

Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria

Name: Maryse Usher

Organisation:

Organisation position:

In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this Inquiry into homelessness to consider: Housing affordability, Employment, Mental health, Public housing, Family violence, Indigenous people, Rough sleeping, Services

What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? Concerned citizen , Other (please describe)

Are there any additional themes we should consider? Housing costs prevent many couples from marrying and having children which the mother can care for at home.

Submission: There are several ways in which homeless people may be successfully housed, and it depends on the reason the person is homeless.

PeoOple with drug and alcohol issues wwith a history of foster care need to live in therapeutic communities where they contribute financially and pratically to the running of the community, learning inter-person skills and cooking, budgeting, etc. Somer of these people will never be able to live alone.

Young married people should be given at least five years in public housing in order to save for a deposit/establlsh employment and be able to have children without both parents being foirced out to work.

People who are mentally ill need to be housed also in secure community housing. Some of these placdes are near where I live and the neighbourhood seems remarkably peaceful. They need companionship and trained supervision/help.

Public housing needs to reserve accommodation for people who have become homeless through job loss or family break up -- but the flats/houses should not be all in one spot, but rather as spot-bought properties where the hitherto tenant/homeowner can stay for a year or so until back on their feet.

For those persons who cannot cope with normal accommodation, there must be a place with facilities (washing, laundry, lockers) where they can sleep the night and keep their possessions - perhaps cubicles locked from the outside to

prevent theft, assault, etc. and where food is provided. NOT for panhandlers, though. I am thinking of foster care 'survivors' for whom the notion of "home" is unbearable. These shelters must be divided to segregate (biological) men and women.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

One size does NOT fit all.

Signature:

Maryse Usher