

Housing and Homelessness Support Package

29 Apr 2020

Roger Jaensch, Minister for Housing

The health, safety and wellbeing of Tasmanians is our number one priority as we continue to deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

Our first social and economic support package included a number of measures to support our most vulnerable, but we know that more is needed.

Today, we announced nearly \$4.3 million for additional housing and homelessness support to complement the measures previously announced and provide more help for those doing it tough.

This includes providing funds to expand the current Safe Night Space pilot, which has provided a safe overnight refuge for people sleeping rough in Hobart, delivered through a partnership between Hobart City Mission and the Salvation Army.

The new funding will extend the program from an overnight service into a 24/7 full wrap-around support service operating in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, with additional support from Launceston City Mission.

This will ensure some of our most vulnerable people will be able to access a secure place to sleep and the services they need to assist them into secure accommodation.

The package also includes extra funding to expand Housing Connect's capacity to provide emergency accommodation in hotels, motels and cabins statewide. The funding will also deliver increased mental health support services for clients who need them.

The Government will also invest more in services to support young people presenting at homeless shelters, delivering on several recommendations from the Under 16 Youth Homelessness Taskforce convened last year. Additional services will include intensive case management, outreach support and family mediation for young people at risk of homelessness in the North, North West and South.

These measures will ensure more Tasmanians have somewhere safe to stay, with the supports they need to follow public health advice and help save lives as we continue to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Importantly, we are also continuing with the expansion of existing homeless shelters, with 18 new pods at Bethlehem House now taking tenants, 10 new units being installed at the Hobart Women's shelter and work underway to convert the Waratah Hotel into a supported accommodation facility.

These projects, together with the hundreds of new homes and units being delivered under our Affordable Housing Strategy, will provide secure, longer-term accommodation for clients entering the Housing Connect system through the Safe Night Space and brokered accommodation services.

These are challenging times but Tasmanians can rest assured we are doing what we can to help all Tasmanians in need as we continue to work through the coronavirus pandemic.