supported, the service not only addresses urgent needs but also fosters pathways to stability and long-term well-being. Its combination of community contribution, relational quality, and economic efficiency makes it a model worthy of continued investment and replication.

The lessons extend beyond Dom's Place. Housing outcomes cannot be sustained in isolation; they require community-based support that fosters trust and a sense of belonging. As governments and providers seek more effective responses to homelessness, Dom's Place stands as evidence that modestly-resourced, relationship-centred services can deliver profound human change and measurable public value.



This evaluation demonstrates that modestly-resourced wrap-around homelessness services can deliver outcomes that are personally transformative and systemically significant.

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