



Community, Action, Advocacy, Relationship

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JUSTICE
Aotearoa, New Zealand

Ethical Encounter - Housing

On the 31st July, Edmund Rice Justice Trust hosted its first Ethical Encounter for 2017. As part of the build-up to the election in September, we had Labour Minister for Housing Phil Twyford present on housing and the social justice issues currently faced due to housing unaffordability.

The invited guests came from a variety of backgrounds – some were connected to the Edmund Rice Network through the Justice Trust, Edmund Rice Schools and Edmund Rice Camps while others came from external organisations such as Catholic Social Services, De Paul House and the Society of St Vincent De Paul.

The knowledge and experiences of those around the table facilitated some open and honest discussion about the current situation of housing in New Zealand, and many enriching insights were made into the many different areas that contribute to our housing problem.

Thank you to all those who attended the event. We will be having several more ethical encounters this year: Three in Christchurch and two more in Auckland.



Post Sentencing Restorative Justice – Green Party

Below are the thoughts of Green Party's Minister for Criminal Justice, David Clendon MP, on Post Sentencing Restorative Justice:

“Our criminal justice system fails both offenders and victims. We have one of the highest rates of imprisonment per capita in the world and a high rate of recidivism; we also routinely underfund victim support services and deny victims the closure they deserve. If in Government, the Green Party aims to – and has always aimed to - expand the availability of restorative justice processes across a variety of cultural and geographic contexts, appropriately funding and evaluating those processes to ensure that they're truly fair and inclusive.

That expansion includes substantially boosting the availability of post-sentencing restorative justice processes, particularly in prisons. Restorative justice is far more than just a sentencing tool. It can be an important step in the rehabilitation process for offenders, particularly those who have committed serious offences, helping them address the hurt they've caused and see a way forward. It can also help victims (if they feel ready) gain the kind of personal closure that is lost in an adversarial format that gives them few opportunities to make their voices heard.

However, restorative justice processes and victim support organisations are chronically underfunded. The government barely funds post-sentencing restorative justice and many organisations, such as Edmund Rice Justice, rely heavily on volunteer networks to operate. The Green Party would actively seek an ongoing dialogue about restorative justice policies between government, community organisations and other affected stakeholders; it would also adequately fund victim support services to strengthen post-sentencing restorative justice processes and ensure that victims aren't further victimised by power imbalances in the room.

The Green Party wants to build a compassionate justice system that prioritises community well-being and offender reintegration over mean-spirited, counterproductive punishment of people who are often driven to offend by reasons more complex than malice. If that's what we're building, restorative justice is an important pillar – and post-sentencing restorative justice processes are a key part of that.”

Youth in Custody Index 2017

Last month, St Thomas of Canterbury College launched their most recent findings at their annual index into youth in custody in New Zealand. The official launch was held at The Nga Hau E Wha National Marae in Christchurch and had highly influential guest speakers as part of the launch – Judge Peter Boshier, Chief Ombudsman,

Judge Andrew Becroft, Children's Commissioner and David Rutherford, Chief Human Rights Commissioner.

If you would like to read the Edmund Rice Youth Custody Report 2017, [click here](#)

If you would like to read Judge Peter Boshier's keynote speech, [click here](#)



“There is no saint without a past and no sinner without a future” – Pope Francis

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