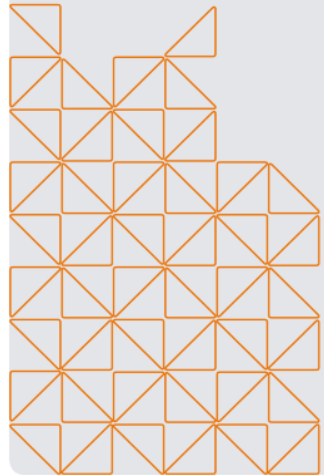




## Melbourne, don't criminalise homelessness

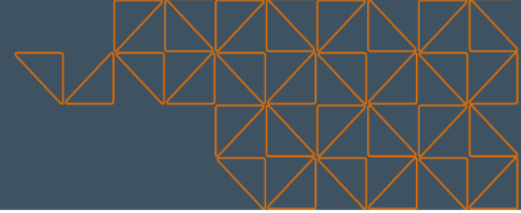
Lucy Adams, Head of Homeless Law and Advocacy, Justice Connect



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[justiceconnect.org.au/homelesslaw](http://justiceconnect.org.au/homelesslaw)

# What happened



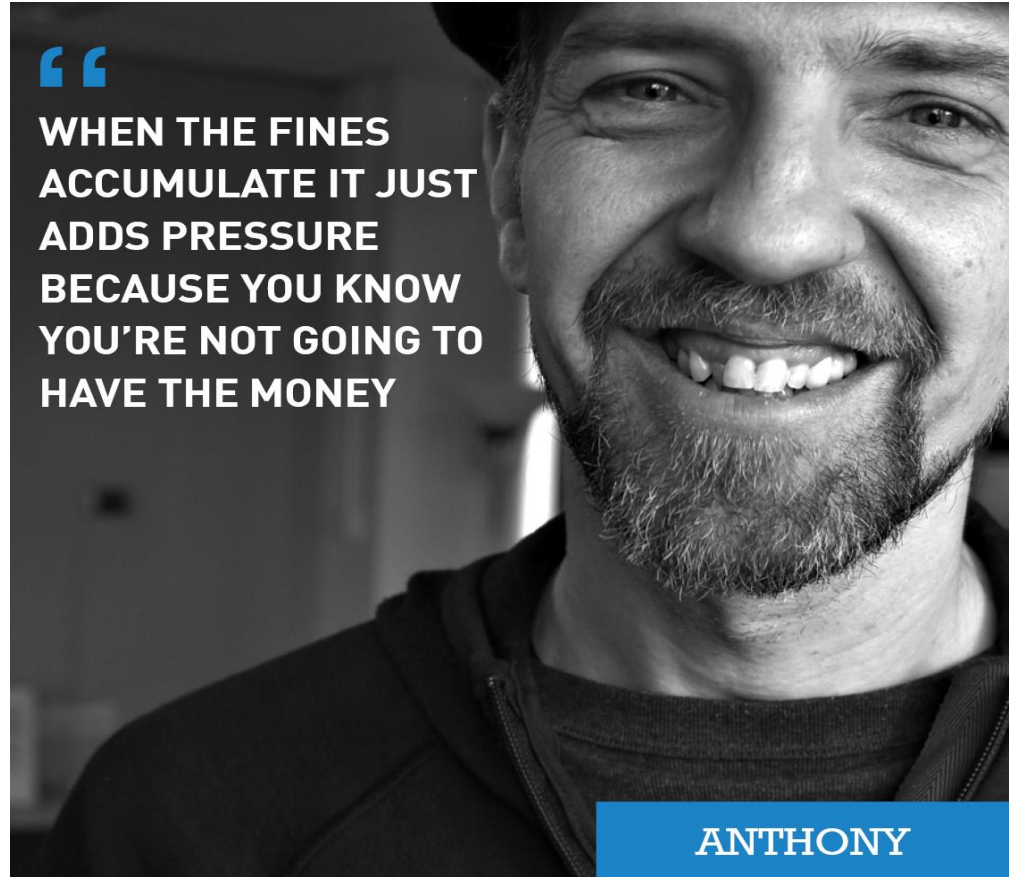
An increase in people sleeping rough in the City of Melbourne by 74% (to 247) between 2014 and 2016

Media like this

A proposal to use the local law to tackle rough sleeping and unattended items

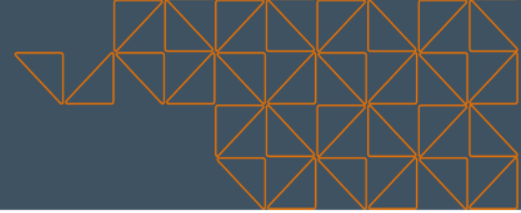
# What we did (1): The risks

1. Physical isolation and risk
  2. Increased vulnerability
  3. The justice system is costly for individuals and the community
  4. Strain on enforcement officers
  5. Human rights
- ... ineffectiveness



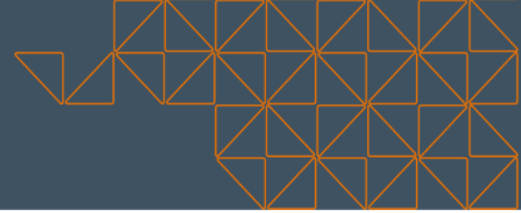
In the Public Eye – [personal stories of homelessness and fines](#)

# What we did (2): Constructive response



[www.justiceconnect.org.au/CBDhomelessnessframework](http://www.justiceconnect.org.au/CBDhomelessnessframework)

# What we did (3): Allies and human rights



NATIONAL VICTORIA

## 'Violation of human rights': UN condemns Melbourne's homeless camping ban

# What now?

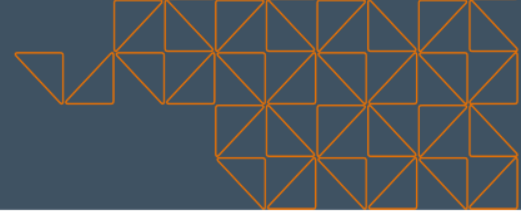
- Operating protocol
- Reliance on existing laws (e.g. amenity and begging)
- New Victorian Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan
- Melbourne funding for innovation, storage workshops, service co-ordination and Connect Respect



## **MAYOR DOES U-TURN ON TOUGH HOMELESS LAWS**

MELBOURNE Lord Mayor Robert Doyle has backed away from tough laws to crack down on homeless people and professional beggars in the CBD.

# Reflections



- Can happen quickly – be prepared
- Allies are crucial, including ‘non-traditional’ allies (e.g. business) ... but don’t forget human rights
- Even without new laws, there are still abundant ways people sleeping rough can be fined, charged or moved on. It’s crucial we’re connected with people before, during and after these campaigns
- It was a win for the evidence and collaboration and progress is being made
- Housing First! = long-term (appropriate) housing with support



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