



3RDSPACE MEDIA RELEASE

TIME TO STOP LEAVING PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS OUT IN THE COLD

FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2020: 3rd Space Chair Ian Sampson responds to the Federal Government's latest housing stimulus package.

"Yesterday, the Australian Government announced its housing stimulus package. The new HomeBuilder scheme – costing more than \$688m – will hand out \$25,000 for renovators to upgrade their bathrooms over the next six months, but won't fund any new social housing for renters and people who are homeless.

If the Federal Government wants to build Australia, it should confront the fact that this involves more than putting in home cinemas, bathrooms and kitchens. It's time for the Australian Government to act for the economy, jobs AND compassion.

Yesterday's handout money for kitchens and bathrooms could be channelled through the existing Housing and Homelessness Agreement between the Australian and State Governments. No extra overheads, no new program, no risk of rorts, no risk of delays – just change the numbers, make them bigger, and build houses for people who need them.

That handout money could be used to build new accommodation for some of the 200,000 Australians who, every night, don't have a safe place to call home.

Only the Australian Government has the funds to solve homelessness.

The State Governments are responsible for using the funds to get the building of accommodation for people experiencing homelessness underway. Many not-for-profits are ready to act to provide the services required.

It can be a virtuous cycle: Federal funding leads to construction, which leads to jobs, which provides accommodation for the most needy, which leads to safety and rebuilding of lives.

Do we want women and children escaping domestic violence homeless or do we want a few people to get a handout for a new kitchen?

Do we want our mentally ill sleeping on the streets? Do we want people trying to beat addictions cared for or left exposed to violence in squats and doorways?

How long will we continue to tolerate policies that result in kids and old people being left out in the cold?

Will those with chronic physical health issues continue to be left without help while others get paid by the Australian Government to do renos?

Is this the kind of Australia we want?"

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Break the cycle of homelessness • 3rd Space Brisbane is a drop-in centre where homeless people and those doing it tough can find practical support, friendship and dignity. Located in Fortitude Valley, 3rd Space (formerly the 139 Club) helps hundreds of people every week – assisting some with simple things such as a shower or a meal and a cup of tea, and others with a program of support for more complex needs. We help to find accommodation and work; manage addictions and emotional challenges; and get the right health and dental services. Visit www.3rdspace.org.au for more information or to donate funds, time or goods to this worthy cause.