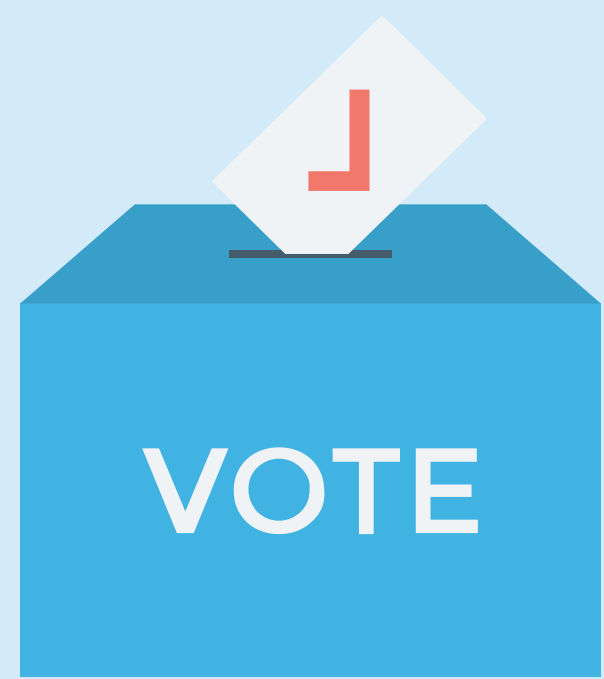




Municipal Election 2026 Fact Sheet

Homelessness

Guelph & Wellington Poverty Elimination Collaborative | August 2026

When everyone has a safe, stable home, our whole community benefits. Yet too many people in Guelph and Wellington County are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This election, vote for solutions.

Homelessness can happen when rising housing costs, a sudden loss of income, eviction, or gaps in supports leave someone without a stable home. Without the right supports, a temporary setback can become a housing crisis.

Emergency responses are essential, but we cannot end homelessness by managing the crisis alone. We need to prevent homelessness before it starts, help people stay housed, and create pathways to permanent housing and stability. This improves lives and makes better use of public resources.

Homelessness is not inevitable. By strengthening prevention, expanding deeply affordable and supportive housing, and connecting people to the supports they need, governments and communities can help more people stay housed and prevent homelessness before it happens.

Why This Matters

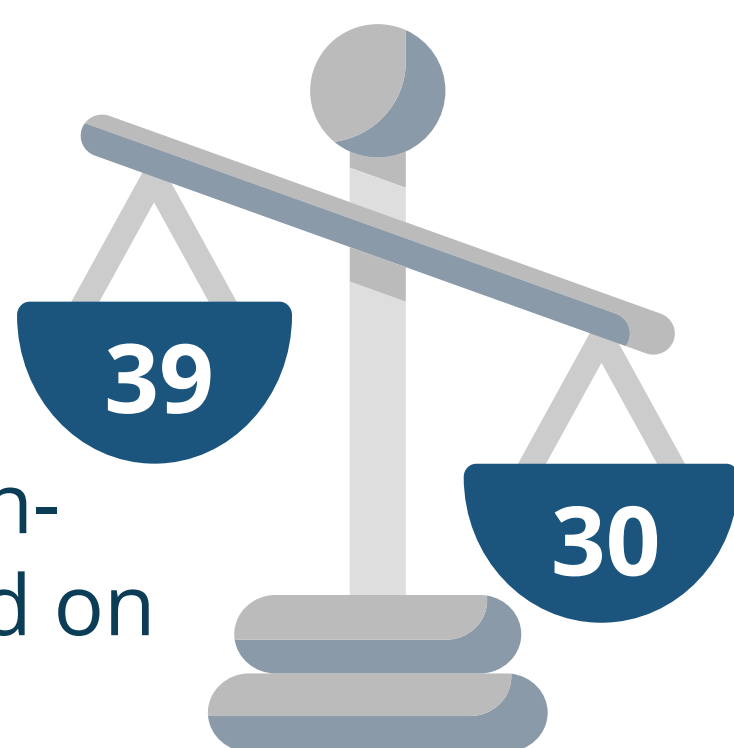


Homelessness is a policy and system failure, not a personal one.

308 people experienced chronic homelessness in Guelph-Wellington in July 2026. This included **18 youth** and **226 single adults**. Families were also impacted and Indigenous people were overrepresented¹, reflecting the impacts of colonialism, racism, and other systemic barriers that require meaningful action and commitment.

More people are entering homelessness than exiting each month.

Median # of individuals entering the homelessness system in Guelph-Wellington based on the last year¹



Median # of individuals exiting the homelessness system in Guelph-Wellington based on the last year¹

To end homelessness, we need to prevent people from entering homelessness and ensure more people exit to housing than enter over time.



Preventing homelessness is possible and it's already happening.

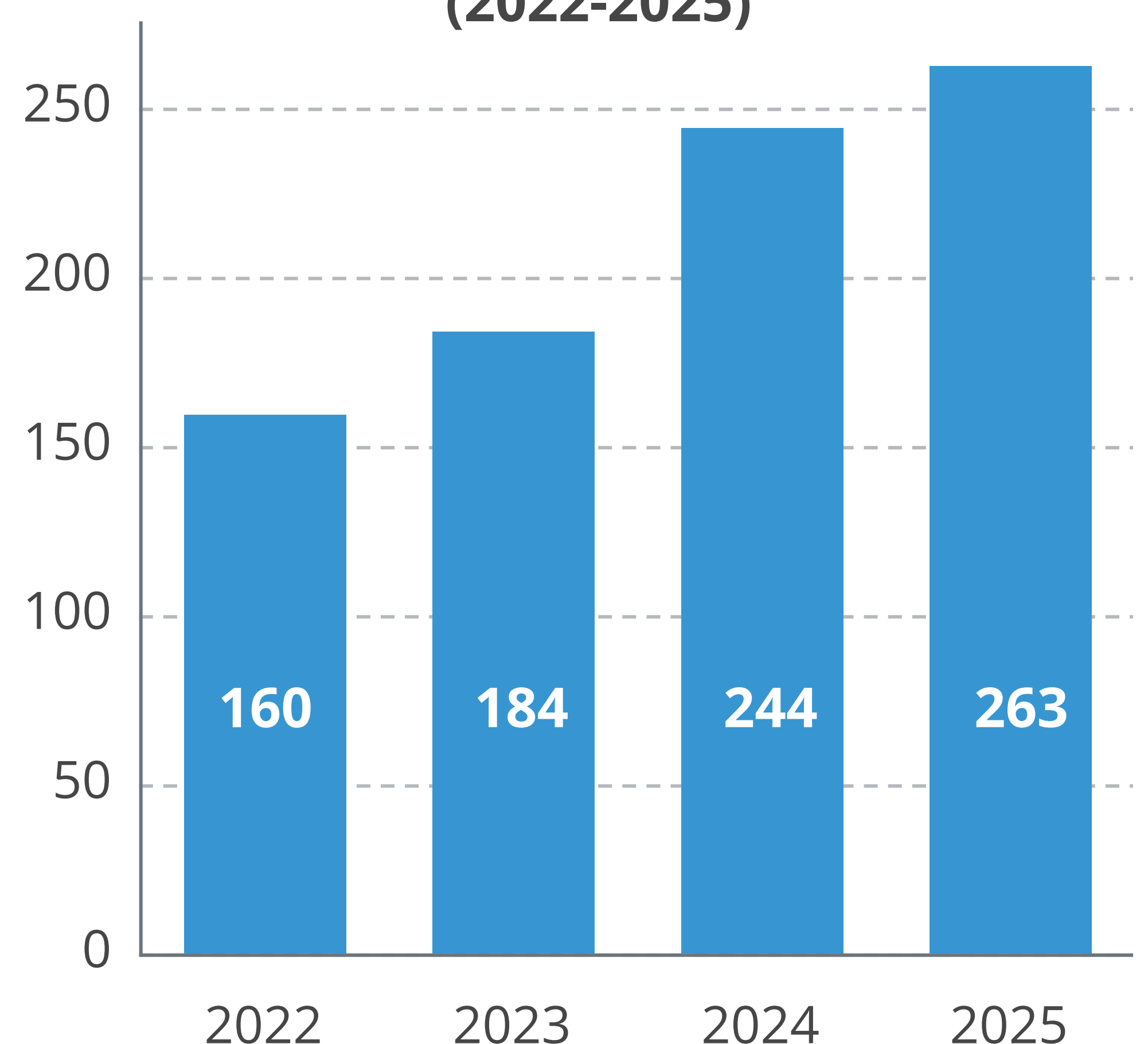
In 2025, Stepping Stone and Wyndham House coordinated nearly **700 diversions** - instances where people were prevented from entering homelessness in Guelph-Wellington.²

Homelessness is growing and many people are entering it for the first time.

From 2022 to 2025, the average number of households experiencing homelessness in Guelph-Wellington has increased by **64%**.³

Nearly half of people experiencing homelessness are experiencing it for the first time.³

Average Households Experiencing Homelessness in Guelph-Wellington (2022-2025)¹



What Municipalities Can Do

While municipalities cannot end homelessness alone, they have an important role to play in preventing homelessness and creating pathways to permanent housing.

Ending homelessness requires municipalities to work together, leveraging their different roles, tools, and relationships. The County of Wellington, as the Social Services Manager for Guelph-Wellington, delivers and administers provincially mandated social and affordable housing programs and initiatives to prevent and address homelessness. The City of Guelph and Wellington's Towns and Townships also have important tools related to planning, land, funding, partnerships and advocacy.

Together, municipalities can shift from primarily managing homelessness to prioritizing prevention, housing, and supports, while advocating for the provincial and federal investments needed to prevent and end homelessness. This approach improves health and wellbeing and makes better use of public resources.

1. Prevent - Help people avoid losing their housing in the first place.

Examples:

- Support homelessness prevention and diversion to help people avoid or quickly exit homelessness.
- Support eviction prevention and housing stability initiatives to help people keep their housing
- Support access to rent assistance, including rent banks and rent supplements, so people can afford housing

2. House & Support - Help people move into and maintain permanent housing.

Examples:

- Support housing-focused outreach to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to build trust and connect them to permanent housing and supports that meet their needs
- Use municipal land, funding and planning tools to create deeply affordable and supportive housing
- Partner with and support non-market housing providers to preserve and expand affordable housing
- Commit to Housing First and human rights-based approaches that prioritize permanent housing and supports
- Advocate for provincial and federal investments in housing, income security, and health supports



Learn More

Learn more about homelessness, its causes and solutions.

Myths & Realities of Homelessness

 shorturl.at/ITPDA

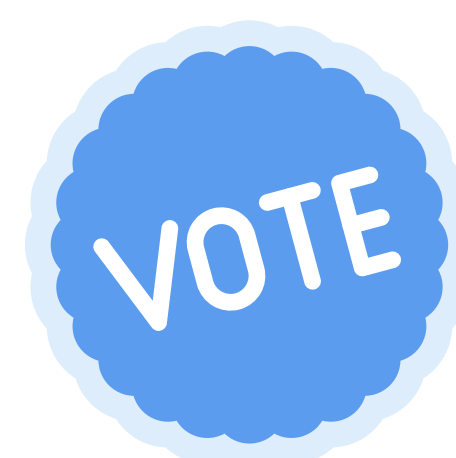
Built for Zero Canada - Learn about data driven approaches to ending homelessness.

 bfzcanada.ca

County of Wellington - Learn about local homelessness programs, services & supports.

 wellington.ca/housing

Take Action!



Your vote matters. Help choose leaders who will advance root cause solutions to homelessness.

Ask a candidate: What actions will you take to help prevent homelessness and create more pathways to permanent housing and supports?

Support the Yes in My Backyard campaign

Show your support for the housing our communities need by signing the YIMBY Pledge:

 gwpoverity.ca/yimby

1. Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, Community Data Dashboard for Wellington-Guelph. By-Name Data provided by the County of Wellington. Accessed 31 Aug. 2026.
2. Stepping Stone and Wyndham House. *Reaching Home Quarterly Reports*, 2025. (Unpublished reports).
3. County of Wellington. *Social Services Advocacy Priorities*. <https://www.wellington.ca/programmes-services/wellington-guelph-social-services/advocacy-priorities> Accessed 31 Aug. 2026.

