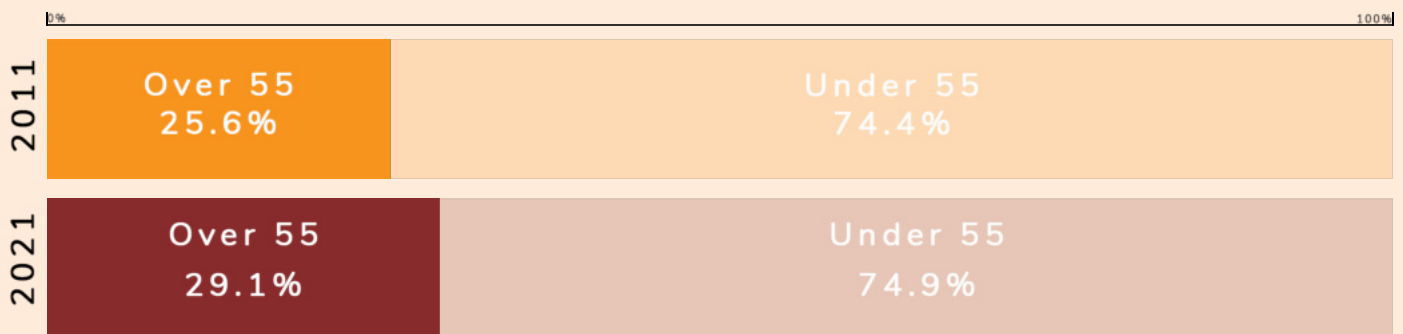


Ageing in a Housing Crisis

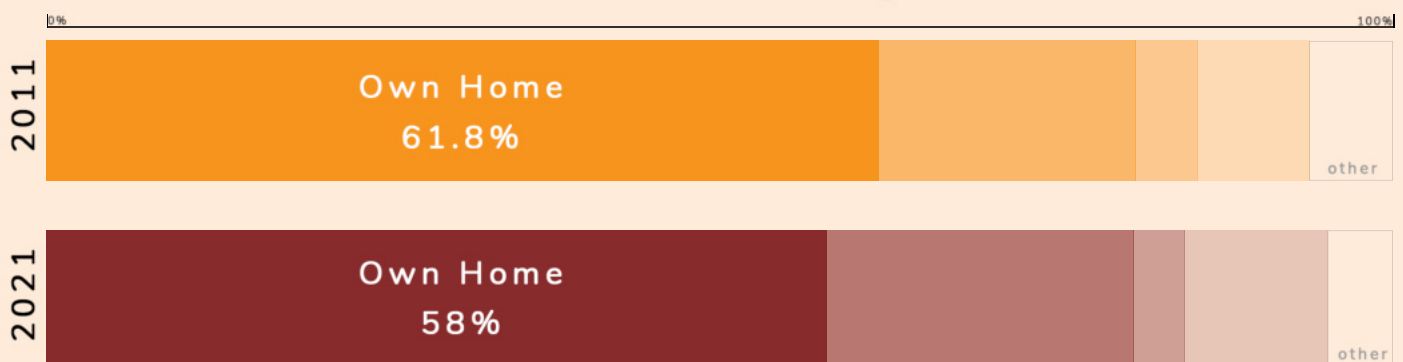
New research conducted for Housing for the Aged Action Group by researchers at Swinburne University of Technology, Western Sydney University and Curtin University examines the housing circumstances of people aged 55 years and older, based on Census analysis and Homelessness Estimates. The full report is available online at oldertenants.org.au/ahc-housing-report



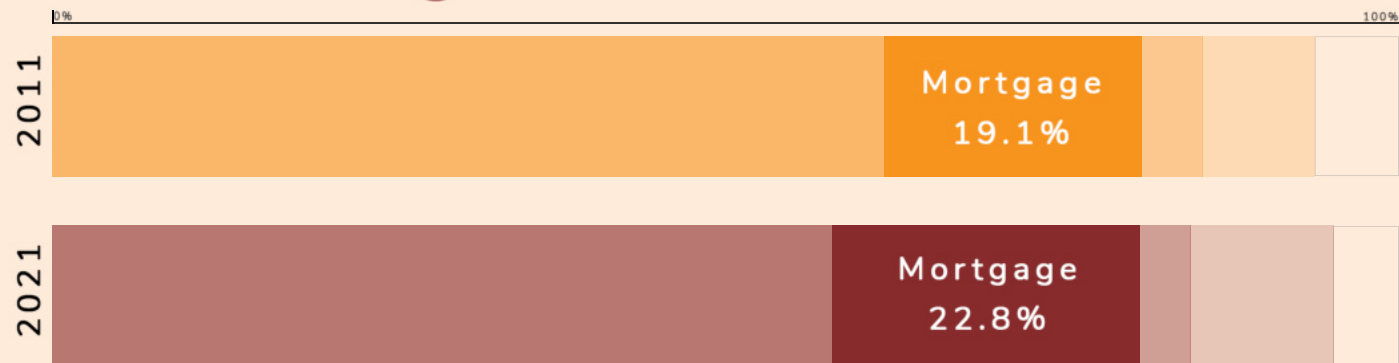
Australia's population is ageing



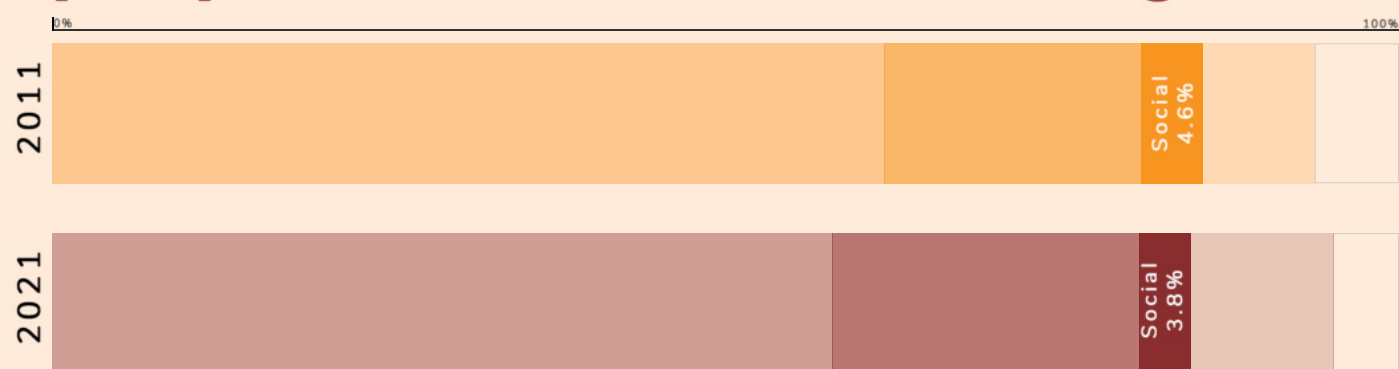
Less older people live in homes that are owned outright



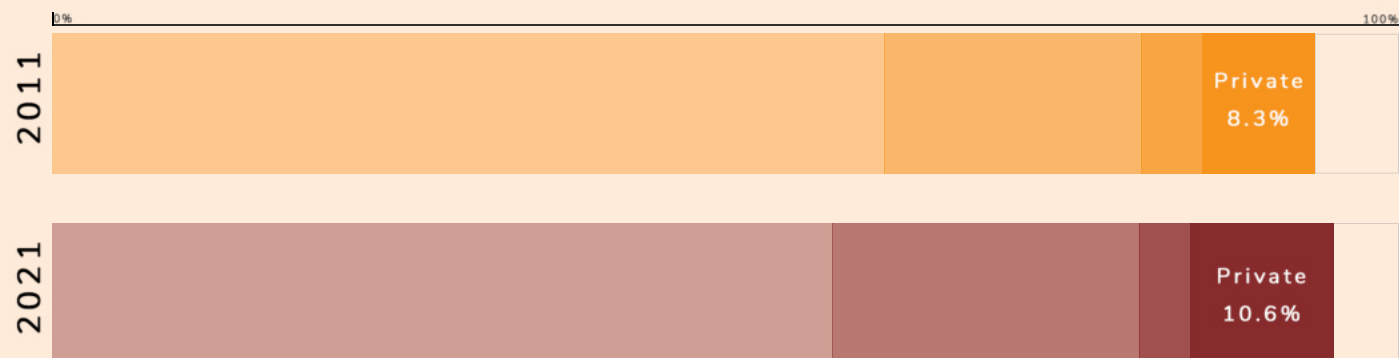
The proportion of older people living with a mortgage is increasing.



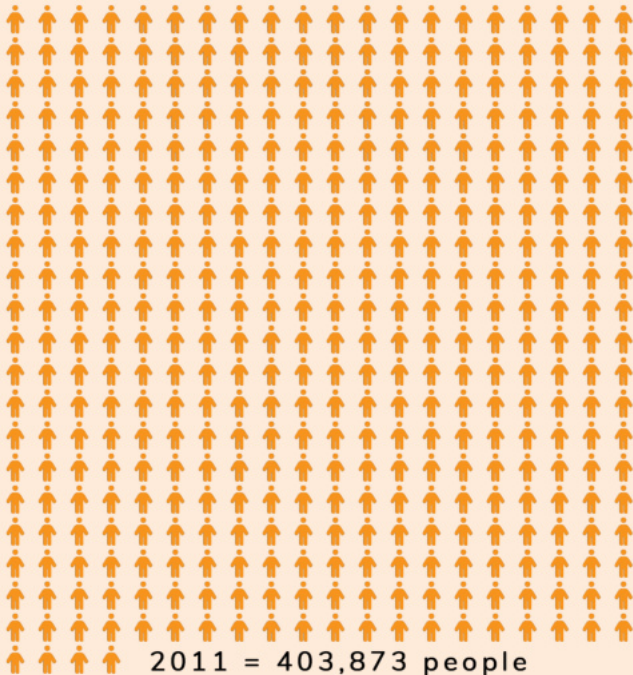
Decreasing proportions of older people live in social housing.



Leaving more older people to live in private rental, Australia's least secure housing tenure.

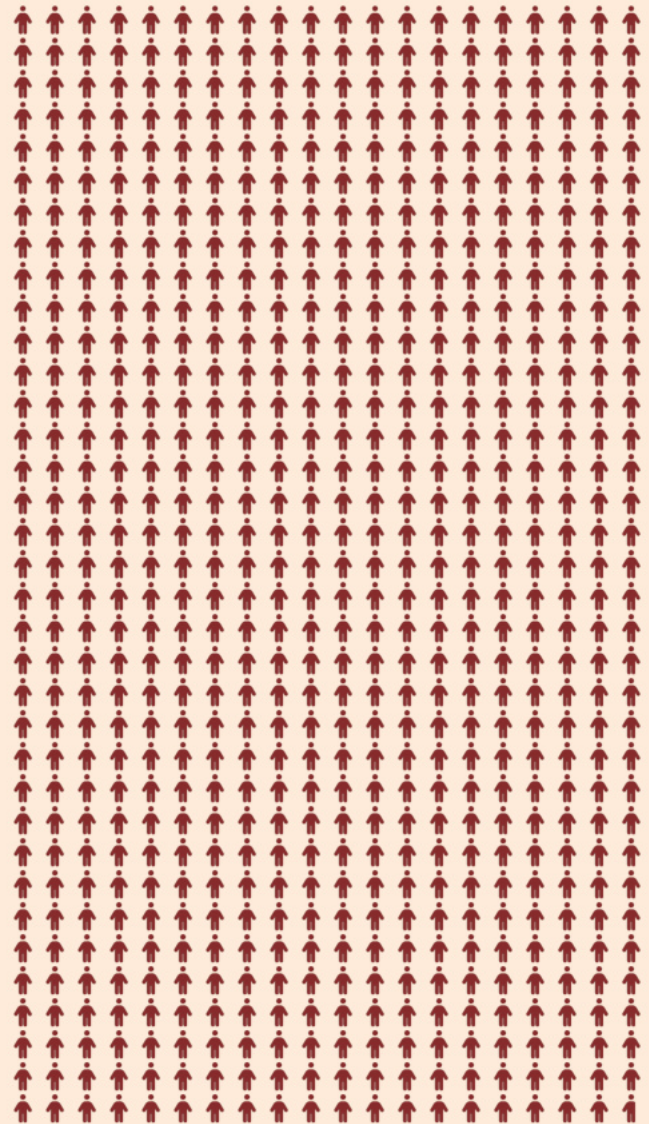


The total number of older private renters increased by 73%



👤 = 1000 private renters over 55

295,688 more people rented privately in 2021 than in 2011, making a 73% increase. This is more than double the rate of increase in the number of people in this age group in the population (34%) in the same period.



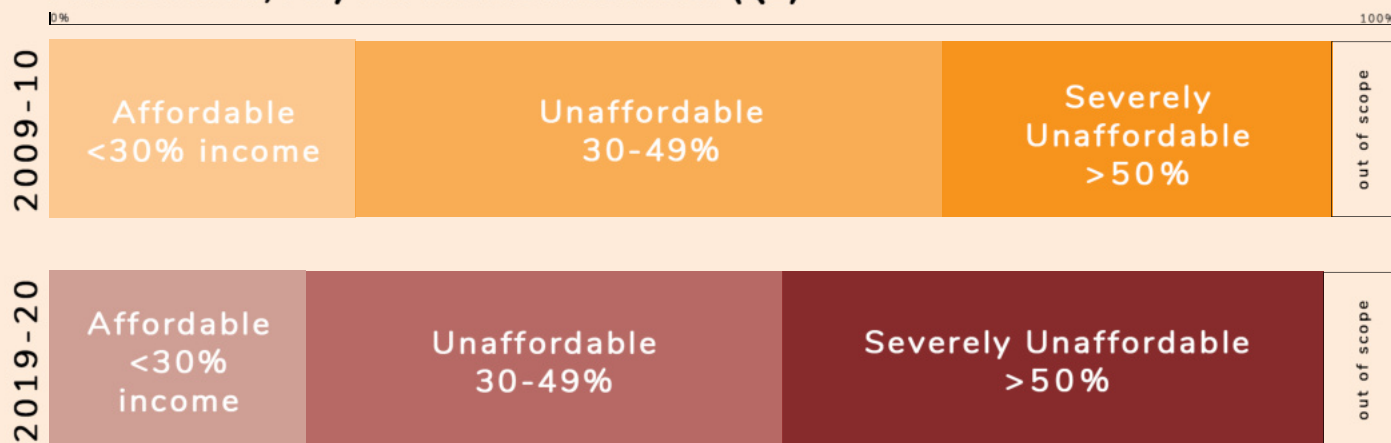
2021 = 699,561 people

The Australian retirement system is built on the expectation that older people will own a home at the time of retirement. Yet the proportion of older people who live in homes that are owned outright is declining.

Australia's private rental sector does not provide security of tenure, affordability or accessibility for older low-income households. For renting in retirement to be as secure as home ownership, it requires proper regulation and legislative reform.

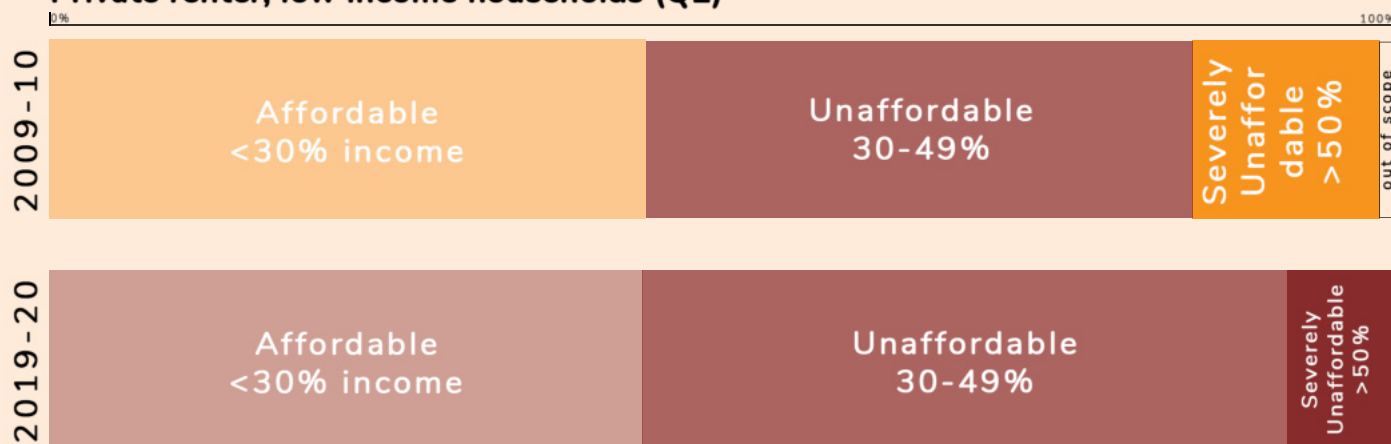
Private rent is increasingly unaffordable, especially for the lowest income households .

Private renter, very low income households (Q1)



This is based on 2019-20 ABS data. Considering the current rental crisis and the impact of pandemic on housing market, it is likely that this number is a considerable underestimate.

Private renter, low income households (Q2)

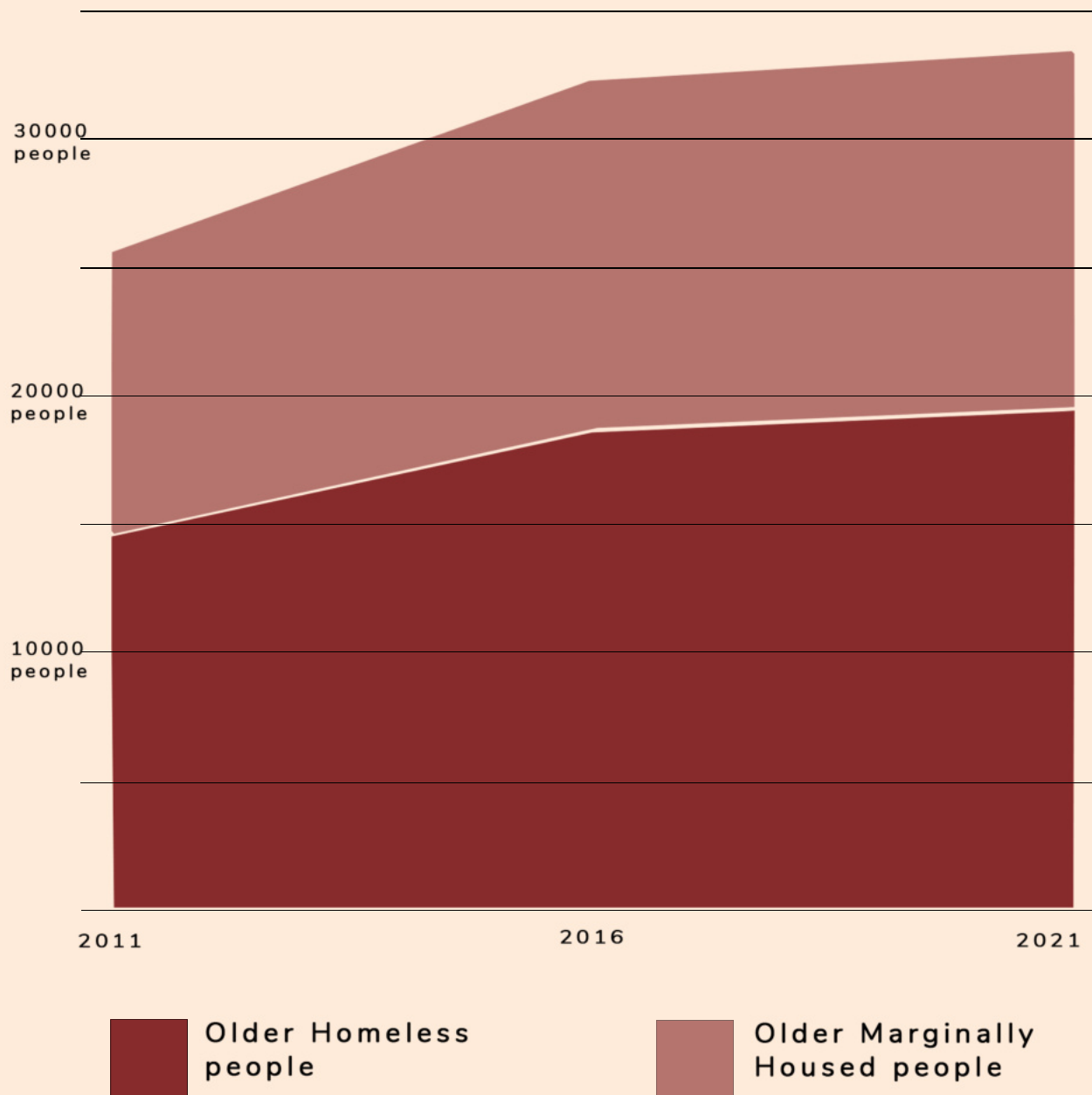


While older people living in low income households (Q2) were better off than those living in very-low income households (Q1), most were struggling financially.

Only 44% of Q2 private renter households were paying affordable levels of rent.

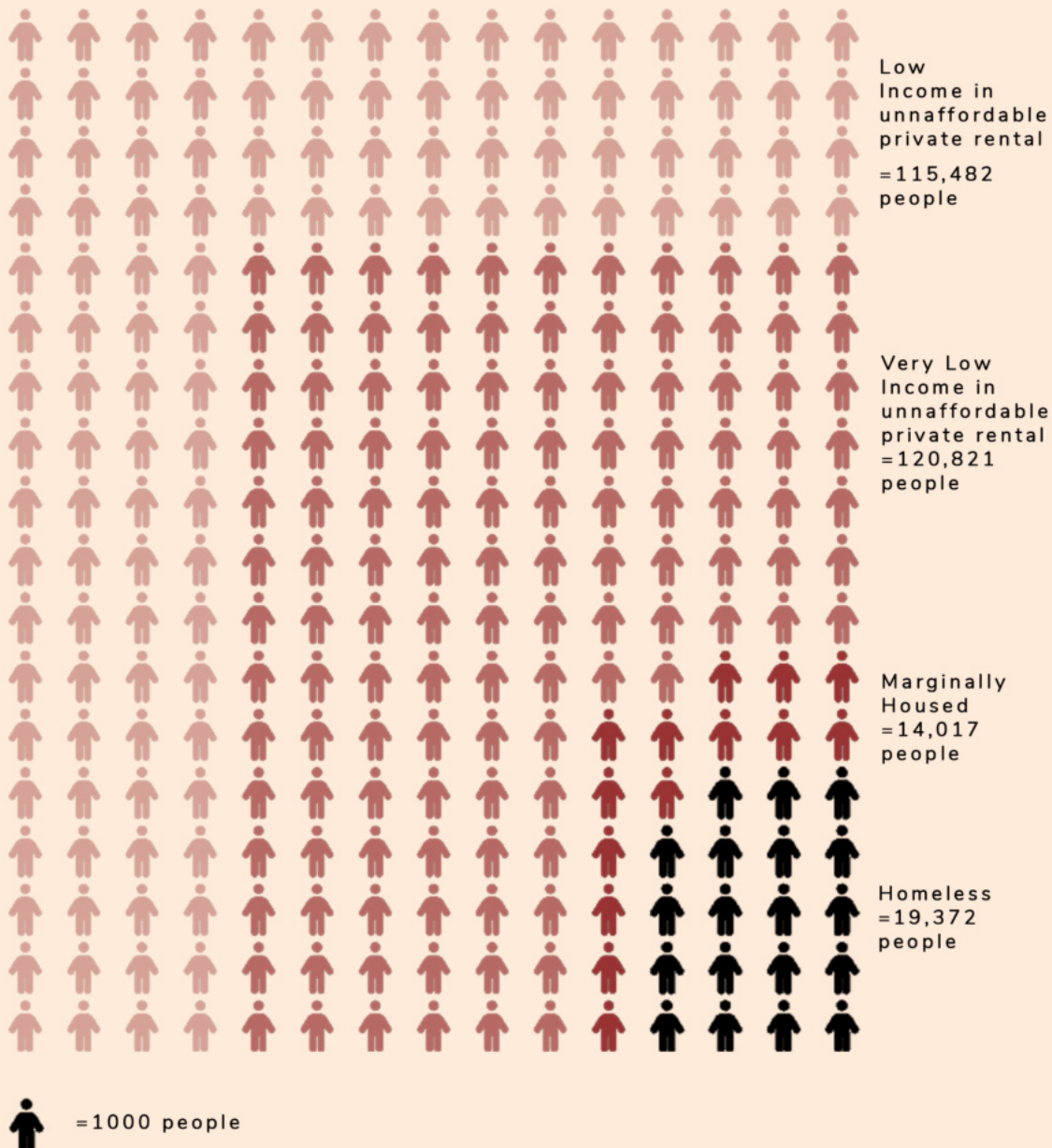
The proportion Q2 of households paying between 30 and 49% of gross household income on rent increased from 41% in 2009-10 to 48% in 2019-20.

More older people are experiencing homelessness or are marginally housed



In 2021 nearly 20,000 older people in Australia were estimated to be experiencing homelessness, which was an increase of nearly 5000 people since 2011. There are some positive signs – the rate of homelessness amongst older people decreased slightly since the 2016 census, however, it is likely that this is a short-term decrease because of efforts that were made to temporarily house people via COVID-19 homelessness interventions.

This leaves 270,000 older people homeless, marginally housed or renting a home they can't afford



Growing numbers of older people in Australia live in private rental and in marginal housing, and more older people are experiencing homelessness. Housing insecurity is increasing and affects older people across the housing system.

Recommendations

The **Ageing in a Housing Crisis report** highlights the extreme magnitude of the housing crisis facing older people in Australia. Considering the urgency and the gravity of the housing issues, Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) is recommending a suite of solutions that require coordinated action from Federal, State and Territory Governments

Building public and community housing for people 55 years and over who are not able to afford rent in the private rental market. This must include, at minimum, housing for nearly 260,000 older people who are renting in the lowest income households, living in marginal housing and experiencing homelessness.



Fund a range of housing options including affordable housing (capped at 30% of household income) and other below market rate options such as co-operative housing, low-cost retirement housing or other co-housing models appropriate for people 55 years and over.



Strengthen rental laws, such as providing for longer leases, minimum accessibility standards and energy efficiency, removing no-reason or no-fault evictions, and better regulation of short-term holiday rentals to increase the stock available for long-term rentals.



Fund specialist housing support services for older people to expand and complement existing services such as Care finder and state-based specialist homelessness services



Financial institutions should **work with older mortgage holders** to identify and intervene early to support those who are likely to default on their mortgages due to financial stress and better tailor their financial hardship measures. Governments should further examine the extent of this issue and the impact on older mortgage holders to support them to age in place.

