

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP
Minister for Housing
Minister for Water
Minister for Equality



Monday, 30 October 2023

REVAMPED CITY BUILDING TO SUPPORT HOMELESS VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting more Victorians experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives through funding for a new supportive housing site in Melbourne's CBD.

Minister for Housing Harriet Shing today visited the site of Make Room, a \$24.9 million development that will repurpose a vacant council-owned building into housing for up to fifty people experiencing rough sleeping.

Delivered in partnership between the Labor Government, City of Melbourne, Unison Housing and philanthropic donors, Make Room will house up to fifty residents for up to 12 months in studio apartments in Little Bourke Street.

The Labor Government has provided \$9 million in capital funding under the Building Works Stimulus package and through the Sustained Solutions for Housing First to end Rough Sleeping initiative.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* also invested \$4.8 million for on-site support and specialised tenancy management, as part of a \$67.6 million investment in this year's Budget to give more Victorians a safe roof over their head.

The building will be refurbished and converted into spaces for people experiencing homelessness to access integrated support services like long-term case management, healthcare, alcohol, drug, and mental health services. Make Room will also support residents to access long-term accommodation at the end of their 12-month stay.

The site will also include a rooftop garden, designed with therapeutic considerations to give residents the opportunity to pursue gardening activities for recreational, social or skill development purposes.

The City of Melbourne appointed Public Realm Lab to develop Make Room Cultural Safety Guidelines to ensure the project will effectively support and meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This included hosting engagement sessions with people with a lived experience which took place from May to August 2023.

Construction of Make Room is due for completion late 2024.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Housing Harriet Shing

"Make Room will make a genuine difference to the lives of Melburnians experiencing homelessness."

"We're proud to be giving more Victorians the stability and safety of having a roof over their head, and we can't wait to bring Make Room to life."

Quotes attributable to Lord Mayor Sally Capp

"Our vision is to set a new standard for transitional supported accommodation in Victoria and demonstrate how safe spaces and integrated support services can be created."

"The whole community benefits when we work collaboratively to help people out of homelessness. We've seen that people can take back control of their lives when housing and support is available."