

Dandenong housing crisis grows

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A GROWING number of homeless people in Dandenong prefer to sleep outdoors than in crime- and drug-infested social houses.

Cornerstone Contact Centre coordinator Don Cameron said the centre's swag handout had been "extremely popular" with the at-risk community.

The Walker St faith mission bought the water and insect proof swags, similar to mini-tents, from a charity called Swags for the Homeless.

"Housing is a major issue," he said.

"We're seeing more people without stable accommodation coming to the centre for a meal and a safe place to relax."

Ahead of the November 27 state election, Leader straw-pollled Dandenong district candidates about affordable housing.

Labor MP John Pandazopoulos said the State Government's multi-faceted approach to affordable housing would deliver the best results.

"One approach is new land releases on the urban fringe, but we also need facilities around them," he said.

Higher density and more diverse housing options are included in the Revitalising Central Dandenong project, he said.

Dandenong precinct Greens candidate Matthew Kirwan condemned homelessness.

"I believe housing is a basic human right," he said. "The Greens will tackle homelessness as a priority."

Liberal candidate Dale Key said a Coalition Government would strengthen housing stock and work with associations to ensure the needs of homeless women, the elderly and disabled were met.

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