



Business and poor find common ground

By **EMILY CHARRISON**

FUNDING: A City housing development for homeless and low-income earners has been given a multimillion dollar funding boost by Adelaide businesses.

Oil and gas company Santos is donating \$3 million towards Common Ground's latest projects – a 52-apartment complex in Light Square and 40 apartments in Pt Augusta – over the next three years.

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Big business backs city homeless housing project

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Candetti Constructions also plans to hire some of the would-be tenants to carry out building works, while several subcontractors in the building industry will offer discounts, reducing the cost of the two projects by a further \$400,000.

Santos' funds will go towards Light Square's fitout, including meeting rooms, kitchens, an arts studio and outdoor areas, as well as staff salaries, cars and security. Construction of the \$7 million Light Square apartments, built on the site of the old Sands and McDougall building,

started last September and is expected to be complete by the end of this year.

The project is the second Common Ground development, with the first, a 39-room apartment block, which opened above the Franklin St bus station in 2008. Common Ground chairman **Theo Maras** said the Light Square project would eventually allow Franklin St to be used as a "graduation building" for people with less urgent needs.

Santos CEO and managing director **David Knox** said the company, which has now become the largest

corporate donor of Common Ground projects across Australia, hoped to increase community awareness about homelessness. "Our partnership with Common Ground is key to building independence, confidence and safe, secure and fulfilling lives for high-needs people who would otherwise be homeless and unsafe," he said.

Founded in New York in 1990 by former SA Thinker in Residence **Rosanne Haggerty**, the Common Ground scheme has now built more than 500 apartments in five Australian states.



CONSTRUCTION: Alex Candetti, Paul Vigar and Sue Crafter at the Common Ground project. Picture: Roy Van Der Vegt H0295660