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24/03/2023

Community First

Hornby Island Housing Report

Tara Channell and April Lewis
HORNBY ISLAND HOUSING SOCIETY

Hornby Island Housing Report

Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the unceded territory of the K'ómoks Nation and Pentlatch peoples. We also want to recognize that we are painfully aware that we benefit from their forced removal from this land and offer our gratitude and heartfelt respect for the willingness of all First Nations to enter into reconciliation processes with those who benefit from their loss.

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BACKGROUND

Hornby Island Housing Society

The Hornby Island Housing Society is a non-profit organization that has been in operation since 1992. During the past 30 years, the Society has built and operated the eleven-unit Elder Village, an affordable housing project for seniors who are able to live independently. There are currently 11 residents at The Village, with no vacancies and 32 community members who have applied to live there.

The Society has been working towards a 26-unit housing project with BC Housing and M'akola Housing Society since 2018. The project has been submitted to Islands Trust for approval of development permits.

Hornby Island Housing Network

The Hornby Island Housing Society became a member of the newly formed Hornby Island Housing Network in the fall of 2021. Once the member organizations began discussing the need for a co-created housing strategy for Hornby Island, it became apparent that although each organization had some data regarding the housing situation on Hornby Island, the data was agency specific, incomplete and dated. In order to create a housing plan for the island, with realistic goals and effective strategies, it was agreed that current and comprehensive data was needed.

Many categories of housing needs were identified by the Housing Network members including seniors who are living alone in their owned homes, but no longer able to manage independently, seasonal and year-round workforce housing, and supportive housing for those community members living with physical and/or mental well being challenges. However, because of the urgency involved and the depth of both the personal and community wide impact due to friends, neighbors and family members being either homeless or living in sub-standard housing, it was decided to first gather statistics regarding that population. The Hornby Island Housing Society agreed to be the lead organization applying for funding for that purpose.

Comox Valley Community Foundation and the Comox Valley Ending Homelessness Coalition

The Comox Valley Community Foundation (CVCF) has been a supporter of the Hornby Island Housing Society (HIHS) since 2011 and has granted over \$15,000 to the Housing Society over the past 10 years. In 2019, the CVCF revised its granting process to include a significant portion of the available funds to be dispersed to qualified donees, to be granted to organizations who are focussed on the provision of affordable housing in the Comox Valley. Being familiar with the work being done by the Hornby Island Housing Society, the Comox Valley Community Foundation recommended that the Hornby Island Housing Society join the Comox Valley Coalition for Ending Homelessness. The Hornby Island Housing Society followed up on that suggestion and joined the Coalition in July 2021. In October, HIHS applied for a grant to the CVCF under the housing stream of funding that is administered by the CV Ending Homeless Coalition. The purpose of the grant was to gather current data about the numbers of people on Hornby Island who are homeless and/or precariously housed. This data, once collated, would be analyzed by the Hornby Island Housing Society and the Hornby Island Housing Network members and used to help inform a co-created housing strategy for Hornby Island.

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Grant

The grant application was successful and HIHS was awarded \$2500 to carry out the research and collation of the data. April Lewis, the Administrator for HIHS acted as the Project Coordinator. Tara Channell, a long-time community resident with extensive personal and professional networks on the island was hired. Tara brings with her almost 40 years of lived experience as a renter on Hornby Island who has been displaced countless times for different reasons, including the landlord's use of the residence as a short-term rental. Tara also brings her skills and years as an outreach worker in Victoria, who created and sustained relationships with youth living on the street in order to connect them with services and to assist them in finding a home.

Our goal was to interview 50 community members who would fit the definitions of homeless or precariously housed. The goal was surpassed: data was collected from 55 individuals.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was developed utilizing the input from community members with lived experience along with that of the Project Coordinator. See Appendix A.

Fifty-five interviews were conducted, using the questionnaire as a guideline, with the interviewer reaching out at the following gathering spots:

- Hornby Island Co-op porch
- Ringside Market
- Little Tribune Beach
- The Kitchen
- The Ballpark
- Individual homes

In the sections that follow, the information gathered through the interviews is summarized by Demographics, Income and expenses, Owner/Renter, Accommodation type, Current living conditions, Times moved, Desired improvements and Ideal situation.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Self-identified gender and household composition.

Age	Demographic			
	M	F	Other	Couples
19 to 25	1	1	0	0
25 to 35	4	7	1	2
35 to 45	5	3	0	1
45 to 55	5	2	0	1
55 to 65	6	6	0	0
65 to 75	0	6	0	0
75 to 85	1	2	0	0
85+	0	1	0	0
Total	22	28	1	4

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There are 12 children whose parents (all renters) were interviewed: 1 teen, 3 children 7yr to 12 yrs and 8 children under 6yrs of age.

INCOME AND EXPENSES

Average monthly income, rent/expenses and mortgage/expenses costs

Age	Income					Rent/Utilities				Mortgage/Expenses				
	500 to 1000	1100 to 2000	2100 to 3500	3600 to 5000	5100 Plus	300 to 500	600 to 1000	1100 to 1500	1600 Plus	Mortgage and/or Expenses				No Mort
	< 500	< 1000	< 2000	< 3000	No Exp									
19 to 25	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0					
26 to 35	0	9	3	1	1	8	3	1	1			1		
36 to 45	0	7	2	0	0	3	3	0	1		1			
46 to 55	1	3	3	0	0	5	1	1	0	1				
56 to 65	1	7	2	2	0	5	2	1	0	2		1	1	
66 to 75	0	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1		1	1	2
76 to 85	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		1			2
85+	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0			1		
Total	2	34	13	5	1	24	10	3	2	4	2	4	2	4

Note:

- 27 of 39 renters earn between \$1000 and \$2000 per month
- 24 of 39 renters pay rent of less than \$500 per month
- 10 of 39 renters pay rent between \$600 and \$1000

OWNERSHIP, RENTAL, TYPES OF RENTALS

Number of interviewees who own their own home, numbers who are renters and types of rentals.

Age	Home		Vehicle/Boat/Tent/Chicken Coop	RV/Caravan	Cabin	Shared	Private House
19 to 25	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
26 to 35	13	1	3	2	3	2	3
36 to 45	8	1	2	2	2	0	2
46 to 55	7	1	2	3	1	0	1
56 to 65	8	4	0	2	4	1	1
66 to 75	1	5	0	0	1	0	0
76 to 85	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
85+	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	39	16	8	10	11	3	7

Note:

- 7 of 39 renters live in a private house
- 8 of 39 renters live in a boat, tent, their vehicle or unused chicken coop
- 10 of 39 renters live in movable homes
- The remaining 14 renters live in cabins or in a shared house

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CURRENT LIVING CONDITIONS

Dwelling Has:	Renter Yes	Renter No	Owner Yes	Owner No
Inside Running Water	26	13	16	0
Inside Toilet	17	22	12	4
Electricity	28	11	16	0
Insulation	25	14	14	2
Shower/Bathtub inside	21	18	14	2
Laundry facilities	14	25	14	2
Workshop	10	29	6	10
Storage Space	18	21	7	9
Mould	11	28	5	11
Rodents	20	19	7	9
Muddy Site	19	20	6	10
Accessibility Issues	23	16	12	4
Water Damage	16	23	8	8

Note:

- Accessibility refers both to having a driveway and to having a short distance from the driveway to the house, a challenge for aging owners.
- Rodents, mould, water damage and muddy lots are issues for both renters and owners with aging homeowners being especially challenged to address these issues, not only due to cost, but also due to the lack of available workers.
- All owners have inside running water and electricity, most have indoor toilets, indoor bathing and most have insulation and laundry facilities.
- Only half to two-thirds of all renters have running water inside, electricity, indoor toilets, indoor bathing, insulation and/or laundry facilities.

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TIMES MOVED

Please note only 31 of 39 renters are included in Stability section as 8 of 39 renters live in boats, tents or vehicles.

Age	Times Moved – Owners and Renters									Stability of Current Rental				
	0x 0x	1x to 5x	6x to 10x	11x to 15x	16x to 20x	21x to 25x	26x to 30x	31x to 35x	35 x plus	< 6 months	1 year	2 to 5 years	5+ years	Yr round Duration Unknown
19 to 25	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
26 to 35	1	8	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	6
36 to 45	2	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
46 to 55	0	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	3
56 to 65	1	3	2	2	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	4
66 to 75	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 STVR* own	0	0	0	0	1
76 to 85	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
86+	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	21	10	8	2	1	0	2	1	17	1	2	1	18

** This person owns their own home and moves out during the summer in order to operate a Short Term Rental for the summer months.*

Note:

- 17 of 39 renters have less than 6 months stable housing (15 due to short term rentals and 2 due to owner use)
- 4 of 39 renters have less than 5 years stable housing
- 18 of 39 renters have unknown stability – no signed agreements, no guarantees and dependent on the decisions of the landlord and/or aging landlords

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DESIRED OPTIONS

Desired practical Improvements to current situation - Owners

1. Proper foundation, septic system
2. Gravel for driveway, finishing work inside, renovate bathrooms
3. Rodent proofing, load of gravel, better insulation, workers to help with maintenance
4. Finding workers
5. Changing bylaws so renting of outbuilding is permitted
6. Better water supply, easier access
7. Ramp, help sorting
8. Upgrade studio to rent it out
9. Bylaw changes, 2nd home on half acre
10. Siding, finish insulation, heat pump, cistern, get rid of rot
11. Redo bathroom, finish basement, age at home with daughter
12. Helpful young person
13. Heat pump
14. Laundry room, boot room, draining standing water
15. Change bylaws, have a studio that could be a dwelling, senior proof the house
16. Yard work help, would consider a tenant, has in-law suite

Desired practical Improvements to current situation – Renters

1. Year-round house
2. Buy a mobile home to move around for privacy
3. Bylaw changes, buy a house
4. Addition with more laundry space, workshop
5. Driveway redone, electrical overhaul, year round
6. Running water inside
7. Bigger space, bylaw change
8. Security year round
9. Water for garden, rodent proofing, get rid of mould
10. Load of gravel, indoor toilet, cistern
11. Workers to help build outdoor shower, hot running water, rodent proof
12. Year round house
13. Bedroom, better insulation, better plumbing, get rid of mould
14. 2 bedrooms, heated storage space
15. Own home, year-round, garden, chickens
16. Moor boat at Ford Cove
17. Siding, toilet
18. Cistern, outdoor shower, fully insulated
19. New foundation

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Desired practical Improvements to current situation – Renters, cont'd

20. Year-round rental
21. Year-round rental
22. Year-round rental
23. Woofer
24. Parking, campsite
25. Long-term, year-round rental
26. Used to being in this situation
27. Change bylaws to build a shop on 10 acres where trailer is parked
28. Bed, desk (lives in van, chicken coop)
29. Live at dock, access to boat
30. Even heat distribution, fencing, clearing clutter
31. Stability, landlord threatening to sell, evict
32. Year round, affordable, adequate housing
33. Stability
34. Stability, load of gravel
35. Better electric, only has an extension cord
36. Lower rent, currently paying \$1000, could afford \$600
37. More storage, workspace

Note: 2 renters are happy with their current living situation

DESIRED OPTIONS

Type of Dwelling Preferred by Renter

Age	Happy as is	Renter wanting to purchase home	Renter willing to Share	Renter wanting Private Dwelling	Owner willing to Share
19 to 25	0	0	1	1	0
26 to 35	0	0	9	4	0
36 to 45	Happy as is	1	3	3	0
46 to 55	Very happy	0	2	4	0
56 to 65	0	1	2	5	1
66 to 75	0	0	1	0	4
76 to 85					1
85+					1
Totals	2	2	18	17	6/16

Note:

- No renters in the age groups of 76 to 85 and 85+ were interviewed.
- 18 of 39 renters willing to share, live in group or cluster housing
- 17 of 39 renters prefer own living space
- 6 of 16 owners willing to make space for a tenant either in their house or on their property

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DESIRED OPTIONS

Private Dwelling -Size, Type and Affordable Rent

Age	Storage	Wkshop	Laundry	Bach/Cabin	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	Pets	Rent	Other *
19 to 25	1	1	1	0	1 share 1 private	0	0	1	400 500	
26 to 35	3	5	5	1 private	9 share 1 private	0	0	6	750 -2 500 -2 1300 700- 900 400 800 1100 300	2 NI
36 to 45	2	2	2	0	3 share 1 private	0	1	2	600 -2 500 -2 800	1 B 1 H 1 NI
46 to 55	3	4	5	1 private	2 share 3 private	0	0	3	500 -4 900 400	1 H
56 to 65	3	2	3	1 private	2 share	3 priv	0	5	700 600 500 -3 900	1 B 1 U
66 to 75	0	0	0	0	1 share	0	0	0	700	
76 to 85										
85+										
Totals	12	14	16	3	18 share 6 private	3	1	16		8

*** Other**

Renters who are happy as is – H

Renters who wish to buy – B

Renters who did not specify number of bedrooms or preference for laundry, storage, workshop, pets – NI

Renter used to current situation - U

Note:

- 2 renters wish to buy their own homes
- 2 renters are content to remain in current living situation
- 1 renter used to conditions
- 3 renters did not specify number of bedrooms, or preference for laundry, storage, workshop space.
- 24 renters preferred 1 bedroom, 18 of them willing to share kitchen and living room
- 16 renters want pets

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DESIRED OPTIONS

Interest in moving to Beulah Creek

	Beulah Creek							
Age	Yes	No	Maybe	Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	Unspecified
19 to 25	2	0	0	1	1			
26 to 35	9	3	2	3	3			3 Unspecified
36 to 45	4	4	1	1	1		1	1 Unspecified
46 to 55	6	2	0	3	2			1 Unspecified
56 to 65	5	6	1		3	1		1 Unspecified
66 to 75	1	2	3		1			
76 to 85	0	2	1		0			
85+	0	1	0		0			
Totals	27	20	8	8	11	1	1	6

Note:

- 16 owners and 4/39 renters uninterested in moving to Beulah Creek
- 27 renters interested in moving to Beulah Creek
- 8 renters might be interested depending on design, having a second story unit, garden space pets
- Most interest in the studio and 1-bedroom units, coinciding with the interest in sharing a living room and kitchen.
- 6 interviewees did not specify size of unit

DATA ADDITIONAL to the INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGH INTERVIEWS

Adult Mental Health

The following data has been shared by the Mental Health Outreach Counsellor for the Hornby Denman Community Health Care Society.

There are 23 of the current 66 clients (35%) who are insecurely or sub-standardly housed, negatively impacting their mental health and/or substance use for all 23 of those clients.

Families

The following data has been shared by the Family Counsellors for the Hornby Denman Community Health Care Society.

There are 6 of the current 7 client families (86%) who are housed in unsafe, unsuitable and/or precarious housing situations such as the following:

- There are families where parents have separated and they are forced to live on the same land (in different buildings) even though this is not ideal/preferred, due to lack of housing.
- Some parents are staying in negative or unsafe relationships because there is no housing to go to.

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DATA ADDITIONAL to the INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGH THE INTERVIEWS

Families

- Some families are in negative intergenerational situations, living on the same land as their parents/grandparents even though there is conflict due to lack of other options.
- Many families are living in homes that are too small so children are sharing rooms with one another or with parents even though this is not preferred.
- Some families are living in situations where they are fearful of their housing being reported to Islands Trust as non-compliant.
- Some families and older youth (age 18-24) are living in unsuitable housing, such as uninsulated trailers, boats, lack of plumbing, lack of good place to take care of animals, lack of electricity and this is intersecting with mental health challenges to create difficult situations.

Food Security

The relationship between housing and food security is undeniable, with the capacity to store food safely and the ability to prepare and cook meals, interwoven with adequate housing. The following report has been shared by the Coordinator of the Food Program provided by the Hornby Island Educational Society.

The current **The Kitchen Hot Meal Program** serves a total of 58 to 66 meals per day on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

The core group of diners include the following 5 groups:

1. Seniors:

- A proportion of this group do have reliable year round housing, often ownership, but not necessarily affordable, as many are on a fixed income which is not keeping pace with the costs of maintaining a home or affording the additional costs of upkeep; living; and eating.....
- A significant proportion are home bound and/or unable to cook nutritious meals for themselves. Many do not qualify for ongoing Home Support Services or the Better At-Home-Meals, or if they do, the service does not totally meet the need of the clients.
- Additionally, there are increasing numbers who are self sufficient until the last week of the month, when they have run out of money and cannot afford to buy groceries.
- There are a few seniors who have banded together for physical survival, combining their financial resources, in an attempt to live their remaining time in their community on Hornby Island.

2. Year-Round Workers

Two groups within this category are the most visible.

- 25-40; single, male. The female equivalents are present but seem to be more resourceful or in the least, less visible.
 - Feed back from this group suggests that they are able to stay year-round because they do have housing, but that it is substandard; coupled with “seasonal employment” highs and lows.

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DATA ADDITIONAL to the INFORMATION GATHERED BY THE INTERVIEWS

The Kitchen Hot Meal Program cont'd

2. Year-Round Workers

- The definition of sub-standard includes: lack of hydro, lack of running water, lack of plumbing, no kitchen facilities allowing for refrigeration, cooking, or adequate hygiene.
 - While these inadequacies would be impossible for many, there is an ethic on Hornby which takes pride in the ability to survive without “modern conveniences”. That said, most of the feedback we have received indicate those “renters” would prefer to have some access to those basics.
 - There are those of the same age group who lose their housing to the “summer visitor” syndrome....
-
- 50 yrs + long term residents who work intermittently/seasonally; some with home ownership/marginal amenities; some renters with a “Hornby history” and so, are able to maintain housing, but again leaving little for food by month end.

3. Older Women

There is an increasing representation of older women; single, and some in partnerships, who have a degree of safe housing but which again, are not financially stable to month end.

4. Young Transients

Seasonally, we are also feeding the young transient group who are looking to find community on which to build a life.

- For the most part, they are a summer group, but we always see several who stay and try to survive year round on Hornby.
- These new residents appear to camp out in the forested areas of the Island as there is no other resource available to them.
- They utilize the Joe King showers and laundry facilities as best they can afford, and eat as they need, at The Kitchen.

5. Mental Well Being Challenges

This is perhaps the group of the homeless most in need here on Hornby, that we feed at The Kitchen.

- This is a seriously difficult group to identify accurately as they are inconsistent in accessing meals; extremely paranoid about asking for help, and/or being identified and targeted as “mental cases” and so understandably, reluctant to share details of their living situation.
- We do know that many simply “live in the woods” with zero amenities or basic comforts; some manage to make some friends and “crash” temporarily in homes or sheds.
- The extent of the numbers is often seasonal and weather dependent.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Hornby Island Housing Society will use the information contained in this report to inform their long-term strategic planning.
- The Hornby Island Housing Network members will identify a lead organization(s) to host the following focus groups to brainstorm housing options, identify the level of interest and individual/organizational/community capacity to move forward:
 - Seniors who own their own homes who would consider adding a secondary suite/dwelling
 - Renters with financial assets to contribute who wish to share
 - Renters without financial assets to contribute who wish to share
- The Hornby Housing Network members will focus in the fall on the creation of a housing strategy plan for Hornby Island, using information gathered from the member organizations, the focus groups, this report and the following additional documents:
 - Stats Canada information
 - Trouble in Paradise – Sadie Chezenko
 - Nine Point Housing Plan – Tony Law
 - Comox Valley Regional District Housing Report
 - Comox Valley Coalition for Ending Homelessness Housing Strategy

CONCLUSION:

The intent of this grant was data collection only. There was an identified need to have current information about the state of affordable rental housing on the island and to determine the numbers of community residents living in housing that was sub-standard, unstable and/or not year round. It is our hope that the various agencies involved in addressing affordable housing on the island will meet in the fall to discuss the findings in this report as well as the other documents cited above, and will as a group, create a collaborative and comprehensive housing strategy that meets the needs of all members of the community.

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APPENDIX A QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Background

- a) Age: 20 to 30 30 to 40 40 to 50 50 to 60 60 to 70 70 to 80 80+
- b) Self identified gender:
- c) How long have you lived on Hornby Island?
- d) How many times have you moved during that time?
- e) Household monthly income: \$500-1000 \$1000-1500 \$1500-2500 \$2500-5000
- f) Monthly rent: Monthly utilities Other household expenses
- g) Stability of rental: 1 to 2yrs 2 to 3yrs 3 to 5yrs 5yrs+ unknown
- h) Hidden costs: Ex. Having to purchase water, time off work to collect beachwood for stove, cost of batteries if no electricity.....

2. Current Living Situation

- a) Tent/tarp Car Van RV Trailer Cabin Shared House Private House
- b) How old is your current dwelling?
- c) How many square feet is your current dwelling?
- d) How many rooms?
- e) How many people living there?
- f) Are pets allowed?
- g) Does it have any of the following:
Muddy location Mould Rodents Water Damage Accessibility issues Other
- h) Does your current dwelling have:
Insulation Electricity Generator Batteries Other
Electric cook stove Propane cook stove Wood cook stove
Electric heat Propane Heat Wood Heat (if so, where do you get your wood)?
Running water inside Running water outside
Potable water inside Potable water outside (if not, where do you get your drinking water)?
Private bathroom Shared bathroom Proper septic and greywater systems?
Toilet inside Toilet outside (if not, what facility do you use)?
Bathtub inside Bathtub outside
Shower inside Shower outside (if not, how do take care of personal hygiene)?
Washer Dryer (if not, how do take care of laundry)?
Storage Space (if not, where do you store extras)?
Workshop Space (if not, what space do you use)?

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3. What realistic/practical changes could improve your existing situation?

Ex. lower rent, lower utilities, composting toilet, cistern, load of gravel, pet, electricity.....

4. Ideal Situation

a) Type of Dwelling

RV Trailer Cabin

Shared Dwelling: Willing to share: kitchen bathroom living room

Private Dwelling: How many square feet? How many bedrooms? How many floors?

b) Pets: Type Size Number

c) Affordable rent:

d) Affordable utilities:

e) Type of power: electricity propane generator batteries other

f) Bathroom: toilet shower bathtub

g) Laundry: washer dryer

h) Storage Space

i) Workshop Space

j) Other:

5. Are you interested in moving into the Beulah Creek Housing Project should it get approved? If so, what size unit?