



Foyer Oxford Evaluation Report

2014-2017

July 2017



From 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017 ...

Foyer Oxford was home to
367 young people

206 young women*

111 young men*

50 children

*Of whom: 60 young
parents



18.8% of residents
were **born overseas**,
coming from 29
different countries

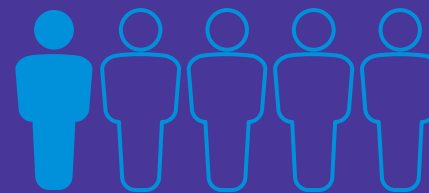
Accommodation one month prior
to living at Foyer Oxford

7% sleeping rough

25% unstable accommodation

68% short term or emergency housing

*"You can have dreams wherever you are.
But Foyer makes you feel like you can
achieve them."* **Former Foyer resident.**



1 in 5 residents identified as
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders

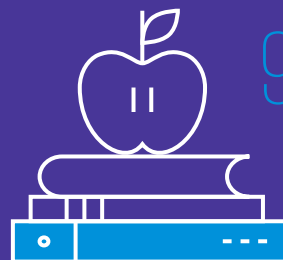
1 in 5 either **had been** or **were currently in the
care of the state** whilst living at Foyer Oxford

Housing Outcomes

93% of residents left to
STABLE, SECURE HOUSING



Employment, Education or Training (EET)



93% of residents who **WERE ALREADY
ENGAGED** in EET, and

53% of residents
who **WEREN'T...**

..engaged in EET at some point whilst living at Foyer Oxford

Foyer Oxford - on a page

2. Where do they leave to?

Two main types of experience at Foyer Oxford are identified:



In most cases, Foyer Oxford provided help and support for the young person to identify and reach their goals.

In these cases, the young person exited into sustainable accommodation, able to support themselves, with a positive, future-focused outlook.

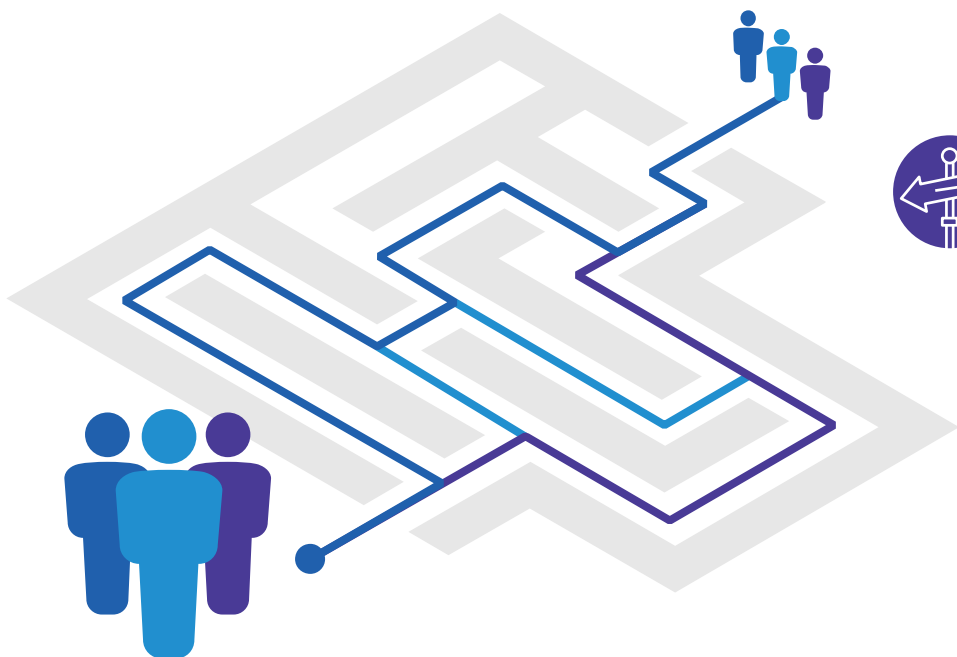
Typically, residents indicated that Foyer Oxford played a role in achieving this outcome, in conjunction with other support services used by the residents before, during and after their stay.

In some cases, Foyer Oxford did not provide useful support for the young person.

In some instances, Foyer Oxford was experienced as a negative place, where young people 'took a step backward' in engagement with work and/or study, or general well-being.

Typically, these young people left without secure housing (sometimes to an institutional setting) and a negative view of their experience.

The factors associated with this outcome are discussed at pages 40-41. Suggestions for improvement are made at page 43.



1. Who comes into Foyer Oxford? There are three main categories of young people coming into Foyer Oxford:

Predominantly in need of housing

Once housed, able to work towards personal goals with limited targeted support.

In need of housing and non-housing support

Able to identify and work towards goals with targeted support from case managers and other services.

Complex needs and issues

Young people who present with a range of needs, including for housing, practical assistance, and specialised mental health and/or other life and social supports.

Between 2014 and 2017, there has been a shift towards residents with a greater number and complexity of identified needs with greater need for support. This is discussed at pages 13-18.

3. What happens next?

Two main post-exit experiences were found among former residents:



The gains made by the young person in their lives were maintained and solidified after leaving.

The young person is on a path to substantially overcome the disadvantages they faced in their earlier years.



The young person had difficulties in maintaining any gains made at Foyer following their exit, and may have experienced 'steps backward' in some areas.

The factors associated with this outcome are discussed at page 40. Suggestions for improvement are made at page 43.



Foyer Oxford

Foyer Oxford is a service for young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or experiencing disadvantage. Since opening in February 2014, 317 young people and 50 children, including 60 young parents, have called Foyer Oxford home.

Who uses Foyer Oxford?

Between February 2014 and December 2017, 317 young people and 50 children lived at Foyer Oxford. Sixty of these residents were young parents, with around 20 per cent identifying as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and about the same proportion born overseas (in one of 29 countries of origin).

The data available indicates that these residents were homeless or at risk of homelessness prior to entry. This includes a range of chaotic, unpredictable, and unsafe housing situations, as well as no housing at all.

A number of trends in Foyer Oxford demand have emerged between 2014 and 2017:

- A shift towards residents with more complex needs, and those who are younger;
- Steadily declining demand from young parents; and
- Lower than expected demand for the penthouse apartments.

A key influence on these trends is the fall in Perth rents since 2015, which means that young people in 2017, including those with complex issues, have more options to obtain affordable housing than they did in 2014.

The Foyer Oxford Culture

The environment at Foyer Oxford is most commonly described by residents as positive, future-focused, and aspirational.

Overall the reported level of 'drama' – conflict and hassle, which caused some residents to feel anxious and/or move out early – reduced between 2015 and 2017, with the environment being reported as more nurturing and supportive by residents. Interviews with staff indicate that this is the result of deliberate and careful oversight of resident intake and management of issues that have emerged from time to time.

Is Foyer Oxford different to other youth housing services?

Foyer Oxford is unique among youth housing services in Perth in two main ways:

- The length of stay (two years with the possibility of extension for another year, compared to 12-26 weeks in most other services). This is considered by the residents to offer stability, which enables them to make progress towards the goals that support eventual independence.
- The aspirational and supportive culture that leads to residents being able to express 'hope for a better future' in a way that other services do not, in the opinion of young people who have experienced both.

Foyer Oxford Performance

While at Foyer Oxford, residents consistently maintain high levels of engagement with work and study; have opportunities to engage in community activities; and improve their practical and life skills. Young parents generally say the service offers useful supports. Most former residents tell positive stories about their lives after Foyer, which involve stable housing, meaningful activities, and personal well-being.

Performance in key areas

Engagement in Employment, Education and Training (EET): Overall engagement in EET at six month reporting intervals remained consistently high, ranging between 76 per cent (six months to July 2017) and 90 per cent (six months to June 2016) – exceeding Foyer’s stretch target of 70 per cent. While residents needed to demonstrate some motivation to study and/or work in order to be accepted into Foyer, the available evidence suggests that the package of housing and non-housing supports provided at Foyer Oxford reduces the barriers these young people would otherwise have faced to realising their goals.

Practical and life skills: Foyer Oxford residents and staff tend to report that residents’ independent living skills improved during their stay. Residents singled out help with cooking and food shopping as useful life skills they had developed at Foyer Oxford. They reported that these kinds of skills were acquired as much through informal interaction with other residents as through formal programs.

Community engagement and activities: There are a range of activities available to young people living at Foyer Oxford, such as subsidised gym memberships and yoga classes, volunteering and community activities, and ad hoc outings. Many former residents said they’d never had such opportunities before, and linked them to positive physical and emotional health outcomes during and after their stay.

Young parents: While demand from young parents has been steadily declining, those young parents that did live at Foyer Oxford generally reported positive experiences, both from the parenting support workers and the informal peer support network. Workers generally consider parenting skills to have improved over the stay.

Long-term outcomes

Overall between 1 February 2014 and 31 December 2017, 93 per cent of residents who left Foyer Oxford went into positive, long term housing. Follow-up surveys reported most maintain these positive outcomes after 12 months.

Most interviewees had positive stories of life after Foyer Oxford. Some had gone travelling, some were buying a home. A number had reconnected with family, reporting that their stay at Foyer Oxford had been the ‘circuit-breaker’ they had needed to reengage positively with them. Typically, former residents were engaged in work and/or study, as well as other activities that they said were interesting and meaningful. They had friends they spent time with, and did things that they enjoyed.



I have a rental house in Kenwick with my partner. He’s got a supervisor position. We’ve got a baby on the way. A dog. Two incomes. My partner is really supportive. He pushes me – but to do what I can do ... My friend just called me. She invited me to go to the foreshore to walk our dogs. I might do that. It sounds nice.

- Foyer Oxford young parent, 2017

Foyer Oxford Outcomes

Overall between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2017:

- 93 per cent of residents who left Foyer Oxford did so into positive, long term housing options. Five per cent left to an unstable housing situation or crisis accommodation.
- Follow up surveys with former residents 12 months after leaving Foyer suggest many maintain these positive housing outcomes, with a range of between 81 per cent and 96 per cent reporting being in long term accommodation a year after leaving Foyer Oxford.
- The same follow up surveys also show that between 61 per cent and 73 per cent of former residents are in EET 12 months after leaving Foyer.

Positive outcomes were generally also found during interviews with former residents, most of whom said that they had stable accommodation, were engaged in EET and other activities that they considered interesting and meaningful, and had positive social connections and relationships.

Figure one also shows resident's homelessness status one month prior to moving into Foyer Oxford. The tenure types listed mirror those recorded for people experiencing homelessness by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the 2016 Census– which found that around 7 per cent of people defined as homeless were sleeping rough, and that one in five were living in supported accommodation. This is an indicator that the resident population over the period was similar to the national population of people defined as homeless – in terms of complexity of support needs and lived experience.

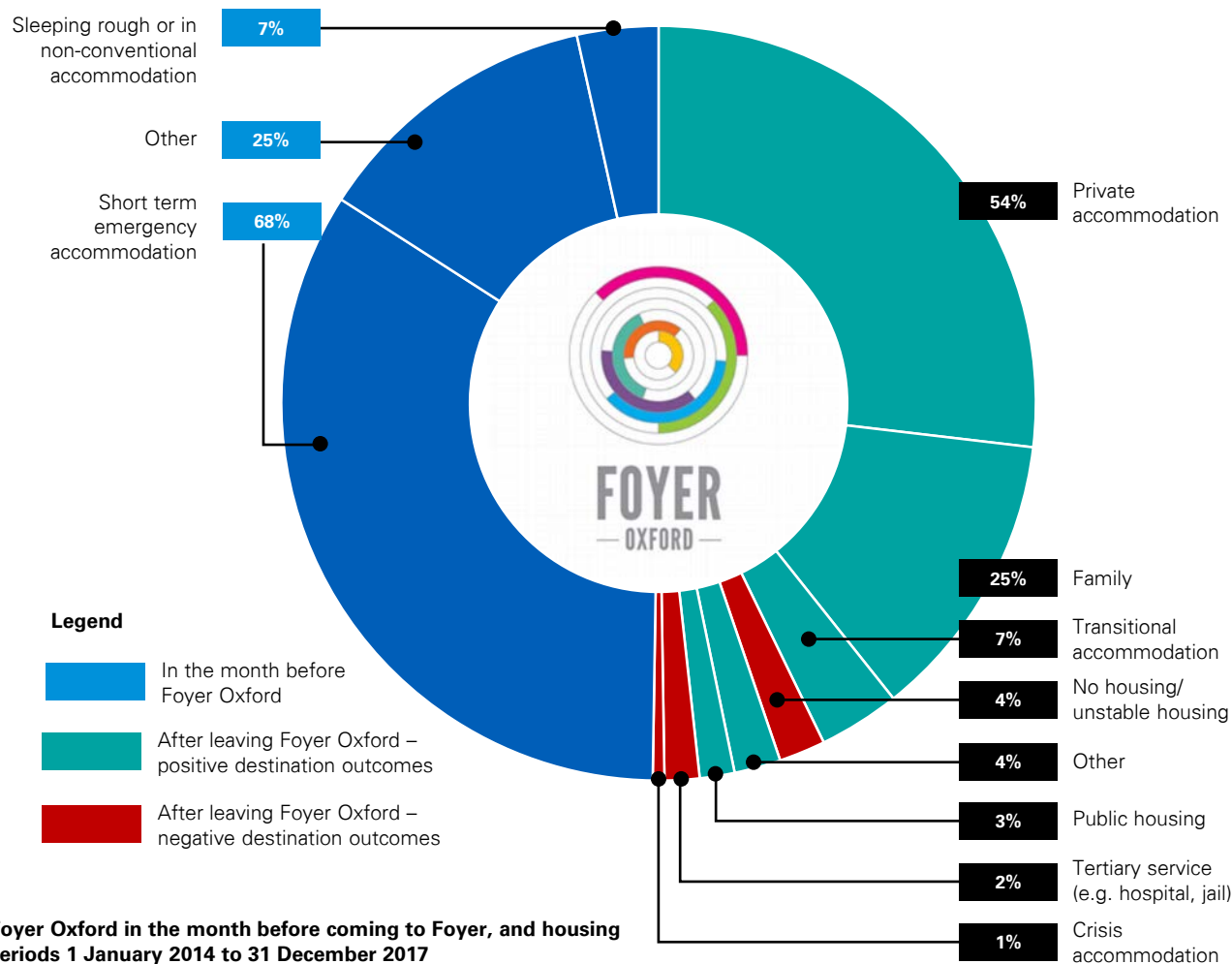


Figure 1. Homelessness status of young people supported by Foyer Oxford in the month before coming to Foyer, and housing status of those who left Foyer over the same period, support periods 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data and Foyer KPI reports

Opportunities to improve

Recognising that Foyer Oxford has been engaging in on-going service improvements, a number of further potential improvements have been identified. These focus on better management of transitions out of, and into, the service; securing funding post-2019; and ensuring all staff have the right skills to support Foyer Oxford residents.

Negative outcomes after Foyer Oxford

While Foyer Oxford residents and former residents most commonly reported a positive experience, some reported negative experiences at Foyer Oxford, including some who had gone on to be homeless again after their stay.

The most common theme in these stories was a failure to connect with others (either residents or workers) during their stay. This tended to be associated with:

- Finding Foyer Oxford large and overwhelming (too many people);
- Being young, and in a different 'space' to older residents – attending high school, and not being interested in/able to engage in activities such as clubbing or bars;
- Experiencing active conflict with other residents, for example bullying, harassment or 'drama' – conflict or hassle over various things (relationships, and so on).

There was also a group of people who had episodes of mental ill-health that they reported being poorly handled by staff, which had left them feeling unsupported and uncared for.

Interviewees – even those who reported a positive experience – also commonly reported that their transition out of Foyer Oxford had been poorly managed. Many reported suffering set backs after Foyer Oxford because of this, sometimes including a return to homelessness.

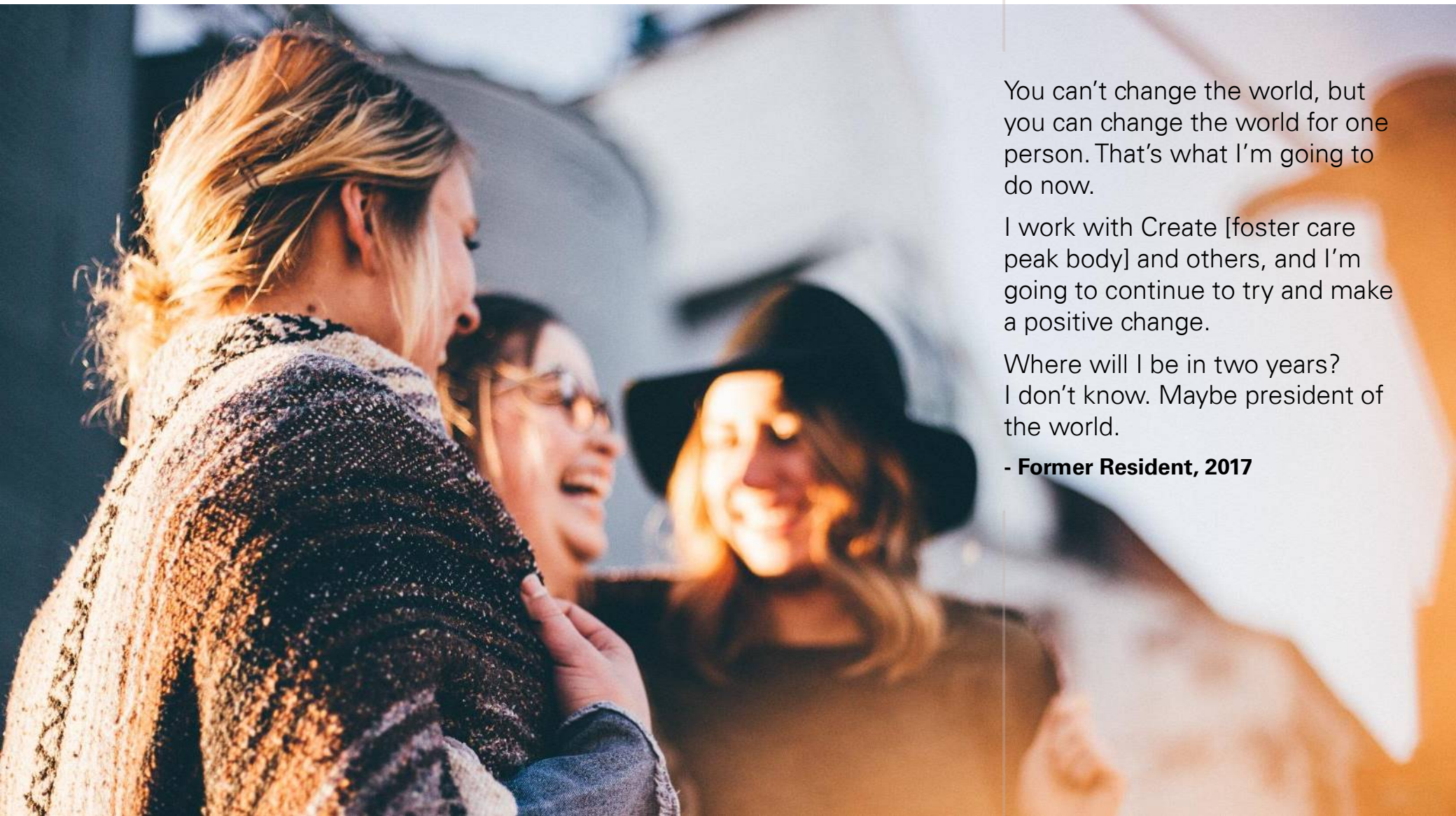
Young people who were interviewed in 2017 were reflecting back on their experiences with the service in 2015 and 2016, since which time Foyer Oxford has made a number of service enhancements. Nonetheless, these young people's experiences show where the service model has fallen down in the past, and a number of recommendations based on these experiences are made.

It is important to note that overall, young people presenting at Foyer Oxford from 2016 onwards have had more complex needs, particularly in terms of the range and severity of mental health conditions, than was anticipated (or planned for) in the service design. This has necessitated amendments to the Foyer Oxford model to cater for the needs of these young people.

Foyer Oxford – Opportunities to improve

Overall, four potential areas of improvement for Foyer Oxford have been identified:

- **Increase attention to post-exit support.** Many interviewees had struggled with the transition out of Foyer, and some reported having taken a step backward after leaving due to a poorly managed exit. Foyer Oxford has initiated improvements in this area in response to feedback; future evaluation activities should seek to understand the extent to which that this has been effective.
- **Pro-active identification of potential issues in settling in.** People who had negative experiences at Foyer Oxford commonly reported issues emerging early in their stay. A more comprehensive and thorough intake process has been instigated, which should provide a better indication of those residents who are at risk of not settling in; additional service enhancements might include a more intentional transition process to increase the potential for a successful experience.
- **Finalise funding to ensure service viability post-2019.** While there has been activity to secure funding post-2019, this has not yet been achieved. All consortium members and partners should be engaged to resolve this issue. Securing on-going funding has been further complicated by the lack of certainty around the proposed National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, which has yet to be agreed.
- **Require mental health training for all staff who have contact with residents, regardless of their role.** Some staff, particularly night staff, are reported to not have had specialist mental health training. It is considered essential that all staff with any resident contact have relevant training and understanding of the needs of people with mental health issues so as to be able to adequately respond to the needs of young people.



You can't change the world, but you can change the world for one person. That's what I'm going to do now.

I work with Create [foster care peak body] and others, and I'm going to continue to try and make a positive change.

Where will I be in two years? I don't know. Maybe president of the world.

- Former Resident, 2017

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Inherent Limitations

This report has been prepared as outlined in the Scope Section. The services provided in connection with this engagement comprise an advisory engagement, which is not subject to assurance or other standards issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board and, consequently no opinions or conclusions intended to convey assurance have been expressed.

The findings in this report are based on a qualitative study and the reported results reflect a perception of the relevant stakeholders but only to the extent of the sample surveyed, being an Anglicare WA approved sample of stakeholders. Any projection to the wider stakeholders is subject to the level of bias in the method of sample selection.

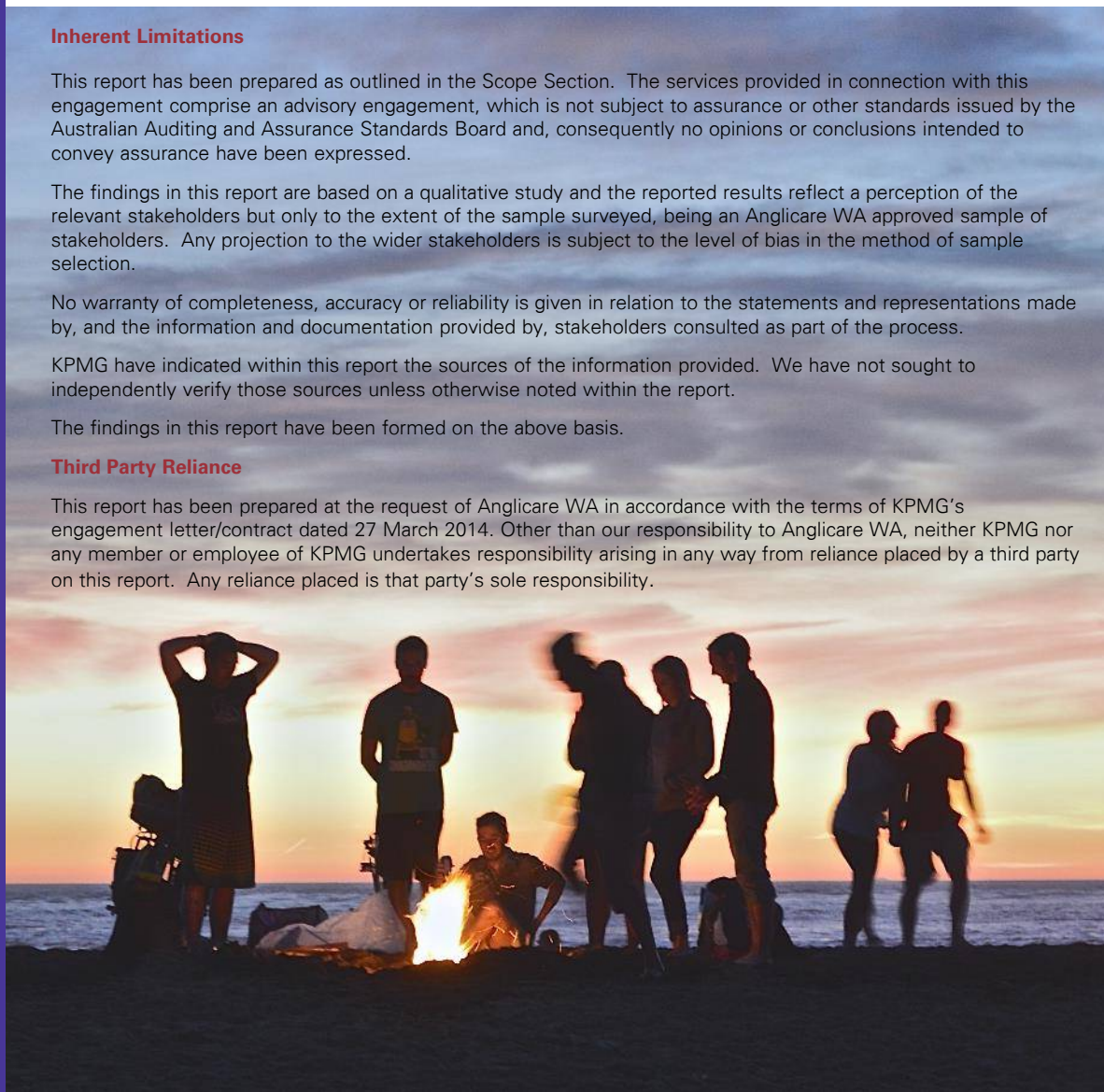
No warranty of completeness, accuracy or reliability is given in relation to the statements and representations made by, and the information and documentation provided by, stakeholders consulted as part of the process.

KPMG have indicated within this report the sources of the information provided. We have not sought to independently verify those sources unless otherwise noted within the report.

The findings in this report have been formed on the above basis.

Third Party Reliance

This report has been prepared at the request of Anglicare WA in accordance with the terms of KPMG's engagement letter/contract dated 27 March 2014. Other than our responsibility to Anglicare WA, neither KPMG nor any member or employee of KPMG undertakes responsibility arising in any way from reliance placed by a third party on this report. Any reliance placed is that party's sole responsibility.



Stock photos featuring models used throughout this report, with the exception of the front cover. Front cover photograph courtesy Foyer Oxford.

Introduction & background

The Foyer Model

Foyer is a particular model of accommodation service for young people who are experiencing homelessness. Foyer projects are characterised by:

- Access to a diverse range of supports and services, including training and education, recreation and social activities, support workers, and life skills support.
- Mutual obligations and responsibilities – in return for accommodation and support, young people agree to pay rent, meet the normal requirements of a tenancy agreement and, critically, to actively pursue activities such as study and work that will put them on a path to longer-term independence and well-being. This reciprocal obligation is commonly known as the 'Foyer Deal'.
- Long-term tenure – residents at Foyer Oxford stay for two years (with the possibility of extension for an extra year).

Foyer Oxford

Foyer Oxford opened in Leederville, Western Australia, in February 2014, offering accommodation for up to 98 young people in studio and one-bedroom apartments. It was the first project of its kind in WA, and the largest in the world.

Foyer Oxford is operated as a consortium between:

- Anglicare WA, who provide the high quality support services to the young people who reside there;
- Foundation Housing, who provide tenancy management and building maintenance services; and
- North Metropolitan TAFE, who provide flexible access to training and educational facilities for Foyer Oxford residents.

Funding has also been made available from BHP over the period 2013-2018 to fund the support services component, while the Department for Community Services has allocated funding from the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

This evaluation

KPMG was engaged to undertake an independent assessment of Foyer Oxford, from 2015-2017.

The objectives for the evaluation have been to:

- Assess the effectiveness of Foyer Oxford in implementing its services and in achieving its primary outcomes for its target group;
- Identify critical success factors and barriers;
- Assess the sustainability of Foyer Oxford's funding model at a high level;
- Assess the impact of Foyer Oxford on the local community and the young people who have lived there; and
- Identify 'lessons learned' that can be incorporated into the decision-making process of all partners, and potentially lead to changes in service delivery and/or performance measures.

Milestone reports were produced in 2015 and 2017. This report represents the final evaluation of the service, and summarises the activities and outcomes of Foyer Oxford to date.

Research questions were designed to guide the evaluation team's work. These, together with the identified challenges and limitations of the report, are outlined in the Appendix.

As part of the methodology, the evaluation team conducted interviews based on these research questions with some 75 current and former residents of Foyer Oxford, as well as service workers and partners, over three years. These interviews form a major part of the evidence used to develop the findings outlined in this report.

The KPMG evaluation team gratefully acknowledges those who contributed their time, effort and insights to this project, particularly those young people who have lived at Foyer Oxford and who generously shared their experiences and views over the three years of this evaluation project.

What is Foyer Oxford?

The Foyer Oxford is made up of a range of housing and non-housing related elements, which together make up the model. These are described below.

Housing and accommodation

- Stay of two years with extension possible (other homelessness services are typically 3-12 months)
- Studio apartments with own bathroom and kitchenette at between \$138 and \$148 per week (2018)
- Dedicated floor for single parents with one-bedroom apartments at between \$224 and \$244 per week (2018)
- One-bedroom penthouse apartments with additional privileges (e.g. extra guests allowed) at \$172 per week
- All rents are inclusive of utilities
- Lease through Foundation Housing under Residential Tenancies Act conditions
- Overnight visitors allowed under certain conditions
- Shared and social spaces including laundry, kitchen, indoor and outdoor recreational areas

Support to get into and/or maintain employment, education or training

- Requirement to engage with a case manager (typically weekly)
- Requirement to fulfil participation requirements in Education, Employment or Training for the duration of stay ('the Deal')
- Opportunities to participate in additional training at subsidised / low cost – e.g. first aid certificate, Responsible Service of Alcohol, barista courses
- Invest in Me Scholarship program to support young people to access education, funded by the late Michael Gregg
- A dedicated employment officer position (2017 onwards) to support residents to achieve employment outcomes

Other support – counselling, pastoral care, community activities

- Additional community engagement activities – e.g. yoga, gym (concessional pricing), volunteering opportunities, outings and day trips
- Access to opportunities such as music lessons – negotiated on an individual basis
- Health and allied health support (including visits from dentist, in-house nurse, doctor)
- Practical support – learning how to manage a private rental
- Dedicated parenting training and support resources – for young parents
- Linkages to dedicated therapeutic (mental health) support by external providers (if necessary)

'Aspirational culture' – a future-focused and goal-oriented environment

How is Foyer Oxford different to other youth services?

Foyer Oxford is different to other services in Perth in terms of the length of stay offered and the positive culture it cultivates. This creates a supportive and aspirational environment for young people to grow and develop.

One of the key differentiating features of Foyer Oxford is the length of time residents are permitted to stay, being up to two years (which can be extended for another year), compared to other services which typically have stays of three to 12 months. The two-year stay is considered to be a key success factor of the model, due to the stability it offers to residents, enabling them to put their lives on a different track and make progress towards the goals that will support eventual independence.

The other key differentiating characteristic is the intentionally aspirational nature of the environment.

The aspirational, support and positive culture is a key point of difference and an important factor in promoting engagement and future success among residents. Staff and residents said that the Foyer Oxford offered 'hope for a better future' and an 'aspirational culture', and hence an environment within which young people could be nurtured to grow and develop, in a way that other services they had used or knew of did not.

This aspect of the Foyer Oxford is achieved in a number of ways through the model – from the intentionally strengths-focused case-work model, to the selection of young people willing and able to make a positive change, to active management of issues that arise.



What's different about this place is that in the hostel they don't really care if you sit around doing nothing or not – they'd prefer you didn't, but they don't stop you. Here, they don't let you do that.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016



At the [community housing] place [before I came to Foyer], it was a three bedroom place in Armadale, I didn't know anyone there, and it was empty and I was alone, it was scary and I felt anxious.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016

A photograph of two young men sitting on a rocky shore, looking out at the ocean. The man on the left is wearing a red shirt and sunglasses, and the man on the right is wearing a blue patterned shirt. The background shows a calm sea and a hilly coastline under a warm, golden light, suggesting sunset or sunrise.

Who uses Foyer Oxford?

My parents have been in prison, my mum has gotten out but she hasn't adjusted very well to the real world. I have five brothers and sisters. For a short period, I lived with three of my brothers with a foster care family. Before that, I'd been living with a foster family and I didn't get along with the father. We often had fights... part of this is dealing with my Dad when I was growing up.

- Former Resident, 2017

Who uses Foyer Oxford?

A total of 317 young people and 50 children have called Foyer Oxford home. Residents are increasingly likely to be younger and have more complex needs, and less likely to be young parents.

Between February 2014 and December 2017¹, a total of 317 young people lived at Foyer Oxford. In total, 206 were women and 111 were men; 60 were young parents. Around 50² children also lived at Foyer Oxford with the young parents. The data available indicates that all young people were homeless or at risk of homelessness prior to entry.

Around 20 per cent of the young people identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, with about the same proportion born overseas (in one of 29 countries of origin); around 23 per cent of residents were either currently or had previously been in the care of the state whilst living at Foyer Oxford.

Interviews with the young people at Foyer Oxford highlight the complexity of the situations that can be defined under the term 'youth homelessness' – which includes chaotic, unpredictable, and unsafe housing situations, as well as no housing at all.



I moved out of home at about 13 – when my step dad said he didn't want me there anymore. I went and stayed with different friends, their families, boyfriends.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016



Before I was carting things all over the place – I never knew where I was going to say, how long I was going to be there. I was studying, but I couldn't concentrate on study, I couldn't get a job because one day I might wake up in Cannington and then how could I get across Perth? It was all too unpredictable.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2015

¹ Source: SHIP snapshot data, 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017. Includes residents of the interim Foyer prior to the Leederville location becoming operational.

² Likely to be an undercount due to data issues.

Who uses Foyer Oxford? Changes over time

Foyer Oxford users are increasingly presenting with more complex needs – particularly for specialised mental health support – than was anticipated. The model has had to be adapted to respond to these needs.

Over the period 2014-2017, some key trends in Foyer Oxford residents have emerged:

- Foyer Oxford residents have been increasingly likely to present with complex needs. Foyer Oxford data suggests that 48 per cent of residents have a prior diagnosis for a mental health condition and that 44 per cent are either currently receiving mental health treatment or have done so in past 12 months (2017). This has increased since 2015, when approximately 38 per cent of residents had a prior diagnosis for a mental health condition and 31 per cent were currently receiving or had recently received treatment for these conditions. This supports staff reports that the number and complexity of needs across the caseload has progressively increased.
- Residents are getting younger. The mean age of Foyer Oxford residents has declined from 23 years in 2014 to 19 years in 2017 (see page 17). Younger residents are more likely to need more intensive and frequent support due to their age alone; they also have specific needs for support to complete school rather than work; once schooling is complete, they will often find it harder to move into work. Lower Centrelink payment rates for under 21s also make it harder for them to afford the costs of living, including costs such as TAFE fees.

Stakeholders consider that these trends are being influenced by the increase in rental housing availability and affordability since 2015 (see Appendix for discussion), with young people in 2017 having more options to obtain affordable housing than they did in 2015. The result has been that those presenting at Foyer Oxford tend to be unable to manage a lease independently due to complex personal issues.

Overall, young people presenting at Foyer Oxford from 2016 onwards have had more complex needs, particularly in terms of the range and severity of mental health conditions, than was anticipated (or planned for) in the service design. This has necessitated amendments to the Foyer Oxford model to cater for the needs of these young people.



We were never intended to be, nor funded as, a mental health service. We weren't set up for the level of mental health needs that came through the doors – and initially, we didn't do a good job of it. We had to upskill ourselves to manage it, enter into additional partnerships with specialised services and take on additional case managers. Now we're capable of responding to the mental health needs of the young people we have.

- Foyer Oxford staff member, 2017



To some extent what you are seeing at Foyer [with increased complexity of need] is the failure of mainstream mental health services to meet the needs of young people.

- Foyer Oxford staff member, 2017

¹ Source: SHIP snapshot data, 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017. Includes residents of the interim Foyer prior to the Leederville location becoming operational.

² Likely to be an undercount due to data issues.

Who uses Foyer Oxford? Housing prior to Foyer Oxford

One month prior to presenting at Foyer Oxford, residents were most commonly (68 per cent) living in short-term or emergency housing. Seven per cent were sleeping rough or in other non-conventional housing arrangements – a similar proportion to the overall Australian average for this group of people.

Nationally agreed definitions of homelessness used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics include a range of living arrangements, including dwellings that are overcrowded, inadequate and/or where tenure is not secure. According to the 2016 Australian census, around 18 per cent of people defined as homeless were living in supported accommodation and around 7 per cent were sleeping rough.

Short term or emergency accommodation

The largest group were in short term or emergency accommodation (68 per cent, n=219).

Other*

The 'other' group (25 per cent, n=79) was composed of young people who were experiencing secondary homelessness, such as couch surfing, or were otherwise at risk of homelessness.

Sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation

A smaller proportion were sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation (7 per cent, n=22).

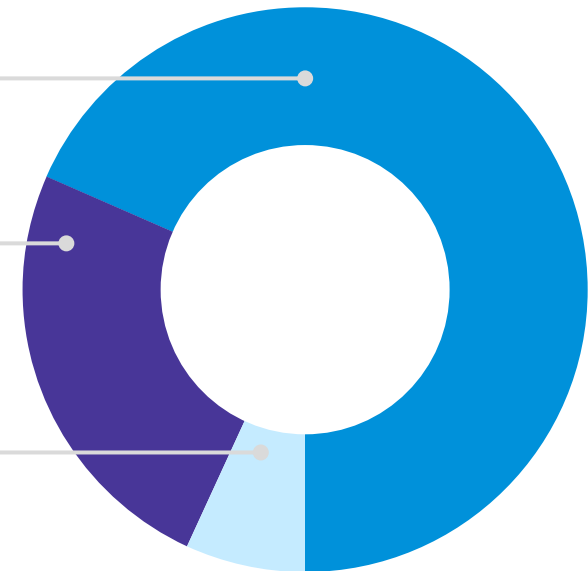


Figure 2: Housing status of Foyer Oxford residents one month prior to referral

Sources: KPMG analysis of SHIP data 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017 – note figures exclude children; ABS 2049.0 Census of Population and Housing, 2016.

Who uses Foyer Oxford? Age and referral source over time

Self-referral to Foyer Oxford has been the most common entry path since 2015, although referrals from educational institutions have been increasing. Residents' average age has been steadily declining – from almost 23 to around 19.

Figure 3. Top five referral sources for Foyer Oxford residents

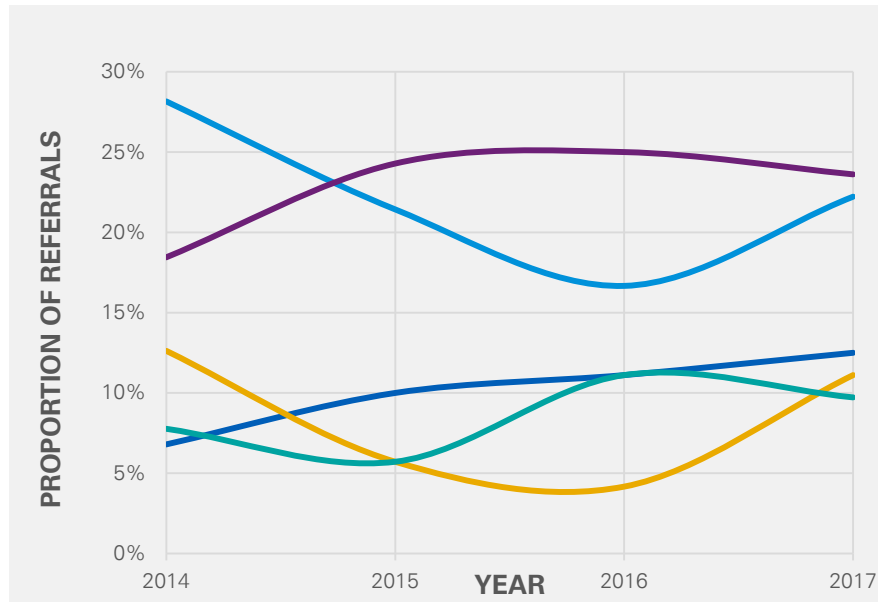
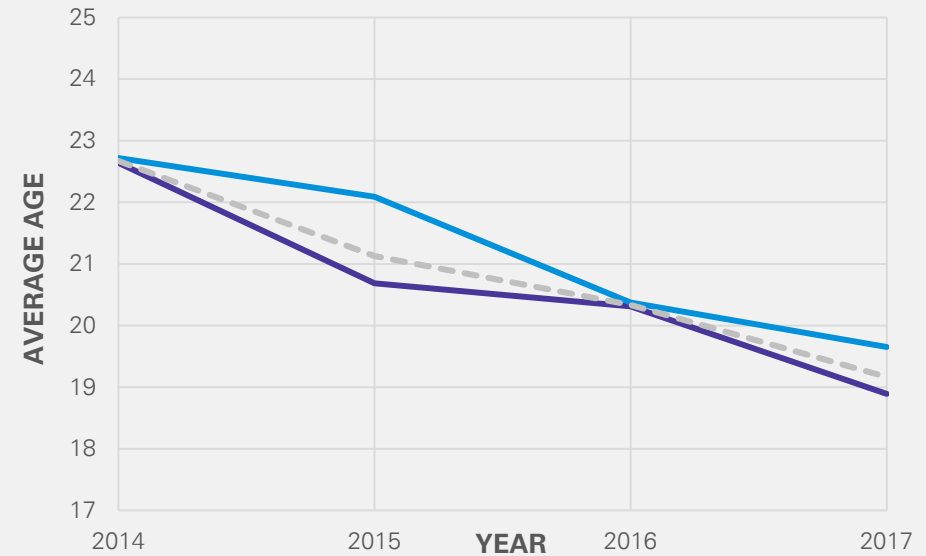


Figure 4. Mean age of Foyer Oxford residents by year



- Specialist Homelessness Agency/outreach worker
- Self-referral
- School/other education institution
- Mental health service
- Child protection agency

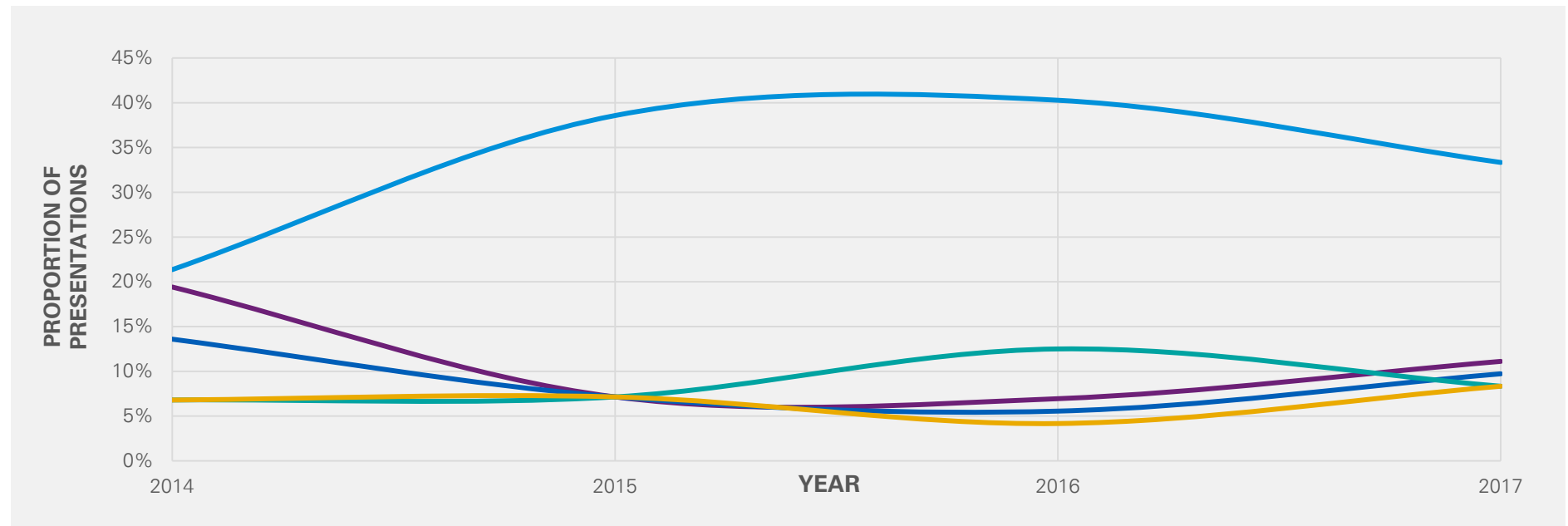
- Female
- Male
- Average

Source: KPMG analysis of SHIP data 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017 – note figures exclude children

Who uses Foyer Oxford? Presenting issues over time

Residents in 2017 are more likely to present due to family breakdown, and less likely to present due to inadequate housing, than in 2014.

Family or relationship breakdown has been the single biggest reason for presentation across all years. There has been a reduction in presentation due to inadequate dwelling conditions or the end of previous accommodation. This shift is consistent with a more affordable private rental market and generally younger cohort.



- Relationship/family breakdown
- Previous accommodation ended
- Domestic and family violence
- Inadequate or inappropriate dwelling conditions
- Lack of family and/or community support

Figure 5. Top five main presenting reason for residents

Source: KPMG analysis of SHIP data 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017 – note figures exclude children

Who uses Foyer Oxford? Young parents

Fewer young parents than expected are living at Foyer Oxford.
Demand has been steadily declining since 2015.

Foyer Oxford has 24 one-bedroom apartments on a dedicated young parent floor, designed to provide a safe and manageable space for single parents and their children, as well as a dedicated parenting support worker.

Over the period 2014-2017, demand for young parent rooms was lower than expected. In December 2015, there were 23 young parents at Foyer Oxford. By December 2017, this had fallen to three.

Improving housing affordability was identified by stakeholders as a contributor to this trend, with private rental available at a similar or lower price. However, interviews also identified the following factors:

- Many parents felt apartment living is generally not suitable for small children, and that the parent rooms are too small for children as they grow.
- Some parents do not consider Foyer Oxford to be a suitable environment for children due to perceived risks from other residents. Reported interpersonal conflict, gossip and 'drama' also detracted from a 'family friendly' environment.
- Some young parents felt that the constraints and rules at Foyer Oxford were condescending – given they were adults with their own children.
- The smaller number of parents living at Foyer Oxford means that specialised parenting activities and programs that were once run internally at Foyer are now delivered externally – reducing the appeal of the young parent offering.

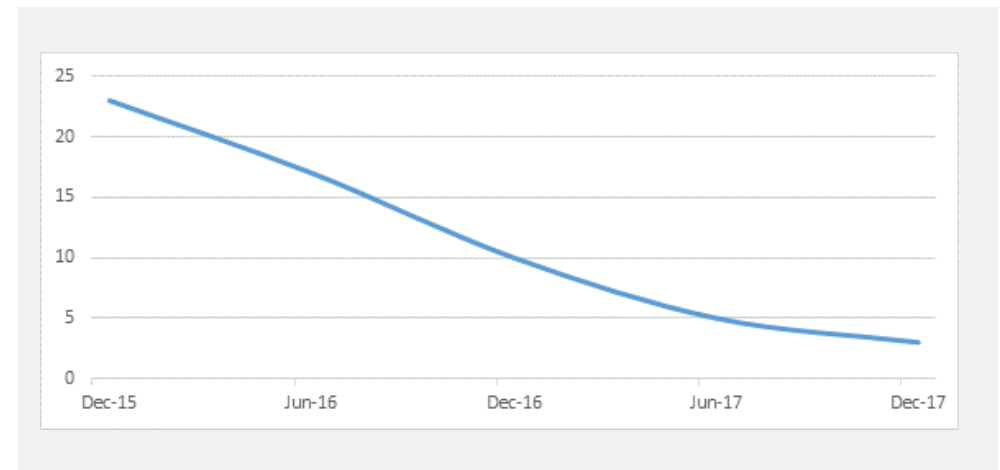


Figure 6. Number of young parents living at Foyer Oxford

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data, 31 December 2015 to 31 December 2017



What is Foyer Oxford like?

Before I'd moved in there, I'd failed my Cert III – while I was there they encouraged me to do my Cert III and then Cert IV and Mental Health first aid and also I got work in youth services, and I was doing volunteer work too. They helped me feel I could do those things.

It was the stability of housing, you knew you weren't going to be kicked out. And they pushed you to do it, because you had to do those things to stay. So you had to. It did seem harsh at the start, but I understand that it was for my own good.

- Former Resident, 2017

The Foyer Oxford experience

Foyer Oxford is overwhelmingly described, by people who lived there, as a welcoming place where residents felt supported and accepted.

By and large, Foyer Oxford residents interviewed for this evaluation said that they feel supported and accepted there. It is described as a non-judgmental place that brings together a group of people with common experiences, and as a place where ‘everyone could find someone to hang out with’. Interviewees typically reported that they made valuable and meaningful friendships while there.

Two reasons were principally given for this :

- People there are non-judgmental and accepting;
- People there are “like me” - residents felt they didn’t have to explain their backgrounds or history.

Residents also generally considered that Foyer Oxford offered a positive and aspirational environment, within which people focused on goals and building skills for the future.

Residents emphasised how important the mind-set of the other young people in the service is to the experience; Overall, while a number of residents singled out the social support and practical assistance offered by case managers as something they valued about their time at Foyer Oxford, they were more likely to say that other young people influenced how well they settled in and how easy it was to find friends.

Interviews with staff have highlighted that the creation of a positive, future-focused environment has required intentional action, with staff honing their efforts over time to control the intake so as to deliver this experience for the young people there. This is described further at page 30.



Foster kids don’t feel like they have a lot of support and are often portrayed as helpless and that stigma is hard to shake. At Foyer you are accepted for who you are and don’t have to explain that to people.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016

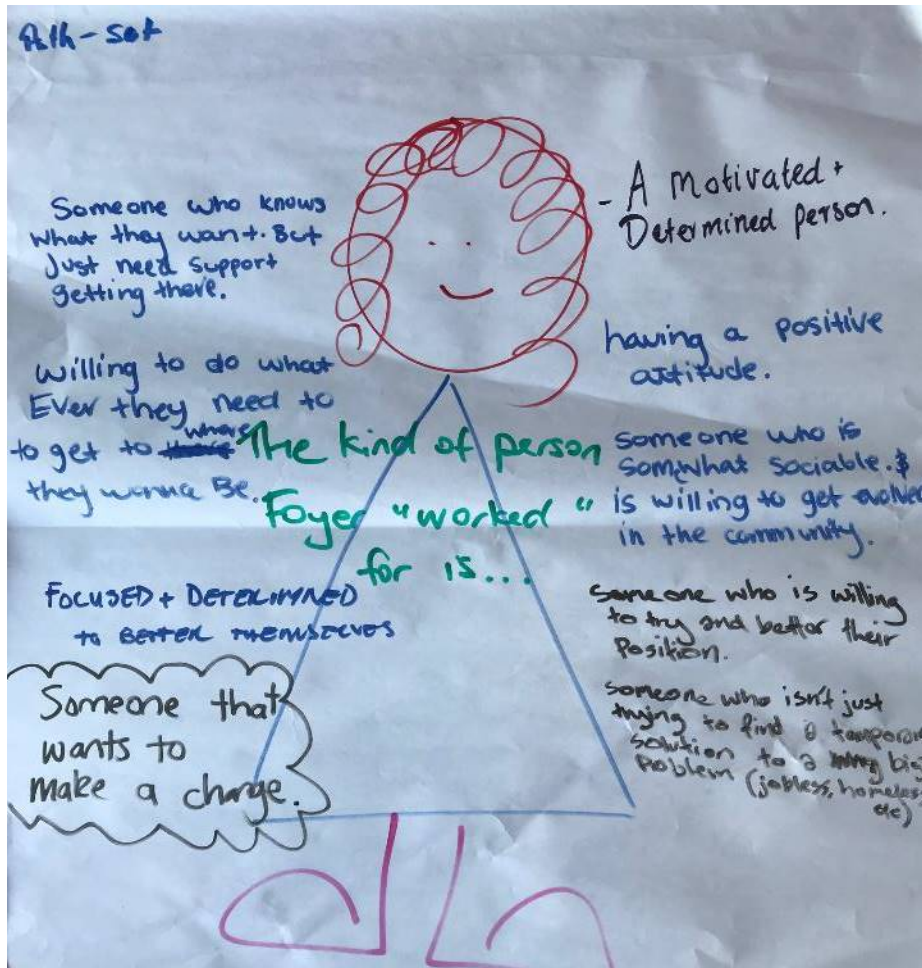


I already had those independent living skills from a young age so, for me, things like community dinners were really nice, but more for social skills. I made sure that I made the most of those opportunities. Foyer helped me to do it, but I also felt like I could do it.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016

The evaluation team note that residents who had a positive experience at Foyer Oxford were probably more likely to volunteer to be interviewed, hence interviewee reports are likely to be somewhat positively biased.

Who does Foyer Oxford 'work' for?



What sort of person does Foyer 'work' for?

The following are the (verbatim) views expressed by former residents to this question, at an evaluation workshop held on 14 November 2017.

- Someone who knows what they want. But just needs support getting there.
- Willing to do whatever they need to get to where they want to be.
- Focused and determined to better themselves.
- Someone that wants to make a change.
- A motivated and determined person.
- Having a positive attitude.
- Someone who is somewhat sociable and is willing to get active in the community.
- Someone who is willing to try and better their position.
- Someone who isn't just trying to find a temporary solution to a big problem (jobless, homeless, etc.).

The evaluation team note that, for myriad complex reasons, young people may come to Foyer Oxford with all of these attributes and still not find that it 'worked' for them; while others without these characteristics on entry may succeed.

Promoting study and work

Resident engagement in EET while at Foyer Oxford has consistently been high. 93 per cent of those who had been in EET prior to Foyer Oxford continued, while among those not engaged in on entry, 53% started.

Residents' engagement in EET while at Foyer Oxford has been consistently high, and exceeded targets (see 22-24 for more detail).

- Overall engagement in EET at six month reporting intervals has been consistently high, ranging between 76 per cent (six months to July 2017) and 90 per cent (six months to June 2016) – exceeding Foyer's stretch target of 70 per cent.
- Residents who reported being in EET on entry consistently maintained high engagement, with 93 per cent engaging at EET at some point while at Foyer.
- Those who entered not engaged also increased their engagement, with 53 per cent engaging at EET at some point while at Foyer.

Throughout the evaluation period (2014-2017), residents have specifically and consistently reported three main factors about Foyer Oxford that have supported them to maintain and increase engagement with EET:

- Residents consistently report that having access to the safe, stable accommodation, in and of itself, supports and enables them to commit to work and study.
- Some residents also credit their case managers for having encouraged or enabled their on-going engagement, both in terms of helping them access supports – such as computers, course information or enrolment processes, or simply encouraging (or pushing) them to keep studying.
- They also credit the motivational environment of the other young people, who are also studying and working, with keeping them motivated and helping them be resilient in the face of set backs.



I find I'm able to study more easily now that I'm not living in my car.

- Former Resident, 2016

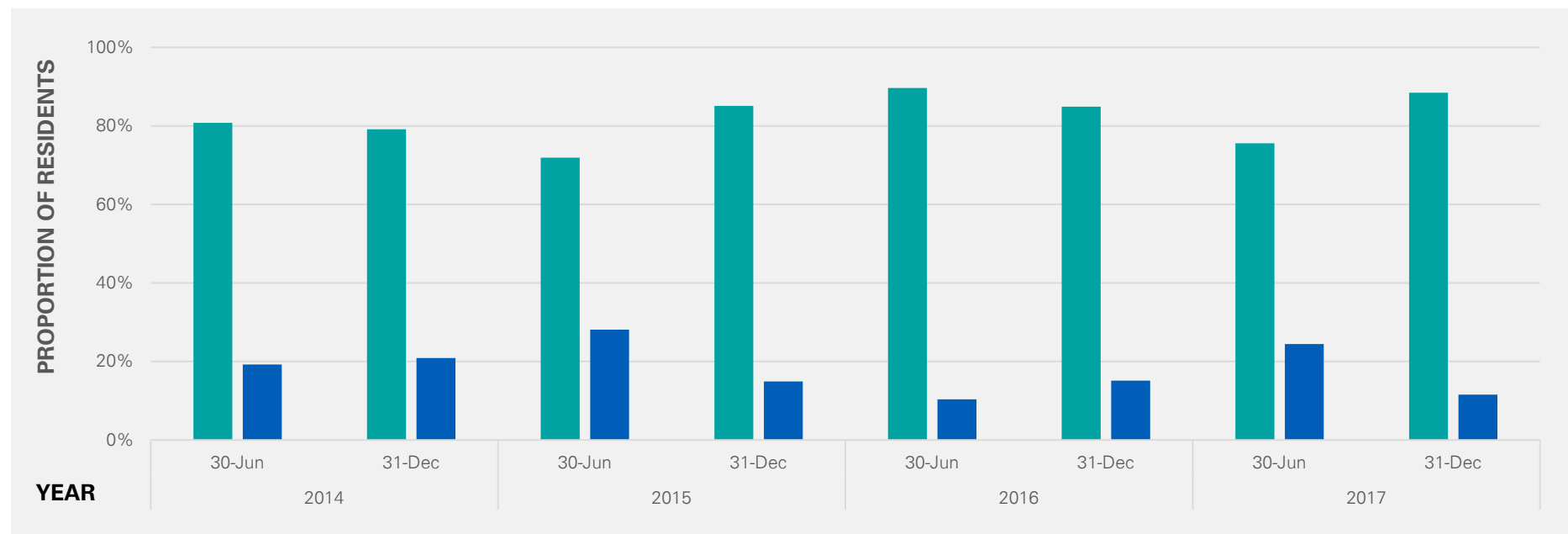


It's easier to focus on my study at Foyer. It's just quieter than where I was before.

- Former Resident, 2016

Promoting study and work

The proportion of residents currently engaged in EET at reporting points regularly met or exceeded Foyer Oxford's target of 80 per cent. Snapshot reporting data below indicates whether residents were engaged with EET as at the six monthly reporting date.



● Engaged with EET ● Not engaged with EET

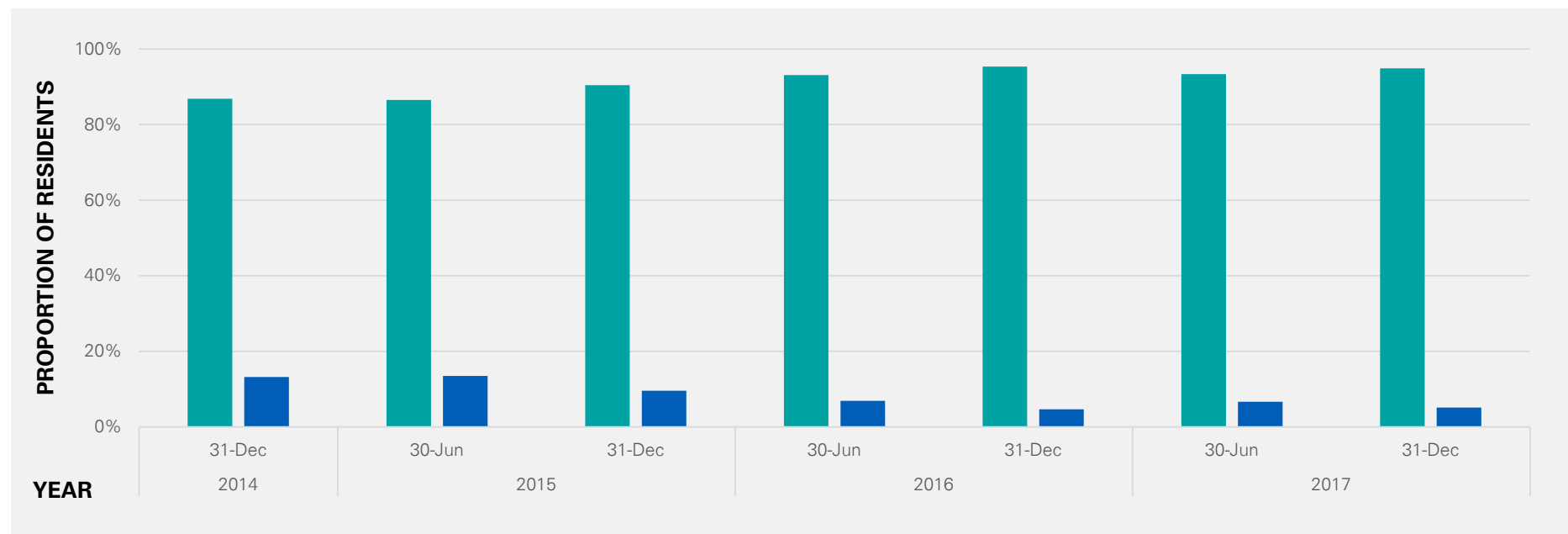
Figure 7. Percentage of residents engaged with EET at points in time, six month snapshots 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data

Promoting study and work

The proportion of residents who had engaged in EET at any point over the previous six months was even higher.

Reporting data below indicate the proportion of residents who, as at the six monthly snapshot reporting date, had engaged with EET at any point over the previous six months.



● Engaged with EET ● Not engaged with EET

Figure 8. Percentage of residents engaged with EET at points any point over previous six months, support periods 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data. Data was not collected for six months to 30 June 2014.

Promoting study and work

Those residents who were already engaged in EET, had a very high chance of continuing during their stay at Foyer Oxford.

53 per cent of residents who were not engaged with EET became engaged during their stay.



Figure 9. support periods 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data and Foyer KPI reports

Practical & life skills

Many young people bring highly developed life management skills to Foyer Oxford, as many have had to live independently from a young age, and others have not had support in the family home. Residents and staff generally said that residents' living skills improved further while at Foyer Oxford.

In interviews, residents often voiced the opinion that they were not critically in need of life skills, as they had largely been independent prior to entry and knew how to do 'the kinds of things they needed to do'.

Nonetheless, Foyer Oxford residents and staff tend to report that residents' independent living skills generally improved over the duration of their stay. Residents singled out the help with cooking and food shopping (knowing what to buy, getting to cheap places like 'Spudshed') as useful life skills they had picked up at Foyer Oxford.

They stressed that these kinds of skills were acquired not only through formal programs involving staff, but informally as a result of residents with skills or knowledge (e.g. cooking) passing these on to or helping out the others.

Residents who were younger, and those who had come from foster care environments, were more likely to say that they had not had the opportunity to develop practical life skills before living at Foyer Oxford, and that they had developed useful and necessary skills during their stay.

The case manager role was specifically mentioned as useful in terms of passing on practical help in some cases. Case managers were also generally considered to work within a framework that generally facilitated and supported young people to move towards independence and self-reliance.

Figure 10 shows the snapshot reporting of case managers' perceptions of change in residents' independent living skills.

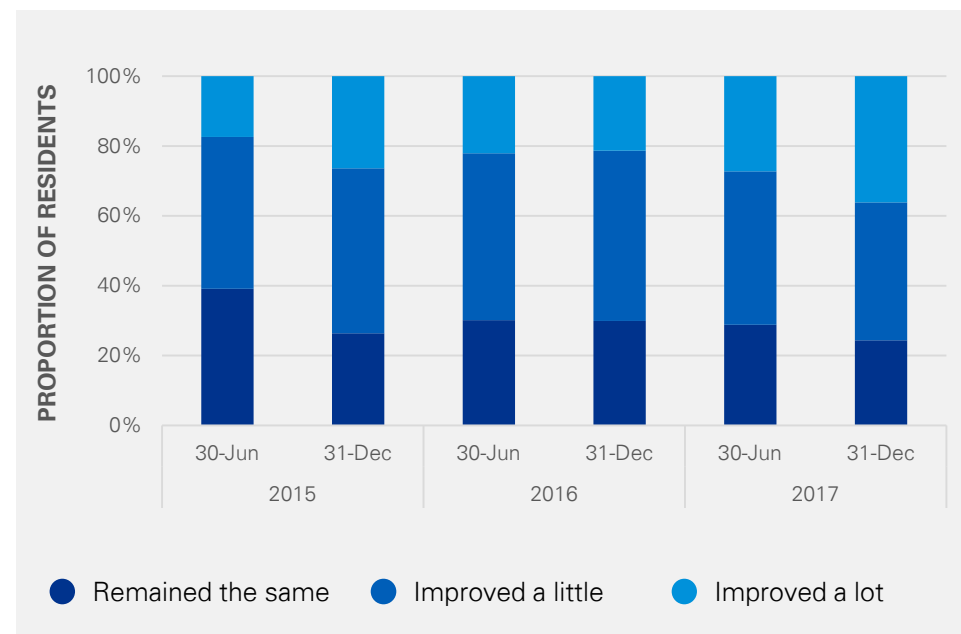


Figure 10. Case manager perceptions of changes in residents' independent living skills over six-month periods, January 2015 to December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data

Community engagement and activities

There are wide range of activities available to young people living at Foyer Oxford, including external community activities and those offered in-house. Many residents hadn't had access to these opportunities before Foyer Oxford, and pointed to their value for their physical and mental health after they'd left.

Subsidised gym memberships and yoga classes, music lessons, support to engage in volunteering and community activities, and ad hoc trips and outings, such as to the beach, are some of offerings that support young people to engage with their community. Some additional supports are offered in-house, such as health services (in-house nurse, house calls from doctors and dentists).

In interviews over the course of 2015 to 2016, some residents considered that these supports might have been making things 'too easy' for residents, and not preparing them for the 'outside world' – where they would have to fend for themselves.

This said, while there is value in promoting independence, many Foyer Oxford residents have missed out on a lot. They also may also not always be able to easily engage with or feel accepted in mainstream activities, nor do they typically have family members who can help to arrange appointments for them and attend with them. Interviews in 2017 with people who had left some time ago, highlighted the value of these experiences to former residents, who talked about their many 'firsts' at Foyer Oxford – the first time they'd had the chance to try yoga, or music, or writing. Many said they'd never had such opportunities before – and linked them to positive impacts on their physical and emotional health and well-being.

Further, engaging in activities such as sports and volunteering offers multiple advantages in job search, including the opportunity for young people to develop networks that can lead directly to a job, to develop formal and informal skills that will help them in work or in interviews, and the opportunity to find referees.



There was a strong expectation of independence, which was good in some ways, like learning how to budget, get to school and all those life skills. But in other ways it made things harder for me – there is still a need for a lot of support when you are a teenager.

- Former Resident, 2017



If I had been left to live where I was before I wouldn't have gone on to study and I would have had more children - I would have got stuck in the system.

- **Former young parent resident, soon to be home-owner 2017.**

Young parents – experience at Foyer Oxford

While demand has been declining, those young parents who did live at Foyer Oxford generally reported positive experiences, and valued both the parenting support workers and the informal peer support.

While the number of young parents at Foyer Oxford has been steadily falling (discussed at page 17), those young parents who had spent time at Foyer generally reported positive experiences.

Many felt that their case manager and the parenting support worker had been strong advocates through difficult interactions with government agencies and their own relatives. Practical advice and support around parenting techniques, attending appointments, and accessing other services were also highlighted as strengths. Young parents identified the provision of these supports as key to enabling them to pursue further education, and to find or continue in employment.

A number of young parents interviewed said that Foyer Oxford had specifically enabled them to combine work or study with being a parent, and that they would not have been able to do this otherwise. However, case managers noted that they had had to become more flexible with EET expectations for young parents, due to the practical barriers and issues that young people face in combining work and parenting, as well as the reality that ‘being a good parent’ requires full-time commitment.

Young parents identified informal peer support as a major benefit of the Foyer model, with living with a number of other young, single parents creating a sense of connection and community. Some of the first young parents there felt encouraged to share their knowledge and experience with new parents, benefitting both groups.

One young parent (who had been in care herself) said that she considered she would have lost her child to the child protection system were it not for Foyer Oxford, while others considered they would have gone on to have more children, and that those children would potentially have required child protection engagement.



Being at Foyer changed my life – I’ve grown in confidence so much from a seventeen year old with a new born, scared and pretty much alone, to someone who was trusted to help out new mums.

- Foyer Oxford young parent, 2017



There’s no way I could be doing what I’m doing now – a young mum, finished Year 11, studying nursing. I couldn’t have done this without Foyer.

- Foyer Oxford young parent, 2015

Young parents – parenting skills

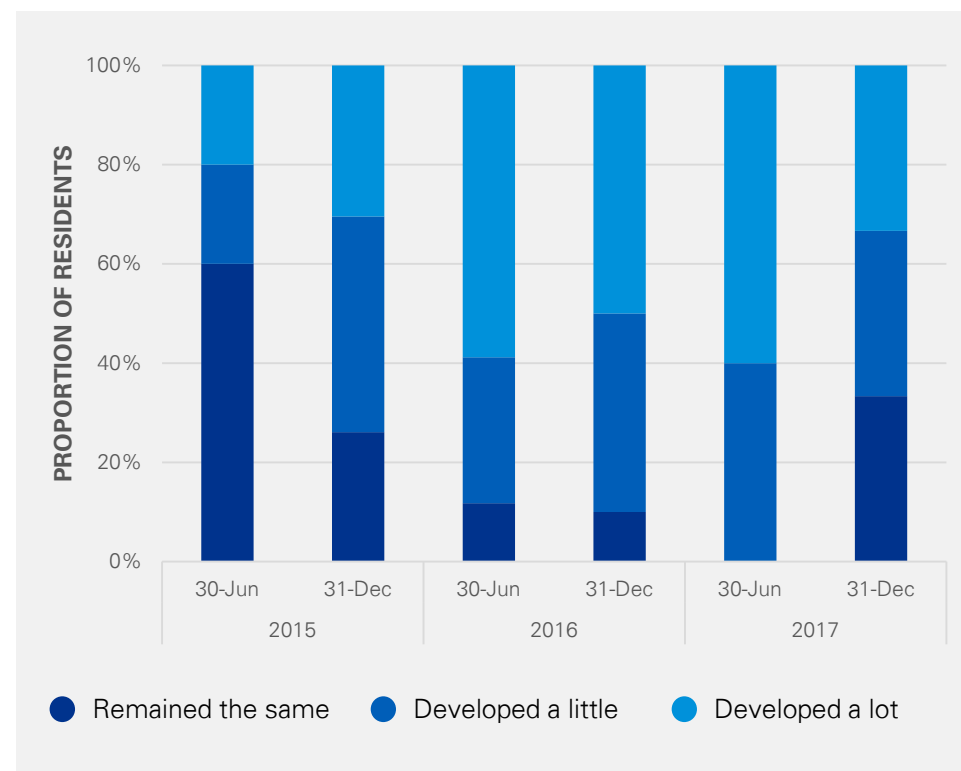
Parenting support workers generally reported perceived improvement in parenting skills among young parents.

Generally, the parenting support worker reported perceived improvement in young parents' parenting skills. Figure 11 shows this trend over time, with more parents being assessed as making greater progress in later time periods (noting that a small number of young parents were living at Oxford Foyer during this time).

As noted in the interim evaluation reports, the measure utilised ("have young parents' parenting skills developed 'a little', 'a lot' or 'remained the same') is somewhat subjective. This presents some problems with effectively capturing progress. For example a young parent with strong parenting skills may have their skill remain the same between periods but still have all the skills required to raise a happy and healthy child. A more objective assessment, using a standardised measure, would allow for each young parent to have a baseline of their skills assessed and progress against this to be reported.

Figure 11. Parenting support worker's perceptions of changes in young parents' parenting skills over six-month periods, January 2015 to December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data



Overcoming initial 'drama'

Foyer Oxford staff have overcome some initial issues to deliver an environment that is more positive and less prone to 'drama', in the eyes of residents, in 2017 than it was in 2015.

In the 2015 interviews, young people commonly reported issues they described as 'drama' at Foyer. 'Drama' was the word the residents used to describe a range of hassles with other staff and residents, including some reports of bullying, conflict, fighting, or aggression (harassment, intimidation, threats of violence). In revisiting former residents in 2017, it was common to also hear this experience, when they described this period.

This is important, as some of the young people at this time reported that the level of drama led them to have a negative experience of the service, including feeling vulnerable, afraid, and in some instances leaving early.

Such conflict wasn't a feature of the 2016 interviews, nor was it reported by residents interviewed in 2017 – despite reported increases in client complexity over this time. Staff also agreed that there is less 'drama' now, reporting that the reduction has been a result of:

- Learnings about what kind of person Foyer Oxford would work for;
- Effective training on dealing with bullying and anti-social behaviour; and
- Reduced pressure to fill the apartments (after the initial opening).

Overall, it seems that the 'drama' reported was mainly limited to a period in which the service was still evolving, and confined largely to a group of people who were identified and managed out of the service. However, this highlights the importance of the client mix to the environment, and points to the need to remain vigilant that this delivers a supportive and positive environment for the young people living there.



My first time there, they didn't pick the residents too carefully. There was a group of about 10 who terrorised everyone there, the residents, the staff. They weren't really committed. Anyway they got rid of them and the second time it was a lot better, people were more into it [the commitment to work/study] and everyone was friendlier.

- Former resident, 2017



I never had to deal with the drama, but I heard a lot about it. It was before I went there.

- Former resident, 2017

Engaging with EET - 'The Foyer Deal'

'The Foyer Deal' – the requirement to engage in work or study while a resident – is part of what supports the Foyer Oxford's positive culture. There has been increased flexibility in how it is applied, particularly for young parents.

'The Deal' is the term for the requirement for residents to engage with EET while they are at Foyer Oxford, as a condition of on-going accommodation. Young people consistently identified 'the Deal' as part of what motivated them to continue engagement with work and study during their stay – as they understand that it is part of what they needed to do to keep their housing.

While 'the Deal' is typically reported by residents to be a fair expectation, in earlier interviews (conducted in 2015), it was a source of some frustration, as some residents perceived it as a 'blunt instrument' that allowed some people to get away with 'the bare minimum' that satisfied requirements, while others who were genuinely trying could have been punished for failing (e.g. to get a job) or required to do things they weren't committed to or interesting in just to meet the requirements.

The sense from interviews is that such sentiments decreased over 2016 and 2017. Partly, this is attributed to staff taking a more flexible and individualised approach towards the Deal, with a greater focus on 'best endeavours' rather than 'ticking a box' – particularly for residents with particular barriers, including young parents and some residents with complex mental health issues.

The result has not been a deterioration of the culture; if anything, there is a slightly greater sense that Foyer Oxford is a place where effort is rewarded, and where it is OK for young people to change their minds – and, sometimes, to fail.



The deal is a good motivator. I wanted to learn anyway. But the deal means I have to do it to stay here – and no one wants to leave.

- Former Resident, 2015



They pushed you too, because you had to do those things to stay. It did seem harsh at the start, but I understand that it was for my own good.

- Former Resident, 2017

Community support

Community surveys indicate consistently high levels of knowledge of, and support for, Foyer Oxford among Leederville residents and businesses, as well as partner agencies. Some partners identified an opportunity to better promote the service and its outcomes.

External community perceptions surveys contracted by Foyer Oxford have revealed consistently high levels of support for Foyer Oxford among local residents and businesses. In 2017, 85 per cent of respondents indicated that 'I support the establishment of the Foyer Oxford project here in Leederville (up from 77 per cent in 2014), while 70 per cent considered its impact in the area had been positive or extremely positive in 2017 (compared to 58 per cent in 2014). Support was similar among resident and business respondents.

Consortium and partner stakeholders consistently report that dealings with Foyer Oxford team are smooth, professional, and hassle-free, and that they are kept abreast of any developments they need to know about.

In interviews, some stakeholders felt that Foyer Oxford could have been doing more to promote the outcomes of the service, its role, and its unique service offering, particularly given its high and positive community profile.



We have had no trouble with the tenants that I know of. They must be doing some good down there.

**- Local Leederville stakeholder,
(External) Community perceptions survey, 2017.**



There are some fantastic stories. But the communication of them is missing. Where are they [the residents] now? We put that expectation on them [Foyer] to provide that. It would be great for them to contact us and say, 'it's homelessness week next week, shall we do something together?' but it doesn't happen.

- Foyer Oxford Consortium Stakeholder, 2017

Service viability

Funding for the Foyer Oxford service model post-2019 is yet to be secured, and represents a key service risk. Some stakeholders consider that more could have been done to leverage the service's positive community profile to garner additional corporate or philanthropic funding.

Foyer Oxford involved some \$19 million in upfront capital funding (\$9 million from the WA Department of Housing and \$10 million from the Commonwealth Government, through the Social Housing Initiative). Ongoing funding has come from \$5 million in funding for support services from BHP (covering the period 2014-2019), matched by funding from the Department of Community Services, sourced through the joint Commonwealth/state National Partnership on Homelessness Agreement.

Since opening, the profitability (current and projected) of the service has been lower than expected. Lower than expected demand for the (higher rent) one-bedroom apartments for young parents and penthouse apartments has reduced revenue, while expenditure has increased due to the need for more intensive service provision for a population of residents with increasingly complex needs.

Property management services (those related to the physical building, rather than the residents) are funded by the rents collected from residents, supplemented by the offset delivered by the (Commonwealth) National Rental Affordability Scheme, which provides cash credits over the building's first ten years of operation. These services are currently operating at a profit, and are predicted to do so for the coming 15 years.

Tenant management services (those related to the provision of support services to the tenants) have been funded until 2018 by the grants from BHP and the Department for Community Services. While negotiations between the parties are underway, at the time of this report, the expected conclusion of the BHP contract and the lack of certainty on the future of Commonwealth and State funding give rise to uncertainty in the future funding arrangements that has still to be resolved.

Source of funding figures: Anglicare WA

Interviews with staff and managers have identified a number of strategies that Foyer Oxford has considered to improve sustainability and viability, including:

- Improving referral relationships with universal agencies (e.g. schools, TAFE), with a view to identifying young people who are at risk of homelessness who are not necessarily accessing specialised services – the available data identifies that the numbers of referrals from educational institutions have risen steadily since 2015.
- More deliberately targeting young people leaving out of home care. The number of referrals from this source did rise between 2016 and 2017.
- Seeking to support greater numbers of young people with disabilities, who are also in inadequate or inappropriate housing. These young people can have access to dedicated funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which can represent an additional source of funding.
- A number of strategies that were considered but not adopted – e.g. offering rooms to young people from regional/remote areas. This would have improved service viability, but potentially reduced the core service focus.

These efforts have mitigated, although not addressed, the decline in service profitability. Some stakeholders expressed the view that Foyer Oxford could have been doing more to leverage its reputation to better effect to reduce this future service risk, specifically through pursuing corporate or philanthropic partnerships.

While acknowledging that substantial efforts have been and are currently being made to secure funding past 2019, the lack of an agreed funding strategy is considered to represent an on-going service risk.

Foyer Oxford - Outcomes

There are 98 people at Foyer.

Imagine 98 people, who come in and stay there for two years and focus on themselves, and imagine they come out like I did – determined to do well, to succeed, with the direction they need to go somewhere.

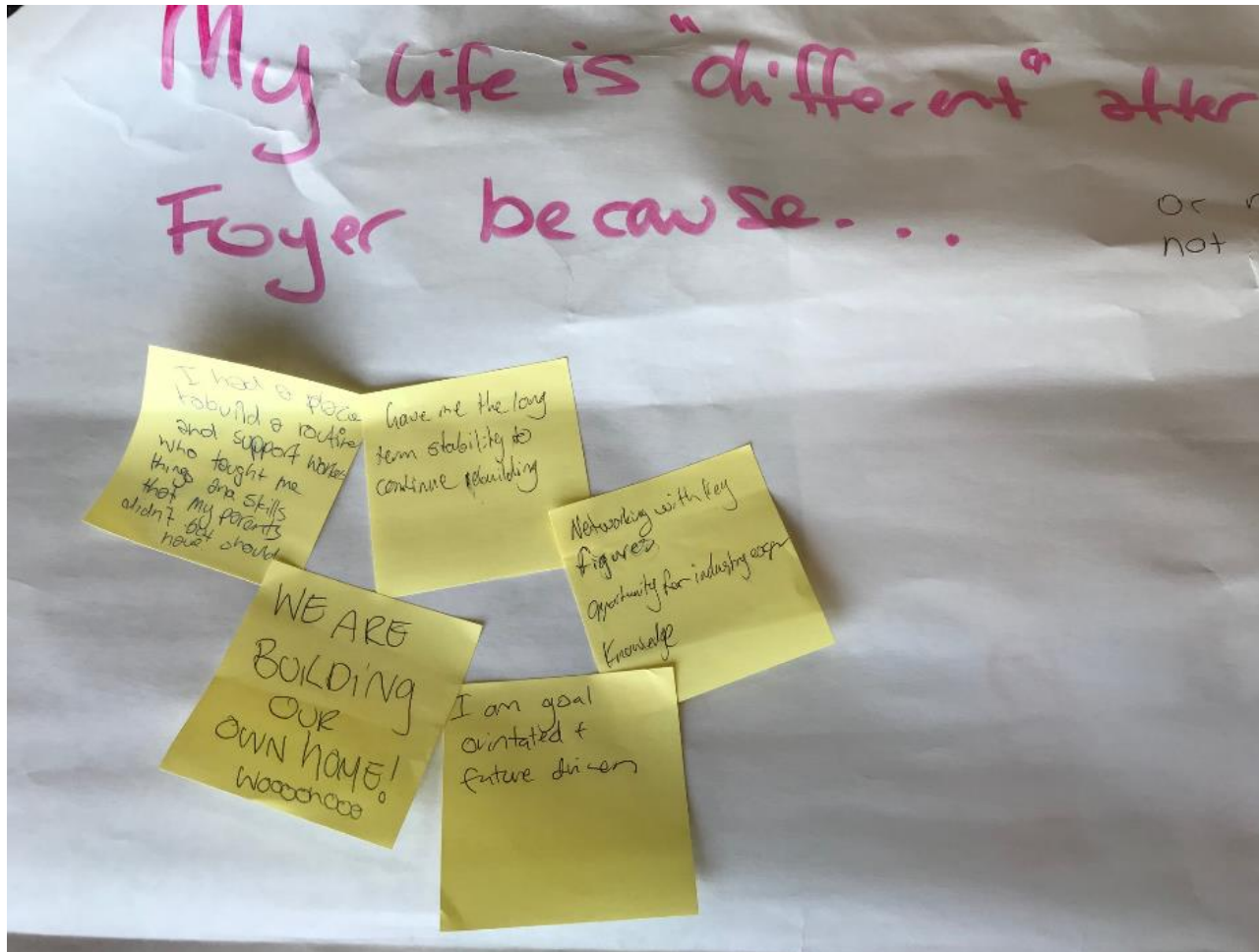
That's 98 young people every two years – the benefits to the community are massive. That's 98 tradies, receptionists, people going to university, TAFE teachers, child care workers, people who want to be youth workers.

The next generation, with the determination to guide the next generation after that. It's mind blowing, the potential of it.

- Former Resident, 2015



What is life after Foyer Oxford like?



The following are the (verbatim) views expressed by former residents asked to say how their life is different after Foyer, at an evaluation workshop held on 14 November 2017.

- I had a place to build a routine and support workers who taught me things and skills that my parents didn't but should have.
- Gave me the long-term stability to continue rebuilding.
- I am goal-oriented and future driven.
- Networking with key figures; opportunity for industry experience; knowledge.
- We are building our own home! Woohoo!

Housing outcomes

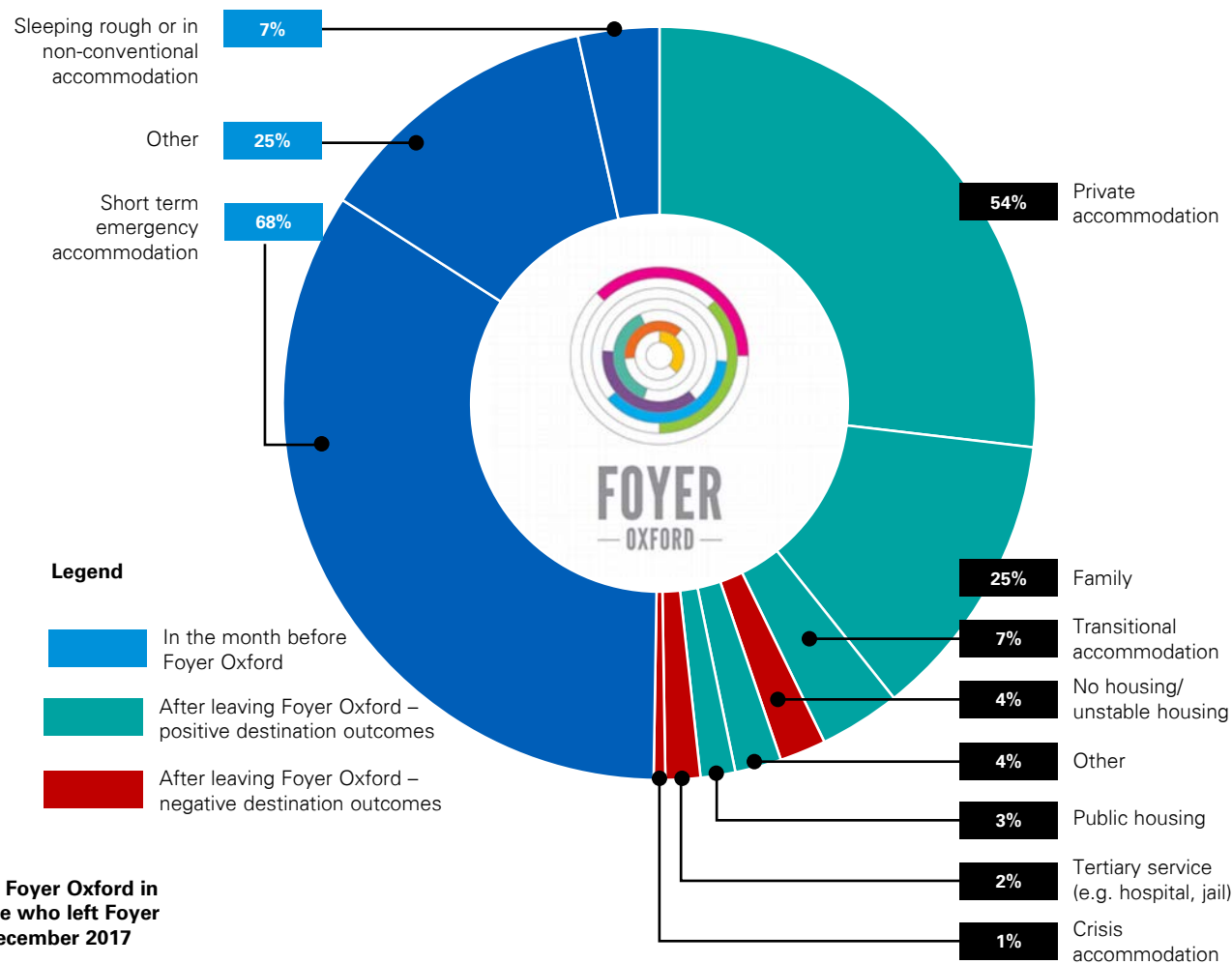
Overall between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2017:

- 93 per cent of residents who left Foyer Oxford did so into positive, long term housing options. Five per cent exited to an unstable housing situation or crisis accommodation.
- Follow up surveys with ex-residents 12 months after leaving Foyer suggest most maintain these positive housing outcomes. Between 81 per cent and 96 per cent reported being in long term accommodation a year after leaving Foyer Oxford.
- The same follow up surveys also show that between 61 per cent and 73 per cent of ex-residents are in EET 12 months after leaving Foyer.

It is noted that the housing and work outcomes for former Foyer Oxford residents are strongly related to economic conditions. Where housing prices have been low (2016-17), young people have been more able and likely to transition into independent accommodation. Foyer Oxford's housing outcomes should be considered in this context.

Figure 12. Homelessness status of young people supported by Foyer Oxford in the month before coming to Foyer, and housing status of those who left Foyer over the same period, support periods 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2017

Source: Anglicare WA Foyer Snapshot data and Foyer KPI reports



Life after Foyer Oxford: Positive outcomes

Most interviewees had positive stories of life after Foyer Oxford. This supports the post-exit survey data, which also suggests that most residents leave to secure, stable housing and continue to engage with work and study.

Most of the interviewees, at the time of the interview, said that they had stable accommodation. They had (public or private) leases, which they felt were secure. In a number of instances, former residents had moved around to various places as they moved jobs, partners or went travelling, but this was at their instigation.

Several, including some young parents, indicated they had bought or were in the process of buying a home, usually with a long-term partner.

A number were able to reconnect with family (biological or foster) and had moved back in with them, and reported an improved and positive experience. In some instances, this was because someone (e.g. a parent's partner) had left; however, there were a number who reported that Foyer was a 'circuit-breaker' that enabled them to all have a break, and then live together as a family again without conflict.

Typically, former residents were engaged in a combination of activities that they considered interesting and meaningful. Most reported that they were working, studying or a combination of the two – although with youth unemployment at 15 year highs, many were struggling to get or maintain jobs. Almost all reported that they had friends they spent time with, and things they did that they enjoyed.

The evaluation team notes that the young people who have lived at Foyer Oxford have interacted with a range of services before, during and after any stay, and the outcomes they go on to achieve are influenced by all of these interactions, as well as environmental factors such as work and housing availability. People who had a positive experience at Foyer Oxford were also more likely to volunteer to be interviewed.



There was this other girl there, she had real mental health issues. Very anxious. And she would go to the beach when she felt anxious. And a little bit of that rubbed off on me, so I would start going to the beach when I was feeling stressed. Or do yoga. It's better than alcohol. So Foyer saw this, and would take a bunch of us to the beach. Snorkeling or whatever we wanted to do. If we wanted to do something, they would listen to us and make it happen. Now that girl, she's a youth worker.

- Former Resident, 2017



You can have dreams wherever you are. But Foyer makes you feel like you can achieve them.

- Foyer Oxford Resident, 2016

Life after Foyer Oxford: Negative experiences

Some former residents had gone on to be homeless again after Foyer Oxford. They typically reported high levels of conflict or 'drama' with other residents or staff while at Foyer Oxford, and a failure to find friends or people to connect to.

A number of former residents reported a negative experience at Foyer Oxford. Several interviewees were homeless at the time of the interview or had been after leaving. Some of them had accessed in-patient mental health treatment, which they said had been caused in part by a highly stressful experience at Foyer Oxford.

The most common theme in these stories was a failure to connect with others (either residents or staff). This tended to be associated with:

- Finding Foyer Oxford large and overwhelming (too many people);
- Being young, and in a different 'space' to older residents – attending high school, and not being interested in/able to engage in activities such as clubbing or bars;
- Experiencing active conflict with other residents, for example bullying, harassment or 'drama' – conflict or hassle over various things (relationships, and so on).

There was also a group of people who reported they had had episodes of mental ill-health that had been poorly handled, which had left them feeling unsupported and uncared for. They considered that not all staff were trained to adequately deal with mental health situations that could present, particularly the night staff, who do not always have specialist mental health training.

It is not the case that all young people who had a negative experience at Foyer Oxford went on to have negative outcomes – some managed to overcome these experiences and put themselves back on a positive path. However, in these instances, the contribution of Foyer Oxford to this outcome is not straightforward.

Young people who were interviewed in 2017 were reflecting back on their experiences with the service in 2015 and 2016. Since then, Foyer Oxford has made a number of changes to how it deals with young people with presenting mental health conditions. Nonetheless, these young people's experiences show where the service model has fallen down in the past, and recommendations based on their reports are made at page 43.



My mental health really suffered after I left there, I went into hospital [mental institution] and was there for a long time. Then I was homeless again for a while.

Now, I live in my home [in Yangebup], with a cat and dog. I enjoy what I do. The work I do is fun. Other than that I stay home, watch movies, play board games with my boyfriend.

The thing that turned it around for me was having my own [public housing] home. My own place. Once I had that I could build everything from there. So my boyfriend lives with me, but in my house.

- Former Resident, 2017



Honestly, I would have preferred to be in a hostel setting, with a small number of people, maybe six or so. Smaller groups make it easier to get to know people and trust them. I like to look after my mates so knowing them well is important, to be sure I can trust them and they trust me.

- Former Resident, 2017



I was in school, trying to go to school every day and do years 11 and 12. But on top of all the homework I had to cook meals, look after everything. It was too much. So I dropped out. It was too hard, juggling being an adult and a child.

- Former Resident, 2017

Life after Foyer Oxford: Transition issues

A common report from interviewees was of a positive experience at Foyer Oxford, but a transition out that was poorly managed. This group often suffered set backs after Foyer Oxford, even if their experience there had been generally good, sometimes including further periods of homelessness.

A common experience among interviewees was of a positive experience at Foyer Oxford after which they had felt ready to leave, followed by a negative transition out. For some, the transition was so difficult that it led to further periods of homelessness.

This group reported that a lack of adequate preparation and support to move out resulted in them being 'set back' in terms of work, study and/or well-being after their exit. There were a number of specific factors they mentioned:

- They had not understood things such as tenant rights, how to choose a rental property, the responsibilities of a lease, and so on. They sometimes chose houses in bad locations, e.g. in high crime areas, were taken advantage of by landlords, and/or ended up with debts from co-tenants – causing emotional and financial stress, and difficulty with continuing work or study.
- They hadn't understood how high bills would be (bills are included in the Foyer Oxford rent), and didn't know how to use services such as direct debit or other management tools. They often ended up unable to manage financially.
- There was also a group who experienced the cut off from Foyer Oxford as abrupt and unkind. While some former residents continued to meet up with case managers and visit, and others said they did not have a desire to retain any connection with the service, there was a group who said they felt like they'd been 'dumped', or 'rejected', which they found painful and destabilising.

Foyer Oxford was never intended to nor funded to provide post-exit support. Young people who were interviewed in 2017 were also reflecting back on their experiences with the service in 2015 and 2016; since then, Foyer Oxford has instigated new partnerships with agencies to better support young people leaving the service. Nonetheless, these young people's experiences show where the service model has fallen down in the past, and recommendations based on their reports are made at page 43.



The big thing I didn't like was exit planning. There wasn't any. Time's up, and they didn't give us enough time to deal with it, a month to try and find a rental you could afford. It felt like you were home, but then you needed to be pushed out. 'well, we can find you emergency accommodation' they said. It was all too rushed. You'd trusted them and felt safe and secure, and then they just rushed you out. A couple of friends went down a hard path after that. People got built up, but then they got pushed back down again by the exit planning.

A lot of friends I knew, they went to pretty bad situations after Foyer. Couch surfing, homeless, because it was too rushed and the exit planning wasn't there. It should help you find a secure housing. I had a friend who moved out seven months later – it was the same. So no, I don't think that has changed.

I think we were over supported. We had the gym memberships, the art, the music, friends. And we left and had nothing.

Now I talk highly of the place, even at work and that, but I don't want to go back into the building. Because of what happened at the end.

- Former Resident, 2017

Life after Foyer Oxford: Low cost housing

While the majority of former residents interviewed were in stable housing, it is noted that financial constraints mean they are often now living in outer suburbs, with poor access to transport, jobs and educational opportunities.

While most former residents are in stable housing situations, it was common for interviewees to say they didn't know people locally, and that they had to travel a considerable distance to visit family or friends – they didn't really feel 'at home' where they lived. In some instances, they identified that they felt unsafe – due to a perceived or actual vulnerability to crime in their area.

These former residents are probably experiencing the housing reality of many low income people, whose housing choices are limited. It may be that this is particularly stark for former Foyer Oxford residents, given the relatively easy social and geographical connections that were possible from the Leederville location.

However, it does suggest that residents, in considering whether to move out in a more affordable market, may need to be given information and help to make an informed decision about their proposed vs. current living arrangements, which go beyond just the cost.



I'm living in a Department of Housing place in Tuart Hill. I don't like it as much as Foyer. When I have issues with my neighbours or want something fixed it takes the Department forever to respond to me. One of my neighbours is aggressive and uses hard drugs. He's threatened me, so I've applied to move to a new house in Bentley, which will also be closer to my family. This is taking longer than I hoped but I think I'll be transferred within the year. The Department of Housing apartment is nowhere near as nice as the Foyer one, there is a lot more damage and wear and tear.

- Former Resident, 2017

Opportunities to improve

Recognising that Foyer Oxford has been engaging in on-going service improvements in response to feedback, four suggestions for further service enhancements are made here: Improving transitions out; pro-active identification of potential issues in settling in; securing service viability post-2019; and improving the mental health response skills of staff.

1. Increase attention to post-exit support. While acknowledging that the Foyer Oxford model never included a post-exit support component, former residents have highlighted the importance of effective transition support in consolidating and maintaining any gains made at Foyer. Foyer Oxford has initiated new partnerships in this area in response to this feedback; any future evaluation activities should seek to ensure that this has been effective in improving the transition experience of young people and seek to identify additional ways to improve.

2. Take additional steps to proactively identify residents not settling in. There is a group of young people who fail to settle at Foyer, and who report a negative experience there. They often went on to leave early, sometimes exiting into homelessness. Typically, they reported that the issues that led to their failure to settle emerged soon after entry, and were often related to feeling overwhelmed by the number of people there, and/or being unable to find a group of people to bond with.

Foyer Oxford's intake assessment procedures have become more comprehensive and thorough, which should provide a better indication of those residents who are at risk of not settling in the period immediately following entry. Additional service enhancements might include a transition process ahead of actual entry, for example with visits, introductions to current residents and so on, to increase the potential for a successful experience at Foyer Oxford.

One way to enhance the service provided on exit and entry might be to establish some form of peer support program, particularly focused on the transition points. Many former residents are studying and working in community services roles; given this, consideration could be given to employing former residents in such roles, which would provide valuable work experience, as well as a way for former residents to feel that their lived experience as a resident is valued and appreciated.

3. Finalise funding to ensure service viability post-2019. While there has been activity to secure funding for the support service component of Foyer Oxford's activities post-2019, as at this report this has not yet been achieved. As this is a critical service risk, it is recommended that an appropriate governance structure to raise and resolve the issue of on-going funding is established, involving all consortium members and partners.

4. Require mental health training for all staff who have contact with residents, regardless of their role. Not all client-contact staff have mental health training or experience. Particularly concierge (night) staff, who are not directly employed by Foyer Oxford, may not have had such training. Given the acute mental health issues of many residents, it is considered appropriate that all staff who will be in contact with residents have access to relevant training and materials to support effective and appropriate response to the needs of people with mental health issues.

Appendix



Employment and housing costs in WA - trends over time

Housing affordability (2014-17)

Rental housing in WA in 2017 is substantially more affordable and available than it was in 2014. When the first evaluation report was published in 2015, it noted that as of June 2014 the cost of both private rental and shared accommodation in Perth were the second highest in the country. By December 2017, the cost of a private rental in Perth had dropped to fourth highest, with the most affordable price per room for share housing in the country¹.

In regards to availability, the vacancy rate for private rentals in Perth in June 2014 was 2.5 percent. By December 2017, this had increased to 3.5 percent.

While the rental market has softened, improving availability for some, many on medium-low incomes are still finding it extremely difficult to find available, appropriate and affordable housing². Renters, particularly, are reported to struggle in an insecure private rental market, with a lack of diverse and affordable options, particularly in locations close to jobs and services.

Youth unemployment rate (2014-17)

In WA, unemployment in general, and youth unemployment specifically, is relatively high. For a period from 2010-12 WA encountered youth unemployment levels below the national average. As of February 2014, youth unemployment was 6.9%. By September 2017, the state's annual youth employment rate was 13.3%, the highest level in 15 years, and 0.5 percentage points higher than the national youth unemployment rate (of 12.8%)³.

Sources:

¹ <https://www.rent.com.au/blog/rental-snapshot-december-2017>

² <https://www.domain.com.au/news/vacancies-soar-in-perth-home-rental-market-20160212-gmsevq/>

³ https://reiwa.com.au/uploadedfiles/public/content/about_us/news/housing%20affordability%20report%2014%20september%20202016.pdf

⁴ <http://www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/uploads/Labour%20Market%20Snapshot%20-%20September%20quarter%202017.pdf>

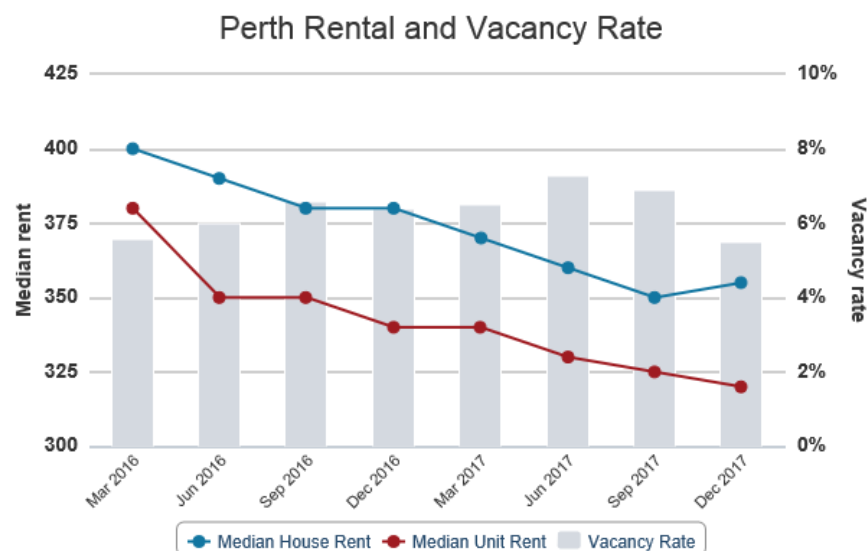


Figure 13. Perth Rental costs and Vacancy Rates, Mar 2016 to Dec 2017

Source: Source: Real Estate Institute of WA figures (www.reiwa.com.au)

Evaluation method & identified limitations

The Foyer "Story" - To what extent is Foyer...	Research themes/questions	Evaluation themes
A service there is demand for....	How necessary is Foyer?	Appropriateness
...that creates a positive effect on the mental well-being and life skills of young people who live there....	How effective is Foyer in developing practical life skills? What effect does Foyer have on young people's ability to develop meaningful, positive relationships? How effectively does Foyer support young people to access the resources in their community? How effective is Foyer in supporting young parents to provide an appropriate environment for their children? What is 'the Foyer culture' like?	Effectiveness
....that leads to visible outcomes in key domains....	How effective is Foyer at promoting a transition to positive long-term accommodation? How effective is Foyer at promoting successful engagement with education, training and work?	Effectiveness
...operating within a sustainable funding model...	How sustainable is Foyer? To what extent does Foyer have community support?	Sustainability
...that results in people exiting with a positive self-image and confidence...	What effect does living at Foyer have on the feelings and emotional well-being of residents?	Impact
...and exhibiting positive actions and behaviours....	What effect does living at Foyer have on the behaviour and actions of residents?	
...resulting in good outcomes for the community.	What kind of lives do people who have lived at Foyer go on to have?	

The Evaluation Framework outlines the research and evaluation themes of the review.

These were developed in consultation with Foyer Oxford, including workshops with residents at the time. The key research themes and questions identified are shown here at Figure 14.

This Framework served as the basis for all information gathering during the evaluation and maintaining a structure for the development of all tools.

An evaluation report was issued in 2015, 2017 and 2018. Throughout the three evaluation stages residents, staff and stakeholders of Oxford Foyer were interviewed through a series of consultations, focus groups and phone interviews, in which the questions asked aligned to the key thematic areas of appropriateness effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

Several limitations to the report are identified;

- This evaluation is not a longitudinal evaluation and thus the journey of individual residents has not been followed over the course of their referral, residence and exit from Foyer Oxford. Aggregate data has been used to obtain an overall picture of outcomes at Foyer Oxford.
- Given the number of residents at Foyer Oxford in a given week is fluid and a number of different datasets were used to understand Foyer Oxford's outcomes, total numbers of residents in the service vary between datasets. In some instances data are double counted across periods, while residents who entered and exited within a period may not be represented in point in time data.
- There is no source of complete or quantitative information regarding past residents. Reporting here on the experiences of residents (current and past) is based on voluntary interviews. Those who agreed to be interviewed, while expressing a range of circumstances and experiences, are likely to be biased towards more a positive sample.

Figure 14. Evaluation research themes and questions

Source: KPMG Evaluation Framework

Evaluation activities - Focus groups

Residents

Date	Attendees
2015	
14 April – 5 May 2015	15 residents
2016	
16 August 2016	8 residents
2017	
14 November 2017	10 residents

Staff

Date	Attendees
2015	
5 May 2015	Case managers
6 May 2015	Community development workers and residential support workers
2016	
6 September 2016	Employment and residential support workers
20 September 2016	Case managers
2017	
14 November 2017	Case managers
13 December 2017	Foyer management

Evaluation activities - Individual Interviews

Residents

Date	Type of resident
2015	
11 May 2015	2 former residents: single young person
2016	
16 Aug-18 Sep 2016	11 current residents: single young person
8 September 2016	1 current resident: young parent

Former Residents

Date	Type of resident
2016	
19-21 Sep 2016	8 former residents: single young person
	1 former resident: young parent
2017	
6 Sep-17 Nov 2017	15 former residents: single young person
	4 former residents: young parent

Staff

Date	Attendees
2016	
	Community Development Co-ordinator
20 September 2016	Case Manager Co-ordinator

Evaluation activities - Consortium Stakeholder interviews

Organisation	Position	Date interviewed
2015		
Central Institute of Technology	Executive Director Health and Community Services	17 April 2015
Foundation Housing Limited	Deputy CEO	14 May 2015
	Manager Housing Services	
Department of Child Protection and Family Support	Manager Non-Government Funding – Homelessness	15 May 2015
Anglicare WA	Executive General Manager Operations	15 May /2015
	Regional Manager North Metro	
BHP	Analyst Social Investment	18 May 2015 (written response)
2016		
Foundation Housing	Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Housing Services Manager	5 September 2016
North Metropolitan TAFE	Director Foundation Pathways	12 September 2016

Organisation	Position	Date interviewed
2016 (cont.)		
Department of Child Protection and Family Services	Senior Project Officer, Services, Standards and Contracting unit	31 September 2016
Anglicare WA	Director Services, Regional Manager North Metro	12 October 2016
BHP Billiton	Specialist Social Investment Australia, Community and Indigenous Affairs	18 October 2016
2017		
Foundation Housing	Director Tenant Services	23 November 2017
Department of Child Protection and Family Services	Senior Project Officer, Services, Standards and Contracting unit	23 November 2017
2018		
BHP	Specialist Social Investment Australia, Community and Indigenous Affairs	23 January 2018

Contacts

The contacts at KPMG in connection with this report are:



Liz Forsyth
**KPMG Global Lead for
Government**

**KPMG Global Lead Human &
Social Services**

lforsyth@kpmg.com.au



Jay Martin
**Associate Director, Health
Ageing & Human Services**

jaymartin@kpmg.ca



Andrew Campbell
**Senior Consultant, Health
Ageing & Human Services**

acampbell13@kpmg.com.au

(02) 6267 5122



kpmg.com.au

kpmg.com.au/app



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ACS094598