



**Vinnies**  
good works

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**NETWORK**

## Welcome to the Social Justice Newsletter for June

### Federal election opens the door for justice

The recent Federal Election saw the winds of change bring an incoming Labor Government as well as a significant run of independent candidates.

Throughout New South Wales and across the country, members of our social justice network were active in meeting with local members and candidates in their communities, drawing attention to key social justice issues.

The change of Government has brought welcome commitments to issues such as the constitutional recognition of First Nations Peoples, a National Housing and Homelessness Plan, and addressing climate change. But in these, and other areas - such as ensuring adequate income support - much work remains.

Some of you have told us you've now reached out to congratulate your new or returning Federal MP, and are seeking to establish or continue a constructive and ongoing relationship to help progress positive change for vulnerable individuals and families during the new political cycle. If you'd like any support or information to help you do this, please contact us at [social.justice@vinnies.org.au](mailto:social.justice@vinnies.org.au).



## Thank you for joining us at the 2022 Social Justice Forum!

Close to one hundred St Vincent de Paul members, volunteers and employees from across NSW gathered at Mary MacKillop Place on Saturday 28 May for the 2022 Vinnies Social Justice Forum.

The day was an opportunity to look at key social justice issues affecting local communities, and the role of Vinnies in advocating on behalf of the people we assist. During the morning session, Jack de Groot, CEO, led a panel discussion with guest speakers Fr Peter Smith, Alice Salomon and Jihad Dib MP, discussing how we can effectively advocate for more just and inclusive communities. [You can watch a short wrap-up video here.](#)

Workshops were held on issues including the Uluru Statement from the Heart, responding to domestic violence, climate change and natural disasters, uplifting the voices of people with lived experience, and building local relationships.

The continuation of the Build Homes, Build Hope campaign was discussed in the afternoon, with agreed actions including a new letter-writing campaign in the lead up to the 2023 NSW election calling for increased investment in social housing.

Thank you to everyone who attended and all involved in planning and making the Social Justice Forum a success! [Read more about the day here.](#)



## Submissions and Inquiries

The NSW Parliament regularly agrees to examine specific issues in detail through existing or specially established Committees. Informed by the experiences of both Vinnies Services and our member volunteers - as well as research and data - the Society contributes to these inquiries to help shape more informed and equitable policy-making, and as part of our social justice advocacy.

This week, the Society was called to give evidence at a Committee Hearing being conducted as part of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Response to Major Flooding Events. Clare Van Doorn, Regional Director, North East, and Joy Kyriacou, Manager, Volunteer and Member Programs, spoke about the role our member volunteers play supporting others in their communities, and how better coordination, led by Government, would have enabled a more effective and trauma-informed response. You can [watch the hearing here \(14 June\)](#) or [read our submission here](#).

We also prepared a submission to the Inquiry into Homelessness Amongst Older People in New South Wales. Our submission identified a range of issues impacting the growing number of people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, and the need to provide specialised responses, while at the same time addressing broader challenges such as the housing affordability crisis. [Read our submission here](#).

## CEO Sleepout

Still on the topic of homelessness, the Society's major annual fund-raising event - the CEO Sleepout - is on next week. This event is not only an opportunity to raise funds for services needed to support the growing number of people without a place to call home. It also provides a glimpse of some of the diverse experiences of homelessness - through storytelling, real-life conversations, and discussions with experts and practitioners - encouraging greater empathy and awareness. Research conducted by Western Sydney University found that many participants go on to use their power and privilege to effect change within their companies, their communities, and their homes. You can [donate to the CEO Sleepout here](#).

## Build Homes, Build Hope - join the letter writing campaign

Can you contribute to our Build Homes, Build Hope letter writing campaign?

As part of our response to rising homelessness and the enormous waiting list for social housing, the Society continues to call for increased investment in social housing. We have

started a letter writing campaign and aim to send the NSW Premier a letter a day in the 300 days leading up to the March 2023 election.

Send us a hand written letter stating why homelessness needs to be addressed and calling for 5,000 new social housing homes every year for the next ten years, and we'll make sure it gets to the Premier's office.

Please raise your voice for more social housing and encourage your friends and colleagues to write a letter also! We've prepared a [short video that can be used to raise awareness of the importance of social housing here](#), and a [campaign guide for letter-writing can be downloaded here](#). If you'd like any support to run a letter-writing workshop with your conference or in your community, don't hesitate to contact us at [social.justice@vinnies.org.au](mailto:social.justice@vinnies.org.au)



## Joining the Struggle for Recognition

The Social Justice Network recently produced a document, [Joining the Struggle for Recognition - Uluru Statement from the Heart](#), explaining why the Society has accepted the Uluru Statement's invitation to walk with First Nations Peoples in 'a movement of the Australian people for a better future'. We are proud to support the Statement's calls for Constitutional recognition of First Nations people and an enshrined and protected National Voice to Parliament. We hope the resource will be useful for members of our network who wish to build support for the Statement within their conferences, parishes, and broader communities. To find out more about the Uluru Statement from the Heart, [visit here](#).

## Modern Slavery Workshop

Modern Slavery is an issue that should concern us all.

Over 40 million people are enslaved in the world today. In Australia, it is estimated that around 15,000 people are enslaved, with the additional risk that procurement through international supply chains exposed to slavery adds to global suffering.

Under the Modern Slavery Act 2018, Vinnies works to assess and prevent the risk of modern slavery in our operations and supply chains. Our latest Modern Slavery Statement will be submitted to the Federal Government in July.

Join us in a one-hour online Modern Slavery Workshop at 12pm, 27 July, to find out more about what slavery looks like in Australia, and what can be done for people we encounter who may be at risk of or experiencing slavery, and what Vinnies and members of the Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Taskforce are doing to shine a light on this issue.

[Click here to register.](#)

## Refugee Week 2022

Refugee Week takes place each year from 19 to 25 June. This year's theme is 'Healing' and the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a proud sponsor.

On Monday 20 June, the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office and the Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace will host an online prayer service as part of World Refugee Day. The prayer service will be broadcast live at 6pm AEST. [You can register here.](#)

In the lead up to Refugee Week 2022, we also encourage you to visit the Refugee Week website to find out more about the experiences of refugees, [or attend an event near you.](#) For additional Refugee Week resources, please [click here.](#)

To all those who've come from  
far and wide, **I'm happy you're here.**

Happy Refugee Week  
**19 – 25 June 2022**

[refugeeweek.org.au](http://refugeeweek.org.au) | [@OzRefugeeCounc](https://twitter.com/OzRefugeeCounc)

Refugee  
Week



Coordinated by  
Refugee Council of Australia

## Events

### Refugee Week 2022

Sunday 19 June - Saturday 25 June

[Click here](#) to learn more

### Online Prayer Service for Refugee Week

*Held by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office and Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace*

Monday 20 June at 6pm

[Register here](#)

### Interfaith Prayer Service

*To promote justice and treatment for people living with drug and alcohol dependency*

Monday 27 June 2022 at 10am

*Gallery Room, State Library of NSW*

[Register here](#)

### NCOSS Post-Budget Breakfast

Thursday 30 June 2022

*NSW Parliament House or online*

[Click here](#) to learn more and register

### NAIDOC Week 2022

Sunday 3 July - Sunday 10 July

Theme: *Get up! Stand up! Show up!*

[Click here](#) for local events

### Modern Slavery Workshop

Tuesday 27 July 2022 at 12pm

*St Vincent de Paul Society NSW*

[Register here](#)

**Is there a local social justice event or news item you'd like everyone to know about?**

**CONTACT US**