

# Homeless to homemaker



Australian Manufacturing  
Workers' Union

3PE Build

Health and Community  
Services Union

**Prepared For :**  
Mental Health Victoria



# About us

**The AMWU** campaigns for members working in Print, packaging, metals, vehicles, manufacturing and food. We deliver strong wins in the workplace, and work for better jobs for Victorians. We also campaign in the community for a fairer Victoria

**3PE Build** is a midsize, full-service steel engineering & welding specialist staking its reputation on developing innovative, cost-effective solutions to the toughest engineering problems.

**HACSU** has represented the workers who make a difference to lives of people living with mental illness, disability, and drug and alcohol problems for over 100 years

## The Core Team

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# Housing in Victoria



In the 2018-19 period **1 in 57** Victorians access a government funded homeless service. A devastating number but one that is highly likely to underestimate the extent of the issue.

Approximately **24,000 Victorians** and **116,000 Australians will be homeless tonight**. These Australians cover a wide array of demographics including young people, mothers and children escaping domestic violence, older people, people with a disability and community members grappling with mental health and risky substance use issues.

According to the Victorian Inquiry into Homelessness, the demand for services exceeds the availability of support with 112,919 Victorians seeking assistance from homelessness services in the 2018-19 period. Of those who sought assistance for short, medium, or long term accommodation most could not be assisted to government or not-for profit services due to overcapacity.

The Victorian Inquiry into Homeless noted:

- 76% could not be provided long-term housing
- 62% could not be provided transitional accommodation
- 32% could not be provided crisis accommodation.

The trade union movement applaud the Andrews' Labor Government's record \$5.3 billion investment to build more than 12,000 public housing dwellings with projected job creation at 43,000. This will represent a 10% increase in the overall Victorian social housing stock.

However, despite this landmark investment, this will not ensure that the State will meet the national average of social housing as a percentage of total dwellings. For Victoria to reach the social housing average, it is estimated that the State would need to build at least 3,400 dwellings each year until 2036. As a movement we know that the housing crisis has become more urgent due to direct and indirect economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.



# Our Way Forward



As it stands over 80,000 Victorians are on the Victorian Housing Register and the list is growing.

The Victorian branch of The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in partnership with 3PE Build are proposing a homeless to homemaker program that incorporates affordable housing, access to apprenticeships and job-training and fast and reliable access to mental health and community services. The project also has the support of the Health and Community Services Union, the only specialist mental health union in Victoria.

The AMWU know that providing the dignity of housing is only the beginning. As unions, we believe that offering the opportunity to receive job readiness training in an apprenticeship or the community services sector should be attached to any housing project to ensure that our most vulnerable Victorians are supported in every way possible in commencing a new chapter.

The most common causes of homelessness tend to be issues with mental health, medical problems, substance abuse, and interpersonal or relationship issues such as family violence. We believe that these issues should no longer be a barrier to safe housing and employment.

It is our belief that programs supported by business, trade unions and the government not only have the capacity to offer a long-term solution to structural inequality in the housing market, but also can deliver reliable solutions to immediate problems such as hotel quarantine, crisis accommodation and pop-up sites to assist in critical policies such as the repeal of public drunkenness and The Royal Commission into Mental Health.

The AMWU, HACSU and 3PE Build echo the calls made by the Victorian Inquiry into Homelessness for the Victorian government to explore opportunities to include more social enterprises and to include work readiness components into their employment program. We see this as the way forward, particularly for young people who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness to receive job readiness training and employment opportunities.

As stated in Josh Burn MP's report for the McKell Institute, *"The Crumbling Australian Dream"*, we know that providing people safe and stable housing improves people's lives significantly and has widespread social benefits. The evidence backs up what we all intuitively know, that people who have a safe home are better able to cope with the other challenges we all face in life.

The AMWU, 3PE Build and HACSU are delighted to offer a project that provides housing, healthcare, job training and community to amplify the Victorian Government's Big Social Housing Build.

## Tony Mavromatis, AMWU



*"The AMWU is proud to present this plan to help some of the most disadvantaged in our communities, providing them not only a home and the mental health treatment they need to become a productive part of our community, but to also offer the participants a step off the merry-go round of disadvantage and homelessness. The project aims to provide an opportunity to gain skills that make them employable, provide a good stable job and at the same time help them to realise their self-worth and provide dignity. This is a hand up not a handout, the skills are in shortage and will help to lessen the burden on the government purse strings while delivering on required skills that are in shortage in this state and the country. We are proud to be working with other unions, business, and government to offer this solution to a massive issue within our state and community in general."*





# 3PE's Designs



## What you get in a portable building:

Cost per unit: \$95-\$125K

Finished house includes:

- 20ft container
- Furniture
- Lighting
- Flooring
- Walls
- Beds
- Bathroom including shower, toilet, sink
- Electricity, gas and water installation
- Insulation
- Groundwork and footings
- Building surveyors
- Code Requirements
- Labour inclusive of experienced and apprentices



## Introduction

### 40FT ACCOMODATION | PORTABLE BUILDING

Us at 3PE.

Proudly designed, manufactured and engineered in Australia. We provide sustainable modules for hospitality, major events, corporate offices and accommodation.

We believe modulation is every industries way forward.

21 September 2021

What is this document?

This document shares designs for modular accomodation units made from four, 40ft transportable containers.

They are stackable combining togfether to house 16 people.

Each living and sleeping space is 20ft long and houses 2 people.

## Building Summary

### External

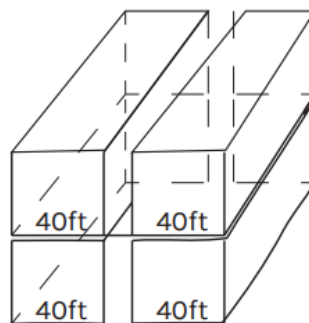
- Modular kit for 'plug and position' to match most sites.
- Centre stairs to reduce footprint
- Apartment entrances face into 'courtyard' for protection against tough remote or marine environments.
- Feature walls can be used to secure the courtyard space.
- Large windows facings greenery
- Permawood timber cladding (durable)
- Shading mesh options available

- portable veggie beds available
- Soft external night lighting

### Internal

- Split Aircon
- Insulated
- Bunk or Loft sleeping layouts
- Veneered composite flooring

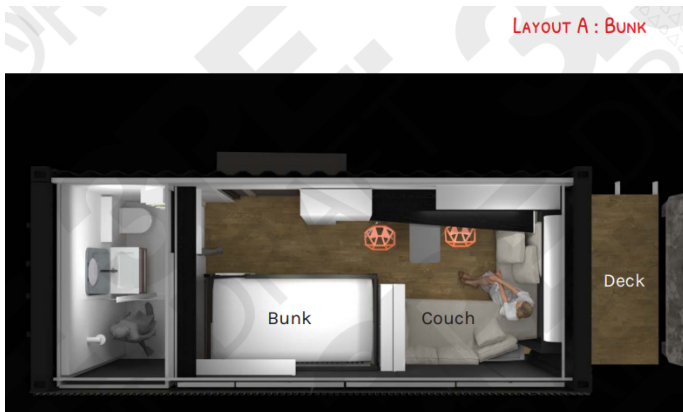
- Many internal storage options for clothing, dailies and hobbies.
- Cooking options available.





# The Homes

\*See Addendum for more images



## Dutch Model of Social Housing

Dutch social housing organisations are private, non-profit enterprises that pursue social goals within a strict framework of national laws and regulations. They involve local government, tenants and other stakeholders in their policies and are accountable to society. Municipalities and social housing organisations are partners at the local level, each with their own responsibilities. Tenant organisations are also involved and help to determine the quality and quantity of housing needed. This results in 'performance-agreements'. Tasks vary greatly between areas and regions. Different approaches are tailored to local and regional situations and require local cooperation. Social housing organisations ensure an adequate supply of affordable, good-quality homes. Energy saving is a high priority as it can lower the total housing costs of tenants. We see this as the way forward to ensure that tenants are empowered to create their own, productive community.



*"Homelessness is a solvable problem. We know what needs to be done, we just need the will to carry it out."*

**Fiona Patten MP**

**Leader of the Reason Party and Chair of The Victorian Inquiry into Homelessness**





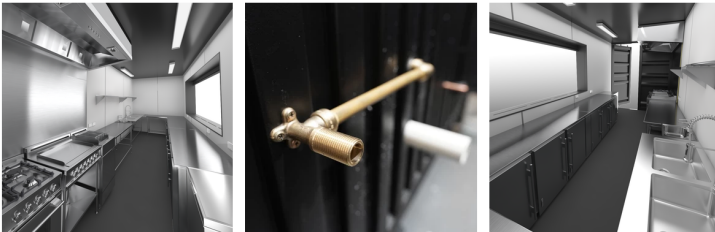


# Examples of Social Spaces

Examples of 3PE hospitality builds for breweries, wine bars and cafes.



Example of a kitchen fit out by 3PE which has the capacity to be a light house cafe available for formal hospitality training and open to the public based on Melbourne 614 and The Wayside Chapel.



## Stand-Alone Kitchens | 20ft Container

A nifty, good looking kitchen for wherever you want it.

Our units are certified to Aussie food hygiene standards, and ready for commercial operation.

### Specs

- 1x 4 Burner & Oven
- 1x Griddle
- 1x 2 Basket Fryers
- 2x 3 Door Bench Fridges
- 1x Exhaust canopy
- 2x Shelves
- 1 x hot water unit
- 1x water outlet
- 3 phase power (32-amp, 5-pin)
- 2x 45kg LPG bottle holders
- Vinyl Flooring
- LED lighting
- Cladded facade
- Full serving window
- Security Shutter



*"We know that safe and secure housing is one the key social determinants to wellness, particularly mental health and a key factor that aids people in recovering from whatever issues they are facing in their life"*

**Paul Healey, State Secretary of the Health and Community Services Union.**





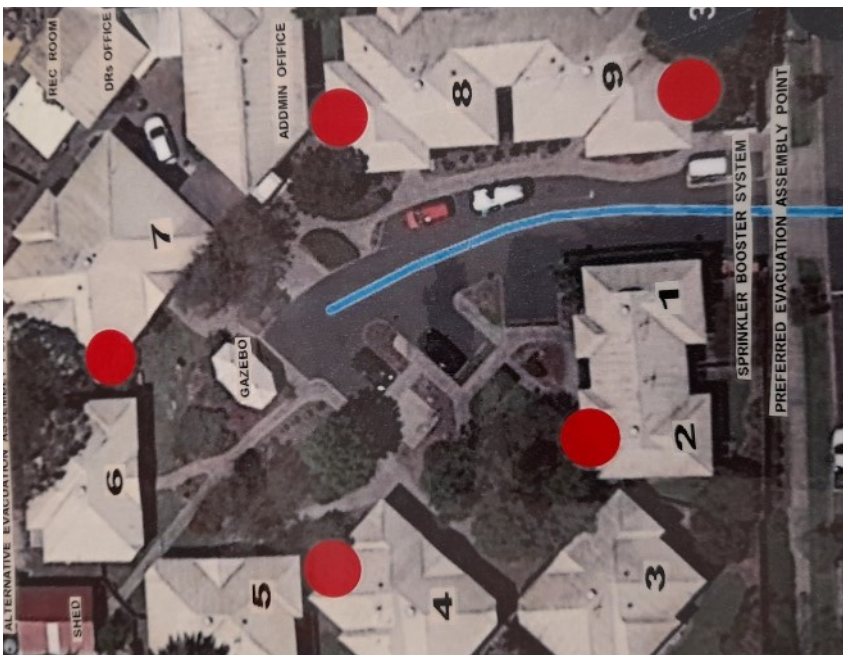


# Other Opportunities

As part of the housing trial, 3PE are asking that the Victorian Government provide a piece of Crown land close to the accommodation to produce more housing for other electorates. The workshop will be crucial to providing jobs and apprenticeships and will include a training facility. To the side of the building will be a garage for mechanic training opportunities and will be the site where occupational therapists and driving instructors can conduct driver training to ensure that our young Victorians have access to gaining their licence. 3PE have indicated that they are willing to fund this initiative at approximately \$6 million.



**3PE.**  
build



An example of the Community Care Units currently in operation in Victoria. We see our trial using plans such as this as a starting point to provide housing, community spaces, treatment rooms for visiting clinicians and the site of a lighthouse cafe and community workshops.

We see our project at the next step in supporting the recovery of Victorians and/or providing community and support for those seeking long-term housing with less stringent guidelines but with the knowledge that assistance is only a phone call away.

*"We have a housing crisis in this country. We have a situation where more and more Australians can't afford to live in their own home. We have a situation where the dream of more and more Australians of owning their own home is fading away."*

**Josh Burns MP - Federal Member for Macnamara**





# Covid-19 Specific Solutions



## Hotel Quarantine

The emergence of the Covid-19 Pandemic forced State governments to implement immediate quarantine options for international and domestic travellers. This resulted in an Australia-wide policy of utilising hotels to assist in quarantine. However it is now widely accepted that this is not the most effective option, particularly with the emergence of the highly infectious Delta variant.

It is estimated that approximately 1 out of 200 positive hotel quarantine entrants will result in a leak as evidenced by the second wave in Victoria in 2020 and the Western Australia lockdown of 2021. Although the hotel quarantine system has done much in halting the spread of the Coronavirus, it cannot be denied that issues of social distancing and the unavoidable shared airflow in hotels, renders them not fit for purpose as a long-term quarantine option.

It is widely accepted that most effective quarantine program resides in Howard Springs in the Northern Territory. Originally designed by AECOM to attract highly skilled fly in fly out workers to the region, the Manigurr-ma Village provides a high standard of sustainable, long-term accommodation inclusive of green spaces and outdoor recreational activities such as swimming, indoor cricket and a gym.

The structures are predominantly made with dongas as the base and this can be easily adapted by 3PE as shipping containers have the same capacity.

Given that Covid-19 will be with our communities for years to come, we believe that this is imperative to ensure that quarantine is done safely.

## Combatting Overcrowding

In the second wave of the Victorian outbreak, the top ten suburbs identified as Covid hotspots were also housing crisis hotspots. Currently, there is an outbreak in the New South Wales town of Wilcannia with an estimated 1 in 6 community members infected. With a high Indigenous population and a lack of affordable housing, it is clear that the housing crisis is making people sick.

People residing in overcrowded and insecure housing have less opportunity to self-isolate and it is no coincidence that hotspots high housing affordability stress, where the lowest 40% of income spend more than 30% of their household income on housing were more at risk.

The capacity of people to isolate effectively is directly related to areas of Melbourne with high rates of overcrowding, homelessness, housing affordability stress and financial stress. The relationship between Covid-19 and the housing crisis cannot be ignored.





# Crisis Management for Medium - Long Term Housing

## Natural Disasters

Natural Disasters pose immediate threats on housing availability. In many instances after floods, fires, cyclones, and storms communities are rendered helpless without power and without a roof over their head.

In 2017 the Category 4 Cyclone Debbie lashed the Whitsunday Islands, Airlie Beach, Proserpine, Bowen and Collinsville destroying 44,000 homes. The infamous 2019 bushfires claimed 3094 homes. The 2021 storms in Victoria destroyed 98 homes and severely damaged 86. We note that many of these affected communities in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria are still waiting for their homes to be built and it is our belief that projects that have the capacity to provide safe, affordable housing must be investigated in as a key part of crisis management.

## Domestic Violence and Gendered Inequality

The trade union movement applaud the landmark \$3 billion committed by the Victorian state government to tackle domestic violence. However, 5 years after the Royal Commission into Family Violence 26,000 women and children are being turned away from housing services each year and police reports are at an all time high. There are serious shortages in emergency and long-term housing options for victims of family violence with some waiting times up to eight weeks.

In the year leading up to December 2020, police attended 92,521 family violence incidents and each night 66 women and 55 children are spending the night in motels due to a lack of available housing.

**51,000 Victorians became homeless in the 2019-20 period due to family violence** and it is our belief that as a matter of urgency, 3PE in partnership with the AMWU and HACSU have the ability to create housing with the opportunity for retraining in another career and with mental health and social services supports attached to ensure that vulnerable Victorians have every chance to restart their life when fleeing violence.

We also note that with a long history of structural and economic inequality, it is not surprising to see that women over 55 are becoming more vulnerable to housing stress and homelessness in increasing numbers which must be urgently addressed.





# Closing the mental health gap

## Mental Health and Homelessness

HACSU members have for years identified that the lack of appropriate and affordable housing for consumers is a major contributor of recurrent presentations at acute services. The lack of affordable and appropriate housing plus a lack of medium to longer term support options combined to make homelessness a serious risk for many Victorians with a mental illness or grappling with an addiction.

Many of our mental health clinicians link the lack of long-term care options to the deinstitutionalisation of acute mental health treatment. HACSU believe that linkages to organisations or health services with proven track records, inclusive of rehabilitation and outpatient services, mental health, peer support and the unions engaged with job retraining, will be a positive way forward for our most vulnerable Victorians.

This also aligns with calls from the Royal Commission into Mental Health which identified that supported housing for adults and young people living with mental illness, accompanied by an appropriate level of integrated, multidisciplinary and individually tailored mental health and well-being treatment care, and support as being a vital aspect of Victoria's 10-year housing strategy.

## Halting Medical Discharge to Homelessness

A critical part of the mental health eco-system is the emergence of Community Care Units (CCUs). These services, usually attached to public area mental health services, provide clinical and rehabilitative care in a home-life environment to ensure that people who are seriously affected by mental illness develop and relearn skills in self-care, communication and social skills. Patients have access to full-time psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, peer workers, lived and living experience workers and a range of allied health professionals.



Unfortunately, many CCUs are negatively impacted by the housing crisis. Often times when it comes time for discharge, patients are either faced with waiting lists of up to 80 years or mental health workers are left with not option other than to drop them outside of a housing service.

The Victorian Inquiry into Homelessness also noted that far too often many Victorians are being forced into a transition from many institutional settings into homelessness inclusive of health, mental health and custodial settings. There is a lack of sufficient planning or support to find meaningful accommodation for these Victorians inevitably leading to poor outcomes.

Recommendation 24 of the Inquiry called on the government to immediately implement a 'no discharge to homelessness' policy to improve discharge practices at all institutional settings. We emphatically agree and believe that this project has the capacity to not only provide housing but to also offer apprenticeships and opportunities for employment retraining in a supported setting. This will go a long way to ensuring that vulnerable Victorians exiting a mental health facility, hospital, rehabilitation facility, aged care setting or jail will be supported by mental health teams such as those found in CCUs and will be given a platform to retrain in skills desperately needed in the Victorian Community.

As this is an affordable option, it can be implemented much faster than capital works investments.



# Job readiness and retraining opportunities

## Apprenticeship Opportunities

- Boilermaker
- Carpentry
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Plastering
- Roof Plumbers
- Painters
- Automotive Mechanics
- Hospitality

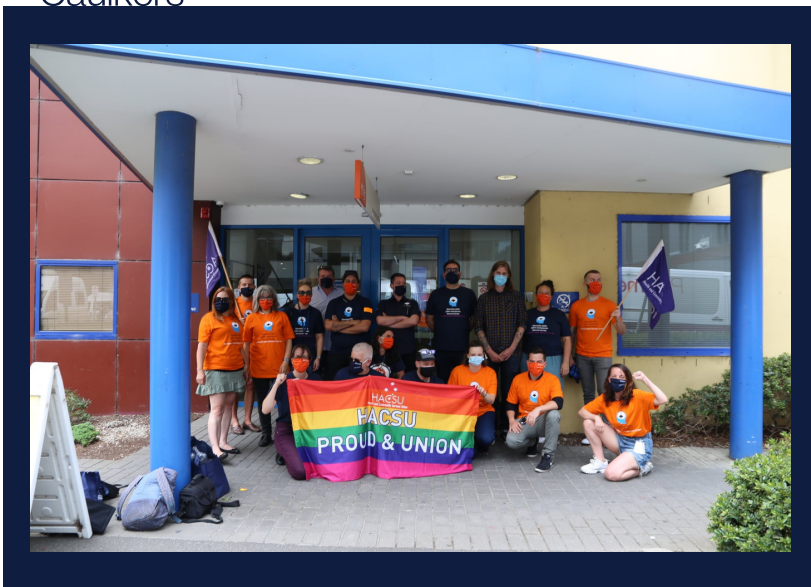
## Non-Traded Opportunities

- Sheet Metal
- Machine Operator
- Production Line
- Dispatch
- Truck Driver
- Crane Lift Operator
- Hospitality
- Caulkers



## Retraining Opportunities

- Disability Support Work (Certificate IV Disability)
- Alcohol and Other Drugs (Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- Community Services (Diploma of Community Services)
- Lived Experience (Mental Health)
- Lived and Living Experience (Harm Reduction - alcohol, other drugs, needle and syringe programs)
- Aged Care (Certificate IV in Aged Support)





# Project recap



- The AMWU, 3PE Build and HACSU wish to initiate a trial of a housing project based on the Dutch model of social and public housing with job training and mental health support.
- These three organisations see this as a viable way forward to ensure that those who are seeking housing are also afforded the opportunity to seek employment, engage in study or commence and apprenticeship while also receiving mental health support.
- Land to build a factory to produce the units near the housing trial - 3PE will fund the building and labour costs at a value of \$6million with a commitment to providing employment and apprenticeships.
- Projects such as this will take much needed pressure off of the mental health workforce - particularly the clinicians working at Community Care Units and the Crisis Assessment Treatment Teams (CATT) who are hamstrung in providing treatment by a lack of social and public housing.
- If the Victorian Government commit to engage 3PE, the AMWU and HACSU will work with relevant trade unions, mental health providers and business to deliver a housing project based on the Dutch model.
- This trial could be done in partnership with an Area Mental Health Service or could be run through the same NGO who will run the worker-led rehabilitation, outreach and outpatient service.

## Our Ask of Government:

- Support to begin a reference group with government, the relevant trade unions and business.
- Support to find Crown land in Melton to begin planning and consultation with councils to build accommodation.
- Support to find Crown land close to the accommodation site for 3PE to build a workshop.
- Support to find a relevant partner university to track a trial to measure the benefits of the project.
- A trial the use of the 3PE buildings for key initiatives such as the public drunkenness repeal to be used as an alternative prior to the sobering up shelters being built. We see this as an excellent way to trial the medical capacity of the buildings in an effort to design the medical and treatment rooms attached to the housing trial.
- To commence discussions with Jobs Victoria to assess how best to support those seeking to re-enter the workforce.



*"I'm proud to stand behind a project which not only answers a market need, but also creates longevity and suitability for Victorians seeking a new start in life. This is about a legacy that 3PE Engineering can proudly leave behind to better our communities and one that I hope will be around long after I am. I am proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with government, business, and trade unions to give a hand up to the most disadvantaged in our community."*

**Charlie Hamod, CEO 3PE**