

**Municipality Of Chatham-Kent**

**Community Human Services**

**Housing Services and Employment and Social Services**

**Information Report**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Chantal Perry, Program Manager Employment and Social Services  
**Date:** June 4, 2021  
**Subject:** Chatham-Kent 2020 Housing and Homelessness Progress Report

This report is for the information of Council.

**Background**

Chatham-Kent's first Housing and Homelessness Community Plan was approved by Council in January, 2014. The Housing Services Act, 2011 requires Service Managers to review and update their plan every five years. At the June 29, 2020 regular Council meeting, the updated [Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Community Plan](#) was approved by Council.

The Housing Services Act, 2011 Ontario Regulation 367/11 mandates the following requirements:

- Report annually to the public on the progress of Housing and Homelessness Plans based on the previous years activities. Public reports are to be completed no later than June 30 of each year.
- Report to the public on the measures taken and the progress achieved to meet the objectives and targets in their Housing and Homelessness Plans.
- Provide the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing with a report on the same information provided to the public and indicate how it was reported to the public (e.g., through press release, annual reports, web-based materials, etc.) each year.

**Comments**

The Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Plan (HHP) Committee, led by Employment and Social Services and Housing Services, is charged with the task of steering the collective community partnership in the implementation of the HHP and ensuring accountability for its successful implementation. In 2020, Chatham-Kent committed to a new five year updated Housing and Homelessness Community Plan. This plan builds on the achievements of the previous HHP and prioritizes:

1. Increasing affordable rental and ownership housing
2. Increasing housing stability for residents
3. Ending chronic homelessness
4. Increasing appropriate housing and supports for priority populations
5. Increasing community awareness and service integration

A significant amount of work has been completed in this reporting year which is succinctly captured in the 2020 Progress Report (Appendix 1).

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated and challenged Chatham-Kent's housing and homelessness service delivery. Physical distancing measures and safety precautions displaced many residents from unstable and transient housing options (e.g. couch-sleeping, room-sharing) and homelessness increased significantly. Prior to the pandemic, local scattered-site motel rooms provided emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. With the advent of COVID-19, the need for emergency shelter motel rooms outpaced the supply available in the community. Like many other communities, Chatham-Kent established a temporary homeless and COVID-19 isolation shelter for people displaced by COVID-19 and/or requiring a safe space to isolate or recover from COVID-19. As the pandemic continued, Chatham-Kent shifted from an emergency shelter model to a housing-focused model called the Chatham-Kent Emergency and Rapid Re-Housing Program (CKERRP). This new model is evidence-informed and still adheres to the Housing First philosophy, however the increasingly complex needs of people experiencing homelessness required a fixed site location to increase room capacity and to ensure resident health and safety.

Housing Services also worked diligently in 2020 to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on tenants. Increased safety and cleaning protocols in municipally-owned and operated social housing was implemented, and guidance and oversight to local non-profit and cooperative public housing providers was enhanced. Increased building and case-management services were implemented to ensure that tenants in isolation, and people experiencing increased mental health and physical health concerns, had access to basic needs and appropriate health-related services.

Performance indicators and program outcomes demonstrate a growing affordable housing need and increased shelter insecurity and homelessness within Chatham-Kent. Rent-Geared-to-Income waitlists continue to rise, as escalating housing costs, declining vacancy rates and increasing mental health and substance use disorders continue to make affordable housing difficult to find and maintain for many residents.

Despite these challenges, progress continues to be made in the development of affordable housing, with completion of four affordable housing builds in 2020 (48 5<sup>th</sup> St., 48 5<sup>th</sup> St. Youth Supportive, 45 Michener, and Clairvue). Additionally, the number of households assisted with portable housing benefits and rent supplement units increased substantially. Significant strides were made in service coordination, community outreach, and supportive housing planning.

In 2021, progress will continue to be evaluated on the community HHP, while strengthening and streamlining emergency housing and rapid rehousing programming, increasing affordable housing stock, as well as, prioritizing supportive housing and health-focused interventions and service coordination.

### **Consultation**

The Program Manager of Employment and Social Services, with input from Housing Services and The Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Plan Committee, compiled and prepared the 2020 Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report attached as Appendix 1.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications with this report. Nominal costs were incurred in the preparation of this report, including municipal staff time, graphic design and printing. These costs will be recovered from the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), which is funded 100% by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Prepared by:

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Chantal Perry, B.A.  
Program Manager, Employment and Social Services

Reviewed by:

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Polly Smith, B.A. Dipl. MM  
Director, Employment & Social Services

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Ray Harper, CPA, CMA, PMP  
Director, Housing Services

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April Rietdyk, RN, BScN, MHS, PhD PUBH  
General Manager, Community Human Services

Attachments:

Appendix 1- 2020 Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report

c: Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Plan Committee members

P:\RTC\Community Human Services\2021\ESS\June 28\2020 Chatham-Kent Housing  
And Homelessness Progress Report.Doc



## Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Community Plan 2020-2024

As the Service Manager, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is responsible for the delivery and administration of provincially mandated social and affordable housing programs, as well as initiatives to prevent and address homelessness. This annual report highlights progress that has been made in 2020 on the targets and goals of the Chatham-Kent Housing and Homelessness Community Plan 2020-2024.

### The Path Forward - An Outcome Based Plan

Chatham-Kent's original Housing and Homelessness Community Plan (HHCP) was adopted in 2013. It was instrumental in the development of programs and shifting service delivery to reflect data-driven outcome-based solutions and best practices to address housing and homelessness needs.

In 2020, Council approved a new plan that will set the foundation for systems and continuous improvement over the next five years.

### Vision

Every person living in Chatham-Kent has an affordable, suitable, adequate home.

- Meet both need and demand for affordable rental and ownership housing.
- Increase housing stability for residents.
- End chronic homelessness.
- Increase appropriate housing and supports for priority populations.
- Increase community awareness and service integration.

Homelessness  
increased by  
**42%**  
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## Pandemic Pivot

### CK Emergency and Rapid Re-Housing Program (CKERRP)

Prior to the pandemic, local scattered-site motel rooms provided emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. With the advent of Covid-19, the need for emergency shelter motel rooms outpaced the supply available in our community.

Like many other communities, Chatham-Kent established an emergency isolation shelter for people displaced by COVID-19, and/or needing a safe space to isolate or recover from COVID. As the pandemic continued and homelessness increased by 42%, Chatham-Kent quickly adapted and shifted from an emergency shelter model to a housing-focused model called the Chatham-Kent Emergency and Rapid Re-Housing Program (CKERRP). This new model is evidence-informed and still adheres to the Housing First philosophy, but the complex needs of the people required a fixed site location to:



Increase the  
Emergency Shelter  
Supply



Provide 24-hour Support  
Staff to Ensure Health  
and Safety



Focus on Helping  
People Find a Safe  
Place to Call Home

## Emergency Housing

Emergency  
housing is  
**short-term  
housing** for  
people who are  
homeless or  
in crisis



**114**

people were homeless  
on average every  
month in 2020



**373**

unique individuals  
accessed emergency  
housing in 2020

## Reason for Accessing Emergency Housing



**39** released from incarcerations



**21** released from the hospital



**15** domestic violence



**131** family breakdown

\*May include multiple admissions



**23 families, including 43 children, were provided emergency housing**  
(64% male 34% female 2% transgender)



**63%** high

**33%** mid

**4%** low

Acuity = Level of Need

People with moderate to high acuity typically need supportive housing to become and remain successfully housed.

**14** nights  average length of stay in emergency housing

**15,922** total emergency shelter nights provided  
**89** people housed (average age 41 years)

**CKERRP** is a housing-focused emergency housing option available to Chatham-Kent residents that are facing homelessness. This program is focused on contributing to the Municipality's goal of ending chronic homelessness and making the experience of homelessness as brief as possible. At the center of this is the dedication to maintain a focus on proven methods like Housing First and Coordinated Access.



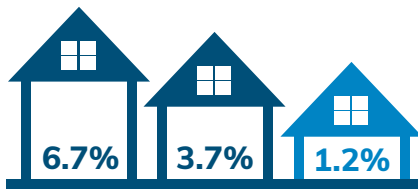
## Factors that Impact Housing & Homelessness in CK



rental rates have increased

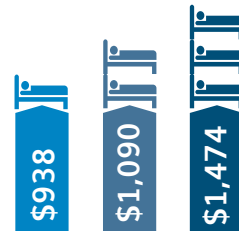
**48%**

2015 - 2020



2011 2015 2020

vacancy rates have decreased



2020 market rent and increases



**3.1%**

new builds are designed for rental

28% of residents in CK spent more than 30% of their income on housing in 2020. 17% of CK households were considered low income.



A household is considered **low income** if it's income is **below 50%** of median household income



33% single person



22% families w/ children



40% single parent



14% seniors 60+

\* Statistics based on Statistics Canada data and definitions



## Rent-Geared to Income (RGI) Housing

719 households currently waitlisted

24% seniors (65+)

31% families

45% single (18-64)

## Public Housing in Chatham-Kent

694 total units

379 RGI high-need households

167 RGI additional households

127 households paying market-rent

21 vacant (in-transition units)



## New Additions to Affordable Housing

32 new affordable rental housing units

20 new units from 3 new landlords that registered for the Rent Supplement Program

13 new supportive, transitional or modified/accessible units

\$177,190 was invested in repairs and renovations to municipally owned social housing (\$37,716 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative and \$139,474 of municipal funding)

## Built for Zero

As a committed Built for Zero Canada community, Chatham-Kent uses a structured and supportive data-driven approach that focuses on system improvements and proven best-practices to end homelessness and improve housing stability. Chatham-Kent continues to make reductions in homelessness through appropriate diversion, rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services.



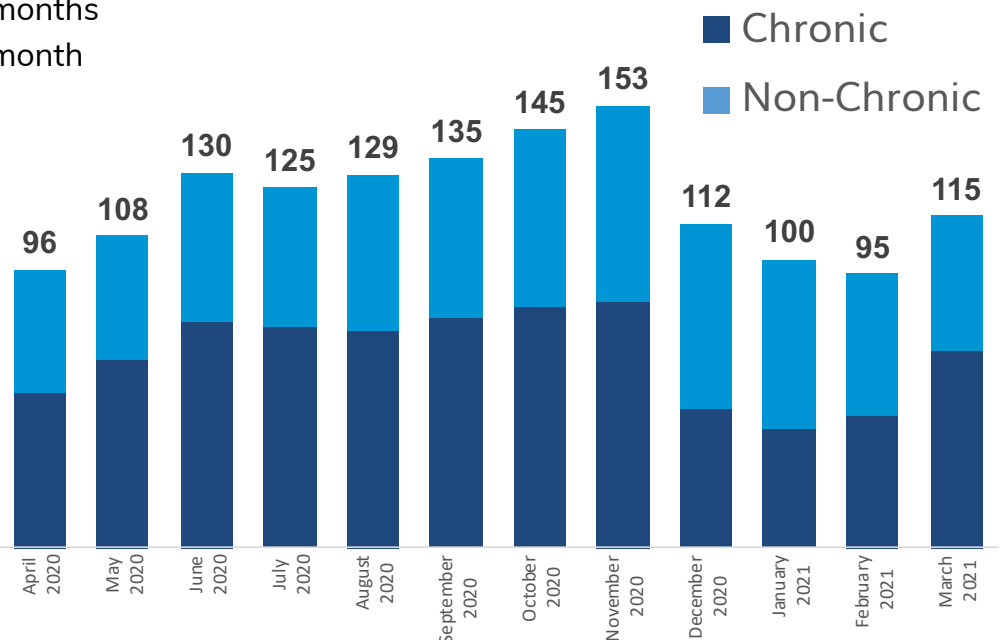
**ByName List (BNL)** is a comprehensive list of every person in a community experiencing homelessness for more than 14 days, updated in real time that includes name, homeless history and housing needs.

## Individuals on the ByName List in 2020

56% were housed within 3 months

26% were housed within 1 month

**Chronic homelessness** occurs when people, often with disabling mental or physical conditions, have been **homeless for six months or more (180 cumulative nights) within the past year.**





## Homeless Prevention in 2020

**\$286,800** was provided for rent and utility arrears to prevent **487 households** from becoming homeless

**\$131,956** was provided, in rental deposits to help **188 unique households** secure new long-term housing

**\$63,691** was provided in short-term housing allowances to **174 households** making housing costs more affordable and preventing homelessness

On average **21 homeless individuals** were housed each month in 2020.

**89 households** moved from emergency housing directly into long-term housing.

## Making Housing More Affordable for More People Increased Municipally-funded Portable Housing Benefits (PHB)

**85**

households received a  
Portable Housing Benefit  
(22 in 2019)



**57**  
singles



**17**  
families



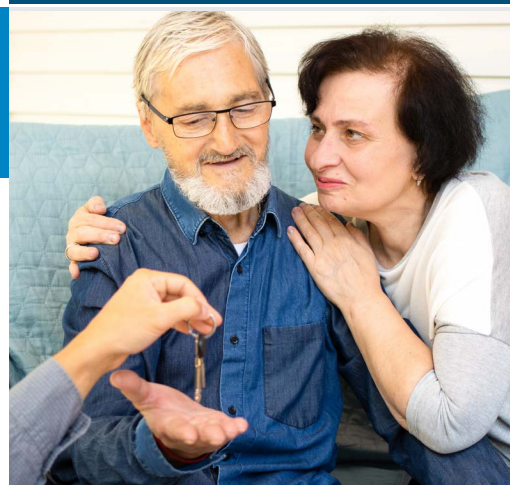
**6**  
seniors 65+

## The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

COHB is a new provincial Portable Housing Benefit program available to eligible priority groups who are on the Rent-Geared to Income Centralized Waiting List. The COHB pays the difference between 30% of the household's income and the average market rent in the area.



households received an  
average Canada-Ontario  
Housing Benefit of  
**\$303 / month**



“ I am happy where I am living, and the PHB means I don't have to choose between food or rent - I am so grateful! ”

Portable Housing  
Benefit Recipient

## Chatham-Kent Community Assessment, Referral and Evaluation Services (CK CARES)

CK CARES represents six community organizations that operate supportive housing programs in Chatham-Kent. These organizations include Canadian Mental Health Association Lambton-Kent (CMHA), The Salvation Army, Chatham-Kent Women's Center, House of Sophrosyne and Employment & Social Services. Recognizing that there is not currently enough supportive housing spaces to meet the need, these organizations work together through "coordinated access" to match individuals most in need with available supportive housing program spaces, and are committed to the belief that Housing is the only solution to end homelessness.

**CK CARES = 2492 housing placement appointments in 2020**

### Supportive Housing Programs in 2020

The **Homes 4 Youth** program has supported **70 youth in 2020**. **12 new youth** were housed in 2020, and **45 youth** are currently receiving supportive housing services.

**5** previously homeless youth entered into Chatham-Kent's first **Bridge Supportive Housing** program focusing on life skills development while providing safe and secure affordable housing.

**12 previously homeless adults** were housed through the CMHA **Intensive Case Management Program**. **16 previously homeless adults** continue to receive supportive housing services through this program.



**tenants were supported during the COVID-19 pandemic**

### COVID-19 Pandemic Support to Tenants

The pandemic has impacted all residents of Chatham-Kent, including those living in social housing. Throughout the pandemic, Housing Services has been providing case-management and ongoing pandemic support to 790 tenants, including:

- Isolation requirements and daily living supports
- Social distance and safe handwashing, sanitization and mask instruction
- Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Legislative change information related to lock-down and stay at home orders
- Isolation related gift cards for food and PPE supplies
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## Community Navigators

Helping people get the service they need,  
when they need it.

Helped 640 individuals with:

- ⦿ Referrals to community services and information
- ⦿ Identification clinics
- ⦿ Assistance with completing forms
- ⦿ Support with digital technology
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- ⦿ Employment support

Assisted 181 households with income tax filing:

- \$32,592.92 in total tax returns
- + \$70,608.07 in GST rebates
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= **\$444,076** into the pockets of vulnerable  
Chatham-Kent residents!



**For more information contact:**

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435 Grand Avenue West  
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toll-free **1-800-382-4940**  
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**Twitter:** @CKEandSS

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The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative  
has received funding support from the Ministry of  
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**May 2021**



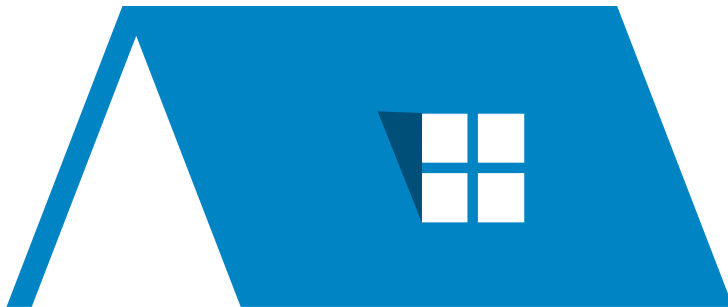
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# 2020 Update



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**114**

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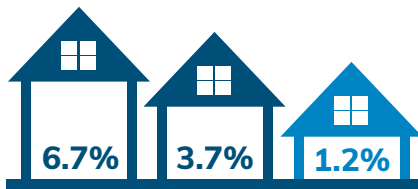
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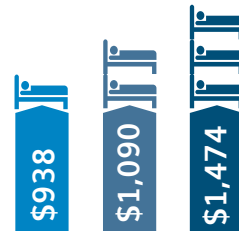
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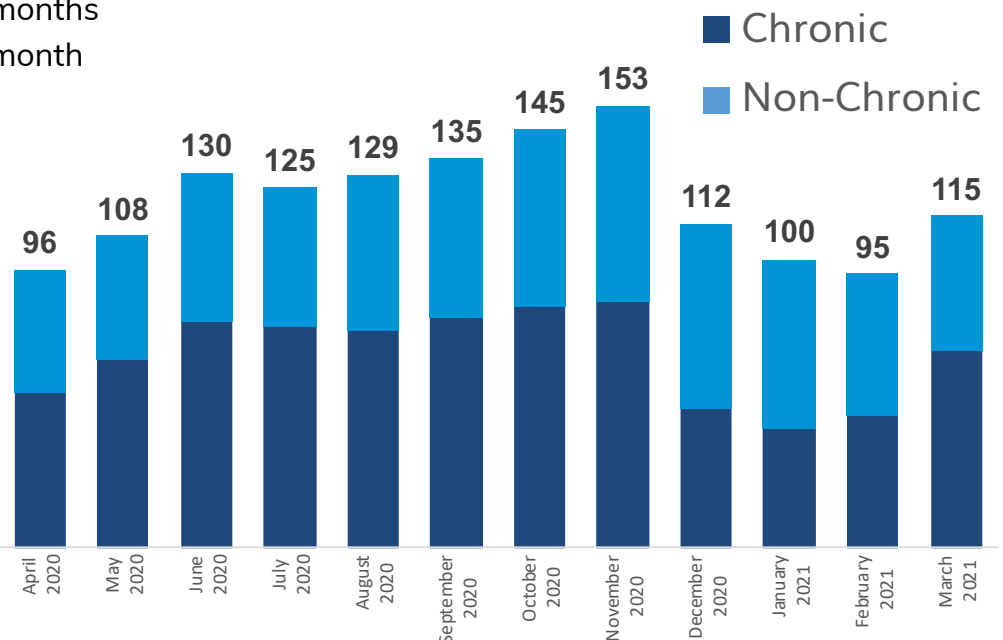
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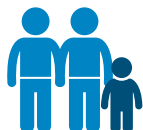
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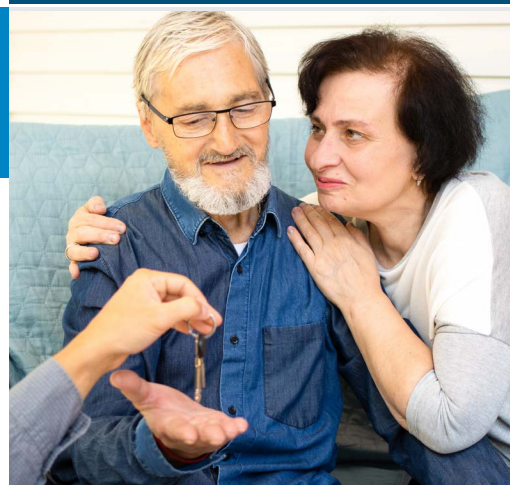
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 **Chatham-Kent**  
Cultivating Growth, Shore to Shore

**May 2021**



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