

HOUSING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Welcome to this community forum, a discussion of social justice issues associated with housing. Everyone in the community needs a secure place to live; without this, participation, employment, physical and mental health, become very difficult or impossible to maintain, along with positive relationships with others. Regardless of income or individual circumstances it is in the whole community's interest that no one is homeless, no one is trapped in violent domestic circumstances for lack of alternative housing, and that all who need access to health services, employment services, public transport and other amenities can be appropriately housed.

There are serious issues of equity and access to the housing available in the private market, with enormous purchase prices and rental costs, and a persistent shortfall in the supply of subsidised housing arrangements such as existing public housing units and various social housing options, with tens of thousands of households waiting for access. The current program of Public Housing Renewal is affecting our neighbours at the Walker Street estate and other public housing estates, raising many concerns about the principles underlying this form of redevelopment, and the likely outcomes for existing tenants and for those who wait in hope for more of such housing to be available.

All Saints church has participated in public debate and discussion of these issues from a Christian perspective – our abiding concern for the vulnerable and disadvantaged, and belief in justice and fairness. But we recognise that these are not just religious values – they are widely shared in the community and better approaches to achieving good housing outcomes are a matter of concern to many.

This event is an initiative of the Inner North Anglican Network: All Saints Northcote, St Mark's Fitzroy and St Philip's Collingwood. We plan to provide further such events on important social, ethical and environmental issues. The Network is not affiliated with any political party, and the forum has no connection to the forthcoming by-election in the Federal electorate of Batman.

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) catering company will provide light refreshments. This company provides employment for asylum seekers who have permission to work, and all surplus funds are used to support those seeking protection in Australia.

We are very grateful for the participation of an outstanding panel of speakers, and for the leading contribution of our moderator.

CHRIS KOTUR, Moderator

Chris has facilitated consultations for two Royal Commissions, the 2009 Bushfires Royal Commission and the 2015 Royal Commission into Family Violence. She was appointed to similar roles for the 2011 Flood Review, the 2013 Government review of the Harrietville fires and the 2014–15 Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry. She chairs investigations and inquiries and is an expert on strategy and improving organizational capability. Chris has a distinguished career serving as a chief executive, ministerial advisor, university Pro Vice Chancellor, council and board member and as a director and trustee. She is currently Leader in Residence at Leadership Victoria.





RAY CLEARY

The Rev'd Canon Dr Ray Cleary AM has been a lifelong advocate on behalf of the most disadvantaged groups in society. In a career spanning 40 years, he has held many different leadership positions in services for children, including deaf children, family care services, and services for the aged. He was the Chief Executive Officer of Melbourne City Mission (1995–2000), Chief Executive Officer of Anglicare Victoria (2000–2010) and a member of the Board of the Brotherhood of St Laurence (1993–1995). In 2001, Ray chaired the Victorian Government's Ministerial Advisory Committee on Homelessness and subsequently joined the Ministerial Council on Housing and the Ministerial Council on Children and Families. Ray received a Centenary Medal in 2001 and in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2008 he became a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of his work in the area of community services and social justice.



SEAN MCNELIS

Dr Sean McNelis is a part-time researcher at the Swinburne Centre for Urban Transitions. He has over 35 years experience in housing management, housing policy and advocacy, and housing research. Over the past 16 years at Swinburne University, he has undertaken a range of AHURI research projects and local government housing strategies. He recently published a book, *Making Progress in Housing: A Framework for Collaborative Research*, which outlines a new framework for research and policy called Functional Collaboration, based on the work of Canadian philosopher, theologian and economist, Bernard Lonergan. His interests include: social housing policy, in particular housing finance and rental systems; housing for older persons; housing co-operatives; and the foundations of housing research and policy.



NICK MATTEO

Nick began his professional career as a housing worker in 1985, liaising between tenants and state government to progress the public housing improvement program. Currently a community planner with the City of Darebin he has worked in local government since 1989 in various community and social planning roles, developing the role of Councils in responding to social housing needs and homelessness. His work has included exploring innovative support models for homeless people, introduction of policy and management innovations to support the wellbeing of rooming house tenants (with mixed success), and leadership in social policy development. He is currently Chairperson of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Rooming House Group and co-convenor of the Housing and Local Government Network.



KATE SHAW

Dr Kate Shaw is a critical urban geographer at the University of Melbourne. She is interested in the cultures of cities and the political-economic and social processes that shape them, in particular, urban planning and policy practices and their capacity to deliver social equity and cultural diversity. She is co-editor with Libby Porter of *Whose Urban Renaissance? An international comparison of urban regeneration policies* (Routledge 2009) and author of the forthcoming *Squander and salvage of urban waterfronts*, which looks at the redevelopment of the deindustrialised docks and harbours of London, Melbourne, Sydney, Toronto, Vancouver, Berlin, Hamburg and Copenhagen.