SPRC Conference
12 July 2007

Dr Andrew Hollows
Hanover Welfare Services
Adjunct Professor RMIT University
The community is generally tolerant of homelessness but intolerant of the homeless
“Our daily habits and our everyday, private, concerns that surround us are the most reliable of all safeguards against the words and the presence of others”

Hannah Arendt
Responsibility
Most homeless make no effort

While I have sympathy for anyone in distress not of their own doing, I am tired of any government being blamed for homeless people, the majority of whom have not made any effort to provide for their own future.

If they ever worked, the money has gone on booze, cigarettes, drugs or gambling.
And then they expect the Government — which, don’t forget, is financed by you and me — to get them out of the hole.

Let’s help the ones who deserve it, like the sick and disabled, and let everyone else take responsibility for their own lives.
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Those experiencing homelessness are held responsible for their own ‘irresponsibility’ as well as the irresponsibility of others.
Individual and institutional responsibility
What does a home provide?
‘It should be waterproof, it should be windproof, it should be warm in the winter and cool in the summer‘

Source: Little piece of heaven. Thoughts from Victorians on Housing as a Human Rights – A collaborative project of VCOSS, Shelter Victoria, Women’s Housing Ltd & the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Safety & security

Free from harm

‘Bare life’ - Shelter
‘Safety, security and your well-being. Three vital things’

Source: Little piece of heaven. Thoughts from Victorians on Housing as a Human Rights – A collaborative project of VCOSS, Shelter Victoria, Women’s Housing Ltd & the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Privacy & intimacy

Safety & security

Control and belonging

Free from harm

‘Bare life’ - Shelter
'The metaphor of “shutting the door” was often used by people to signify the defining of their own space, where they have control’

Source: Little piece of heaven. Thoughts from Victorians on Housing as a Human Rights – A collaborative project of VCOSS, Shelter Victoria, Women’s Housing Ltd & the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Social participation and involvement

Control and belonging

Safety & security

Privacy & intimacy

Social

Free from harm

‘Bare life’ - Shelter
“To be excluded from the political community – a civil death – is to be deprived of the right of action and of opinion”

Source: Citizens Without Shelter, Leonard Feldman
Political recognition and participation

Social participation and involvement

Control and belonging

Free from harm

‘Bare life’ - Shelter
To a large extent homelessness is a values debate