

MEDIA RELEASE

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Building dreams: St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria to break ground on Epping/Wollert housing partnership

From vision to reality: St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's new community housing project in Melbourne's north to house vulnerable families.

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria (SVDPV) is proud to announce that it is moving into the build phase of a community housing project set to deliver nine new safe, secure and affordable homes in Epping/Wollert in partnership with Homes Victoria as part of the \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build.

Ground is due to be broken at Epping/Wollert under the auspices of SVDPV's designated housing provider VincentCare Community Housing (VCCH). The project will comprise four two-bedroom and five three-bedroom townhouses.

On **Wednesday 3 April**, the Minister for Housing, Harriet Shing visited the site for a ceremonial sod turning.

The Epping/Wollert housing project is funded by the Victorian Government's Big Housing Build, which allocated \$5.3 billion to build 12,000 new homes in metropolitan and regional Victoria, addressing the pressing need for social and affordable housing.

For several Victorian families, particularly single parents and their children, the project will provide a safe place to call home, and opportunity for a self-sustainable future.

Dr Jennifer Fitzgerald AM, Group CEO of St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria, says: "The housing crisis disproportionately affects single-parent families, and we are honoured to contribute to a collaborative effort that is quite literally building dreams. Partnering with both government and building contractors amplifies our impact, ensuring families have stable housing.

"Homelessness is a challenge with viable solutions, embedded in determination and cooperation. Our collaboration with government and business to offer family-oriented social housing underscores our dedication to providing roofs over heads, with a focus on improving the lives of those most affected."

This initiative is made possible through the collective efforts of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria, VincentCare Community Housing and the Victorian Government. With \$58 million secured across three projects via the Homes Victoria led Social Housing Growth Fund, and an additional \$20 million contribution from VCCH, these projects represent a tangible step towards addressing the housing crisis gripping our communities. In addition to Epping/Wollert, a current build in Footscray is forecast to be completed later in the year and will deliver more than 90 new homes. Construction of another project in Bendigo is slated for later in the year.

Victorian State Government Minister for Housing, Harriet Shing, says, "Every day around Victoria we are building light-filled, accessible, secure, and energy efficient homes for singles, couples, and families as part of the single biggest investment in social and affordable housing by any state or territory government.

"We are proud to work alongside St Vincent de Paul Society to provide these brand new homes to enable more

people on the Victorian Housing Register to connect to schools, public transport, healthcare, and services in this growing part of the city.”

As construction commences on these new homes, the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria remains steadfast in its mission to uplift and empower people in need, ushering in a brighter future for all Victorians.

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Claudia Loeber-Raab | Media & Content Lead
claudia.loeber-raab@svdp-vic.org.au | 0438 804 023

or

Jen Vuk | Communications Manager
jen.vuk@svdp-vic.org.au | 0418 863 719

ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of members and volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of our community. Key services include home visitation; Vinnies Shops; youth programs; soup vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; education and tutoring; and professional accommodation and health services through VincentCare. The St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria has more than 11,000+ members and volunteers, and more than 60,000 across Australia. Internationally, the Society operates in 149 countries and more than 950,000 members. To find out more visit www.vinnies.org.au/vic.