



Ipswich enterprise scores cash to reduce homelessness



HELPING HAND: Pastor Fred Muys at Tivoli Drive-In. Cordell Richardson



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FRESH meals will be prepared and delivered to hundreds of people in need across the Ipswich area after \$76,000 was granted to a social enterprise hub.

Tivoli Social Enterprises will deliver the nutritious meals after receiving cash through the State Government's \$2.5million Dignity First Fund.

The fund supports fresh ideas from non-government providers that aim to prevent and reduce homelessness and assist people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity.

Tivoli Social Enterprises is one of three new Dignity First recipients from Ipswich to share in more than \$167,000.

The cash helped Tivoli Social Enterprises purchase a refrigerated food truck for transporting produce from Brisbane to the organisation's kitchen and then people in need.

Executive director Fred Muys said the truck, which started operating on December 4, as the "missing link" in the food-service chain.

"We've invested a considerable amount to upgrade the kitchen located on the site of the Tivoli Drive-In Theatre, and the Dignity First funding is giving us the transport infrastructure we need to service our clientele well into the future," he said.

"Our clientele includes a core group of several hundred people experiencing homelessness and a significantly higher number of people who are experiencing financial stress or other difficulties."

Member for Ipswich West Jim Madden praised the hub for its work.

"Dignity First provides for people who really need it, when they really need it," he said.

Forty Queensland organisations have secured 42 grants under the third round of the Dignity First Fund, with applications in 2018 totalling 165, up from the 111 received in 2017.

Minister for Housing and Public Works Mick de Brenni said some of the projects, like Tivoli Social Enterprise's refrigerated truck, would be operational by the end of the year, while others requiring significant construction would be completed mid-2019.

"We are providing funding for a range of important projects - mobile outreach services, food trucks, community kitchen upgrades, drop-in centres and backpacks containing essential supplies, to name a few," he said.

"Whatever situation you're in, you have the right to live with dignity, and the innovative ideas we've seen emerge through this funding round will make a huge difference to the lives of Queenslanders in need."