

What happens when government gives tax dollars to private housing investors?

In Australia you get a crisis in affordability – private housing rents and home ownership – for millions of households and the homeless!

“Per Capita” – an independent highly respected public policy research group – has recently assessed the tax revenue that federal government forgoes through negative gearing and the 50 per cent capital gains tax discount for private investors who sell the dwellings they own and make a profit. On top of these tax benefits, private investors have their rents subsidised by Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) for tenants. The CRA adds to private investor profits.

“Per Capita” used government reports to accurately estimate what all this is costing: \$27 billion in 2021/22! Annual investor tax concessions have grown from \$1.5 billion

in 2000 to an estimated \$18 billion in 2024. This huge amount of money could be spent on ending homelessness and providing quality, affordable public housing.

The Australian Greens and a number of independent federal MPs have demanded an end to these tax breaks for the wealthy. The story that Bill Shorten lost an election because he wanted to change this is just a beat-up driven by banks and private investor interests and should not be listened to.

The state government is pushing on with demolitions with no publicly available details

Public housing tenants are being offered alternate accommodation to move out of three towers in Flemington and North Melbourne but there is no transparency on how empty public housing and new dwellings built under the Public Housing Renewal Program and the Big Housing Build are being used for relocations, nor how much

Homes Victoria is paying private investors to make scarce housing available instead of it being in the general rental market for those desperate for a place to live.

The financing of their plan is not clear. It is likely that a good chunk of the miserly annual allocations to Victoria of the federal government’s new Housing Australia fund have been earmarked for demolitions and redevelopments. If the guaranteed annual \$500 million nationally is to be shared based on population size, Victoria will only be getting around \$130 million per year.

This new fund is also dedicated to building more housing for defence personnel-serving and retired- reducing its availability to those in urgent need.

Anti-demolition Supreme Court injunction case is now up and running

Retiring Victorian Ombudsman, Deborah Glass, exposed the previous Andrews government’s disregard for public housing

tenants’ human rights during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

I pay tribute to the public housing tenants now taking the government to the Supreme Court. They are standing up for their rights to be consulted, heard and to oppose the demolition of their homes.

New retain, repair and reinvest projects

The fantastic team at Office (office.org.au) are now working on projects to keep towers as quality public housing. Please check out their website for announcements.

**Prepared with the assistance of the Save Public Housing Collective ●*

Cory Memery

CITY OF MELBOURNE
COMMUNITY CHAMPION 2020



Discover Docklands from the water

Melbourne’s award-winning ferry service, Port Phillip Ferries, is offering a unique opportunity to take in our city from the water with their new Docklands Discovery Cruises.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



Running Tuesdays from March 5 to 19, between 2.30pm and 3.30pm, the hour-long cruises take passengers through Victoria Harbour, along the Yarra River, and under the Bolte Bridge and Westgate Bridge, accompanied by commentary on the port’s rich maritime history.

“The historical commentary begins with some notable vessels in the harbour such as the *Alma Doepel*, a century-old tall ship currently being restored at North Wharf,” Port Phillip Ferries marketing manager, Brad Wright, told *Inner City News*.

“It also goes over the history of Victoria Dock, the Bolte Bridge, info and stats on the Port of Melbourne, Port of Melbourne tugs, Coode Island, European discovery and settlement, the Westgate Bridge, Newport Power Station and Williamstown.”

The cruise includes your choice of afternoon delight, including house wine with cheese and crackers, a beer with mixed nuts, or a coffee or tea with a muffin.

The modern fleet of ferries features

multiple indoor and outdoor seating areas, accessible onboard facilities and complimentary Wi-Fi and charging stations, and are easily accessible for all via our boarding ramps and they comfortably accommodate wheelchairs, motorised mobility scooters, and prams.

“The Melbourne Docklands area we know today surrounds the former Victoria Dock, which opened in 1893 as the second largest single dock in the world,” Mr Wright said. “Built as part of Sir John Coode’s port improvement plans, Victoria Dock formed an integral link with the railway yards at Spencer St. By the early 1900s, Victoria Dock received most of Victoria’s imports.”

“It is important we show and celebrate Melbourne’s deep maritime history, and there are few better ways to do that than from the harbour itself.”

For more information: portphillipferries.com.au/packages/docklands-discovery-cruises ●

Melbourne’s celebration of international students

Committee for Melbourne is proud to see the return of the Melbourne International Student Week from March 1 to 8, 2024, which recognises and celebrates international students and all they bring to the city.

Joining forces with The Ascott Limited, Australia (Ascott Australia), the Committee will for the second year, put on a welcome celebration full of events, activities, giveaways, and live music at Fed Square from March 1 to 2. Performances from K-Pop band AO Dance Crew and international DJ Jodilly are among the acts to be enjoyed by everyone. This weekend will be followed by a weeklong series of activations and activities over multiple sites across Melbourne.

International students are a critical part of the social, cultural, and economic fabric of Melbourne. International education is the state’s third largest export earner and there are more than 140,000 international students from 160 countries studying in Victoria, making Melbourne the most diverse student city in the world.

That’s why our educational institutions such as Deakin University, RMIT, Latrobe University, The University of Melbourne, Monash University and Victoria University will be onsite at Federation Square on March 1 to 2 and offering a week of festivities to ensure that international students feel at home in Melbourne. It is important that we provide occasions such as MISW to ensure that international students understand the culture and services our great city has to offer.

With international students contributing



\$6.9 billion into the economy and supporting more than 40,000 jobs, the Committee and Ascott Australia recognise the value and importance of providing effective backing for international students.

To support the influx of students and families, Ascott Australia’s multiple brands, including Quest Apartment Hotels, offer students, and visiting friends and families a range of accommodation options to make their stay in Melbourne comfortable and convenient.

For more information about the week-long activities please visit: misw.org.au ●

All Welcome!
CARLTON COMMUNITY
Free to join
Wominjeka
Salam

HARMONY DAY 2024

Saturday March 23rd 2pm–5pm
LOCATION: CARLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
CORNER OF RATHDOWNE & PALMERSON STREETS

FIT FOR A KING:

VINCENT JENDEN REIMAGINES THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

28 FEBRUARY – 25 AUGUST 2024

East Melbourne’s best-kept secret: explore exquisite fine and decorative arts in an historic townhouse.

JOHNSTONCOLLECTION.ORG | BOOK ONLINE

THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION