

## Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria

Mr David Bath

**Organisation Name:**  
**Your position or role:**

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this inquiry into homelessness to consider::**

Rough sleeping, Services, Public housing, Housing affordability, Mental health, Family violence, Indigenous people, Employment

**What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :**

Concerned citizen

**Are there any additional themes we should consider?**

### YOUR SUBMISSION

#### **Submission:**

There is one place in the world where homeless has been addressed both successfully and cost-effectively - Finland - by providing housing in their own names, not shelters, not temporary accommodation, which then gives the person the stability needed to get on track with everything else.

It's simple: Ask yourselves "What has worked, what hasn't?" and then explain to Victorians why you do not try what is known to work, and continue to do what is known to fail.

From a paper at the World Economic Forum (link below)

'There can be a number of reasons as to why someone ends up homeless, including sudden job loss or family breakdown, severe substance abuse or mental health problems. But most homelessness policies work on the premise that the homeless person has to sort those problems out first before they can get permanent accommodation. Finland does the opposite - it gives them a home first. The scheme, introduced in 2007, is called Housing First. It is built on the principle that having a permanent home can make solving health and social problems much easier.

The homeless are given permanent housing on a normal lease. That can range from a self-contained apartment to a housing block with round-the-clock support. Tenants pay rent and are entitled to receive housing benefits. Depending on their income, they may contribute to the cost of the support services they receive. The rest is covered by local government.'

And it costs less than traditional means of support that don't work. Again from the WEF Paper

“All this costs money,” admits Kaakinen. “But there is ample evidence from many countries that shows it is always more cost-effective to aim to end homelessness instead of simply trying to manage it. Investment in ending homelessness always pays back, to say nothing of the human and ethical reasons.” The savings in terms of the services needed by one person can be up to 9,600 euros a year when compared to the costs that would result from that person being homeless, he adds.'

'In the UK, a study by the homeless charity Crisis found that a policy of this kind in the UK could be more

than five times as effective and nearly five times more cost-effective than existing services.'

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/02/how-finland-solved-homelessness/>

**Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:**

**FILE ATTACHMENTS**

**File1:**

**File2:**

**File3:**

**Signature:**

David T. Bath