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Vinnies calls on NSW Government to address housing affordability crisis

The St Vincent de Paul Society will call for better planning and funding from the NSW Government to increase the supply of social and affordable housing when it makes its submission to the NSW Legislative Council Select Committee on Social, Public and Affordable Housing on Thursday morning.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President, Ray Reynolds explains that across the State, in 420 communities, Society members visit almost 600 people in crisis every day. This he says, places the Society in a unique position to understand the real impacts of the housing affordability crisis.

“There is nothing more powerful than people telling you their story, sharing their hardship. And there is nothing more uplifting than connecting with these people, assisting them and walking a journey with them. They are telling us very clearly that unaffordable housing and rents are putting enormous pressure on their ability to keep their heads above water.”

The Society also has 98 Special Works — including homelessness services that deliver ‘wrap-around’ support services for people who are experiencing homelessness, at imminent risk of homelessness, or have experienced homelessness and need post-crisis support to sustain their housing. The Society has recently established a community housing company, Amelie Housing, in a bid to use its current property portfolio as a base to develop more social and affordable housing.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, Michael Perusco says that ensuring more affordable housing is vital if people are to escape the cycle of disadvantage and homelessness.

“Improving access to safe, secure, affordable and well-located housing means better outcomes in areas such as health, education, employment and community inclusion,” he says.

To help meet the housing needs of low-income and disadvantaged households, the St Vincent de Paul Society will table a number of recommendations at the Inquiry including: the development of a formal plan to increase the supply of social and affordable housing; capital funding for a Community Housing Social Investment Fund; the discontinuation of the sale of dwellings on public housing estates; the large-scale transfer of the management of tenanted properties by the Land and Housing Corporation to community housing providers, utilising long-term leases; and the establishment of a new community housing sector advisory committee to advise the Minister for Family and Community Services, and the Community and Private Market Housing Directorate.

The St Vincent de Paul Society will give its submission at the Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing on Thursday 13 March at 10:15am at the Dixon Room, State Library.

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