

TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASES

Paul Lennon, MP
Premier

Wednesday, 30 April 2008

COLONY 47'S NEW HOME OFFICIALLY OPENED

The Premier this morning opened the new headquarters of Colony 47, one of Tasmania's leading community organisations.

Opening the new base for some of Colony 47's services in North Hobart, Mr Lennon paid tribute to the provider's strong record of service to the community.

"Colony 47 first opened its doors in 1973 with funding of just \$4000 as a coffee shop and drop-in centre for young people," the Premier said.

"Today, it delivers important services to the community from several sites across Southern Tasmania, including this new base in North Hobart.

"It employs around 140 Tasmanians who assist people with housing, employment, training and family issues.

"From small beginnings, Colony 47 has achieved a great deal of success and this move into new premises is evidence of it continuing to fulfil the needs of the community.

"This new facility provides another base from which Colony 47 can reach out to people in need."

Mr Lennon said the new building at 432 Elizabeth Street would allow Colony 47 to consolidate its services and be more client-focused.

He said the State Government was committed to working in partnership with groups like Colony 47 to make a positive difference in the community.

"The State Government provides over \$4 million in funding to Colony 47 each year – and I regard it not only as money well spent – which it is – but as an investment in the social fabric of our State," the Premier said.

"When people are vulnerable, they need assistance. When a community wants to reach out and support others, it needs encouragement.

"That's why I have committed the Government, as part of my Agenda for 2008, to strong and consistent action in social policy.

"I have established a dedicated Social Inclusion Unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet to generate practical solutions.

"This includes the production of a whole-of-government social inclusion strategy.

"It's about fighting poverty and mental illness and family breakdown in a holistic way, so that we address the causes of social inequality and not just its symptoms.

"In housing, I have committed to an immediate injection of \$60 million.

"We have a responsibility as a government and as a community to make sure that the homeless are not a forgotten part of our society.

"The Labor Party has always been committed to lending a helping hand to Tasmanians doing it tough, it is a responsibility we will not shirk.

"I have also committed the Government to halving the number of people 'sleeping rough' in Tasmania by 2010.

"We are already moving on that agenda by examining the feasibility of converting Highfield House on the corner of Murray Street in Hobart into a 'Common Ground' housing facility for the long-term homeless.

"We are taking action, and in partnership with organisations like Colony 47, I know we can make a difference."

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