

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Habitat for Humanity brings together community members and organizations as one force to tackle Guelph's housing crisis**

GUELPH – Habitat for Humanity Wellington Dufferin Guelph (Habitat WDG) hosted a free, two-day affordable housing symposium on Sept. 19 to 20 at the River Run Centre.

Facilitated by Dr. Rebecca Sutherns, the symposium brought together City of Guelph and County of Wellington senior planning staff, developers and planners, and housing advocates. Approximately 40 organizations were represented among the estimated 75 attendees.

On day 1, attendees were introduced to successful models in place throughout Canada in presentations from guest speakers.

“This is about capacity expansion and partnership-building,” said Steve Howard, CEO of Habitat WDG.

The goal was to create a community-driven affordable housing solution, one that is full-spectrum – homelessness, supportive housing and affordable/attainable rental and purchase options – to address Guelph's current affordable housing crisis.

“This was a collegial approach,” said Howard. “It was an opportunity for each group in our community to come together as one to have a better understanding of resources, identify gaps, and most importantly, expand our collective capacity for growth, and I believe we were successful in this initiative.”

Attendees explored tools, structures and support mechanisms like inclusive housing, mobilized partnerships, social enterprise models and community land trusts.

“At the end of the second day, there was an agreement to strike new models of partnership. Both Habitat WDG and leaders of the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination will be working together in the weeks ahead to form new leadership structures,” says Howard. “The will in the room was, ‘We're past drawing up plans, let's get on with solutions.’”

For more about the event, visit [habitatwdg.ca/symposium](http://habitatwdg.ca/symposium).

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### **Schedule an interview or request more information:**

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### **About Habitat for Humanity Wellington Dufferin Guelph**

At Habitat for Humanity WDG, we envision a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. To achieve this vision, we partner with our community to build homes that provide the foundation for bright, stable and empowered futures for the families and individuals who live there. Our affiliate builds homes across our catchment area of Wellington Dufferin Guelph. Since 2000, we've built 25 homes and are in the process of completing a 28-unit development in Guelph and are planning a multi-unit build in Dufferin.

The Habitat for Humanity Canada model of affordable homeownership bridges a gap for people who face barriers to homeownership and would not otherwise qualify for a traditional mortgage. Local Habitat for Humanity organizations in every province and territory across Canada help build and rehabilitate decent and affordable homes, from single-family houses to multi-unit developments. With the help of volunteers and donors, Habitat helps families build their own homes and pay an affordable mortgage geared to their income. Safe, decent and affordable homeownership plays a critical role in helping families build a foundation for a life with better choices and more opportunities.