Melbourneâ€™s homeless to benefit from new facilities at Salvation Army

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Melbourneâ€™s most vulnerable community members will benefit from new personal mailboxes and storage facilities at The Salvation Army Melbourne Project 614 on Bourke Street, thanks to an initiative led by Australia Post, the Collingwood Football Club and the City of Melbourne. The group investment will provide access to 171 personal mailboxes and more than 150 storage boxes so people sleeping rough have a place to store their personal belongings and send and receive mail.

Previously, storage facilities at The Salvation Army Melbourne Project 614 was limited and at capacity, and mail deliveries for people without a fixed address could only be received via a single PO Box at a nearby Post Office.

Australia Post Group Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director Christine Holgate said the joint initiative is an opportunity to give people without a fixed address the chance to reconnect with society.

“We are pleased to help The Salvation Army provide this service and assist people who need our help the most,” Ms Holgate said.

“Personal onsite mailboxes enable people in special circumstances to re-establish connections with family and friends, government and financial services, and accommodation, in a safe and secure place.

“The expanded storage facilities also allow people to securely store all of their personal belongings, including sentimental items, like family photos.

“For all members of our community, feeling safe and connected is really important.”

Collingwood Football Club President Eddie McGuire said the mailboxes and storage facilities will provide a degree of certainty and security for people who have little of either in their lives.

“We know that if you lose touch with friends, family and the services essential to wellbeing that the challenge to get back on your feet can be extraordinarily difficult,” Mr McGuire said.

“What these new facilities offer is a connection; a way for those in need to

re-connect or stay connected with the community and the avenues to assistance they might require.

"This is our community offering a helping hand."

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the project is an example of how government and the private sector can work together with agencies to support people who are homeless or sleeping rough on the streets of Melbourne.

"Many people don't realise how difficult it is to connect with services like Centrelink and Medicare if you don't have a fixed address when filling out the paper work. A personal mailbox is a simple way of helping people reconnect with society," the Lord Mayor said.

"For someone who is experiencing homelessness or sleeping rough on the streets, there is often nowhere to store their personal belongings, which often can mean people are left with no choice but to leave items on the street where it's at risk of being stolen or collected with rubbish."

The Salvation Army Melbourne Project 614 Major Brendan Nottle said the initiative will offer people the dignity of a fixed mailbox.

"Most of us take having a safe and accessible mailbox and place to store our belongings for granted, but for our clients at 69 Bourke Street, this initiative will make a real difference to their everyday lives," Major Nottle said

"One of the things that makes Melbourne great is that business, police, community groups, government and the broader community all work together to solve problems and initiate positive change and this is one such example of that successful collaboration.

"Thank you to Australia Post, the Collingwood Football Club and City of Melbourne for helping us to make this idea a reality."

The initiative is part of the group's ongoing efforts to help the most vulnerable members of our community.

Source: Australia Post

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