

**MEDIA RELEASE****EMBARGOED 10 August 2022**

## **Construction starts at Vinnies Victoria's first Big Housing Build project in Footscray set to deliver 92 community housing homes**

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria (Vinnies Victoria) is proud to announce that we are moving into the build phase of our first major community housing project set to deliver 92 new safe, secure and affordable homes in Footscray in partnership with the Victorian Government's Big Housing Build and construction company LU Simon Builders.

Ground is due to be broken at the Wightman Street site as work on the 18-storey residential building begins under the auspices of Vinnies Victoria's designated housing provider VincentCare Community Housing (VCCH). The project will comprise 28 one-bedroom, 58 two-bedroom and six three-bedroom homes and ground floor office space, along with parking for around 60 vehicles.

**The media is invited to attend a sod-turning event to mark this milestone in the build at 11.00am on Wednesday 10 August at the site.**

Footscray is the first of three projects that VCCH is in partnership with the Victorian Government and construction partners to deliver that will provide 164 new homes in total. The others are in Bendigo and Epping. VCCH currently manages a range of properties and tenancies across Victoria, and in 2021 secured \$78 million worth of funding via the Social Housing Growth Fund for these new homes, of which VCCH has contributed \$20 million.

VCCH is well-placed to successfully deliver this project and provide ongoing support and benefit to the community as part of its broader organisation, whose members and volunteers deliver welfare assistance to the most marginal, vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians in need.

The development will meet all contemporary design requirements and aim to achieve 7-star energy ratings. These units will be available to eligible people on the Victorian Housing Register and currently living in unaffordable private rental or in inadequate accommodation – and for those currently experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. All apartments will be owned by VCCH and leased to tenants at an affordable rent.

Designated properties in the Footscray build will be allocated to singles, couples and families reliant on Aged, Disability, Jobseeker or parenting payments or those earning low wages. Of this, 10% of designated properties will be allocated to First Nations Victorians.

**Event details:**

- What:** Sod-turning ceremony  
**Where:** 7 Wightman Street, Footscray, 3011  
**When:** 11.00am - 11.30am, Wednesday 10 August 2022, including morning tea  
**Parking:** On-street 2-hour free parking at the east end of Wingfield Street, approximately a 5-min walk.

**Quote attributable to VCCH board chair Alyssa Caplan:**

*"VCCH's collaboration with the Victorian Government's Big Housing Build project is a commitment to responding to the needs of vulnerable Victorians. VincentCare Victoria was successful, in part, due to our highly regarded track record of supporting people on pathways to sustainable housing."*

**OFFICIAL**

**Quote attributable to Vinnies Victoria Group CEO Julia Cambage:**

*“Hitting the first milestone in our three-year commitment to provide 164 much-needed new homes for hundreds of people waiting on Victoria’s social housing register is a deeply satisfying and exciting occasion.*

*“We know this project will go some way to easing the housing stress across the state and are delighted to be working with the Victorian Government and LU Simon on this project that is not only creating jobs but will deliver high-quality sustainable social housing for generations to come.”*

**Other key facts and figures about Big Housing Build and the community-housing sector projects:**

- The partnership between Victorian Government and Community Housing Organisations will deliver more than \$1 billion of new housing. Homes Victoria is investing almost \$739 million with 22 community housing organisations contributing a combined \$271 million.
- This partnership – joining together to meet a common need – will deliver at least 2,300 new homes across 38 metropolitan and regional Local Government Areas.
- These projects will create a minimum of 9,000 jobs. That’s 2,000 direct and 7,000 indirect jobs for people throughout Victoria.

*For any further inquiries or to arrange an interview with Julia Cambage, please contact our media office below.*

- ENDS -

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES:**

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**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 12,000 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](http://www.vinnies.org.au).*