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Contributions to *Parity* are welcome. Each issue of *Parity* has a central focus or theme. However, prospective contributors should not feel restricted by this as *Parity* seeks to discuss the whole range of issues connected with homelessness and the provision of housing and services to people who are homeless. If possible, the length of contributions should be no greater than 1000 words. Please consult the *Parity* editor if this is insufficient.
Where necessary, contributions will be edited. Where possible this will be done in consultation with the contributor.

CHP Web Site

www.chp.org.au

Parity Web Site

www.chp.org.au/parity
Contributions can be sent by e-mail to **parity@chp.org.au** or sent on disk in a Microsoft Word or rtf format to:
**Council to Homeless Persons,
2 Stanley St, Collingwood VIC 3066**
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2012 *Parity* Publications Schedule

NB: Please note that this may be subject to change.

May:	**Policing Homelessness**
June:	**New Responses to Youth Homelessness**
July:	**Client and Consumer Participation in the Response to Homelessness**
August:	**Ending Long Term Homelessness**
Sept:	**National Conference Edition**
Oct:	**Service Integration**
Nov:	**Health and Homelessness Revisited**
Dec:	**Responding to Homelessness in Western Australia**

The views and opinions expressed in *Parity* are not necessarily those of CHP.

Contents

Foreword

I am pleased to contribute to this issue of *Parity* which is sponsored by the Australian Government and the Mercy Foundation and is appropriately dedicated to the examination and discussion of philanthropic, corporate and private sector responses to homelessness.

The Government's 2008 White Paper on Homelessness, *The Road Home* notes that tackling homelessness is everyone's responsibility. Commonwealth, state and local governments, service providers, community organisations and the private sector all must work together to address the complex issues affecting those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The Australian Government has made addressing homelessness a national priority and is working towards two ambitious goals—to halve the rate of homelessness and provide supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who seek it by 2020.

To support this strategy, the Australian Government has committed almost $5 billion in new funding since 2008 to provide support services and programs to assist people who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness. Under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, the Australian Government together with the states and territories has committed $1.1 billion to provide new and better integrated accommodation and support services.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of collaborative partnerships in providing innovative housing. This provides safe, attractive and affordable long-term accommodation in conjunction with onsite wrap-around support services for people who are on low incomes or experiencing long-term homelessness.

An example of such an initiative is the Common Ground facility in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, which opened in August 2010. This facility was funded by a joint investment of the Australian and Victorian Governments under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. This project brought together governments, service providers, community organisations and importantly the construction and development company Grocon, who provided their services at cost.

This is a wonderful example of what partnerships can look like and achieve, each contributing their particular skills and expertise to ensure the project is targeted at those most vulnerable to or experiencing homelessness.

The Australian Government is supportive of relationship development and sustaining long-term partnerships between the community and business sectors. Work commissioned by the Prime Minister's Council on Homelessness has demonstrated that businesses are keen to become involved in this important social issue and I am pleased to see increasing investment in this area.

I recently had the great pleasure of presenting the inaugural National Homelessness Services Achievement Awards, which recognised the wonderful efforts across a wide range of service providers in assisting and supporting those who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness. The importance of a combined effort, partnerships and contributions from across all levels of government, service providers and the wider community was demonstrated in the range of award categories.

Of particular interest is the category of *Outstanding business or philanthropic commitment to addressing homelessness*. The finalists for this award were Street Smart Australia and Second Chance Programme Fundraising Group Inc. for their commitment to supporting community organisations to address homelessness. The winner of the award, Kids Under Cover and Hocking Stuart Real Estate have partnered together to deliver a unique suite of programs to prevent homelessness among young people including the Studio Program, the Scholarship Program and the Mentoring Program.

The three-year partnership between Kids Under Cover and Hocking Stuart has brought much needed awareness and funds to support many young people who found themselves in unfortunate situations, impacting, not only on the young person themselves, but also their families and the wider community.

The National Homelessness Services Achievement Awards is a timely reminder that partnerships and philanthropic contributions are important to the overall objective to reduce homelessness across Australia. I hope you will find inspiration in the insert about the Awards included in this edition of *Parity*.

Another resource you may find of value in sharing ideas, information and best practice is the Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse developed by the Australian Government. An article in this edition provides further information on how to become involved in making this collaborative tool of value to homelessness stakeholders—I encourage you to be part of this important resource.

It is an honour to serve as the Minister for Homelessness in the Gillard Government and I look forward to working with the sector and business to reduce homelessness because, like you, I believe all Australians should have a place to call home.

The Hon Brendan O' Connor MP
Minister for Housing
Minister for Homelessness
Minister for Small Business

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Editorial

The 2008 Australian Government White Paper *The Road Home* called for a 'whole of society response to homelessness'.

This approach is essential, as government alone cannot be responsible for effectively responding to homelessness or meeting the White Paper goals of 'turning off the tap', 'improving and expanding services' and 'breaking the cycle'.

In identifying the path forward for achieving this 'whole of society' involvement in the response to homelessness, the philanthropic, corporate and larger private sectors were nominated as areas of Australian society that could and should, have a greater presence.

The contributions to this edition of *Parity* demonstrate that there has been much work undertaken and some considerable progress made in meeting that call for greater philanthropic, corporate and private sector involvement in the developing response to homelessness.

However, it is important to recognise that there is a very long history of philanthropic involvement underpinning the response to homelessness. Indeed homelessness has long been a focus of the work of philanthropy in Australia. It must not be forgotten, that long before government in Australia took up its share of the responsibility of supporting people who are homeless, the response to homelessness in Australia came from the denominationally based charities that were at least in part, supported by the 'good works' of wealthy philanthropic donors.

In more recent times, philanthropy in Australia has developed a much more focussed and directed response to homelessness; a response that has gone well beyond providing financial backing and support for particular programs or services. Philanthropy has become increasingly involved in innovative program and service development. Philanthropy has moved from being a distributor of funding to playing a significant role in policy and program development.

Philanthropy Australia's, Addressing Homelessness Affinity Group and the work of the Mercy Foundation are fine examples of targeted grant programs. These have the aim of contributing to the implementation of initiatives that seek to end homelessness for specific cohorts of people experiencing homelessness.

Another very welcome and relatively recent development is the greater involvement of the corporate and private sectors in fundraising for particular services or programs. These efforts provide a crucial addition to the resource base of some services and agencies in the homelessness sector. Examples include the ongoing St Vincent de Paul CEO 'sleep outs', and the partnerships that have led to the development of major initiatives like the Mission Australia Michael Project and the establishment of Common Ground models in several State capitals.

It would seem that for the involvement of corporate Australia and the private sector in general, the next step is to move beyond the fine examples of good 'corporate citizenship' to become more systematically involved in homelessness policy and program development.

While there are both historical and cultural reasons for our current state of play, there are also institutional obstacles and barriers to greater corporate and private sector involvement in the response to homelessness. When we look overseas, we can see that an appropriate framework for facilitating greater levels of corporate and private sector involvement will probably need to include further incentives provided through taxation system reform.

Some contributors to this edition have quite appropriately expressed concern that philanthropic, corporate and private sector involvement in the response to homelessness must not be seen as a substitute for social investment in the response to homelessness, or as in any way lessening of the responsibility of the State for the welfare of its most disadvantaged citizens.

In this light, we can regard philanthropic, corporate and private sector involvement in developing responses to homelessness as 'adding value' to the existing national strategic framework for responding to homelessness in Australia.

In some ways, the real benefit of philanthropic and especially corporate and private sector involvement in homelessness comes not from the 'wealth transfer' but rather from the 'knowledge transfer' that follows from the participatory application of the skills, expertise and experience of this sector to the complex issues that confront policy makers, program developers and service deliverers in their work of effectively responding to homelessness.

Acknowledgments

Jenny Smith
CEO Council to Homeless Persons

Welcome to CHP:

Introducing
Ian Gough, Manager Consumer Programs CHP

CHP would like to welcome Ian Gough to the team at CHP. Ian will make a significant contribution to the work of CHP.

He has worked in the social welfare sector for eighteen years. He worked for six years with young people, has worked in the family services sector and immediately prior to commencing at CHP was at the Department of Human Services in the youth homelessness team.

Ian's key community sector experience has been in homelessness, having worked in the non-government homelessness sector for nine years. In that time Ian has worked at all levels: direct service delivery, case management, management and project development. Ian is committed to social justice and is focused on delivering better services and outcomes. He believes people have the capacity and skills to achieve their life goals.

Ian is passionate about consumers participating fully at all levels in the homelessness system, from driving their case plan through to helping shape how services are designed and delivered at the organisational and system levels.

In his role of Manager Consumer Programs, Ian will be focused on supporting the terrific work of the Peer Education Support Program and the Homelessness Advocacy Service. These programs are powerful voices for consumer rights, empowerment and participation and Ian will work with his team to further strengthen that voice.

Ian believes homelessness can be ended and is really excited to contribute to CHP's efforts to meet this goal.

Please get in touch with Ian at CHP on 03 8415 6200 or via email: Ian@chp.org.au

Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse

Reducing the rate of homelessness in Australia requires new methods of collaboration, sharing knowledge and generating holistic outcomes. To this end, the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) has developed the *Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse* website to ensure consolidated and up-to-date information is available to people working in the homelessness field in Australia.

The key aim of the Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse website is to provide information on national, state and territory homelessness initiatives, as well as local, community and international homelessness initiatives; information on client issues and service delivery; information on agency management and best practice in the homelessness sector; research papers and homelessness data; and a 'Communities of Practice' function to encourage on-line forums on homelessness.

The ongoing development of the Clearinghouse website is being guided by an Advisory Group, comprising representatives from the homelessness sector and Australian, state and territory governments.

You can participate in the site by using the information and making suggestions for adding content. For example, you can:
- Add research papers, data or articles about a particular topic;
- Suggest documents to be uploaded (e.g. a policy or a good practice case study) to share with others;
- Provide information about organisations, services and programs that deliver; support services targeting homeless people;
- List conferences, seminars or events, and
- Participate in forums with other site users.

Since its launch on 15 July 2011, the Clearinghouse has proven to be a valuable resource for the homelessness and social housing sectors. To date, the site has had over 14,800 hits with visitors viewing over 47,000 pages. There are currently 595 subscribers to the weekly electronic updates, and numbers continue to grow.

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice are a great way to communicate and discuss ideas and good practice models with like-minded people. Through such online forums you can interact and engage on issues with people involved in homelessness from around Australia.

You can share your ideas and documents, research papers, articles and data. You can determine who you share your information with.

How to become involved in the Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse Communities of Practice

You will need to register to become a user. Once you have registered, you can participate by following the Communities of Practice link on the Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse website.

If you are experienced in a topic area and willing to devote a few hours a week to monitoring discussions within particular forums, you might like to consider becoming a Communities of Practice moderator.

More Information

For more information about the Australian Homelessness Clearinghouse; to subscribe to the weekly e-updates; to share your organisation's events with the sector or to register for the Communities of Practice, visit http://homelessnessclearinghouse.govspace.gov.au/.

If you would like to contribute to the Clearinghouse, email homelessness.research@fahcsia.gov.au. ■
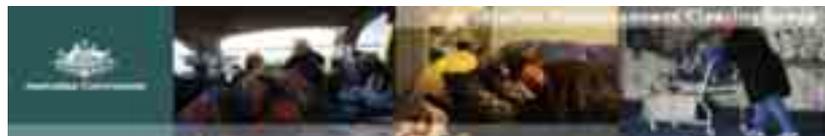
HomeGround Launches Disability Action Plan

Ending homelessness presents many challenges, not least of all how to respond to people with multiple support needs that create additional barriers to assistance and the provision of housing.

Melbourne-based agency, HomeGround Services, has taken an important step toward improving services to one key group of people who face additional barriers with the launch of its first disability action plan.

'Nearly a quarter of people who accessed our services last year were receiving the Disability Support Pension,' says Dr Heather Holst, HomeGround's Acting CEO. Despite this huge crossover between homelessness and disability, Dr Holst states that the accessibility, funding and coordination of these services is still poor in many areas. 'This makes it even harder for those with a disability to escape from homelessness.'

HomeGround has responded by developing its first Disability Action Plan, which is a formal commitment to remove or reduce barriers that exclude people from accessing services, gaining employment or participating equally in an organisation's activities. In Victoria, these Action Plans are coordinated by the Office of Disability, within the State Department of Community Planning and Development.

HomeGround's three year plan includes goals such as increasing the number of staff with a disability and who can speak Auslan; improving the accessibility of service information and communication materials; and increasing staff knowledge of disability issues.

Dr Holst says it sends a strong message that staff, facilities, programs and services are open, welcoming and responsive to the needs of people with a disability.

Simon, a member of HomeGround's Disability Action Group and someone who has experienced homelessness in the past, had this to say about his involvement:

'I got involved in this process because I was impressed with the commitment I saw from HomeGround to improve services to people with the double whammy of being homeless and having a disability. The stronger the bridges we build between homelessness, housing and disability services the better we will be able to break down the additional barriers to housing that these people face.'

Dr Holst also believes that the involvement of consumers, staff and other relevant stakeholders is 'essential' to developing a plan that addresses the key barriers to housing people in a strategic and realistic way.

More information: www.homeground.org.aun

New Research Project:
Beyond Charity: The Engagement of the Philanthropic and Homelessness Sectors in Australia

Researchers: Selina Tually and Michele Slatter, The University of Adelaide, Jo Baulderstone and Loretta Geuenich, Flinders University, Shelley Mallett, Hanover Welfare Services and Ross Womersley, SACOSS.

Funder: FaHCSIA as part of the National Homelessness Research Agenda.

Researchers associated with the University of Adelaide and Flinders University are seeking your input for a new research project on the engagement of the philanthropic and homelessness sectors in Australia.

As the articles in this edition of *Parity* confirm, the philanthropic sector[1] continues to play an important role in addressing the causes and consequences of homelessness in Australia. This role has been long-standing, with philanthropic organisations and individual philanthropists providing funds for the operation of homelessness services and support programs for homeless people, as well as cash to fund the emergency, material aid and services needs of homeless people themselves.

The important role played by philanthropic organisations in the homelessness sector was formally recognised in *The Road Home* (Commonwealth of Australia 2008), with a key discourse in this document being that national aspirations in terms of addressing homelessness can only be achieved if governments, philanthropic organisations and other organisations not traditionally involved with the homelessness sector (such as corporate and private sector interests) work together to address homelessness.

While the important role of the philanthropic sector and individual philanthropists in the homelessness sector is often mentioned in debates around homelessness and particularly in strategies to address homelessness, we really know very little about how these two sectors actually engage with each other. We know even less about barriers to effective engagement between these sectors and why philanthropic organisations and individual philanthropists chose to support a particular cause, including why they may choose to support another cause ahead of homelessness.

This project aims to fill this gap in our understanding. Specifically, it will map out the roles currently played by philanthropic bodies within the homelessness sector, considering the ways in which engagement between the homelessness and philanthropic sectors can be supported and enhanced to improve outcomes for both sectors and ultimately for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Understanding the role of philanthropic organisations and individual philanthropists in addressing homelessness, as well as potential for expansion of this role, is all the more important at the current time given known demand pressures on homelessness services, support services and charities generally because of events such as the global financial crisis, recent floods and major bushfires and the impact of such events on general levels of donations to the community sector.

To answer the core research questions underpinning this project a conventional two stage research methodology will be employed:

- Review of the published and grey literature about the role of/engagement between the philanthropic and homelessness sectors in Australia and internationally.
- Interviews with representatives of key philanthropic organisations and specialist homelessness services in five states (Victoria, NSW, WA, SA, Queensland). This stage of the research will collect primary data on the engagement of the philanthropic sector with homelessness services, as well as interviews with representatives of philanthropic organisations not currently involved with the homelessness sector. These interviews will provide us with a better understanding of the motivations of philanthropic organisations, appetite for engagement, and the enablers of/barriers to engagement with homelessness services and people experiencing homelessness, and the (mutual?) benefit of engagement.

Further Information

If you are interested in participating in this research, or for further information, please contact the project leader Dr Selina Tually, Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning at The University of Adelaide via email at selina.tually@adelaide.edu.au or phone 08 8313 3289 or 0419 857 264. ∎

References

Commonwealth of Australia 2008, *The Road Home, A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness*, Homelessness Taskforce, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra.

Footnote

1. This research assumes the broadest view of philanthropy, including engagement by individual philanthropists as well as philanthropic organisations – organisations operating like philanthropic businesses.

How Many People in Boarding Houses?

By Chris Chamberlain,
Director, Centre for Applied
Social Research, RMIT
University

In 2011, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released new figures on the boarding house population from the 2001 and 2006 Censuses. The ABS reported that the national population had fallen from 23,750 in 2001 to 16,830 in 2006, a decrease of 29 per cent. In Victoria, the fall was 'dramatic'. The number of people in boarding houses declined from 5,701 in 2001 to 3,355 in 2006, a decrease of 41 per cent. The ABS was confident about its new figure, noting that 'the revised boarding house count is likely to be an over estimate'.

The ABS relies on census collectors to identify boarding houses, but it is known that census collectors sometimes make mistakes. Chamberlain's (1999) analysis of 1996 Census data found that some census collectors misclassified boarding houses as hotels and staff quarters. In 2001, various conventions were used to identify boarding houses that census collectors had misclassified as 'other' (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003). In 2006, more corrections were introduced to identify boarding houses that had been misclassified as 'private dwellings' (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008).

This paper outlines a more reliable method for counting boarding houses, using council records. The research identified 12,568 people in Melbourne's rooming houses in 2011, compared with 2,946 identified by the ABS in 2006. This paper argues that the national rooming house population was about 70,000 at the time of the 2011 Census, compared with 16,830 identified by the ABS in 2006.

Methodology

In Victoria, all rooming houses must be registered with local councils. As part of this process, councils inspect rooming houses to ensure that they meet the minimum standards set out in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)* and the *Building Act (1993)*. The Office of Housing collates this information on a central register. At the time of the Census in August 2011, the central register was nearly a year out of date. The best way of gaining up-to-date information was to approach local councils for current information about rooming houses in their municipality. Altogether, 30 out of the 31 local councils in metropolitan Melbourne supplied updated information.

Thirty-one council officers who inspected rooming houses were interviewed. I also undertook 250 field visits to rooming houses. One purpose of these visits was to establish the range of buildings that are currently being used as rooming houses. Another purpose was to investigate whether census collectors would recognise that these dwellings were boarding houses.

New Approach

Councils provided updated figures on the number of rooming houses in their municipality. There can be no doubt that these dwellings were rooming houses. As part of the registration process, each property is inspected by council staff to see that the dwelling conforms to the relevant public health and planning legislation.

However, many council officials thought that there were unregistered rooming houses in their municipalities. Rooming houses have to come to a council's attention before they can be registered. Council officials reported that there were 'some operators who do not want to bring themselves to our attention' (Environmental health officer, Eastern suburbs). Another council official (Inner Melbourne) said: 'If the operator owns the dwelling he is more likely to be registered. Those who are renting places to make a quick buck are less likely to be registered'.

The most important reason for undercounting is that rooming houses often do not come to the council's attention until there are complaints about the property. Council officials report that most complaints come from neighbours:

> Neighbours complain about noise, or garbage, or something like that. Often new tenants will not know when the garbage is collected and they leave it out at inappropriate times …
> (Environmental health officer, South-eastern suburbs).

> It is almost always because of complaints … in relation to noise, antisocial behaviour, people coming and going, and so on. We have some well-off suburbs. People do NOT like it if a rooming house opens in their street (Team leader, Inner South-east).

Another reason for undercounting is that a minority of councils keep inadequate records. One council had only begun registering boarding houses a few weeks before the 2011 Census. Another council had '200 dwellings under investigation'. The council officer appeared to be doing a good job, but did not have the resources to keep up with the steady flood of notifications.

The 31 councils across metropolitan Melbourne reported 1,276 registered rooming houses. Of course, the number of unregistered properties is unknown.

Nonetheless, it is possible to identify some dwellings that were unregistered. The North and West Homeless Network compiled a list of boarding houses that were currently being used by services in the North and West of Melbourne. It was possible to check the addresses on this list against the addresses on the lists provided by the councils. Altogether, 175 unregistered rooming houses were identified. Overall, 1,451 boarding houses were identified across the 31 local councils in metropolitan Melbourne.

How Many People in Rooming Houses?

Next, the ABS 2006 estimates and the Counting the Homeless (CTH) 2006 figures are compared with the findings for 2011. Table 1 shows that there was a striking increase in the number of rooming houses between 2006 and 2011. In Inner Melbourne there were between 128 and 146 rooming houses in 2006 compared with 188 in 2011. This is an increase of roughly 30 to 50 per cent, depending upon which benchmark is used for 2006.

In Outer Melbourne the number of rooming houses increased from between 18 and 29 in 2006 to 214 in 2011. In 2006 there were few boarding houses in these communities. Now there are 35 rooming houses in the Outer West, 37 in the Outer East, 62 in the Outer North and 80 in the Outer South-East.

The increase was largest in the inner suburbs of Melbourne. There were between 117 and 183 rooming houses in 2006 but this had increased to 1,049 by 2011. In the Inner West the number of boarding houses increased from between 26 and 36 in 2006 to 339 in 2011. In the Inner East the number increased from between 49 and 68 to 394. Overall, there was a five to sixfold increase in rooming houses in the inner suburbs.

Table 2 shows that there has been a large growth in the rooming house population between 2006 and 2011. It has increased from roughly 3,700 people in 2006 to about 12,500 people in 2011. If one uses the CTH figures as the benchmark for 2006, the increase is 236 per cent. If one uses the ABS figures as the benchmark, the increase is 327 per cent.

Most of this growth was in suburban Melbourne. Table 2 shows that in Inner Melbourne the rooming house population increased from 2040 people in 2006 to just under 2,700 people in 2011, an increase of about one-third. In inner suburban Melbourne there was a sixfold increase over the same time period: from 922 to 1,461 people in boarding houses in 2006 to 8,417 people in rooming houses in 2011. In the outer suburbs, the number increased from between 106 and 238 people in 2006 to 1,469 people in 2011. This was also a sixfold increase.

Table 1: Number of rooming houses by geographical area, 2006 and 2011

	SSD	ABS 2006		CTH 2006		2011	
Inner Melbourne	Inner Melbourne	128		146		188	
Inner West	Western Melbourne	26		36		339	
Inner North	Moreland, Northern Middle Melbourne	7	117	30	183	154	1,049
Inner East	Boroondara, Eastern Middle Melbourne	49		68		394	
Inner South East	Southern Melbourne, Dandenong	35		49		162	
Outer West	Melton-Wyndham	1		1		35	
Outer North	Hume, Northern Outer Melbourne	3	18	7	29	62	214
Outer East	Eastern Outer Melbourne, Yarra Ranges	6		10		37	
Outer South-East	S.E. Outer Melbourne, Frankston City, Mornington Peninsula	8		11		80	
Total		**263**		**358**		**1,451**	

Sources: ABS (2011); Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2008).

Table 2: Number of tennants by geographical area, 2006 and 2011

	SSD	ABS 2006		CTH 2006		2011	
Inner Melbourne	Inner Melbourne	1,795		2,040		2,682	
Inner West	Western Melbourne	207		288		2,669	
Inner North	Moreland, Northern Middle Melbourne	46	922	241	1,461	1,319	8,417
Inner East	Boroondara, Eastern Middle Melbourne	392		545		3,327	
Inner South East	Southern Melbourne, Dandenong	277		387		1,102	
Outer West	Melton-Wyndham	np		9		264	
Outer North	Hume, Northern Outer Melbourne	15	106	59	238	358	1,469
Outer East	Eastern Outer Melbourne, Yarra Ranges	47		83		275	
Outer South-East	S.E. Outer Melbourne, Frankston City, Mornington Peninsula	44		87		572	
Total		**2,946**		**3,739**		**12,568**	

* Information missing on 123 cases.

NP: not published to ensure confidentiality

Sources: ABS (2011), unpublished data; Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2008).

Table 3: Size of rooming houses

	Inner Melbourne (N=188)	Inner suburbs (N=1,049)	Outer suburbs (N=214)	Total (N=1,451)
Large (20 or more bedrooms)	18	5	1	6
Medium (10 to 19 bedrooms)	38	15	6	17
Small (4 to 9 bedrooms)	44	80	93	77
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**

Characteristics of Dwellings

Originally, boarding houses were large-scale dwellings that provided dozens of rooms and shared facilities, but many of these have now closed. In 2011, 18 per cent of the rooming houses in Inner Melbourne could accommodate 20 or more people (Table 3). This included a rooming house in St Kilda that can accommodate 60 people, another in East St Kilda that has 44 rooms, another in Prahran that can house 40, one in South Yarra that can accommodate 50, and another in Carlton that accommodates 32.

Thirty-eight per cent of the boarding houses in Inner Melbourne accommodated 10 to 19 people Most were large, older style houses that had been converted into rooming houses, sometimes with outbuildings used as additional bedrooms. Another 44 per cent of the boarding houses accommodated four to nine people. These were mainly conventional houses operating as rooming houses.

Table 3 shows that 80 per cent of rooming houses in the inner suburbs had four to nine bedrooms, as did 93 per cent of rooming houses in the outer suburbs. A two-bedroom property can be converted into a four-bedroom rooming house by putting up a partition in the lounge room, creating two additional bedrooms. A three-bedroom property with a lounge room and dining room can become a five-bedroom property if all five rooms are used as bedrooms. If the lounge room and dining room are large, it may be possible to turn this into a seven-bedroom property, by erecting partitions. Most suburban rooming houses are small, family homes that cannot be distinguished from other houses in the same street.

Conclusion

This article has shown that Melbourne's boarding house population has increased from about 3700 on Census night 2006 to 12,500 in 2011. Much of this growth has been in suburban Melbourne and many of the new rooming houses are smaller properties accommodating between four and nine people.

There is a way of estimating the overall picture. According to CTH 2006, 17.3 per cent of the boarding house population was in Melbourne on Census night 2006. According to the ABS (2011), the figure was 17.5 per cent. There is no compelling reason to think that this proportion has changed significantly since 2006. If Melbourne's boarding house population was 12,568 in 2011, then the national boarding house population was about 70,000 (12,568 x 100/17.4 = 72,230).

Will the 2011 Census identify this increase? The answer is probably 'no', because 75 per cent of registered rooming houses in Melbourne were small dwellings accommodating four to nine people. Field visits across Melbourne revealed that most of these boarding houses looked no different from other properties in the same street. Census collectors misclassify many of these rooming houses as private dwellings for reasons that we now understand. The ABS method of counting boarding houses is fundamentally flawed. ∎

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Feature: Philanthropic, Corporate and Private Sector Responses to Homelessness

Harnessing Partnerships to Address Homelessness

By the Housing, Homelessness and Money Management Group of FaHCSIA

Homelessness is a serious issue and the Gillard Government has rightfully made it a national priority. The Government is committed to halving the rate of homelessness and providing supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who seek it by 2020. The White Paper on Homelessness, *The Road Home*, sets out the plan. We need to improve services, intervene early to prevent people from becoming homeless and support people with accommodation to break the cycle of homelessness. In order to achieve these ambitious aims the Australian Government has committed almost $5 billion since 2008 to provide support services and programs for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

This investment has also been supported by over $20 billion to make housing more affordable for low income earning Australians. However, a challenge of the size and complexity of homelessness cannot be tackled by Government alone. We understand the benefits for the homelessness sector in engaging effectively with philanthropists and the private sector more generally.

We know there are a number of existing structures that are very effectively channelling philanthropic donations into addressing homelessness. These include the Sidney Myer Fund, the Mercy Foundation, Street Smart, the Caledonia Foundation and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation in Melbourne.

Philanthropy Australia has also established an *Addressing Homelessness Affinity Group*, which is now a national network of Philanthropy Australia members, supporting coordinated and effective grant making to reduce homelessness in Australia.

In order to assist philanthropic engagement, the government is exploring a range of options, including tax breaks and incentives, reducing red tape, harmonising regulations across jurisdictions, removing inequities in the definition of Deductible Gift Recipients and reforming structures of Public Ancillary Funds and other vehicles used to channel philanthropic funds to worthy causes.

In effect, we are looking for ways to make it easier for philanthropists to give, and easier for not-for-profits to receive.

There's a lot to be gained. The Productivity Commission reports that the Australian not-for-profit sector received $7.2 billion from philanthropic sources in 2006–07. This is a big pie and it's getting bigger by about 8 per cent per annum.

The question for the homelessness sector is how to get a slice of that pie. It is one thing to create an environment that is conducive to philanthropy; but how does the homelessness sector position itself to take best advantage of that environment?

There are a range of strategies the sector could use to leverage increased private sector and philanthropic investment in homelessness reduction. One such strategy is appointing philanthropic ambassadors to encourage their peers in the corporate world to invest in homelessness; as well as to advise the government and homelessness sector on how best to achieve such investment. Other strategies include capitalising on community investment approaches adopted by mining companies and place-based and peer-based philanthropic approaches.

Ambassadors

Effective Philanthropy is a private company that provides advice to philanthropists and policy makers on where and how they can make the greatest difference. In a report prepared for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), they recommend the appointment of *Giving and Philanthropy Ambassadors* to promote philanthropy and encourage giving amongst the high net worth and ultra-high net worth population. That is, people with more than $1.2 million in investable assets and an annual personal taxable income of over $0.5 million.

One of the Directors of Effective Philanthropy, Regina Hill, emphasises that this recommendation is about promoting philanthropy broadly, not promoting issue-specific philanthropy.

Nevertheless, high profile and well regarded philanthropists – people such as Greg Hocking and Andrew Stuart for example who, with Kids Under Cover, were recognised at this year's inaugural Homelessness Achievement Awards for outstanding business or philanthropic commitment to addressing homelessness — could be invited to share their experiences with their peers in the corporate and philanthropic sectors and demonstrate the significant and positive social outcomes that can be achieved by working to end homelessness. Ambassadors could also advise the Government and homelessness sector on strategies for encouraging private sector and philanthropic investment.

Place-based Philanthropy

Place-based philanthropy has been operating successfully overseas for some time. The basic model of place-based philanthropy is a foundation that seeks charitable gifts from a broad base of donors – individuals, businesses and sometimes government agencies – and uses those gifts to address local and/or regional needs.

The popularity of this model is reflected in the proliferation in Australia of Community Foundations that, through the donation of

goods, expertise and financial support, seek to improve the lives of people within a defined geographical area. Philanthropy Australia identifies more than 30 Community Foundations currently operating, primarily in regional areas of Australia

More than a third of the 1,500 or so specialist homelessness services in Australia are operating in regional areas. Some of these services are doing it pretty tough, struggling with limited financial, staffing and capital resources to support ever increasing numbers of people to find and maintain housing.

How can we bring the relevant services and Community Foundations together?

Peer-based philanthropy

Individual donors are increasingly seeking opportunities to practice philanthropy within a group of peers. Peer-based philanthropy is defined broadly as a group of individual donors, united by a common identity, that join together and pool philanthropic resources around a common interest, issue or organisation.

Women and women's groups have a long history of philanthropy, donating their time, expertise and money to community organisations, particularly organisations that deliver programs supporting women and girls.

The Sydney Women's Fund for example; *'works for a community where all women and girls achieve their potential, live safely without fear of discrimination or disadvantage, and enjoy the full benefits of life in Sydney.'*

Internationally, there are also examples of Youth Foundations and youth services forming productive relationships to address youth-related issues such as homelessness, education, training and employment.

Once again, it's a matter of bringing together the right Foundations with the right services.

Mining Companies' Community Investment Programs

Mining companies are very sensitive to the need to maintain good relations with the communities in which they operate. BHP Billiton for example; spends one per cent of pre-tax profits on voluntary community programs. It implements community development programs that are designed to benefit the towns in which their mining operations are located, throughout and beyond the life of those operations.

BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto are each operating in around 20 locations across Australia, primarily in regional and remote locations. That means opportunities exist for

homelessness programs in those locations in the form of potential training and employment for clients as well as financial and other assistance for services.

These are just a few of the strategies available to the homelessness sector. For the most part, these strategies are based on the premise that corporate and philanthropic support is available, and that securing such support simply requires effective engagement between not-for-profit organisations that do good work and corporate or philanthropic organisations that are prepared to invest in that work.

However, as the culture of philanthropy in Australia expands, it also becomes more sophisticated. Australian philanthropists are seeking sound investments in high performing community programs to achieve practical and measureable outcomes. So any approach to foundations and philanthropists must be supported by clear and convincing arguments that homelessness services and programs are worthwhile investments.

These are not difficult arguments to make. Research clearly shows that an investment in supported accommodation for the chronic homeless via a housing first model; represents significant savings on the long term costs – health, police, justice, corrections systems – associated with

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Community Foundations in Australia

Established Foundations with Public Fund and DGR status

- The Ballarat Foundation (Ballarat, VIC)
- Bass Coast Community Foundation (Bass Coast, VIC)
- Bendigo and Central Victoria Community Foundation (Bendigo, VIC)
- Border Trust (Albury-Wodonga Region Community Foundation, VIC/NSW)
- Buderim Foundation (Buderim, QLD)
- Capital Region Community Foundation – Greater Good (Canberra)
- Cardinia Foundation (Pakenham, Victoria)
- Central Queensland Community Foundation (Rockhampton, QLD)
- The Community Foundation for Tumut Region (Tumut, NSW)
- The Community Foundation of South Australia
- Eyre Peninsula Community Foundation (Port Lincoln, SA)
- Fleurieu Community Foundation (Fleurieu Peninsula, SA)
- Foundation Barossa (Tanunda, SA)
- Foundation Boroondara (Hawthorn, VIC)
- Geelong Community Foundation (Geelong, VIC)
- The Greater Melbourne Foundation - sub-fund of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (Melbourne)
- Hunter Region Community Foundation (NSW)
- Inner North Community Foundation (Melbourne, VIC)

- The Mackay Foundation (QLD)
- Melbourne Community Foundation (Melbourne, VIC)
- Mirboo North & District Community Foundation (VIC)
- Mumbulla Foundation (Bega, NSW)
- Northern Rivers Community Foundation (Lismore, NSW)
- Queensland Community Foundation (Brisbane) operated by Queensland Public Trustee. The QCF has regional foundations established under its umbrella. These include the Sunshine Coast Community Foundation, Cairns Community Foundation, and the Gold Coast Community Foundation.
- South West Community Foundation (Warrnambool, VIC)
- The Southern Highlands Foundation (formerly Wingecarribee Community Foundation) (Bowral, NSW)
- Stand Like Stone Foundation (South Eastern South Australia)
- Sydney Community Foundation (Sydney)
- Tasmanian Community Foundation (Hobart)
- Tomorrow: Today Foundation (Benalla, VIC)
- Victorian Community Foundation (Melbourne) operated by ANZ Executors and Trustee Co. Ltd.
- Wyndham Community Foundation (VIC)

Incorporated Community Foundations

- Broken Hill Community Foundation (Broken Hill, NSW)
- Eastern Victoria Community Foundation (Lakes Entrance, VIC)

Other cities and regions of Australia are also in the process of conducting and finalising feasibility studies, such as Loxton/Waikerie, Noosa, Toowoomba, Outback Regional Trust, Whittlesea (VIC), Wangaratta and district (VIC) and Marrickville (Sydney) to determine if they can support and benefit by establishing a Community Foundation in their area.

homelessness. And the earlier the intervention, the greater the return on the investment.

So the corporate and philanthropic support is available, and the evidence needed to effectively argue for that support exists, but what can the sector do to bring them together to achieve a meeting of minds and money?

A strategic, sector-wide approach to leveraging private sector and philanthropic investment in homelessness will be more effective than ad hoc attempts by individual homelessness services.

Such an approach will involve developing high-value partnerships by matching homelessness organisations with corporate or philanthropic organisations on the basis of specific issues, values and/or geographical locations. It will also involve developing resources and strategies for 'selling' homelessness, and for helping homelessness organisations to 'sell' their work, as

worthwhile philanthropic investments that achieve meaningful social outcomes.

Local Government will certainly have a part to play. The Australian Local Government Authority is a signatory to the National Affordable Housing Agreement and therefore committed to reducing the rate of homelessness and jointly responsible with other levels of government for developing and implementing national homelessness policy. Many local governments and councils are already actively involved in programs related to homelessness, including programs that are sponsored by philanthropic organisations. Local Governments operate at a level that is ideal for brokering partnerships between service providers and philanthropic foundations. They will have a key role in any strategic approach to leveraging greater private sector and philanthropic support for reducing homelessness.

Ultimately, a strategic approach to encouraging philanthropic investment in the

homelessness sector will be built on sustainable partnerships between the two sectors. A good foundation for those partnerships could be achieved by bringing together the national peak bodies of those sectors: Homelessness Australia and Philanthropy Australia.

Establishing and maintaining regular lines of communication between these peak bodies will help to underpin sustainable partnerships, build increased cross-sector understanding and contribute to effective and ongoing outcomes.

The White Paper on Homelessness makes the commitment that *'The rate of homelessness will be halved and accommodation will be offered to all rough sleepers who seek it by 2020'*.

These are incredibly worthy goals, but as the White Paper points out 'It will not be possible … without harnessing the efforts of the broader corporate and private sector. ∎

A Foundation Focussed on Ending Homelessness

**By Felicity Reynolds,
CEO Mercy Foundation**

I understand that articles on service organisations and the good works they carry out do not always make for the most interesting reading matter. I am always much more interested in robust research that asks important questions and gives some answers or, in many cases, asks more questions. Having said that; this article is going to read suspiciously like an advertisement for the Mercy Foundation. That is because it is.

I make no apology that this is a subjective account of the Mercy Foundation and a summary of some of the work we have been doing over the past few years. I will not pretend it is an objective article or a piece of research. I will call it what it is – an overview of the work of the Mercy Foundation since 2008. I think a summary of our work is appropriate in a *Parity* Edition that is focussed on philanthropic and corporate involvement in the response to homelessness.

Background

The North Sydney Sisters of Mercy started the Mercy Foundation in 1990. Since its inception, the purpose of the foundation has been to challenge the systems that result in social injustice. Through a national small grants program, the foundation has funded community initiatives that address social injustice at the grass roots, particularly projects that address poverty, domestic violence, disability, mental health issues and addictions, with a particular emphasis on disadvantaged women and women with children. The small grants program remains an important element of the Foundation's work.

My background lies in mental health and homelessness and prior to coming to the Mercy Foundation in 2008, I had managed homelessness services at the City of Sydney. In 2007, I had been awarded a Churchill Fellowship to investigate programs and services that have been successful in ending chronic homelessness.

Ending Chronic Homelessness

In 2008, the Mercy Foundation adopted the bold vision of working to end homelessness, with a specific emphasis on ending chronic homelessness. We challenge the assumption that homelessness is inevitable and irresolvable. We believe that by providing stable housing and by connecting people to the appropriate support services, it has been clearly demonstrated that the most vulnerable people living on our streets can be successfully housed and stay housed.

The Mercy Foundation works to end homelessness through our grants program, our advocacy and by working collaboratively with government, community organisations and the private sector. As far as I am aware, we are the only Foundation in Australia with a specific focus on the notion of 'ending', rather than endlessly 'servicing' homelessness.

Advocacy and Permanent Supportive Housing Models

The Mercy Foundation is one of the founding members of the Australian Common Ground Alliance and we have worked collaboratively in NSW to advise and advocate for the establishment of the first Common Ground model of permanent supportive housing in Sydney. That building, opened in November 2011, and being managed by Mission Australia Housing, is a visible outcome of several year's work to bring corporate and government support together to permanently house people experiencing chronically homelessness. Common Ground at Camperdown is now housing and supporting over 50 people who were formerly homeless and 50 low-income earners together in a mixed tenancy arrangement with an on-site tenancy and support service.

Partnering with Service Providers

By working in partnership with organisations that provide direct services, the Mercy Foundation has been able to influence local responses to homelessness. We work on the assumption that although we need a national framework and proper systemic responses, many of the answers to homelessness still lie at a local level. In reference to local communities, we also include not just NGOs or government agencies, but also private businesses and individuals. We believe that there are compelling reasons why it is in everyone's interest to bring an end to homelessness.

We are involved with the Nepean/Blacktown Regional Taskforce on Homelessness and the development of a 10 year plan to end homelessness in that region. We were also involved in actively supporting the first 'Housing First' project in the region, Project 40. Project 40 is managed by Wentworth Community Housing, but most importantly – this is being done in partnership with many of the NGOs in the region. To date, it has seen more than 70 people who were formerly homeless housed and supported. In fact, this project recently won the Federal Government's National Homelessness Services Achievement Award in the partnership category.

Education and Training

Our role in education and up-skilling around the goal of ending chronic homelessness has seen the Mercy Foundation host several forums and seminars with key international and local homelessness experts. In early 2009, the Mercy Foundation, in partnership with the City of Sydney hosted 'Housing When?' This was one of the first all day forums to focus almost exclusively on the notion of 'Housing First' and Permanent Supportive Housing. Since then, we have been active in ensuring people like Dr Sam Tsemberis (Founder of Pathways to Housing in the US), Nan Roman (CEO of the US National Alliance to end Homelessness) and Rosanne Haggerty (Founder of Common Ground US) have conducted sessions in many cities around Australia.

These types of opportunities should not be viewed as passive talk fests. While I am sure that some participants attend and leave without taking action – I am aware of several examples where direct action has resulted from these events. The innovation of 'Project 40' in Western Sydney is probably the most tangible example of this that I am aware of.

Vulnerability Index Projects

The Mercy Foundation took the lead role in coordinating 'Registry Week' in inner Sydney in late 2010 that sought to interview and assess inner city rough sleepers. This was greatly assisted by just about every homelessness organisation in the city. The Registry Week projects employing the Vulnerability Index is based on robust health and homelessness research and has seen more than 300 rough sleepers in the inner city interviewed and many prioritised for housing and support. NEAMI *Way2Home*, an outreach team, was the essential service that has followed up with this group.

Through our links with the Australian Common Ground Alliance we have also assisted in the implementation of the Registry Week project Hobart and we will be assisting with a similar project in outer western Sydney. These initiatives generate a local register of people who are experiencing homelessness who are prioritised by their vulnerability. It is these people that often fall through the social safety net and service system cracks and

live on our streets for years. This information is provided (with participants' consent) to local community services to ensure the most vulnerable people are housed and supported as soon as it is possible. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing shortage of public and affordable housing, this still can take some time. This is especially the case when the housing that is needed also requires ongoing support in order to sustain that housing.

Grants to End Homelessness

I cannot write this article without mentioning an initiative introduced in 2008, the 'Grants to End Homelessness' Program. Although the Mercy Foundation is a very modest sized organisation with quite limited funds, it made the decision to focus its philanthropy on actions that clearly prevent or end individual or group homelessness. In some instances, the Program has also funded research that might build the evidence for effective models.

In fact, as our Grants criteria notes: Applicants must be able to specify measurable outcomes from the initiative. Those outcomes will need to show that the project has contributed to ending chronic homelessness or contributed substantially to increasing knowledge about the pathways into and out of homelessness – thereby increasing our understanding of how to prevent and how to end homelessness. All applications will need to outline their evaluation strategy and make clear how such outcomes will be measured.

Since 2008, some interesting projects have been supported. These have included the Marist Youth Care 'Affordable Housing for Life' project that aimed to teach young people skills and work together to build housing.

Other supported projects include Guthrie House, an outreach project for women that aims to provide ongoing support and help to sustain permanent housing and the Murwillumbah Community Centre that has been providing a small program for the past few years that aims to link people who are

homeless with private rental opportunities in their local community.

If you would like to read more about some of the work undertaken under the Grants to End Homelessness Program, visit our website at www.mercyfoundation.com.au

Home in a Box

In 2012 the Mercy Foundation is rolling out a brand new project. This project 'Home in a Box', it is a program that, through private sponsorship, we are able to offer to people who are moving into housing from homelessness. One of the difficulties experienced by organisations trying to house people out of homelessness is to source the goods and home wares that turn a house into a 'home'. Accessing good quality home wares can also be an effective way to helping people sustain their housing.

The title of the project is a play on words. We call it 'Home in a Box' because home wares belong in a box, people certainly do not.

People belong in homes. ■

The Role of Philanthropy in Addressing Social Need

By Sue Fitzpatrick,
Policy and Communications
Officer, Council to Homeless
Persons

Introduction

This article is written by someone new to the homelessness sector. It offers a perspective that may assist the specialist homelessness sector to think through some of the issues related to engaging philanthropy in addressing homelessness through a partnership approach.

I see a number of opportunities for philanthropy and the corporate sector to contribute to Council to Homeless Person's (CHP) mission to end homelessness in Victoria. My experience of philanthropy is as a 'donor' or professional volunteer working with groups seeking funding for long-term assistance.

The articles in this edition of *Parity* reflect the myriad approaches organisations have made to philanthropy to assist the homelessness sector to improve service provision and to develop programs that will help end homelessness. There is a real opportunity to capitalise on what has been achieved so far and to progress it further while still advocating for long term sustainable solutions to homelessness from government at all levels.

Sustainable Philanthropy

My experience over the past three years has been with Reichstein Foundation (RF), a social change philanthropic organisation based in Melbourne. RF differs from other trusts and foundations in that it seeks to address the root causes of social issues, and the homelessness sector is one which may benefit from this approach. The impact of the global financial crisis resulted in the reduction of funds available for distribution; and in response RF suspended the distribution of its annual budge and implemented a 'Donor Briefing' and 'Donor Circle' approach to bolster existing projects.

The Donor Briefing and Donor Circle programs work by identifying private and public donors and philanthropic organisations committed to a particular issue and inviting them to attend a Donor Briefing. Up to eight grant seeker groups make a 10 minute presentation outlining their aims and needs. If there is enough interest from potential funders at the end of the session, a Donor Circle is formed and grant seekers are given an opportunity to present their project in greater detail. It is at this point that one or more donors will fund all or part of a project, and in some cases a collective agreement will be reached with donors to fund a project over a number of years. The advantage of this is that with a more substantial and longer term commitment a project can undertake a piece of work without the need to regularly seek additional funding.

My role as a donor volunteer is working with grant seekers to assist with their preparation for a detailed presentation to potential funders. This involves background work such as preparing communications plans, providing advice on government policy and critiquing the presentation from the group prior to the Donor Circle meeting. This important preliminary work assists groups to be thoroughly prepared for this unique opportunity.

Raising Awareness

Historically philanthropy has played a significant role in filling gaps in services in the community sector. Funding from this source to assist homelessness services to provide improved or new services have been successful to varying degrees around Australia. The articles submitted in this edition of *Parity* reflect the programs and services that have benefited from a timely injection of funds from a philanthropic source. However, there are few philanthropic organisations that specifically focus a large proportion of their granting capacity to homelessness.

Traditionally philanthropy has been viewed as a resource to support and nurture new ideas and opportunities to introduce novel or augmented projects, or assistance with purchasing physical resources such as equipment. It also funds research and evaluation into areas that are not viewed by governments and sometimes the general community as mainstream. Early examples of these issues included indigenous or environmental projects which are now included in mainstream service provision.

Philanthropy can also provide objective and evidence based feedback to governments on the veracity of social and community sector policies and programs, as well as offering advice on where the greatest social investment is required.

Another key role for philanthropy is in advocacy on issues that have little or no public voice. An example of this is the support and nurture provided by RF to Gippsland Asbestos Related Diseases Support Inc. (GARDS) established to support asbestos disease sufferers and their families. GARDS was part of a larger group that successfully lobbied for the James Hardie Industries compensation package. It has also advocated for additional health and support services for asbestos sufferers, and advises government and other service providers on research issues and the production of information to educate the community about asbestos related issues.

Successful Collaborations

Collaboration with the private sector along with philanthropy is a reasonably new concept for long term sustainable endeavours. Successful projects such as the HomeGround – Elizabeth Street apartment complex in the heart of Melbourne which houses 131 formerly chronically homeless and low income tenants is a positive example of collaboration. It is a solid partnership between HomeGround Services, Yarra Community Housing, the Victorian and Federal governments, the Victorian Property Fund and construction and development company Grocon. This innovative response to homelessness demonstrates how collaboration can work in permanently eliminating homelessness for a group of people who would otherwise struggle to find secure and appropriate homes.

Conclusion

There are always opportunities to work more cooperatively and collaboratively to end homelessness in Australia. Using philanthropic and private sector funds is a way of developing, augmenting or evaluating new ways to try and find the most sustainable ways to ensure that all who live in Australia can do so with dignity and security.

In the end though, we all need a home – whatever that may mean to each of us. We will continue to rely on governments to make adequate provision for building affordable and accessible housing stock, and support services required to keep our community healthy and safe. ■

Early Intervention Strategic Grant Making:
The Ian Potter Foundation Prevention of Homelessness Grants

By Dr Alberto Furlan,
Program Manager,
Community Wellbeing,
The Ian Potter Foundation

The projects funded through the Foundation's Community Wellbeing Program Area are a barometer – in range and scope – of the key issues at play in the community. Collectively the hundreds of applications the Foundation receives in this area each year help it to gain a sense of the most promising approaches being undertaken by Australia's leading community organisations to address some of the nation's most complex problems.

As part of an ongoing planning process, in 2009 a comprehensive review and assessment of the Community Wellbeing Program Area was undertaken as it is consistently the largest and busiest funding program of the Foundation. In the past the Foundation made a number of grants to organisations that addressed homelessness, but had not identified homelessness as a particular priority for funding. Homelessness is a complex issue and a key indicator of the health of our society. Following the review, the Foundation decided to make this issue a focus of its large granting in the Community Wellbeing Program Area.

Once the Foundation had identified the issue of homelessness as a focus for funding, the next step was to understand how limited funding could be used for maximum impact. Homelessness Australia gave a clear indication that prevention and early intervention are at the heart of the solution to this complex and difficult problem. This suggested approach has become central to the Foundation's philosophy which stresses the importance of early interventions and services that address the root causes of homelessness, namely domestic violence, family breakdown, mental illness and substance abuse.

Guiding the Foundation's grant-making and operations are a set of key innovative principles that are embodied in the variety of projects supported. These principles include:

- *Responsiveness to the diverse needs of the community*: This allows the Foundation to be flexible in its range of funding

- *Large multi-year grants*: This provides organisations with financial support to deliver larger and more impactful programs

- *Partnership with other funders*: The Foundation actively seeks partnerships with other funders, including government, corporate and other philanthropic bodies, in order to support large programs that would be unlikely to be supported by a single funding agency. This approach also helps to actively leverage support against our grant.

- *Evaluation and dissemination of best practice*: The Foundation supports programs that have strong in-built evaluation methodology. This provides successful programs with an evidence base to seek further funding and be replicated.

- *Value-add philanthropy and sectoral leadership*: The Foundation regularly hosts and facilitates forums and roundtables to introduce best practice approaches and grant-making in the area of homelessness.

Since the implementation of the Foundation's large grants focus on homelessness, more than 40 per cent of the total Community Wellbeing budget has been directed to that area. Since January 2009 the Foundation has invested over $3 million in the area of homelessness and homelessness prevention. The Foundation continues to work actively with community, non-profits, government and philanthropy to identify partnerships and best practice approaches.

The measure of success at The Ian Potter Foundation is the impact and effectiveness of its grants. Increasingly, achieving this requires a strategic and planned approach to grant-making that takes into consideration the variety of circumstances (economic, cultural, and geographical) in which individuals and organisations operating in homelessness exist. The diverse list of projects supported in the recent past bear witness to this approach.

Victoria: Children's Protection Society's *Integrated Care and Education* program provides intensive child care programs designed to address the deficits disadvantaged pre-school children experience at home. At the same time parents receive in-home 'wrap around' services designed to improve their parenting, relationship and pre-employment skills. This approach is imperative to ensure that those most disadvantaged do not fall into the cycle of homelessness.

Victoria: Melbourne Citymission's *Education Pathways for Young People* program provides youth at risk of early school leaving with crisis and medium term accommodation alongside accredited education programs. Students are provided with additional support systems vital to their success as part of the overall program. This work includes life skills, basic literacy/numeracy and specialist help with career guidance, job seeking and placement.

Victoria: The Big Issue's *Community Subscriptions Ambassadors* project builds the financial support for the magazine's women's distribution centres. This is achieved through a network of pro-bono marketeers enlisted from the extensive Rotary network. The distribution centres provide a safe environment for homeless women who seek flexible employment and prefer not to sell the magazines on the street.

New South Wales: Mission Australia's Centre in Western Sydney provides accommodation options and support services for homeless families, enabling them to address significant issues, move from crisis to medium-term accommodation and ultimately secure longer term housing. The Centre operates a wrap-around model containing accommodation, child and family support, family day care, health service and various other community services.

South Australia: Welfare Rights Centre's *Connecting Country to City Legal Clinic Services* program provides disadvantaged individuals in rural and remote areas with pro-bono legal support via telecommunication technologies (Skype) allowing face-to-face accessible communication. This counselling helps people to stay in their homes in the face of difficult economic and legal circumstances, thus reducing the risk of homelessness in rural and remote South Australia.

Northern Territory: The Katherine Women's Crisis Centre's *Therapeutic support services for children affected by trauma* employs a dedicated Child Therapist to complete the organisation's holistic approach for homeless families that have experienced domestic violence. This is important as often women's shelters are under resourced to provide support for traumatised children.

The Foundation has not shied away from the need to support sometimes difficult and challenging early intervention programs. Many of these programs struggle to attract support from other funders and yet these programs have great potential to change the life circumstances of many individuals and break the cycle of homelessness. It is for this reason that the Foundation is committed to its role in this space. ∎

A New Model of Engaged Philanthropy:
The Michael Project and MISHA

By Bronwen Dalton and Kathryn Di Nicola, Mission Australia

Effective philanthropy can have a profoundly positive impact on community organisations' practice and the people and communities they serve. This is one example of a donor and recipient organisation forming a close partnership to radically change the lives of homeless men in Sydney.

Introduction

Mission Australia (MA) has received an unprecedented private financial contribution to address homelessness in Australia. The donor, who has chosen to remain anonymous, has provided two grants totalling $5 million over six years. This is one of the largest donations to support homelessness in Australian history. The donor's mission is based on a vision of a world in which homelessness is more effectively addressed through projects that not only prioritise innovation in service delivery but have a rigorous research component focussed on identifying what approaches work and then using this knowledge to inform future policy and practice. This engaged mode of philanthropy is thus not simply looking to deliver another service, but to create 'game-changing' service innovations and new policy directions. Herein lie the origins of two ground-breaking homelessness projects: the Michael Project and its successor, MISHA (Michael's Intensive Supported Housing Accord).

Philanthropist as Engaged Partner

According to High-Engagement Philanthropy: *A Bridge to a More Effective Social Sector*, a 2004 report produced by Venture Philanthropy Partners and Community Wealth Ventures, high-engagement philanthropy can be defined as 'an approach in which funders or 'investors' are directly and personally engaged and involved with their investment partners beyond providing financial support. Often this engagement takes the form of strategic assistance, which can include long-term planning, board and executive recruitment, coaching, help in raising capital, assuming board roles, accessing networks, and leveraging relationships to identify additional resources and facilitate partnerships.'

These elements have characterised the partnership between a philanthropist and Mission Australia as they work together on the Michael Project and its successor, MISHA. The donor approached Mission Australia in 2007 with a strong personal commitment to helping homeless men and an offer to fund an innovative service that would make a real difference in people's lives. Together they designed the Michael Project – a significant departure in homelessness services due to its emphasis on assertive case management and the provision of extensive wrap around services.

Throughout the life of the project the donor adopted a hands-on approach. For example, the donor has been a key member of a steering group to scope and design the project and the governance around its implementation. Behind the scenes, the donor has been an important advocate for the policy responses informed by the project findings and outcomes.

Unprecedented Priority Given to Research

Due to financial constraints, community service organisations often have little choice but to prioritise resourcing service delivery over research. Unusually, and perhaps exceptionally, in the case of the Michael Project and MISHA, MA was able to do both.

From the outset the donor made a clear case that lasting change cannot be achieved by better service delivery alone. What is also needed is a significant improvement in our understanding of what is effective and our capacity to replicate such an approach across Australia. This involves in-depth, large scale and well-resourced research that is focussed on capturing key learnings. In doing so, the research can produce the evidence base to inform advocacy for more effective homelessness services and policies.

To realise this goal MA and the donor put together a collaborative partnership of university academics and MA staff to undertake in-depth research centred on clients involved in the Michael Project. The research was led by Dr Paul Flatau of the University of Western Australia and also included researchers from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at UNSW and the Research and Social Policy Unit at Mission Australia. Many of the same researchers are now also involved in the more recently established MISHA project.

Outcomes and Research

Key findings from the Michael Project include:
- there are substantial benefits of front-loading service delivery both in terms of outcomes for clients and for the long-term costs of reducing homelessness;
- there are some key characteristics of effective case management

practices, including taking an active and respectful approach and inviting people to participate;
- stable housing is critical to client outcomes; and
- access to a range of health and wellbeing services directly enhances social and economic participation.

These results have provided an evidence base that has been used extensively in informing MA service planning for the MISHA initiative which was launched in 2010. Ongoing snapshots of the MISHA research project will be released over the next two years and the final phase of the research will be completed and findings released in early 2014.

The Power of Engaged Philanthropy

Through funding and direct involvement in both the Michael Project and MISHA, the private benefactor has enabled a continuous extension and development of efforts to enhance service delivery to homeless men. The long-term nature of the benefactor's commitment to both the operational and research aspects of the programs has meant that findings from the Michael Project directly and immediately informed the next phase, MISHA. None of this would have been possible without the vision of the donor. In particular this unique brand of philanthropy allowed MA:

- The freedom to experiment: To step well beyond the current method of operating in a way that would not be possible within current government funding mechanisms.
- The opportunity to learn and then immediately reapply: To be able to have the additional opportunity of a second project, building on the first and addressing its weaknesses, combined with a similar research program, may be commonplace in a the lifeline of a new technology, but certainly not in the development of social services.
- The leadership and resources to make a difference to services and policy: By playing a lead role in policy advocacy through their circle of influence the donor has spread the word: the project's results are being investigated by others in the sector as well as informed the government's White Paper on homelessness.

The Michael and MISHA projects provide a model for future partnerships between philanthropists, homelessness services, social researchers and advocates. Now the next great challenge is to find ways to resource the ongoing quest to find out what works, when and how. ■

BOOM BOOM KABOOM
Being Homeless in the Good Times

By Kathleen Noonan, from the Second Chance Committee

Female homelessness in this country isn't going away. It is getting worse. In places like Mackay, Gladstone and south-east Queensland, the resources boom is devouring the low-cost accommodation market. Vulnerable women and children – at the bottom of Queensland's real-estate food chain – are the hardest hit.

Working in this economic climate are a range of government agencies providing ''the bricks'' – the buildings and basic services for those homeless. But too often there are gaps in the service. A decade ago two Brisbane women identified funding gaps in Queensland and set out to provide 'the cement' missing.

Founded by academic and writer Dale Spender and businesswoman Marjorie Morton a decade ago, Second Chance was started when the cause of homeless women was virtually unheard of. There were more than 400 beds in Brisbane for homeless men and about a dozen for women. Yet homeless women numbers were soaring.

Queensland has Australia's second highest rate of homelessness after the NT. Yet, homeless women are mostly invisible in prosperous Brisbane. They do not come out to soup kitchens and coffee vans, for fear of being followed and attacked. Instead they sleep hidden in the city's parks, in drains or in squats, under bridges or else they couch-surf.

Today Second Chance is a committee of nine professional Queensland women, working pro bono, with expertise spanning business, management, marketing, manufacturing, education, media and law. It was recently named as finalist in the prestigious National Homelessness Services Achievement Awards, which recognise extraordinary work by organisations delivering services to the homeless.

With the ever-evolving homelessness scene in Queensland – the 2011 floods and cyclones, the financial crisis and the on-going, unprecedented resources boom - it has been a steep learning curve. Second Chance has had to evolve to meet the changing needs. Here are some of the lessons we've learnt.

LESSON No 1: Don't duplicate what others do well

Second Chance differs from many other homelessness fundraising groups. We don't own offices or duplicate services or pay salaries. We have no hefty administration costs. Apart from insurance, every cent goes to the cause.

We identify the best models working in Queensland and fund them.
- By funding proven rent-gap models like Brisbane Housing Company.
- By buying tickets home for young homeless indigenous women wanting to go back to family and country.
- By supporting emergency shelters such as Najidah Domestic Violence Refuge.
- By funding new furniture packages for women who have nothing moving into apartments.
- By providing support for women at risk of homelessness through partnerships with proven organisations such as Micah.

LESSON No 2: The little things are the big things

The committee meets monthly, plans all year round, is nimble and its projects and programs have evolved to meet changing needs. When we started, we believed providing a bed for someone sleeping rough was the fix. We quickly learnt that this is just the beginning. We have recognised that 'The Little Things' are important. The Little Things are the small incidental hurdles that can send a person hurtling into homelessness, even after they have been housed – a medical bill, a fridge breaking down, lack of support, inadequate security, sliding behind on rent. Through a partnership with Micah in Brisbane, we fund these things.

The Little Things ARE the big things.

When a woman is safely housed in a Brisbane Housing Company (BHC) unit, sometimes they arrive with all their possessions in just one striped bag. We provide funding to BHC for new good-quality furniture packages. Many women voice a great sense of pride in this. Some are overwhelmed. Often it is the first time they have owned something new. It enables them to shed feelings of shame and build self-esteem, to live independently, to build a social circle and a life. We help them to become self-sufficient – a home can lead to a job and drastically improved health. For some women the new life means the return of their children from foster care. The little things ARE the big things.

LESSON No 3: Providing a bed is only one step

We are not interested in revolving-door solutions for homelessness. That doesn't make economic sense. So we pick our projects carefully and evaluate them regularly. At the heart of our success is the Bridge the Gap rental model. Second Chance, partnering with the BHC, pays the rental-gap between what women can afford and what needs to be paid. It's often the difference between gaining a home and sleeping rough. Through this model we have helped 400 women who otherwise may have faced sleeping rough.

So far, more than 80 per cent of homeless women we've assisted do not slide into homelessness again. In this sector nationally and globally, that is a remarkable success rate.

LESSON No 4: The homeless woman is Everywoman

Through funding for BHC, Micah and Najidah refuge, Second Chance has helped some of Australia's most vulnerable people, including young mothers, older sick women, indigenous Australians, and women with children fleeing violent households. We have seen the demographic of the women change in the decade since we began. We originally targeted single women sleeping rough with no one to help them. Today Second Chance projects help women with children; older people and teenagers, widows and daughters, women with addictions or those fleeing domestic abuse. Homeless women can be a 14-year-old girl fleeing mum's new abusive boyfriend, or a grandmother turfed out of her own home after signing it over to her kids. Not unusually, a woman with breast cancer who lost her job and couldn't pay the rent sometimes ends up sleeping rough.

In Brisbane, Second Chance is seeing middle-class, middle-aged women with children in private schools who have spiralled into homelessness. We assisted one, Lynette, back into safe and secure housing. All it took for her to lose her old safe life was the death of her husband, an illness and subsequent depression. Divorce can do it too. Many women could be just one calamity away from homelessness.

LESSON No 5: When you help women, you help children

Domestic violence is still the leading cause of homelessness for women, especially

women with children. We have helped fund shelters for abused women and children in south-east Queensland. Shelter workers report how inter-generational abuse now reaches down to three and four generations. One of the targets for this year is to expand our assistance to women and children fleeing abusive homes, to help break the cycle.

LESSON No 6:
The corporate world wants to help

Second Chance has learnt the corporate world wants to help. You just have to communicate to them the problem, how specifically they can help and how they will get bang for their buck. Most companies want to partner in a way that is not just about donating money. Second Chance has worked with some of Queensland's leading corporations and business people to raise the profile of homelessness. Our recent successful partnership with the University of Queensland Business School has not just meant sponsorship of our annual Corporate Breakfast Series but future research opportunities to update Queensland's homeless statistics, and a documentary making project.

LESSON No 7:
Never presume

Every woman who has fled domestic violence has a different story. Every shelter has different needs. Every person at risk of homelessness is that way for different reasons. We don't presume to know their needs. We ask: What do you need? What doesn't government cover? What is your wish list? At the moment, we are in the middle of assessing the needs of Queensland's domestic violence refuges, outside the things funded by government.

There are always surprises. ∎

Details for Second Chance Programme Fundraising Group at www.secondchanceprogramme.com.au

Some of the Second Chance committee members on site at a new Brisbane Housing Company apartment block in the Valley, Brisbane.

More than Just Funding: Philanthropy and Service Innovation: Sacred Heart Mission's Journey to Social Inclusion

By Shane Austin,
Director Research and
Partnerships, Lord Mayor's
Charitable Foundation and
Sue Grigg, J2SI Manager
Sacred Heart Mission

Sacred Heart Mission's pilot project, Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) is a long-term and intensive case management program that aims to demonstrate that a well resourced service intervention can break the cycle of long-term homelessness.

The 2007-2010 strategic planning process at Sacred Heart Mission (SHM) identified that the existing homeless service system was not effectively responding to the situation of people who are long-term homeless and who have complex needs. SHM decided that a new approach was required to better meet the needs of this vulnerable group of people and that this was a priority.

As a result SHM began exploring alternative approaches to meeting the needs of people experiencing long-term homelessness. The organisation reviewed international and Australian research, consulted with other homelessness service providers and drew on their own practice expertise to develop a tailored program designed to break the cycle of long-term homelessness. Importantly in undertaking this work, SHM focused on the issue of *what is required to achieve sustainable outcomes* rather than being constrained by the *availability of financial or other resources*.

The service model that was developed delivers intensive case management support over a three year period, a therapeutic response to acknowledge and respond to the trauma that is both a cause and a consequence of long-term homelessness and a structured skills building program designed to enhance participant self-esteem, skills and social connections.

Unsurprisingly, J2SI is a comparatively expensive program and after developing the model SHM dedicated considerable effort to generating the $3.8 million necessary to pilot the program with 40 people. This led to the establishment of partnerships with nine philanthropic organisations.

J2SI is one clear example of how close collaboration between a homelessness service and philanthropy has benefits for all the parties involved: homeless services, the philanthropic sector and government.

Benefits for Homeless Services

J2SI has demonstrated the important role that philanthropy can play in supporting an innovative, but untested, way of addressing an old and challenging social issue – long-term homelessness. Furthermore, working with philanthropy in delivering the J2SI pilot enabled greater flexibility and creativity. The absence of government funding, service agreements and prescriptive program guidelines, while important for program accountability, can be restrictive. The importance of flexibility and creativity is particularly pertinent when a service model is untested and likely to require adaptation to meet the intended aims and address unanticipated developments as they arise.

This enhanced flexibility and creativity has been critical to the J2SI pilot and has led to significant adaptations to the therapeutic component of the program to better respond to the needs of participants. Greater flexibility has also enhanced service monitoring and reporting through providing SHM with the freedom to custom build an electronic client management, data collection and reporting system. This database has allowed for the collection and recording of detailed information on key measures developed by the J2SI Steering Group that were designed to identify challenges as they emerge. It is SHM's experience that the flexibility afforded by philanthropic funding has the potential to significantly enhance client outcomes.

Benefits for Philanthropy

J2SI has provided an opportunity to enhance philanthropy's understanding of a complex and challenging social issue and has given philanthropy an opportunity to broaden its reach. It has allowed philanthropic funders to use elements of the philanthropic tool box beyond making a simple grant in response to an unsolicited application. Along with eight other philanthropic funders, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (Foundation) was able to participate in the refining or transforming of a service delivery model to assist people experiencing long-term homelessness.

The philanthropic funders' contribution went beyond providing a grant and involved two key mechanisms. Firstly, SHM convened

six monthly meetings where a detailed update on service delivery was provided to all funders. This provided an opportunity for philanthropy to have an ongoing connection with the project that resulted in funders being better informed on the nature of long-term homelessness and the challenges associated with addressing it. Secondly, philanthropy was represented on the J2SI Steering Group through the participation of The RE Ross Trust and the Foundation. This involvement in the Steering Group has been a key factor in enabling a philanthropic contribution to a policy intervention because the funder's involvement is not for the purpose of 'keeping an eye on the money' or limited to grant and finance topics. Those working within the philanthropic field have varied professional backgrounds whose knowledge and skills are often underutilised. The genuine opportunity to participate on the J2SI Steering Group allowed for these skills and experiences to be used to inform the project's implementation.

Philanthropic involvement in J2SI enabled participation in a project which aimed at extending the outcomes and benefits beyond the 40 project participants and to engage and influence the development of public policy. Engaging in social change in the form of policy reform is something that philanthropic sector has often sought but unfortunately, not always successfully. J2SI has provided philanthropy with a new opportunity to tackle policy reform.

It is important to remember that there are always more requests for philanthropic support than can be met by philanthropic funders, and it is obvious that the requests range across an array of social issues. Philanthropic organisations' targeting of the limited resources in addressing social problems varies depending on the stage the social problem is in its evolution. Homelessness, as a social problem, remains largely misunderstood in public discourse, but is arguably well-evolved in terms of public funding and the range and amount of service responses. So at this stage in its evolution – a plateau in service model delivery – it is imperative to reinvigorate a change in the policy and practice response, in order to reduce homelessness.[1]

J2SI provides philanthropy with an avenue to participate in policy reform through funding, disseminating results in our networks, and promoting program innovation (as opposed to renovation). It also provided an environment for

philanthropy to mature and learn as an active participant over the medium and long-term.

The J2SI evaluation component of the program is also critical to enhancing philanthropy's contribution to policy debate and reform. SHM and funders recognise that J2SI may not meet all of its intended aims and this was a risk that both parties were prepared to bear. Further, both parties recognise that it is just as important to discover what does not work (and document it) as it is to discover what does work and the J2SI evaluation has been designed to capture outcomes across all domains.

RMIT University is undertaking an evaluation of J2SI and the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at Melbourne University is doing an economic evaluation. These two universities are working closely to implement a four year randomised control trial that will track changes in health, housing, social and economic participation over a four year period and compare outcomes for those who received J2SI services and those who have not. RMIT is also undertaking a process evaluation. The rigour, buy-in and

transparency of the evaluation to date has meant that whatever the outcomes, the record and evaluation will assist with future advances in addressing long-term homelessness.

Although it has been around a long time, evaluation has again become a catch cry in contemporary philanthropy. The integration of evaluation into the J2SI program has been important to philanthropic funders and for public policy advocacy.

Benefits for Government

While J2SI is almost entirely philanthropically funded, the program has been implemented in close partnership with government. The Victorian Government, who provided funds to support the J2SI evaluation, has been involved during all stages of implementation and delivery of the pilot through representation on the J2SI Steering Group, the Service Delivery Reference Group and the Evaluation Reference Group. The Federal Government is also represented on the J2SI Steering Group and has been an active partner since its inception.

This has provided opportunities for a detailed understanding of project management, operational successes and challenges, the evaluation methodology and program outcomes.

In addition, the J2SI evaluation outlined above has much to offer policy makers and program designers. ∎

Footnote

1. Assumptions based on a model developed by Jodi Sandfort, see SANDFORT, J. 2008. Using lessons from public affairs to inform strategic philanthropy. Non profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 37.

The Corporate Sector and Homeless Older Women

Freya Latona* speaks to two prominent community leaders about the role of philanthropy, and the involvement of the corporate and private sectors in addressing homelessness for older women.

The involvement of the philanthropic, corporate and private sector in tackling homelessness in our lucky country is a complex and vexed issue. Of particular concern is the increased risk of homelessness facing older women in Australia.

According to official data released in the *'It could be you: Female, Single, Older and Homeless'* report by the Older Women's Network released in 2010, for the first time in our history, older women outnumber older men in requests for shelter services. Alarmingly, women sixty-five and over seeking crisis shelter in Sydney more than doubled from 2007 to 2009.

Given Treasurer Wayne Swan's recent announcement that the Federal Government is providing cash incentives to businesses that employ workers over fifty, it is clear that the involvement of the corporate and private sector is both lacking and entirely necessary to help redress the growing trend of unemployment for older Australian women.

Former Telstra Businesswoman of the Year and former Independent candidate for the seat of Richmond, Julie Boyd is an experienced national and international speaker, professional facilitator, psychologist, educator, coach and mentor. Julie's particular interest is Women and Leadership, and her area of expertise is in creating Sustainable, Healthy Societies. She has written about the homelessness situation facing older women on Wendy Harmer's blog, 'The Hoopla'.

The 2008 Australian Government White Paper on Homelessness called for the corporate and private sector to become more concretely involved in working to reduce homelessness. What is your opinion of philanthropic, corporate and private sector responses to homelessness in Australia?

It appears to me that homelessness is still misunderstood and of peripheral interest. It's not a 'sexy' issue so gains little attention. There is a broad spectrum of reasons why people become homeless, including, but not restricted to, relationship issues, severe financial problems, inherited debt, mental illness, addiction, and sudden change of circumstance. Any one, or a combination of these factors can throw an individual's life into utter turmoil.

The largest group at immediate risk which should be of concern to the government is women who are pre-retirement age. Particularly those over 55 who are attempting to survive on welfare which is usually highly restricted due to the inflexibility and bureaucratic nature of means testing. Most survive on minimal finances and fear. They are terrified to say anything to anyone in case they lose their meagre 'benefit' and are often misinformed, but more often have had a bad experience with a purportedly 'helpful' agency.

Severe restrictions in access to superannuation funds provide a major concern to this group. If they have mortgages they are forced to pay these to banks are inflated rates, rather than being able to use their superannuation funds to pay off the mortgage and keep the interest 'in house'.

Are the barriers to the development and implementation of philanthropic, corporate and private sector responses to homelessness systemic or situational?

The barriers to response are both situational and systemic, and a major concern is that policy makers are often career politicians, on good salaries who have no understanding of the practical pressures extreme poverty has. Addressing the issue means understanding it in the first place, within context. This, in turn, requires a comprehension of the general ecology of homelessness, but also an understanding of the impact of sudden circumstantial change. If triggers and potential individual impacts are not understood, it is difficult to generate a more systemic response.

Barriers in all three sectors for older workers tend to be mainly attitudinal and based on assumptions, stereotypes and misunderstandings of motives and capacities. Redressing homelessness requires addressing the causative factors within the context of a broader societal ecology. However, it must also be noted that the same issues which will redress homelessness, will also redress a number of other issues including law and order, family breakdown, and frustration-related violence.

What do you see as the role of philanthropy, and the corporate and private sector to respond to this issue? I.e. should it be made easier for women over 55 and above to find work to avoid potential homelessness? And can the private sector initiate a response independently of government?

Women over 55 often feel both invisible to the community as a whole, pigeon-holed by out-dated stereotyping, and powerless to change their situations. As a result many women are trying desperately to survive when they cannot, by 'keeping up appearances' so that their circumstances do not become embarrassingly obvious to others. The majority of women are not driven by financial need, other than basic survival, but they are by psychological need. As such they do seek meaningful work and/or participation, and find it insulting to have their PhDs and Masters Degrees relegated to obscurity by offers of supermarket shelf-stacking or nanny duties as the only available work options. The private sector could take a lead by recognising this and taking steps to redress the issue through:

a.   Initiating positive discrimination programs;

b.   Enabling flexibility of work hours and job-sharing;

c.   Establishing skills and professional qualities- based websites to enable more effective matching of people and positions;

d.   Valuing the coaching, mentoring and supportive abilities and capacities of older and retired workers, and

e.   Employing older workers specifically to guide and mentor younger workers.

What do you propose as a business model for assisting older workers transition back into meaningful work to avoid potential homelessness?

a. We need the immediate establishment of a (small, flexible) body to study current and future impacts of potential homelessness, with best practice ideas and solutions, and make workable recommendations to governments at all levels.

b. We need to reframe issues such as the increase in singledom, from fragmentation, loneliness and potential homelessness, into opportunities to develop new types of collective living as the basis for a healthier society.

c. As we move into a new era of valuing information and knowledge, we must not just value physical work as in the mining sector, or intellectual capacities such as internet functionality, but refocus on the concept of a 'smart society' where human interaction, social skills and community building capacities are equally valued, as this is the area where older people can often make the most contribution.

We are at the beginning of an extraordinary and largely unacknowledged cultural change which will have immense consequences into the future.

Rosalind Strong AM is the Chair of the Sydney Community Foundation, which is a public not for profit philanthropic fund where donors combine their gifts to build a growing and permanent endowment for the benefit of the community of Greater Sydney. Ros worked for 35 years in the NSW Public Sector, retiring as Director of the NSW Heritage Office in 2002. Her previous position was Assistant Director General in the Department of Education and Training Co-ordination.

Tell us about the SWF report, A Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney. What were the main findings about older women facing homelessness?

The Portrait asserts that while many things are improving for women in Greater Sydney, these improvements have not affected all women equally. Sydney has some of the most influential, most educated and wealthiest women in Australia, but it also has some of the least powerful, most disadvantaged and poorest women in Australia. For many women and girls in Greater Sydney today's reality is one of constraint, insecurity and challenge. Some disadvantages for some of these women have become more entrenched over the last decades.

The paper on Women and Housing highlights the experience of older women in terms of the combined factors of housing trends, demographics, the impact of ageing, and the financial disadvantage of women. It demonstrates that being older and single is to be at housing risk and points to the social and economic impacts of divorce and separation on the women's capacity. It identifies the new face of homelessness as single, older women given the increasing number of women in the age group in the coming decades and their poor economic status in retirement.

To what extent is it important that the philanthropic, corporate and private sector get involved to help combat homelessness facing some older women in the community?

Government intervention alone cannot break the cycle of disadvantage. There is an emerging broad range of literature which points to evidence of increasing numbers of older women entering the homeless population and there is concern that this demand for housing cannot be met.

Our goal is to grow philanthropic funds which can be targeted specifically for women and girls to carefully selected, grassroots initiatives offering solutions to critical issues faced by Sydney women and girls. We will connect $3 million in philanthropic funds to projects that will spark sustained social investment.

We are excited about the dialogue sparked by this research project – among potential donors, leaders from the public, private and not for profit sectors, and the community in general. This gives us confidence that together we can make lasting change to the often hidden areas of disadvantage for Sydney's women and girls.

What are some of the problems experienced in the development and implementation of these philanthropic, corporate and private sector responses?

This is a big question and of course it is necessary to take the long view on a problem such as housing. The SWF is at the beginning of its endeavour. We hope to work with others more experienced in the field to work through the ways in which we can play a role in eliminating the gaps in provision. We know the community wishes to address preventable social challenges. Many are horrified to hear there are older women at risk of homelessness in Greater Sydney. We are keen to learn from and bring to collaborative discussions, the ideas of Community Foundations in North America and in the UK and Europe.

Do you have any examples of successful initiatives?

One of the many success stories of the Sydney Women's Fund is its support for a project helping to break the cycle of homelessness for at risk women and their children in inner city Sydney.

A grant of less than $10,000 to the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre helped to employ a case worker for the Centre's Outreach Support Program, and it is delivering exceptional results.

The Outreach Support Program assists disadvantaged women not only in dealing with the immediacy of their homelessness but to look beyond their crisis to sustainable solutions for secure, long-term accommodation.

In its first six months, the program exceeded expectations. It has supported 15 women to find housing and, importantly, to keep it, by assisting them to access counselling, mental health and drug and alcohol treatment; prevent breakdown of their tenancies; and to communicate and advocate for themselves.

Helen Williams, Service Manager at the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre, said, *'The funding from the Sydney Women's Fund has meant we've been able to support women before crises occur, assisting them to resolve the problems to prevent loss of their accommodation. This kind of intervention really is helping to break the cycle of homelessness among the most disadvantaged women.'*

How have Barclays Capital corporate strategies worked alongside Sydney Women's Fund?

Barclay's Capital was the SWF's founding partner for the Greater Sydney Portrait. Their generous grant of $40,000 enabled us to develop an EOI which we sent to various social researchers, and we were really pleased to be able to engage Australia Street to do the quantitative research i.e. collation of existing data and collection of new data aggregated to produce the Portrait Report. Another social research agency was appointed for the qualitative research with four cohorts of women we called 'Circles of Women' – identified through the research as those most in need. We wanted to listen to the voices of women whose lives are described in the data, to inform our next steps. ■

*Freya Latona is the recipient of the 2011 Guy Morrison Journalism Prize. She is a tutor at the University of Technology, Sydney and is currently undertaking a PhD in Australian writing and journalism.

Philanthropy: A Relationship with Homelessness!

**By Shane Austin,
Director Research and
Partnerships Lord Mayor's
Charitable Foundation, Chair
Philanthropy Australia's
Addressing Homelessness
Affinity Group (Melbourne)**

Social problems are often seen as complex or *wicked problems*.[1] Philanthropy is not a homogenous field and so there are always risks when discussing philanthropy and its involvement in a particular social problem like homelessness. However, we can mitigate that risk by making some assumptions.

Firstly, not all philanthropic institutions are inclined to actively participate in responding to homelessness.

Secondly, those who are interested will want to participate to varying degrees.

With these assumptions in mind we can proceed to a discussion of how philanthropy is responding to homelessness.

In this article, I will start with what I have learned from my experience at the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (Foundation). I will then discuss the engagement of philanthropy with homelessness more broadly. Finally, I will highlight two responses to homelessness from the United States (US). I believe this is worthy of mention as the philanthropic sector is more developed in the US, and alongside its engagement with government, has in recent times been devoted to homelessness collaborations.

The trustees of the Foundation demonstrated considerable foresight when they committed to addressing homelessness as one of its Community Initiatives prior to the release of the Green Paper in 2008. The opportunity to commence a concerted effort in this field coincided with the greater promotion and awareness of homelessness that was instigated by the Federal Government at the time. The Foundation had supported homelessness services in one form or another for all of its 89 years. However, the decision to commit a third of its funding initially over a three period was a new approach to responding to homelessness.

How Have we Engaged?

The first level of engagement was to understand the issue of homelessness. To develop this understanding required two conditions to be met; firstly, a willingness to dedicate resources to the endeavour and secondly, to gain access to a broad range of stakeholders. For any philanthropic organisation there must be a baseline understanding of an issue if significant funding ($7m in our case) is to be committed. This meant allocating time and human resources to engage in a broad consultation with government, service providers, researchers, business community leaders and other philanthropic organisations to ensure that the understanding is not limited or constrained. This is particularly important for philanthropy (and arguably private sector stakeholders) as our view of an issue can be obscured by the way requests for funding are pitched. Moving beyond a donor-recipient relationship to being an active participant is essential.

After holding a number of forums and participation in roundtables we were able to define the position of our philanthropic foundation. It became clear in this process that philanthropy can contribute to the reduction of homelessness by acting as a facilitator, funder, convener and disseminator of solutions.

Secondly, by being willing to participate alongside the community sector and staying engaged with them beyond the short term provided an opportunity for the Foundation to play a part in policy and practice development. For example, being able to participate in the governance of funded projects that have a life beyond service provision, gives philanthropy a role in the policy and practice development. Working with other funders and stakeholders, including government, allows philanthropy to respond more appropriately to the complexity of homelessness. Working this way also fosters the growth of potential solutions and allows philanthropy to act more maturely.

Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) is an example of the willingness of the Foundation to take risks in terms of funding projects. J2SI as a project has inherent risks in terms of its 'successes'. The desire to see an intervention as something larger than the immediate outcome for participants is always a risk, and yet along with other funders, the Foundation was willing to make that commitment.

Being the sole initial funder of the progressive and new 24/7 Melbourne's Road Home, delivered by Project 614 Salvation Army in Melbourne was another 'test' for the Foundation. As the project gathered momentum it received support from people such as Professor Brian Burdekin as well as State Government policy makers. We have learned many lessons along the way that when put into action, resulted in the successful launch of a 24/7 outreach response to homelessness that is linked into additional service development.

Philanthropy can be broadly defined as a private initiative for the public good. Philanthropic action has a great responsibility as it is not dictated by election cycles or corporate interests. This needs to be understood when philanthropic organisations are called to action. Responding to the opportunities represented by 24/7 and J2SI are the outcome of informed philanthropic action.

Having a Seat at the Table

In my role as chair of Philanthropy Australia's Addressing Homelessness I have been exposed to philanthropic sector's involvement in reducing homelessness and its engagement with Federal and State Governments. When meeting with policy decision makers, the philanthropic sector's point of reference and scope is different to that of the community sector or service providers. This can lead to additional outcomes.

As a funder, there are opportunities to see a range of possible responses in different contexts. The funding of many of these responses informs us and enhances our ability to discuss the issues with the relevant Minister. This complements the engagement of philanthropy more broadly across a number of departmental and ministerial portfolios, particularly in Victoria. Indeed, those in government are sometimes surprised that philanthropy has such a 'finger on the pulse'.

In the USA: Funders Together and Office for International and Philanthropic Innovation (Department of Housing and Urban Development)

There is no need to highlight the sheer numbers of people experiencing homelessness in the US. In surmounting the problem of homelessness in the US philanthropic funders and government have attempted to employ new models of operation.

The first model is the development of a national network of funders known as Funders Together. Funders Together was initially established as a project by the Melville Charitable Trust in Boston as a partnership to end chronic homelessness, with a mission 'to harness philanthropy's expanding potential for impact and change to help end homelessness in America'. The network has expanded its aims to address homelessness more broadly. The importance of this network is two-fold. When we think of American philanthropy it is always names like Carnegie, Ford, Gates and Hewlett that come to mind. However, this provides a skewed view.

Many philanthropic organisations in the US are small and medium size, not large well-endowed private foundations and are comparable in size to Australian philanthropic organisations.

The Funders Together network is important for the small funders who are not highly resourced. Individually they are limited in their ability to understand the issues and respond effectively. However, as part of the network they are able to participate in effective implementation, collaboration and advocacy. The network has also developed a repository for philanthropy and engages with its own sector to be more proactive.

Participation in the issues of homelessness requires an informed field. In Australia we are moving toward similar models and we have to continually improve our approach.

While many US Government policies may be subject of criticism, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has made a significant attempt to redress some of these issues. As part of a trip to Washington I was fortunate to participate in a roundtable between Funders Together and HUD. The establishment of an Office for International and Philanthropic Innovation (IPI) has not only provided a resource for the collection of innovative evidenced based approaches to community and housing issues, it has also extended itself in engaging with philanthropy directly. Through ongoing podcasts and webinars, the growth of the network of funders and HUD policy makers has led to genuine avenues for collaboration and dissemination of evidenced based solutions.

Government recognition of philanthropy's insights and contribution has not only informed government policy, it has also added more than just funding dollars. Collectively with Funders Together, whilst dealing with the current issues of the day, HUD has attempted to try new approaches.

That may turn out to be the greatest challenge for Philanthropy's relationship with homelessness. How do we work toward addressing the needs of tomorrow with policy change whilst not neglecting the needs of today? ■

Footnote

1. Wicked Problems, a term coined by Rittell and Webber, (originally used in social planning) describing a problem that is difficult complex and often changing, requiring complex solutions that are not linear. See. Rittell, Horst, and Webber Melvin, 'Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning,' pp. 155–169, *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 4, Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company, Inc., Amsterdam, 1973.

Philanthropic, Corporate and Private Sector

Preventing and Ending Homelessness: A Community Responds

**By Helen Styles,
Community Liaison at
Micah Projects in Brisbane**

Preventing and ending homelessness is an ambitious but achievable goal; it takes a whole community. It requires the combined efforts and resources of government, big and small business, not-for-profit community organisations, faith communities, community groups, schools and the philanthropic community. Brisbane has embraced this challenge and at Micah Projects, we have seen how this is possible. Here we share some of what we have learned to be key success factors in engaging a community to meet a common goal.

A Simple Message

Homelessness is a complex issue and it should never be 'dumbed down', but it is possible to use simple messages to call a community to action. We operate Brisbane's Street to Home service and have engaged a broad section of our city to support the work of moving long-term rough sleepers into housing by creating the 50 Lives 50 Homes campaign. The campaign's communication strategy has a very clear message: we can end chronic homelessness in Brisbane by housing and supporting people, one by one, starting with the most vulnerable.

By setting an initial goal of housing fifty people, we were able to present an achievable target. The message of 'fifty homes for fifty lives', was easy to grasp, and created the urgency for the people whose poor health meant they were vulnerable to death. This message helped draw the efforts and resources needed to access housing supply, furnish each home and build partnerships with healthcare and service providers to support people in their homes. In the 21 months since the campaign launched, 126 people are now housed – nearly one third of 412 people sleeping rough who have been registered by the campaign.

Leveraging Networks

A city is a collection of communities, institutions and networks, and tapping into these can be a great source of support. For instance, building a relationship with a school means building a relationship with a whole community of students, teachers, parents and their extended networks of friends, families and workplaces. Engaging with schools is a great place to start, as are service clubs, community interest groups, businesses and faith communities.

A great example of a network in action is St Elizabeth's Primary School in Tarragindi, which has been collecting toiletries to create Basic Bags for people presenting to Micah Projects for the past five years. Each year a laundry basket is placed in each classroom and for several weeks students bring in soaps, shampoos, toothpaste and other items that their parents have purchased, found spares at home or collected from hotels. One year, parents were invited to place a basket or box at their workplace. This almost doubled the amount of items that were collected and a school of about three hundred students donated nearly six hundred Basic Bags.

The students love it because they create a tangible gift and it is a fun project, while teachers and parents appreciate their children's enthusiasm for a social cause. What we as an organisation do is minimal; it costs about a day's work to organise a certificate or plaque of appreciation, visit the school to say thank you, pack and unpack a van full of Basic Bags and take some photos so the students can see where their gifts go. For this, we receive enough toiletries to distribute for almost the entire year.

Building on such networks can also mean having access to a lot of people when legwork is needed. In order to build a register of the people sleeping rough in Brisbane for the 50 Lives 50 Homes campaign, we needed about 100 volunteers to find and interview each person across three mornings, from 4am-7am. A one-off event that did not require an ongoing commitment and fell outside of regular work hours was an attractive option to people who wanted to contribute. We turned to the St Mary's faith community that started Micah Projects and supportive businesses and within two weeks, we had everyone we needed.

Crowd funding is another form of people power that was new for us and the *Parklife* music festival when it asked its Brisbane patrons last year to donate $1.95 to 50 Lives 50 Homes when they purchased their tickets online. Almost $1,200 was raised and *Parklife* are hoping that support will grow at this year's event.

Practical Giving

We have learned to never underestimate a community's capacity to respond when given a practical job to do. We saw this overwhelmingly in Brisbane when the January 2011 flood waters receded and people took to the streets with brooms and shovels to help their neighbours clean up the muddy mess. Giving people a clear task and asking them to give what they can, whether it is money, time, creativity or networks, can yield amazing results. Toiletry packs, new baby packs, food hampers, toy and book collections for children, are just some of the practical assistance we have received.

This can be clearly seen in the support the 50 Lives 50 Homes campaign has received to establish homes for the 126 people housed so far. The message is simple: we need furniture, whitegoods, appliances, kitchenware, linen and cleaning equipment. Schools, small businesses, community groups, service clubs, individuals and families are responding with a broad range of donations, discounts and in kind support. Furniture and whitegoods suppliers have provided fantastic discount rates on new items that we cannot acquire second hand. 'Home Packs' full of household items are delivered like giant Christmas gifts. Medium to larger sized businesses often prefer the ease of making a financial contribution and so the 50 Companies 50 Lives campaign was created. It asks companies to give $5,000 to establish one home and cover any additional costs such as installing curtains or bathroom guardrails. In total, $52,000 in donations has been received and support continues to flow in.

Cross Sector Partnerships

In Australia we see more and more partnerships across the government, business and community sectors producing amazing projects, especially in social and affordable housing. Brisbane Common Ground is one such project in which a cross sector partnership is delivering 146 units of supportive housing. Each partner has contributed resources that result in a building that would have cost much more if it had been developed in the private sector.

Grocon Constructors has built the project at cost, with no profit or margin and has coordinated consultants, suppliers and subcontractors to contribute at the lowest rates possible. This has leveraged the capital funds provided by the Australian and Queensland governments, meaning more units and other vital building features are included in the final design than the initial budget allowed. The not-for-profit supportive housing partners that will be responsible for the ongoing operation of the building, Micah Projects and Common Ground Queensland, have been able to fundraise to add further value to the building, such as providing household items for tenants and artworks. Working in a government-business-community partnership requires strong relationship

building and respect for the expertise that each partner brings to the table.

Engaging Philanthropy

Working with corporate and private philanthropy has increased our capacity to be more creative and leverage ongoing support for projects. A $40,000 grant from the Mater Foundation got the ball rolling for 50 Lives 50 Homes. It resourced the planning and brought the American experts in this work to Brisbane to guide the campaign and train outreach workers and volunteers. This training was also attended by interstate organisations, and as can also happen in the world of philanthropy, a small grant has had a wide reaching effect. Since 50 Lives 50 Homes began in June 2010, similar campaigns have launched in the Sydney CBD, Greater Western Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart.

Corporate and private philanthropy has been instrumental in helping Micah Projects provide community building activities and programs that help break the social isolation many people experience when they are housed after years of being on the streets. This is the real 'value add' stuff. A $6,000 grant from James N. Kirby Foundation kicked off a weekly community meal and $10,000 from Medico Legal Insurance Group has supported the ongoing costs of providing the meal, with a further $5,000 purchasing equipment and supplies to start an art group. Our Brisbane Common Ground partner, Grocon, has contributed

$10,000 to the Moonlight Magic Dinner Dance, subsidising the tickets for hundreds of people to attend this gala annual event.

Philanthropy should never shy away from funding advocacy. A grant of $25,000 from the RBS Morgans Foundation provided the resources we needed to effectively advocate for a supportive housing project in Brisbane and assist in the formation of a new supportive housing company, Common Ground Queensland to help achieve this goal.

One of the great joys of philanthropic support is the flexibility it can provide. Second Chance is a fundraising group that supports projects for Brisbane women who are homeless. In a sign of the cultivation of relationship and trust that must occur for philanthropy to be effective, it took almost 12 months of negotiating before a funding agreement could be reached. The result is a commitment to an annual discretionary fund of $15,000 towards the costs associated with supporting women to make the move from homelessness to home.

Foundations are often interested in how a grant might be able to provide evidence or leverage resources to support other projects. This was certainly what interested the Ian Potter Foundation when it made a $50,000 grant to compare the cost effectiveness of scattered site and single site supportive housing. The Ian Potter Foundation and Micah Projects both believe that the evidence from this research will better inform future capital and service investment made by government and the private sector into models of supportive housing.

The Mercy Foundation's Grants to End Homelessness program might be the only grant making program in Australia that is targeted to ending homelessness. Micah Projects received $10,000 to implement the UK Homeless Outcomes Star tool for supporting and measuring change in people moving from homelessness. We were also fortunate to receive the Mercy Foundation's 2011 Social Justice Award and were able to put the $5,000 prize money towards installing Wi-Fi in Brisbane Common Ground to assist in bridging the digital divide for tenants.

Conclusion

Micah Projects' experience with the Brisbane community has shown the value of 'thinking and acting locally'. We can never underestimate the potential of our communities to share, provide, or develop the resources not-for-profits need to do our work. The same principles we apply when working with the people we support also apply to the community in which we operate – every person or group has strengths to contribute to their community. Preventing and ending homelessness is not just the domain of the community sector and there are many ways we can engage with our community to work with us towards this goal. ∎

Micah Projects provides a range of homelessness to home support services to families and individuals in Brisbane. www.micahprojects.org.au Facebook.com.au/micahprojects Twitter @micahprojects

Philanthropy and Taxation

By Bryan Lipmann, CEO Wintringham

There is an old blues song that has the memorable line; '*Life is hard. And then you die*'.

While I don't think philanthropy will anytime soon prevent people from dying, if carefully applied, it does have the potential to make life for some people a little less hard than it might otherwise be.

Having relied on philanthropy during all of Wintringham's existence, I am firmly of the view that the role of Australian philanthropy should never be to replicate or replace societal responsibilities, particularly as it relates to the resourcing of welfare services. Australian philanthropy operates in a different space to that of many overseas countries largely because we still have the semblance of a government funded welfare system. We may not be particularly impressed with what passes for public housing, minimum statutory income, public health and aged care services, but they do still exist in Australia in ways that overseas colleagues can only dream about.

Service providers in countries such as America and England are increasingly seeking out philanthropic resources to enable even the most basic of services to continue.

But given the existence of this safety net of services, scarce philanthropic funds should not be directed to competing with these government funded securities.

Recently I was invited to speak to a service club about our work with older people who experience homelessness, and while the talk was well received, it was a well-meaning comment during the ensuring questions that was the most interesting. A gentleman stated that the government should increase funding to Wintringham instead of spending scarce resources on the Grand Prix.

THE WICKING PROJECT

OLDER PEOPLE WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY & ASSOCIATED COMPLEX BEHAVIOURS: A PSYCHOSOCIAL MODEL OF CARE

Final Report

Dr Alice Rota-Bartelink

January 2012

Comments like that one go to the core of what a society should provide and fund. In my view the argument should not be about welfare organisations having to compete with sporting events for funding. What we should be saying, and what I told the Rotary Club they should be doing, is that society should provide for those who are struggling to survive on their own and that if the debate has to come down to competing uses of a scarce resource and that welfare has to compete with events, then surely the most obvious conclusion is that the government needs to raise taxes. So I suggested that this is what the service clubs should be doing: agitating for an increase in taxation.

If this tax base was raised, there would be funds available for redistribution to both welfare and sporting events, because believe it or not, many in welfare, both recipients and providers also enjoy going to subsidised sporting or cultural events.

Equally important, the role of philanthropy could begin to change to become what many people working in philanthropy believe it should be, that is, to fund innovation, trials, and special projects, leaving core recurrent funding responsibilities to government.

Due to the increasing scarcity of public funds available to welfare, philanthropic organisations are increasingly being swamped with funding applications from cash starved not-for-profits. A funds manager told me 10 years ago that he gets up to 40 applications a day of which he usually ends up binning all but a few that get his attention. And that was 10 years ago!

A direct result of this demand is that all philanthropic trusts must wrestle with two competing strategies: to make many small and relatively insignificant grants up to say $10 – 20,000 or to gamble on a few large grants in the hope that something significant will come from the allocation. Imagine what they could do if the not-for-profit sector was adequately resourced.

Three Examples of Philanthropic Innovation

1. The Establishment of Wintringham

In 1989, Wintringham received two grants of $10,000 each from the Felton Bequest and the Buckland Foundation. That was Wintringham's entire income for the year and enabled me to pay myself a wage and have a crack at starting up a new welfare organisation. Those two grants remain in my view the most pure form of what philanthropy should be about. Taking risks on ideas and resourcing the first tentative steps towards realising those ideas. Today Wintringham turns over about $30 million a year – that is a fair return on $20,000.

2. Miller

Alexander Miller was the originator of the modern retail emporium and sold haberdashery and clothing throughout Victoria. He also funded and built a vast array of housing throughout central and western Victoria for low income elderly people and left this housing and his considerable estate to the Alexander Miller Trust to manage after his death in 1914. The Trust was administered by the ANZ Trustees, who while having great expertise in funds management readily admitted they knew little about social housing. For about 8 years Wintringham and the Miller Trustees worked to find a way for that great legacy to be carried forward.

Eventually, with the permission of the Supreme Court, management of the housing passed to Wintringham and with the arrival of the Rudd economic stimulus money, together we have been able to rebuild the housing, all of which was now approaching 100 years old and totally unsuited to the elderly.

The end result is that Wintringham was able, through the stimulus grants, to bring about $35m into the Trust, all of which was used to develop housing. ANZ Trustees can return to its core business with no longer the worry of managing a housing portfolio and the risks involved in that, and many elderly isolated people in country Victoria now have safe and secure new housing.

Importantly, the vision of Alexander Miller has been retained. He surely would be pleased to see that his legacy is now in a position where it can carry on for a further 100 years.

3. Wicking

We were always sure that Miller would be pleased to see his funds used to leverage additional resources for social housing. However the Wicking Trust presented a somewhat more complicated set of issues as it had a very clear mandate to fund research into issues associated with dementia.

While it is reasonable to allocate most of the considerable disbursements from this large Trust to Alzheimer's Disease, Wintringham successfully argued that Alcohol Related Brain Injury (ARBI) was also a form of dementia and should be eligible for research funding.

While Alzheimer's is a disease which slowly kills the sufferer, it is not normally associated with homelessness. ARBI on the other hand, is an injury to the brain and not a disease, and most certainly is one of the many contributing factors to a rise in homelessness amongst older people.

The Wicking Trust has granted Wintringham over $2m over 10 years to run a research trail that has already had quite spectacular results in demonstrating that elderly homeless people suffering from extreme forms of ARBI can with sufficient supports make a successful transition into a mainstream funded aged care service.

Funding of this nature and magnitude would be completely impossible under current Commonwealth program guidelines, yet the final outcome could see a massive saving to the public purse by removing the need to place extreme ARBI sufferers in locked psychiatric wards. Or worse by seeing them drift back to the streets where they suffer greatly (and consume vast quantities of public health dollars through the public hospital systems, jails etc).

Through each of these three examples, and no doubt there are countless others that other organisations can speak to, philanthropy has demonstrated that it can by careful targeting of its increasingly scarce resources, go into spaces that the government can't and perhaps shouldn't.

A necessary condition of enabling philanthropy to continue to work in this innovative space is that they are freed from any responsibility to fund recurrent expenses that should be the sole responsibility of government.

And for that to happen, taxes need to rise. ∎

Philanthropic, Corporate and Private Sector

Fund Raising by Sleeping Out for the Homeless

By Jed Donoghue,
Manager Housing and
Homelessness Stream,
Salvation Army Tasmania

This paper will focus on the what, why and who of fund-raising rather than the how.

The First Appeal

In early 2009 the General Manager of the Hobart Grand Chancellor Hotel, approached The Salvation Army with the idea of a corporate Sleep Out on the front steps of the hotel to raise awareness about homelessness as well as funding for services to assist people experiencing homelessness. The Salvation Army agreed to promote the idea in order to generate additional funds for specialist homeless programs. After a short campaign, forty-two participants, including local politicians and business and community leaders braved the Tasmanian winter weather. The participants huddled around a fire in the forecourt of the Hotel Grand Chancellor to sing songs and raise funds and the level of public awareness of homelessness in Tasmania.

Also in 2009 the Minister for Human Services Lin Thorp agreed to sleep out to help raise funds and community awareness of homelessness. The Department of Health and Human Services Deputy Secretary, Alison Jacob, and Director of Housing Tasmania, Mercia Bresnehan also agreed to sleep out alongside business and community leaders as part of the Sleep Out.

Ms Thorp told the local print media that shelter was a basic human need and that everyone had a role to play in reducing the individual and social costs of homelessness.

'Homelessness is a cause and a symptom of poverty in our society – it robs people of their dignity and a stable base from which to rebuild their lives.

Homelessness is not only the lack of a roof; it often involves other social ills such as unemployment, loneliness, chronic illness and domestic violence.

While Governments have a responsibility to address homelessness, it's not something that impacts only on Government but on the whole community. We should all be taking the steps we can to reduce its impact on individuals and the broader community' (Mather, 2009).

In 2009 the Tasmanian Government funded 34 organisations to provide specialist homelessness services that had helped 7100 people including 4700 adults and 2400 accompanying children in 2007-08. The Minister congratulated the Salvation Army for its efforts in providing shelter and hope to the one in 200 Australians who find themselves homeless on any given night. The Minister also encouraged people to make a generous donation to the Sleep Out. The first appeal raised $38,000, which was well above expectations.

The Second Appeal

The level of interest and funding generated by the first Sleep Out took the Salvation Army by surprise. The Salvation Army's low-key approach was replaced by a well organised team that included staff from Public Relations, senior management and fund raising who set an ambitious target of $100,000.

Hobart's business leaders, politicians and community leaders were targeted by the campaign team to participate in the second Sleep Out in 2010. The new Secretary to Cabinet, Cassy O'Connor quickly agreed to roll out her sleeping bag for a second year and joined many other well-known Tasmanians in the second Sleep Out.

The Cabinet Secretary told the local print media:

'I can't stress enough that we have to do as much as we can to prevent and reduce homelessness and give those Tasmanians who are at risk, the support they need to find and keep stable accommodation. In Tassie, we estimate that about 385 people sleep on the street each night. Doing something about this problem is everyone's business and responsibility as citizens in a decent society' (DHHS 2010).

Ms O'Connor encouraged the public to give to the Salvos for this worthy cause.

The Cabinet Secretary also congratulated 'Sleep Out' participants for their impressive fund raising efforts. Participants which once again included the Director of Housing Mercia Bresnehan, Metro CEO Heather Haselgrove, Tasmanian Fire Service Chief Mike Brown and the Acting Police Commissioner Darren Hine.

Damon Thomas, head of the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal also took part in the Sleep Out. Along with other participants, Damon slept in the forecourt of the Hotel Grand Chancellor Hobart to highlight the issue of homelessness. Damon commented that even though the experience of one night sleeping out could not compare with the chronic plight facing people experiencing homelessness, it gave him and other participants the opportunity to better consider the realities of the issue of homelessness.

'For him it was one night out of 365, and it was so little when you think of the realities of homelessness and how we can all be in this position so quickly – one inappropriate decision or one rash judgment call'. He felt that the event was a great way to raise funds and draw attention to a great cause and that everyone joined in without question. He also noted that the hot shower and breakfast next morning had a special significance!

The second Sleep Out raised a total of $111,017. It bettered the target of $100,000 and eclipsed the previous total of $38,000.

The Third Appeal

The 4th August 2011 was the night of the third annual Sleep Out for the Salvos in Hobart. This time the appeal target was higher, $115,000, the planning more detailed and the participants limited by invitation. Forty community, business and political leaders and a sprinkling of other keen fundraisers and Salvo staff braved the winter night to raise money and the level of awareness of homelessness.

What started out as a relatively warm August night, gradually turned into a cold and wet experience as the rain set in at 4 am. On top of this, sleepers had to cope with the trucks leaving the docks and a few snorers. The evening included entertainment by the Choir of High Hopes, an update on the work being planned by the Salvation Army and Common Ground, and a challenging talk by Major Robbin Moulds from the Oasis Youth Homelessness Network in Sydney. Robbin also showed video stories of some of the homeless young people that Oasis has been assisting. Amongst the sleepers was Premier Lara Giddings, Human Services Minister Cassie O'Connor, Liberal MP Jacqui Petrusma, Hydro Tasmania chief Roy Adair, Hobart Lord Mayor Rob Valentine, Mercury Chief Executive Rex Gardner, the CEO of Metro Heather Haselgrove and the future Lord Mayor of Hobart Damon Thomas.

Hobart businesswoman Sue Hickey slept out for the third time. She said, *'I have only slept out in the cold by choice, yet there are people in our state who sleep rough on a regular basis. It is one night in the cold,*

so if it raises awareness of the difficulties facing homeless Tasmanians during winter and if helps even one person, it is something. Homelessness is such a big problem and we live in this cocoon where we only see what we want to see'.

The Mayor Rob Valentine said that unless something was done, homelessness would continue to blight our communities. He said some people have made bad decisions but many, particularly children, have no choice and no control over their circumstances (Nardoo 2011).

Raising money was not the only aim of the Sleep Out. It also gives the 40 'sleepers' a taste of the reality experienced by rough sleepers across Australia each night.

Salvation Army captain Craig Wood said the problem of homelessness in Tasmania may not be as visible as in other cities but that it was still significant. Captain Wood said in the last 12 months, 1112 homeless people have presented to the Salvation Army in Tasmania for support. He said that there was still a gap in service provision and that the demand for services was not met.

The RACT's Vince Taskunas said that people experiencing homeless were more than just statistics. He said that homelessness affects real people, Tasmanians 'like you and me, and they deserve safety, security, nutrition and human dignity' (Hoggett, 2011).

To address the unmet need for homeless services The Salvation Army has employed a primary homeless outreach worker using the funds from the 'Sleep Out' to build relationships with people sleeping rough.

The third Sleep Out raised $130,000 and the funding will be used to fund the work of the primary homeless outreach worker over the next two years. The worker will link rough sleepers into long-term accommodation, health facilities as well as other specialist support and accommodation services.

Conclusions

The Salvation Army (Tasmania) has received public donations from a Sleep Out each year for the last three years. These funds were set aside by the organisation to employ a campaign worker to organise the Common Ground 'Street Survey' and a primary homeless outreach worker to work with rough sleepers in the Hobart area.

The primary homeless worker provides support and referral to people sleeping rough and in need of immediate support and accommodation.

The street survey with Common Ground was undertaken in late November 2011 in Hobart, and the campaign worker worked closely with Common Ground to identify the fifty most vulnerable people sleeping rough in and around Hobart.

The primary homeless support worker delivers positive support and health outcomes via referral to affordable housing, health and emergency accommodation services. The primary homeless worker is focused on client's health and housing needs, capacity to re-connect with family, as well as promoting engagement in educational and training activities. The primary homeless worker is providing support to rough sleepers who do not have access to emergency accommodation, who are at risk of harm to their health and require support to move from the street to a home.

The priorities of the homeless outreach worker are to:
- Resolve crisis for clients sleeping rough;
- Re-establish family links where appropriate;
- Re-establish the client's capacity to live independently;
- Provide or arrange for the provision of accommodation, and
- Maximise the independence, self-reliance and integration of clients.

The primary homeless support worker provides medium term support to a caseload of approximately 10-12 clients at any given time. Total client numbers for the program will vary form a minimum of 70 clients and up to a maximum of 100 clients per annum. Support is client focused, flexible and provided for the duration of need.

The Sleep Out has been worthwhile for a number of reasons:

It generates funds for a primary homeless street worker in Hobart.

It provides an opportunity for the corporate sector to get involved.

It raises awareness of homelessness in the media and general public. ◼

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Campbell Street
Common Ground building

Liverpool Street
Common Ground building

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A Good Experience of Engaging Philanthropy: The Upton Road Development.

By Sally Coutts,
Manager Research and
Program Development, Crisis
Services

The Model

The Upton Road Crisis Accommodation project which opened in 2010 is an example of a successful large scale capital fundraising venture - one of the largest The Salvation Army has ever undertaken in an Australian context. Despite a long and strong tradition of organisational involvement with philanthropic trusts, donations and bequests, this project involved a more targeted campaign for raising funds. This article looks at the engagement of the corporate and private sector in this initiative as well as some of the organisational learnings that come from interacting across different sectors. It highlights some of what worked as well as some of the challenges. (A more detailed report by Pollyanna Sutton, soon to be completed, has been commissioned to capture the design and implementation phases of the project. Much of this article has come from this report.)

The decision to develop a new style of crisis accommodation originated in 2000, following an external review which highlighted the need to move the facility away from Grey St, St Kilda and to develop a purpose built facility that would provide the residents with more privacy and dignity and encourage a move towards independent living. The journey took 10 years from the purchase of the land, through the rezoning, planning, design, funding, building and opening. The total cost of the project was $7.3 million- $ 2.3 from the Federal Government Stimulus Package, $2 million from the Victorian Government and $ 3 million from private benefactors.

The need for dedicated fundraising arose early in the life of the project, after some designated funds from a large TSA property sale were re-allocated elsewhere. This prompted the need for a fundraising drive and enlisted some key personnel within TSA to champion the cause with both government and the private sector

Strong Relationships

The capital raising campaign (New Life 08) was formulated by the Public Relations Department in conjunction with two external agencies to help raise funds for two TSA projects- one being Upton Road. This was an attempt to attract more high end corporate donors and business people to become directly involved.

The engagement of key people with established business networks was integral to the success of the campaign and this was made easier by some existing relationships. General Eva Burrows enlisted the support of Baillieau Myer to introduce her to Margaret Jackson AC, who then introduced other high end business people to support the campaign, including Peter Fox Chairman of LinFox Holdings. These two high profile people actively engaged others in raising money for the project, as well as assisting in the lobbying of government. The project would not have been possible without the generous and committed support of a range of private donors and philanthropists, along with local state and Federal Government.

The Government stimulus package of $2.3 million also helped in the commitment of funds from other leading philanthropists. Other factors that helped gain traction in philanthropic donation included the opportunity to be involved in something that was innovative in design and benchmarking for other crisis accommodation developments. This has also been acknowledged and recognised in a number of nominations the service has had for design awards since it opened.

Transparency and effective communication:

Taking potential donors to Grey St in the early stages of the project and showing them the operations of the previous refuge was important for getting them to understand the need for change to both the style and culture of the facility. In particular, seeing how their contributions would help provide the changes needed to improve the lives of individuals who present for assistance within the current network was appealing to donors.

Hearing what was clearly needed in money and kind was also important for donors. Sutton notes:

'It was a common comment among busy entrepreneurs that they wanted the person representing the project to be ready and able to ask for exactly what they needed when asked'. The project manager at the network level provided this and kept people informed and engaged in the projects developments.

Presenting the project, its values, and potential benefits in a way that corporate Australia could understand and appreciate was most important. Individual and group presentations were provided at the beginning of the campaign, and also as it progressed. The project manager at St Kilda ensured that communication and follow up was made with all who donated so they were aware of the project and its development. Power point presentations with visual and written updates were regularly sent to all parties- including donors, government and local government.

The attention to detail provided by the project manager to donors, was also well regarded. This is reflected in one individual's comments on their experience; 'I think it was money well spent, we visited the facility were introduced to the architect and attended the opening. They gave us very good feedback and kept us informed, and we enjoyed being involved.' (Laidlaw).

Organisational Learnings

The different tiers of the broader organisation have at times proved difficult for external players to understand. It has been suggested that the business world is not used to such rigidity or hierarchy. Some of the feedback from private donors suggested there was a need for greater flexibility and the need to improve reporting and transparency within the hierarchy of The Salvation Army itself.

Decisions around any property proposals are subject to a hierarchical process which might provide good stewardship around priority and funding allocations but can inhibit a project's timelines and ability to deliver in an efficient manner. Information internally and externally can be stalled by the requirement to pass it up and down the line according to rank and hierarchy.

Many recommendations were made in the broader report around this- including the suggestion of a property committee of internal and external experts to develop project proposals. Harnessing the right expertise would speed up processes, provide a communication point for all levels of hierarchy, ensure that decisions are scrutinised and that efficient processes are reviewed.

There were also criticisms of the external fundraising consultants who were recruited to assist in the fundraising campaign. These consultants were employed by the Public Relations department to generate funds and facilitate tours, information and donor liaison. In the report there are comments from the project management team on site at Upton Rd about the lack of adequate notice about site visits and the communication was not good. Early communication could have been better and there was some sense of missed opportunities with donors – poor communication and a lack of transparency with internal procedures. Getting the right people or the better utilisation of professional people within the organisation is important if the organisation is to engage such players in an effective strategy.

Conclusion

The Upton Road development was based on a clear vision that was well articulated at the local level and that was well communicated to potential donors. The strong partnerships that formed with people in the commercial world was developed out of a mutual passion and commitment to improving the lives of people in the community and a belief by donors that this would be delivered through the organisation they were donating to. Many of these individuals have continued their involvement with the project in a financial capacity, or have taken on roles in other areas of the organisation on advisory boards.

There was much learning for the organisation along the way and this project has been a valuable catalyst, for changing the way the organisation might go about raising funds for future projects. Reputation alone is not enough. Good communication, transparency and strong stakeholder engagement is highly important. Flexibility and greater efficiency in decision making have also been highlighted as areas that could be improved. In a competitive fund raising environment and tighter economic times, this would seem essential for any not for profit agency within the sector. ■

More information can be found on the project updates on the following website

www.salvationarmy.org.au/crisservices

See also: The Upton Road Project- The First Year by Pollyanna Sutton Communications Services (June 2011).

The PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic:

Partnering the Big End of Town with the Streets

By Fiona McLeay,
Executive Director,
Public Interest Law Clearing
House (Vic) Inc

In October last year, the Public Interest Law Clearing House in Victoria (PILCH) celebrated the tenth anniversary of our Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic (HPLC). The service has proven to be an effective and sustainable model of partnership between an NGO (PILCH) and a range of philanthropic, government and corporate bodies, in particular law firms. The model has been replicated around Australia, with similar services operating in almost every state. The establishment and success of the HPLC provides useful lessons as to what works in partnerships to address homelessness.

So how does it work? The HPLC is a specialist legal service that provides free legal assistance and advocacy for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is based on an outreach model – take the lawyers to the clients – so services are co-located at crisis accommodation centres and welfare agencies around Melbourne to encourage direct access by clients.[1] Services are provided by pro bono lawyers from law firms and legal departments under the supervision of lawyers employed by PILCH. Each firm is responsible for the provision of services at one or two host agencies on a weekly basis.[2] In addition to providing legal services, the HPLC identifies and seeks to change laws and policies that impact disproportionately or discriminate against people experiencing homelessness.

Over it's 10 years of existence, HPLC lawyers have provided over 5,000 people with free legal assistance in order to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness, resolve debilitating debts and fines and a range of other civil law problems. HPLC has also provided hundreds of legal training seminars to pro bono and community lawyers and community legal education sessions to community workers in order to increase their capacity to identify, refer and assist homeless clients. HPLC has also made significant contributions to law reform on issues which affect people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In addition to our law firm partners, who provide the bulk of the legal services, the HPLC is and has been supported by a range of other organisations over the years. Initial seed funding for the service came from the Victorian Department of Housing, supported by a grant from the Victorian Law Foundation. Once the model was established, recurrent funding was obtained through Victoria Legal Aid. Throughout its existence, grant funding has been obtained from a range of philanthropic foundations to support additional programs and new approaches. Most recently additional funding was obtained from the Department of Justice to employ a social worker. This has increased our ability to provide an integrated service to better link clients with a range of supports and services, which might otherwise be unknown to legal service providers.

There are a number of keys to the success of the HPLC. In the establishment phase, it required a degree of bravery on the part of our partners. The model was untried in Australia and although based on successful models in the US, it represented uncharted territory for law firms who had up to that point tended to focus their pro bono work on areas of law that they felt familiar with. PILCH was able to encourage this bravery by both making the case for the need for such a service, and by providing comprehensive training and support for lawyers undertaking the work. With this in place, the ranks of the first four firms to sign up grew to eight by the end of the first 18 months. Ensuring that lawyers are properly trained and supported and that their resources are directed to where the need is most acute has proven to be important to maintaining engagement and quality service delivery over the 10 years of the clinic's operation.

The HPLC's pro bono partnerships with law firms have also been crucial to the success of the clinic through their involvement in advocacy and law reform campaigns. Apart from the significant advocacy gains that have been made, participation in law reform has allowed partners to link the day to day legal issues facing clients with the quest for broader systemic change. This in turn has helped to keep lawyers engaged in the work and helped to create a cohort of lawyers who have first hand experience of the way that their skills can contribute not just to justice for an individual, but to a fairer system overall.

The model also requires a degree of flexibility on both sides. The HPLC focuses primarily on civil and administrative law matters, not just because other legal issues facing our client group are often legally aidable, but because these are areas where firms are more likely to have interest and expertise. We also recognise that many of the lawyers who undertake the work will be younger lawyers who may have less direct client experience than their more experienced colleagues. There are always areas of law where we would like to assist, but are unable, because of these limits. However, the compromise is worthwhile because it gives us access to a large pool of skilled and enthusiastic lawyers who would otherwise be unavailable. From time to time we have altered our case mix in response to requests from our partners. In return, firms have shown an admirable willingness to take on new areas of law in response to newly identified areas of unmet legal need.

The amount of work which is required to sustain the effective partnerships that underpin the HPLC should not be underestimated. Most recently, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of the clinic to respond to the 'ageing' of the service and the development of some 'staleness' in our operations. One of our law firms undertook comparative research on outreach and specialist legal service delivery to vulnerable client groups in Australia and internationally. The research found that the HPLC's outreach model remains best practice for delivery of legal advice to people who are homeless. But it also identified areas for improvement, including the need for strengthened referral relationships and co-location with welfare services, including the promotion of clinic services to clients and service providers and greater use of specialist legal volunteers to address specific legal areas such as family or criminal law. We also reviewed the location of our outreach clinics and our client mix to ensure that we were reaching the most vulnerable groups. Again, this review identified that some groups were over-represented and others under-represented in our client profile.

Implementing the necessary changes to our work, while at the same time continuing to provide services to clients and manage existing relationships, has proved challenging. However, after a decade of operation, we have developed a steadfast cohort of individual lawyers and law firm partners who have a deep understanding of the way the law – and lack of access to legal services – can cause or contribute to homelessness. They have also had the opportunity to see how their skills can make a difference to this and remain committed to the work and the HPLC. Our experience is that partnership is work, but that it is worthwhile work. The HPLC remains an example of a 'best practice' partnership between the private, philanthropic and the not-for-profit sector in response to homelessness. ∎

Footnotes

1. Host agencies include St Kilda Crisis Contact Centre, Melbourne Citymission, The Big Issue, St Vincent de Paul Society, the Salvation Army, Anglicare, Urban Seed, Hanover, VACRO, Koonung Mental Health Centre, Homeground Housing Service, and St Luke's.
2. Current law firm partners include Allens Arthur Robinson, Clayton Utz, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, DLA Piper, Freehills, Harwood Andrews, King and Wood Mallesons and Minter Ellison.

Consumer Voices:
Philanthropic, Corporate and Private Sector Responses to Homelessness

Consumer Voices is a regular feature in *Parity*. Interviews are conducted by and with consumers to ensure they have a say about issues that directly affect them. Allan Martin, Consumer Advocate with the Peer Education Support Program conducted the following interviews for this edition.

Two Points of View

1. Spike is 43 years old, a 'perpetual' university student who squatted before he became chronically homeless. He now shares a flat with his ex-partner and a friend.

The 2008 Australian Government asserted that homelessness is everybody's responsibility and an effective national response must be a 'whole of government' and a 'whole of society response'.

Do you agree with that statement and why or why not?

I am pleasantly surprised that they are using that language. I am also wary that when government makes a proclamation about a particular aspect of its policy making, as in the homelessness sector, that it's a whole of government and a whole of community problem. I would like to see what they actually mean by that because words can be manipulated very easily. Are they going to put money into programs to help empower people who are homeless and make them a part of the solution? Or are they just talking about existing institutions having more of a say in the homelessness issue?

From my point of view, being a person that has been homeless and who has been involved in community development, the biggest problem is that there are these big rhetorical statements that don't add too much at all. If you actually think about it a bit deeper, it creates an option for government to take money out of what they put in because the philanthropic, private and corporate sectors are putting money into it.

Are you aware of the yearly Vinnies CEO Sleep Out which last year raised $1,000,000 for Australian homelessness services? Do you think events like this where hundreds of corporate and business heads come together have more than a financial benefit for services, but also educate people about the causes and myths of homelessness?

I would hope that it educates, but I am cynical because I know the corporate and business people who have backed it in the past have virtually got a free advertisement out of it as their company signs were behind the people being interviewed for television. So they got a big free kick out of it plus a big tax exemption. I don't want to be too cynical and say that it's a complete disaster and that they are only doing it for themselves. Personally I am more in favour of lifting homeless people up by reminding them they matter and developing their potential. Again, I come back to government efforts to create a more inclusive society. That will only happen when everybody commits to the statement homelessness is a whole of society issue.

At Ozanam House and the Ozanam Community Centre groups from the corporate and private sectors regularly donate time to help prepare and serve meals, wash the dishes and mop the floors. Do you think those volunteering benefit from their exposure to people experiencing homelessness and is there is any benefit for the homeless from such programs?

My own feeling is that it is good for corporations to use an institution such as Ozanam House to boost morale or to instil some humility in their work-force. Personally I don't think that it is of much assistance to homeless people unless they are an organisation that works in tandem with Ozanam House and can develop a real rapport with the people staying there. The biggest positive is they see that the homeless are human beings that are not defective or inferior and as the same as themselves. At the same time, people experiencing homelessness do not behave as they would normally. After living for five years in a big rooming house I felt like I had been in jail. I don't think I left a good impression on anyone because I was really frightened. Not just there in the rooming house, but throughout my entire experience of homelessness, I felt really frightened and abandoned.

What do you think the role of the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors in homelessness should be in the future and what initiatives could they create?

If you assume that they are being fair dinkum and are not just in it for a tax break or free publicity, they should join hands with the government and go fifty/fifty building housing stock, as Crocon did when building Common Ground on a non-profit basis. But I don't think the government should ever be required to put pressure on them to be good corporate citizens. They certainly have a responsibility to the rest of the community and if we are to live in an equitable society they need to share the wealth they generate.

2. Interview with Peter who is 53 years old, a successful business man until the 2009 financial crisis during which he lost his business and his home and who now lives in a rooming house.

The 2008 Australian Government asserted that homelessness is everybody's responsibility and an effective national response must be a whole of government and a whole of society response. Do you agree with that statement?

I do think that the homeless situation is everyone's responsibility from the point of view that there are no safety nets in place when people experience homelessness. I know from my own experience of it that I didn't actually have a grip on it. When you are penniless and have got nowhere to go, you find it very hard to get a start. I believe there should be an awareness that homelessness exists and that it could happen to anyone, right across the board. Everyone should understand what the homeless situation really entails.

You have attended the Ozanam Community Centre and have seen the outdoor extension to the dining room which was the work of the construction firm Contrex that donated $85,000 worth of machinery, materials and skilled labour to build. What do you think is the benefit of that corporate input into homeless services and the benefit of the new facility to the general operation of the centre and to the daily 200 homeless and marginalised people who attend for meals and other supports and do you think the construction would have been completed without donated work?

I don't believe the extension would have happened without the company's work. We are all aware that there are lot of projects out there that need to be done. Often government does not want to become involved and these have to be done by corporate or philanthropic bodies. The work done by Contrex has allowed people who

feel closed in and alone, to feel together with others in an open but dry area where they can feel relaxed and have a coffee or a meal. A lot of people may have issues with other people looking at them while they are eating. The new area allows them to eat without the intensity of the dining room. Plus they have also turned that area into a space where a lady comes to do art which is a part of the mental development strategy to help people reconnect. And there's a barbeque and table tennis area for engaging people in activities.

At Ozanam House and the Ozanam Community Centre groups from the corporate and private sectors regularly donate time to help prepare and serve meals, wash the dishes and mop the floors. Do you think those volunteering benefit from their exposure to people experiencing homelessness and is there is any benefit for the homeless from such programs?

Most definitely in the sense that they are doing valuable work that is required. They are also hearing stories from people who are homeless about what they are experiencing. That is invaluable feedback that they can take back to group forums round tables in places where they formulate strategies to solve problems. I also believe that people coming in from the mainstream to assist homeless people indicates that they and others are starting to recognise that homelessness is a real problem. It is not the usual situation for people experiencing homelessness where they feel the corporates are up above and looking down on them. Instead they are starting to meet them eye to eye.

What do you think the role of the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors in homelessness should be in the future and what initiatives could they create?

I believe that corporate and top end business identities should get down to grass roots and really find out what is going on down at the bottom end. I also believe in developing a community approach. The corporates and the business people have the financial resources and influence to change things. If the corporate and private sectors have more input, the homeless situation could pretty much be eradicated and people could be housed.

I also think that the door always needs to be kept open. What I mean by this is that when I was in business, I thought I had it all together, and when I walked past people who were homeless on the street I just thought; *'There goes another bum!'*

Where I am now, I am actually experiencing what I used to walk past and close the door on. ∎

The Private Sector:
Champions of Innovation and Vision

By Kane Bowden,
CEO, Lighthouse Foundation

Lighthouse operates the Therapeutic Family Model of Care™ (TFMC™) in 10 suburban homes across Victoria. For more than 20 years, all operational funding has come predominantly from the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors. We have raised more than $30 million to deliver our programs for homeless young people and, in this time, learned much about the expectations of our benefactors.

In our experience, the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors are vital contributors to not-for-profit organisations who have a strong vision and an ability to deliver innovative, outcomes driven programs. We believe the private sector is more willing to support not-for-profits that will subject themselves to independent, robust analysis of their effectiveness. Corporate groups want clearly articulated values that align with their own objectives and business practices. Philanthropists need to see a passion for the cause. In short, the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors are champions of innovation and vision. They have a significant inclination towards models that are innovative and have proven outcomes.

Private Funding

The Lighthouse model is a strong example of how an organisation can exist almost solely on private funding. In an environment where Government funds most other organisations that deliver similar residential services for young people, this funding model has not only allowed us to innovate and refine the Lighthouse TFMC™, but has actually required it. What we have learned is that the private sector is much more interested in performance than it is in governance. What this means for the homelessness sector is that constant measurement, quality improvement, and refinements to enhance performance are the keys to attracting philanthropic support.

The uncomfortable reality for not-for-profits is that a lot of us have not been very good at documenting the effectiveness of what we do, which does not sit well with corporate supporters. It is not enough to have your heart in the right place. You have to demonstrate some smarts as well. This means putting hard numbers around what we do and creating a business model that is sustainable. The private sector needs to know that its money is going to be put to good use through the community organisations that they support.

Partnership

Partnership is the key to dealing with the private sector. The lifeblood of any business is its ability to partner with other organisations and individuals to deliver on their business objectives. Businesses in the private sector expect the same approach among not-for-profit organisations. In this sense, not-for-profits need to work together to achieve their aims in ending homelessness in Australia.

At Lighthouse we have gone to great lengths to document the effectiveness of what we do. Our Model of Care has been thoroughly vetted and formatted so that it can be licensed to potential partners. We realised that if we were going to make a real difference in tackling the problem of youth homelessness, we needed to focus on the integrity and transferability of the TFMC™ rather than just purchasing homes or delivering programs. Once again, this has been paid for by the private sector. Thanks to a very generous investor who had the foresight to understand our goal, we are now ready to roll out our Model of Care nationally.

Moving Forward

The ultimate partnership, in many ways, is with Government. The private sector will often provide seeding funds to enable new and innovative responses to the problem of homelessness but it is Government that is critical to the long-term funding of programs. To this end, the ability to secure large slabs of funding from a trust, corporate group or private investor often relies on the funder being convinced that government will pick up the longer term funding, should the program or project prove to be effective. As community organisations we will benefit from having an advanced understanding of this concept.

In conclusion, if the private sector is the champion of innovation and vision then it is incumbent on the rest of us, Government and not-for-profits alike, to show initiative in this regard. We need to articulate our vision clearly and question our methods willingly if we are to attract the enormous sources of funding that the philanthropic, corporate and private sectors are capable of providing. ■

Philanthropic, Corporate and Private Sector

Beyond Traditional Corporate Giving: Alternate Models for Business Participation in 100,000 Homes Campaign Communities

By Rosanne Haggerty and Becky Kanis*

It is no secret that NGOs working to end homelessness need support from the business sector. While solving homelessness is cost-effective, it certainly is not free, and most NGOs simply do not bring in enough money independently to carry out their work. That is why, for a long time, they have relied on crucial donations from the business sector to fill out their operations. This model is old and well established, and today, most major corporations in America direct a portion of their profits to the social sector through in-house philanthropic arms. Several have even adopted innovative public benefit structures to ensure that their financial success remains fundamentally tied to their philanthropic interests. More businesses should adopt such approaches in the future, and there is good reason to hope that many will.

Yet, an over-reliance by NGOs on in-house business philanthropy comes with serious structural limitations, primarily because it leaves them vulnerable to the shifting state of the market, a problem that is compounded by the fact that the business sector and the social sector tend to follow opposite cycles of activity. When the economy struggles, demand for NGO-based homeless services is likely to spike, but this is precisely the time when most businesses have the least money to contribute to charitable efforts. The result, as we have seen over the last few years, is that economic downturns often force NGOs to cut back on the volume and scope of the services they deliver to homeless clients at the very moment when those services are most in need on the streets. In countries with less robust state financing of social welfare programs, this can have particularly devastating effects on homeless persons.

So what role should businesses play in ending homelessness, and what models of funding and partnership should NGOs prioritise as they seek allies in the business sector? Clearly, in-house business philanthropy can and must continue to play a major part, but both businesses and NGOs are also increasingly turning to alternate models that recognise the shared interests held by both parties in ending homelessness and allow businesses to take a more active stake in positive outcomes. In America, communities participating in the 100,000 Homes Campaign have leveraged three particularly promising models, each of which goes beyond the traditional in-house business philanthropy approach.

The 100,000 Homes Campaign is a movement of communities working together to find permanent homes for 100,000 homeless individuals and families. While coordinated by a support staff furnished by the New York-based NGO, Community Solutions, the Campaign is fundamentally collaborative and consists of over 100 member communities across America, as well as several communities in Australia. Since the Campaign's launch in July of 2010, participating communities have helped over 13,000 people escape homelessness for good. The Campaign itself has benefited at the national level from generous business contributions, including sizable corporate donations from Bank of America and the Travel Channel as well as a particularly large grant from JPMorgan Chase to boost efforts to help communities end homelessness among veterans.

At the community level, many communities participating in the Campaign have adopted approaches that allow businesses to play a much more active role in their daily efforts to end homelessness. These approaches include securing company-wide volunteer commitments, engaging Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and inviting business leaders to offer their unique expertise in the development of large-scale, financially sound, multi-stakeholder efforts to move individuals and families who experience homelessness into permanent housing.

In communities like New York City and San Diego, corporations have sought to integrate their involvement with efforts to end homelessness by committing their employees to volunteer with local Campaign teams during community registry week events. Registry weeks are fast-paced, volunteer-intensive efforts to canvass the streets of a community block by block in the predawn hours. Participants survey each homeless individual they find with the Campaign's Vulnerability Index, a unique questionnaire designed to gather data about who is homeless in a community, what urgent health and social needs they face, and other pertinent information that helps to expedite the permanent housing process. Registry weeks can be deeply moving for volunteers, and the resulting data often inspires unexpected action from businesses. In San Diego, employees of a local Bank of America branch arrived at 4am for three mornings in a row to participate in the city's registry week. The event proved so impactful that the branch unexpectedly donated $5,000 USD to the local effort. And it wasn't alone— another bank, Wells Fargo, also donated $25,000 USD before the week was over. More recently, Ferguson Enterprises broke Campaign records in March by donating $250,000 USD to the Virginia Peninsula's Campaign effort after employees witnessed and participated in the registry week process.

Another successful strategy involves the Business Improvement District (BID) model, a neighbourhood-based approach implemented by local business associations to represent the unique business interests of a particular, often very small area or region. Throughout New York City, for example, well known BIDs exist to represent businesses everywhere from Manhattan's glitzy Times Square area to Pitkin Avenue, a poorer and lesser-known stretch in Brooklyn's Brownsville neighbourhood. Local businesses are charged an assessment to fund these associations, which then take responsibility for making their respective neighbourhoods optimally hospitable places for businesses and their customers. In midtown Manhattan, the 34th Street Partnership sponsors a neighbourhood security team as well as several initiatives aimed at beautification and anti-littering. Nearby, the Fashion Centre BID sponsors tourism campaigns and

runs seminars to help local entrepreneurs keep up with changing regulations.

Ending homelessness has proven to be an appealing cause for BIDs looking to improve their communities. Many business owners believe that the presence of homeless people near their stores and offices is bad for business, and the BID model offers them a chance to invest in permanent solutions rather than short-term fixes like private security. As a lead partner of Common Ground's Street to Home Initiative in the early 2000s, New York City's Times Square BID played a major role in ending chronic homelessness throughout the Times Square neighbourhood by providing members of its security team with basic homeless outreach training, funding local programs like homeless resource fairs, and sending representatives to monthly case conferencing meetings. Several years later, the Hollywood BID in Hollywood, California, broke new ground for BIDs looking to end homelessness in their communities.

Hollywood's warm climate has long made it a hot spot for unsheltered homeless individuals. In 2009, the local BID began collaborating with homeless service providers in the area to explore the community's participation in the 100,000 Homes Campaign. With significant leadership provided by the BID's director, Kerry Morrison, a diverse, multi-sector team mobilised a large group of community members to conduct a Campaign registry week. Over the next two years, the Hollywood BID leveraged its business relationships and financial expertise to help secure nearly $1 million USD in funding for permanent supportive housing through a combination of foundation and local government grants, private donors and business support. The BID's successful involvement in Hollywood has also inspired BIDs in other communities like San Diego, California and Albuquerque, New Mexico to get involved in their local 100,000 Homes Campaign efforts.

Finally, a small group of communities participating in the 100,000 Homes

Campaign have pioneered sweeping models of business involvement by convening business leaders at the highest levels to help formulate new, community-wide plans to end homelessness outright. The most striking example of this approach comes from Los Angeles County, where over 12,000 people experience chronic homelessness. In L.A. County, the local branch of the United Way, a widely respected national NGO, partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to create a business leaders task force. The panel enlisted the experience and relationships of top executives from high profile companies like UPS, JPMorgan Chase, and NBC Universal to develop *Home for Good*, a comprehensive, countywide plan to end chronic and veteran homelessness in 6 years.

Among existing large-scale plans to end homelessness, *Home for Good* stands out for its solid fiscal analysis and creative, management consulting approach. The plan calls for no new public investment, but rather for the repurposing of existing public funds toward proven, long-term solutions like aggressive, housing-based street outreach and new units of permanent supportive housing. By emphasising smart business principles, the business leaders' task force overcame common political objections that had plagued previous efforts to end homelessness in L.A. County. For example, by highlighting the inefficiency of spending 75 per cent of the county's $850 million USD annual homelessness budget on chronically homeless residents, who comprise just 25 per cent of the homeless population, the framers of Home for Good convinced public officials that existing systems were not only failing to accomplish their goals, they were also making poor use of limited county funding. They calculated that it would be 40 per cent cheaper for the county to fund permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals than to let them remain on the streets. They also proposed the creation of 12,500 new units of permanent supportive housing and a countywide shift to the Housing First model.

As a result, 104 community leaders have signed onto Home for Good so far, including nearly all countywide public officials. Additionally, 18 L.A. county communities have conducted Campaign registry weeks, the average amount of time required to house a homeless veteran has decreased by 41 per cent, and more than 3,100 homeless residents have moved into permanent housing in just over a year.

The lessons from communities participating in the 100,000 Homes Campaign make clear that there is no shortage of innovative ways for businesses and NGOs to partner successfully; the overwhelming success of models like Home for Good and the Hollywood BID suggests that money is not the only thing the business sector has to offer NGOs seeking to end homelessness. The skills required for success in business can also contribute to the development of efficient and effective new approaches and to the bridging of age-old political divides that often hamper the efforts of the social sector. Most importantly, major business hubs like New York City and Los Angeles prove that the interests of the business community are already aligned with NGO interests in ending homelessness, because stronger, more inclusive communities also provide ideal environments for business and entrepreneurship to thrive.

When we fail to pursue creative models that draw on this alignment, we miss significant opportunities to bring the considerable skills and resources of the business community to bear on the critical work to end homelessness that so many NGOs have bravely pioneered. ■

Rosanne Haggerty is the President and Founder of Community Solutions, an American NGO that helps communities develop lasting, cost-effective solutions to problems like homelessness.
Becky Kanis is the Director of the 100,000 Homes Campaign, a national initiative coordinated by Community Solutions.

Philanthropy and Private Sector Involvement in Responding to Homelessness in Ann Arbor, Michigan

By Dr Shae Garwood, Shelter WA

The global financial crisis has had a significant impact on homelessness in the United States, with high rates of unemployment forcing many people into homelessness. The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2011) reported that in 2010, 643,067 people experienced homelessness on any given night in the US. Point-in-time counts in the US use a definition that includes people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in temporary accommodation and those unsheltered on that particular night. It does not include tertiary homelessness i.e. those living in substandard accommodation. If tertiary homelessness were included in the count, the numbers of people experiencing homelessness would be considerably higher.

States with high unemployment, such as Michigan, have a particularly difficult challenge responding to homelessness. As of January 2012, the unemployment rate in Michigan was nine per cent (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012). The City of Ann Arbor is located in Washtenaw County, which is more affluent than many parts of Michigan. Nevertheless, 42,000 people live at or near the poverty level in Washtenaw County. Of these, 10 per cent or 4,200 men, women and children experience homelessness each year.

The writer recently had the opportunity to speak with Ellen Schulmeister, Chief Executive Officer, and Diana Neering, Chief Development Officer and Director of Communications, of Shelter Association of Washtenaw County. The aim of this discussion was to find out about the role of philanthropy, corporate and private sector stakeholders in responding to homelessness in the US and how these differed from the experiences in Australia.

In 2011, Shelter Association of Washtenaw County served 1,449 people experiencing homelessness. In addition to funding from government, the Shelter Association receives 36 per cent of its funding from individuals, philanthropic foundations and corporations. In FY 2010-2011 this totalled US $954,061. Volunteers provide over 12,000 hours of service every year to the organisation. The tag line on the Shelter Association's website states 'You give. We serve. Lives change'. That statement summarises the relationship of individuals, foundations and businesses that provide funding to Shelter Association in order to provide services to people experiencing homelessness in the County.

The Shelter Association building is located in downtown Ann Arbor. The building is a good example of the public-private partnerships that embody Shelter's work. In the late 1990s Shelter Association operated two small overnight shelters with administrative offices in a third location. The City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County provided US$3 million along with US$5 million from private family foundations, individuals and corporations to consolidate and expand the shelters. This provided funding to construct a building that houses 75 single men and women at any one time along with space for food service, classes, a medical clinic, a training room and administrative offices. The Shelter Association building acts as a one-stop-shop where people receive food and health care, substance abuse evaluation, mental health assessments, transportation and clothing assistance, employment training, and access to laundry and showers. There is also a storage facility where people can safely store their belongings.

In winter months (mid-November through the end of March) the Shelter Association runs a Warming Centre, which provides overnight shelter to anyone experiencing homelessness. Shelter Association also works on a rotating basis with sixteen churches that provide emergency accommodation for people seeking refuge from the winter weather. Over 300 people access these services each winter.

The US$8 million for the building included US$7 million for the building (of which the County maintains ownership) and a US$1 million endowment to provide on-going funding for the facility. The Shelter Association website states that, 'The Shelter Association is a national model of public-

private partnership. By collaborating with 30 other service providers on-site in a safe and caring environment, the Shelter offers the tools and help necessary to support individuals end their experience of homelessness permanently' (2012).

A broad group of people in the community was involved in raising funds for the building. Raising money for the building also led community members to build trust and create alliances among disparate groups. Local government and business leaders championed the project. The building is named after Robert J. Delonis, the chairman of a local bank, who had been instrumental in getting people involved in the project and seeing it to completion.

Shelter Association faced opposition from some residents in nearby neighbourhoods and local businesses, but there was also significant support from community members. Some of the people who had gotten involved in the fundraising campaign used their networks to support the project. Donors to the project provided financial support, but they also lent something less tangible. Their buy-in to the project lent support and credibility to the project, which provided momentum and encouraged more individuals and businesses to join in.

This support is a secondary effect of fundraising. In other words, the act of fundraising required the Shelter Association Board and staff to develop relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders in the community. These stakeholders in turn lent their support when confronted with resistance from neighbours, for example, on zoning issues. One of the positive aspects of such fundraising and community support is the shared responsibility among the hundreds of people involved in funding the project and maintaining its services.

When asked if they had seen their donations decrease in recent years after the global financial crisis, Schulmeister and Neering said that they hadn't. In fact, they reported a steady increase in individual giving. Schulmeister suggested that perhaps as people experienced hardship of their own, their compassion extended to people they saw who were worse off than themselves. As a human services agency, the Shelter Association continued to receive generous donations from individuals and foundations. Many other non-profit organisations, such as arts organisations, have had a significant decline in individual giving with the slowing economy.

Another benefit of philanthropy and private sector funding is that this type of donation tends to come with far fewer strings attached than government grants. Most gifts are unrestricted with only a few designated for a specific project. The staff and Board can decide how to use unrestricted gifts most effectively for their clients. This is especially important since the Shelter Association has seen significant cuts to their funding from the state. For example, the funding on which Shelter Association relies to pay basic operating costs comes

from the State of Michigan's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). In the last few years, the ESG funding was cut by 40 per cent and then a further 20 per cent. Many of these funds were diverted to homelessness preventative programs. Schulmeister and Neering said they support the intention of preventative programs, but they often benefit a different client group (i.e. those in +/-30 per cent of median income). Most of the Shelter Association's clients earn 0-15 per cent of median income and had complex needs. Therefore, most of the Shelter Association's clients were ineligible for the new preventative programs. With the retraction of state funding, private funding becomes even more important to continue providing essential services.

Shelter Association does not receive sufficient public sector funding to meet the complex needs of its clients. For example, one program titled Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (HPRP) provided Shelter Association with US $1.8 million to provide services to people who had lost their jobs and were at risk of homelessness. Shelter Association welcomed this funding, but was constrained in what they could do since the Federal government had specific guidelines that were further tightened at the State level. For example, HPRP did not provide any funding for support services. Therefore, the assistance for rent was valuable in keeping people in their homes. However, it didn't address the myriad of other issues in people's lives and the need for job training and mental health and other support services.

A negative aspect of relying on philanthropy is the time and money needed for fundraising. For example, ten per cent of the annual budget of Shelter Association is used for development and fundraising. Even though this is less than most non-profit organisations spend on fundraising, it still takes a significant amount of money and time to raise funds from individuals, corporations and foundations. It can also be difficult to manage the competing interests and expectations of donors. Nevertheless, Shelter Association of Washtenaw County has had significant success in fundraising for its programs and sees great benefits in engaging the broader community in its work.

The experiences of Shelter Association of Washtenaw County are indicative of a broader trend in the US of the role of philanthropy in providing social services. Historically, there have been high levels of individual giving in the US, which continue to this day (Sargeant and Jay 2010). Many communities rely on philanthropy in order to build churches, schools, and hospitals and provide social services. This culture of philanthropy is facilitated by a favourable tax structure that encourages charitable giving in the US to a broad group of registered non-profit organisations that have a charitable, religious, scientific, literary or educational purpose.

Australia also has a strong culture of philanthropy. In 2004, 87 per cent of adult Australians donated to charitable

organisations and 41 per cent volunteered. This is a significant increase from the previous decade (Commonwealth of Australia 2005). The Commonwealth of Australia's Giving Australia report (2005) compares giving in Australia and the US. After adjusting for the size of the relative economies, it found that the US generates more than two and half times the level of giving than Australia. This may due in part to the Commonwealth and State governments in Australia providing more extensive social services than governments in the US. The provision of government services in Australia mitigates at least some of the need for a reliance on philanthropy and the private sector. Another difference in the level of giving may be due to the types of organisations that can accept tax-deductible gifts. In Australia, only a narrow group of organisations may accept tax-deductible donations. In the US, a broader group of registered non-profit organisations can accept tax-deductible donations.

While not wanting to roll back government funding and face the devastating cuts to government funding that organisations in the US have faced, some aspects of incorporating philanthropy and the private sector in responding to homelessness, as practiced in the US, are worth adapting to the Australian context. Responding to homelessness requires the involvement of individuals, community organisations, businesses and government. Government funding for non-government, non-profit organisations is not adequate to comprehensively respond to homelessness. Individuals, businesses and local governments all need to support non-profit providers to deliver essential services to those most vulnerable in our communities. Funding is certainly needed, yet perhaps more important than funding is the recognition that responding to homelessness is the collective responsibility of all sectors of society. ∎

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HomeGround's Experience of Corporate and Philanthropic Support for Ending Homelessness

By Stephen Nash,
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After 20 plus years working in the homelessness and housing sectors I am convinced that ending homelessness in Victoria and Australia is possible. On an individual level it happens every day. There is no reason to believe it cannot happen at a societal level as well.

However, it will not happen if we only rely on the current players, efforts and structures that have failed to make serious inroads into the levels of homelessness or in preventing the flow of people into homelessness. Indeed across the world the existing response to homelessness is increasingly seen as an expensive social policy failure.

Greater levels of social participation and greater levels of accountability from key stakeholders right across the community can make a real difference. When key people, such as business, philanthropic and community leaders get involved in solving a social issue, real social and policy change can and does happen.

The existing paradigm for understanding and responding to homelessness in Australia is well out of date. There are systemic log jams which lead to the unnecessary suffering of thousands of people who are forced to endure and languish in appalling unsafe, overcrowded and unhealthy temporary housing situations.

Despite this, there is much to be positive about in the emerging response to homelessness. Homelessness for individuals is ended on a daily basis when the sector puts together necessary safe, permanent housing and support. This very simple combination of resources works. Even the most disadvantaged and marginalised can get on with rebuilding their lives in the safety of a home with the assistance of a comprehensive support system. It even works for those most entrenched in the trauma of long-term homelessness. It works for those who have experienced poor physical and mental health and those subjected for years to violence and a life of perpetual crisis. For this group, the long-term or so called 'chronically homeless', there are even significant social cost savings as they settle into their home and thus reduce their visits to hospital emergency departments, mental health wards and

contact with ambulances, police and the justice system.

There are several overseas evidence-based innovations which challenge our existing assumptions and paradigms about how we tackle homelessness. In the United States (US) there is over 20 years worth of experience in innovation and the development of a more business-like approach to 'solving' or 'ending' homelessness (rather than simply 'managing' or 'responding' to it).

Evidence-based innovations that are the cornerstone of homelessness policy in the US include Supportive Housing which is simply co-ordinating the provision of safe, permanent housing and support services and a Housing First or Rapid Re-Housing approach which gets people into housing as quickly as possible so that they can get on with rebuilding their lives.

The evidence of the success of these approaches is compelling and many countries in Europe are in the process of embracing Housing First approaches. In Australia, some jurisdictions have been progressively innovating and co-ordinating housing and support to reduce homelessness for specific groups of people in need.

So why hasn't homelessness gained greater political support and attention? Here are some possible answers:

- The message is not getting through to those with social and economic policy influence.
- The stakeholders involved in homelessness are limited to funded service providers and bureaucrats who are all under immense pressure in a constrained environment.
- Evidence for the cost effectiveness of these new approaches is lacking.
- Communication is ineffective.
- There is no co-ordinated campaign to inform the community or influence social policy makers.
- In the homelessness sector there is sometimes a resistance to change. Public and private funding for homelessness is also highly competitive and this can be a barrier to the better co-ordination between services and agencies and the generation of the needed evidence.

So how does this relate to corporates and philanthropy?

HomeGround is a medium sized organisation working to end homelessness

in Melbourne through the provision of housing and support services and by advocating for policy and social change.

Over the past five years we have established some very productive contacts with corporate world and the philanthropic sector. We believe we have achieved results that are both surprising and amazing. What we have found is that there is a deep interest in ending homelessness and an abundance of support to achieve this. This support has come in many forms including technical expertise, pro bono services, volunteering and practical assistance. This helps to open doors to decision makers and in some cases, funding.

Many other organisations have been enlisting corporate and philanthropic support for a lot longer than HomeGround and have their own story to tell about this.

However, when we have sought corporate and philanthropic support, we have also sought their backing for a shift in the homelessness paradigm to that of ''ending homelessness''. We have done this through projects which successfully end homelessness for very vulnerable people. We can demonstrate that our success in achieving this is a very direct and powerful result of their support.

The Elizabeth Street Common Ground project is one example of the massive and unprecedented level of corporate and philanthropic support for projects that respond to homelessness in a different way. The Common Ground model is spreading to cities right across Australia.

The major corporate partner in the Elizabeth Street Common Ground project, Grocon, committed to building at-cost with no profit. Furthermore, all of the contractors and suppliers working for Grocon also agreed to be involved at-cost, no profit – resulting in an around $10 million saving to tax payers. This extraordinary contribution is being replicated in Common Ground projects in Brisbane and Sydney and elsewhere with further savings to taxpayers.

The Rotary Club of Melbourne has been another amazing partner in our work to end homelessness. They have brought a diverse range of business and community leaders and philanthropists together to assist with the development of this project.

When the opportunity arises to discuss our vision to end homelessness and the practical projects that can demonstrate how

we can achieve this, we have learned that the corporate world and the philanthropic sector are very interested and want to be involved.

Working with corporates and philanthropists challenges us to speak their language and respond to their needs and interests. For HomeGround, this has represented a fundamental shift in the way we think and how we communicate. I am sure that along the road of this journey it has sometimes been quite frustrating for them.

But how will this help end homelessness at a societal level?

Those working in the corporate world and the philanthropic sector are really just people like us, people who care about their fellow citizens and who want to make a difference.

Our experience has taught us that practical projects like Common Ground Elizabeth Street offer a way for a win-win situation for all those involved that can produce great outcomes.

However, in Australia there is still a vast distance between what we know and what we actually do. That is, there is a disconnection between the lessons and outcomes of successful projects on the one hand, and the making of social policy decisions on the other.

Working Together

In those countries that have made great advances in reducing homelessness and achieving social and strategic policy change, this has been achieved with the involvement of business and philanthropy and other community leaders.

There are also models of homelessness advocacy that have helped foster innovation and generate the evidence that has underpinned the movement for ending homelessness. These include in the US, the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the Corporation for Supportive Housing whose boards are financial supporters and include significant business and industry leaders.

In Australia we need to work on our capacity to promote our successes and the lessons from the application of successful models like the partnerships that have worked so successfully to get Elizabeth Street Common Ground from an idea to a reality.

These kinds of successful partnerships should be the basis for a determined effort to change the way we work when meeting the challenges of homelessness.

However, they are challenges that can be met when we do decide to work together. ∎
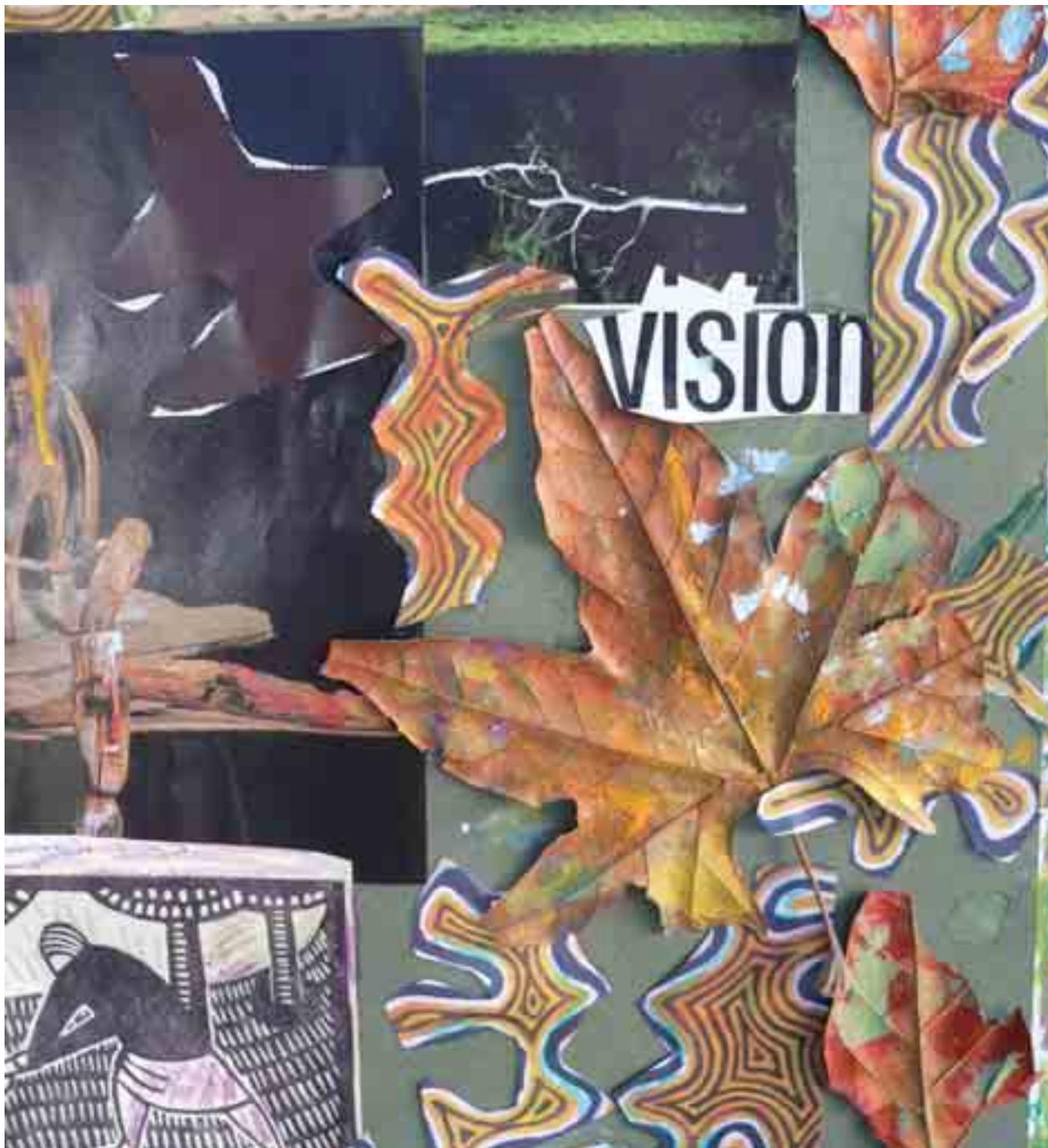
Opinion — Felicity Reynolds

CEO Mercy Foundation

'If good intentions, well-meaning programs, and humanitarian gestures could end homelessness, it would be history by now. Since they don't, it is time to do something different, something that solves the problem, not services the disgrace.'

That quote from a former Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness has always summed up my own view on responses to homelessness. Sometimes, just being 'well meaning' is not good enough. If you are homeless, being offered a sandwich instead of a place to live may be helpful, but it does not really address the problem. It relieves only one of its symptoms.

People who experience homelessness, especially those that experience it over a longer period, are some of the most vulnerable members of our community. We know that there are significant resources directed at the issue of homelessness – be it short term, medium or long-term or involving young people, women, families or single adults. Countless charities, faith groups and community based organisations do much to alleviate poverty and suffering. Philanthropy as well as corporate funding and sponsorship is often a way these services obtain some of their much needed funding.

However, is it time to re-think how we do that? Has this approach been successful? Have many businesses or foundations even considered the possibility of using their influence in solving homelessness?

This is an important edition of *Parity*. It looks closely at an issue that is often overlooked. The edition has a focus on those groups that do not necessarily do the work, but who may provide some of the funding for that work. This edition invites us to look more closely at some of the ways the philanthropic and corporate sectors work to address homelessness. Clearly there are many important issues at stake here.

I represent a Foundation that believes it can perform a role in setting the agenda, using the evidence provided by robust research to create systemic change that ends homelessness. Importantly, we do not see ourselves as a cash dispensing machine. I firmly believe that corporate organisations can bring some core skills (that may not exist in the NGO or charitable sector) that can add value, rather than just money, to the delivery of housing and services. Just asking corporates to continually dip into their pockets is not only unimaginative, it is clearly not an effective response to homelessness, let alone a significant contributor to ending homelessness.

Some of the articles in this edition outline new ways of providing philanthropic funds and new models for using those funds. The article from Rosanne Haggerty notes how corporate involvement can be leveraged to solve homelessness in local communities through active involvement rather than passive donations.

For too long, I think we have failed to see the philanthropic or the corporate sector as equal partners in a concerted community effort (with government) to solve social problems. Yet, we are all members of the same community and we all live in communities that have a vested interest in seeing homelessness effectively addressed.

I have never been of the view that on its own philanthropy can ever solve a systemic problem like homelessness. It will and cannot. As it operates at present, it is not coordinated and it relies on ad hoc responses to ongoing crises. Pooling our skills, sharing our resources, disseminating the evidence about effective models – this, I believe is the paradigm shift that is needed to take full advantage of the limited resources that are available.

My favourite example of using the resources of a private corporation to solve a problem is Grocon. Grocon began with the Melbourne Common Ground building and has gone on to build the Sydney and Brisbane projects. Large building projects are precisely where their particular skills lie. They are, after all a very successful construction company. Offering to build these new units to house people who were formerly homeless in a mixed tenancy model – 'at cost' has, so far, provided significant cost savings to governments and NGOs. Their contribution to date totals over 10 million dollars.

The Mercy Foundation is proud to support this edition of *Parity*. There is still much that needs to be done in Australia. This edition should provide some valuable food for thought on the design and implementation of the way to achieve effective involvement by business and philanthropy in addressing homelessness.

Individually we may make lots of small impacts, but together … perhaps we can create a changed community. ∎