

Fairholme

1952 – 1984

Other Names:

- Nat Harper Homes
- Nathaniel Harper Homes
- Fairholme Hostel

Details

Fairholme was established in 1952 as a home for 32 children aged from 3 years up, with cognitive disabilities, who were transferred from the Claremont Mental Hospital. Fairholme, with [Earlsferry](#), made up the Nathaniel Harper Homes which were owned and run by the government of Western Australia, and located on opposite sides of the Swan River. Residents were gradually relocated into modern premises from 1982. All children had been relocated by 1984. The Fairholme property is no longer used for out of home care.

Fairholme was opened by the Minister for Health, Dame Florence Cardell Oliver, on 27 September 1952.

Nathaniel Harper, who had a son with Down's Syndrome, donated money to the Mental Hospitals Department in order to improve service provision to children with cognitive disabilities., marking the beginning of a change in the way these services were delivered.

Prior to Harper's philanthropy, children with cognitive disabilities were engaged in basic industrial work, whereas children at the Harper homes undertook a special education program facilitated by the Education Department. The Homes were run by nursing staff, with visits from Claremont Mental Hospital psychologists.

The young people and adults at Nathaniel Harper Homes were also engaged in work, taking some of the overflow from the industrial rehabilitation workshop at Claremont Mental Hospital making glass pipettes and cleaned and re-assembled bottle-tops.

When the government purchased Earlsferry, a number of renovations were made. These included adding a laundry, removing the outhouses and building a cottage for the Matron in what had been the orchard. Security wire mesh fences were put up around the boundary, a large tree and rose beds were removed and the driveway was bitumised and kerbed.

By the 1980s, Fairholme and Earlsferry were better known as separate hostels rather than collectively as the Nathaniel Harper Homes. Earlsferry continues as a private home.

Gallery



Fairholme Gates

Description: This is a digital copy of a photograph held by the Heritage Council of Western Australia. It shows Fairholme from the front gates. The photograph was taken by Sian Ferraz.



Fairholme House

Description: This is a digital copy of a photograph held by the Heritage Council of Western Australia. It shows Fairholme from the driveway in front of the porch. The photograph was taken by Melissa Maiden.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Mental Hospitals Department, State Government of Western Australia \(1934 - 1954\)](#)
- [Mental Health Services, State Government of Western Australia \(1954 - 1984\)](#)
- [Authority for Intellectually Handicapped Persons \(1986 - 1993\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Claremont Mental Hospital \(1903 - 1972\)](#)

Children were transferred from the Claremont Mental Hospital to Fairholme.

- [Earlsferry \(1952 - 1989\)](#)

Earlsferry and Fairholme were opposite each other on the Swan River at Bassendean and Guildford. Together, they were known as the Nathaniel Harper Homes, named after the man who donated £20,000 for residential facilities for children with intellectual disabilities.

Resources

- [Editorial \[intellectual disability\]](#), The Daily News, 6 November 1950
- [Legislative Assembly - Questions on Notice \[Disability Services Commission - Residents in Hostels, Age Range\]](#), Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), 2 April 1996. Relevance: 'Legislative Assembly – Questions on Notice [Disability Services Commission – Residents in Hostels, Age Range]' reported that residents aged 25-54 years lived at Fairholme

Records

For more information and to access your records, follow the links below:

Records held by other organisations

- [Files - Community Welfare \("A" Series\), State Records Office of Western Australia \(25 August 1908 - 23 December 1990\)](#)
- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)

Item B441 of the Child Endowment correspondence files relates to the Nathaniel Harper Homes