

HOMELESSNESS WEEK

Statement by Minister for Community Services

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Community Services) [12.13 pm]: As many members would be aware, last week was Homelessness Week. The week is an important time to come together to listen and learn about, and showcase, the important work from across the community sector, government, industry and international jurisdictions on how to respond to homelessness in our community. This year's theme was "Home Safe Home", and last week saw over 35 events held around the state and across the Perth metropolitan area.

I was pleased to meet with Bob Jordan, the national director of Housing First in Ireland, who was brought to Perth by Shelter WA to share the impressive results emerging from Ireland and the Housing First approach it is implementing. I know that Bob's time here was well spent, promoting this evidence-based approach to the sector, to the community and within government.

I was also pleased to join with both the private and community services sectors to announce joint government funding for important projects in 20 Lives 20 Homes in Fremantle, the implementation of the Home Stretch trial, and to keep Foyer Oxford open, and additional funds to extend the operating hours of the Tranby Centre, as identified through the work done between the member for Perth, the state government, the City of Perth and stakeholders.

Underpinning this funding and our approach to working in this complex social policy area is the government's commitment to work with people experiencing homelessness instead of making decisions about them. The book called *When there's no place to call home*, developed by the Department of Communities and launched last week, demonstrates the importance of this approach and hearing the experiences of homeless people, instead of responding to generalisations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the interest they have shown in this issue, and the support that it has generated. I especially want to thank Shelter WA, led by Michelle Mackenzie, for its work in coordinating events and galvanising the sector.

However, we in government realise that Homelessness Week is one week out of 52 in a year, and we must continue our work across the year if we are to achieve results for the people who need our support. That is what the McGowan government has committed to doing, and will continue doing, as we finalise the governments first 10-year strategy on homelessness.