

# Almost \$130k for vulnerable

HOMELESS and vulnerable people in Mount Gambier will get a leg-up, with ac.care raising \$127,800 at their Homeless Luncheon on Friday.

The event attracted more than 400 people from Mount Gambier's business community, including mayors and local politicians.

Premier Peter Malinauskas was the guest speaker, and said he was pleased to attend to event.

"I've heard about this event, going back a few years and the opportunity to be able to contribute to this ac.care fundraiser is a welcome one," he said.

"I love coming down to the South East, I'm here every opportunity I get.

"The government's got a big agenda, investing in health, education and housing down here but to be able to see first hand today the houses that have now been built on vacant blocks of land that were empty in October last year is really satisfying, but there's so much more work that needs to be done."

He also donated a private dinner, hosted by himself, at Parliament House for the auction.

ac.care CEO Shane Maddocks said the luncheon was the community's way of addressing a problem with homelessness in the community.

"The Supporting Homeless People Luncheon is a community driven event and that's the important part of it," he said.

"It's the community accepting responsibility for the issue of homelessness, not just relying on governments or agencies - everybody coming together to say, 'this is a problem in our community, we know it's a problem, and we're here to support agencies like ac.care and everybody else to try to address this problem to make sure everybody has a safe home to live in'.

"The late Barry Maney identified the issue, decided to do something about it and stepped up and has brought the business community and the broader community together to support this issue, and that's really important.

"It can't be done with just a few people but having 430 odd people coming together to network but also to support these causes is pretty amazing, the community is stepping up to support this issue."

He said the problem of homelessness had been made worse by Covid and the cost of living.

"We have a broader range of people - people



**LUNCHEON:** Jason Wallace, Di Ind, Premier Peter Malinauskas, Clare Scriven MLC, ac.care CEO Shane Maddocks and ac.care board chair Rick Fisher.

with low income, whether they're employed or not employed, are really struggling with the cost of living cost of rent increasing and the number of rental properties has decreased.

"People are taking them off the rental market, putting them up for sale or Airbnb and those sorts of things and incomes haven't kept up. So it's that perfect storm of less housing available, more people needing them, rent increasing, people can't afford it, they're

priced out of the market.

"They are vulnerable - in Mount Gambier, it gets pretty cold during the winter, so knowing that there are people that care about them, respect their their issues, and are prepared to support them is really incredible."

Bids in the auction were flowing, raffle tickets were sold by the book, and more than 100 people queued for their chance to win a

stocked wine cabinet.

In a touching act of good fortune, the first prize raffle - a wheelbarrow full of donated goods - was won by Lacey Horrocks, who is an ac.care client herself.

She shared her story on the day, explaining how ac.care helped her when she was in a tough spot, and helped her to turn her life around.

## Government explores truck wash network

A POTENTIAL state-wide truck washing and effluent facility network to increase South Australia's biosecurity is on the cards following new State Government funding.

The State Government has given Livestock SA a \$150,000 grant to conduct a business case on the feasibility of establishing a truck wash and effluent facility network.

The plan has come as an added biosecurity measure to help protect South Australian primary producers from animal diseases including Foot and Mouth Disease and Lumpy Skin Disease.

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development Clare Scriven said it is vital to plan ahead to strengthen our biosecurity.

"With high-risk Emergency Animal Diseases now in neighbouring countries, it is imperative that we investigate all options to ensure South Australia's biosecurity standards remain steadfast against such threats," Ms Scriven said.

"While thankfully South Australia (and Australia) is free of high-risk diseases such as foot and mouth, we cannot let our guard down.

"An FMD outbreak would lead to an im-

mediate halt of exports of animal and animal by-products and would also impact other agricultural industries well beyond farming communities, including impacts on hospitality and tourism, and the domestic supply of food products."

Under the grant, Livestock SA has planned to investigate issues including washdown objectives and requirements, technical specifications, and financial and risk assessments.

Livestock SA chief executive Travis Tobin said the project is an important step in developing a "much-needed" network of washdown facilities.

"It builds on the work industry and government have already done to ensure the livestock industries are better prepared for the threat of exotic animal diseases and the need to continue investing in better biosecurity management," Mr Tobin said.

"There is a strong view that a state-wide washdown infrastructure network is needed to help protect our industries, ensure animal welfare standards can be maintained and enhanced, and deliver environment benefits such as reducing the spread of weeds of significance."



**TRUCK WASH POTENTIAL:** Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development Clare Scriven said it is vital to plan ahead to strengthen our biosecurity.