

LE attending a community...
tion in Rosalind Park late last... water come into place or has this

Problem worsens for the homeless

From Page 3

"How in God's name do we begin to describe the other 90 per cent?"

"This is where the structural failings begin to appear, the cracks in our policy failings really show up."

Mr Marchingo said those structural failings had been caused by the former federal government's reliance on fixing homelessness through the private sector.

"John Howard said before the election if you change the government you change the country and he was right," he said.

"There is a long-held accepted view conservative governments steer

away from government service provision and facilitate private sector responses," he said.

"This is not a party political assessment, it is a political assessment."

"For about 15 years the Coalition government failed to keep up with the funding needs of public housing."

Mr Marchingo said the private sector did not fill the gap as expected.

"What we saw was a reliance on the private sector through the taxation system to create wealth for private investors to create rental housing. We popularly called it negative gearing," he said.

"On the surface that sounds like

a pretty reasonable argument, but there is only one small problem - if you are an investor and you are going to borrow money to negatively gear, you don't wait six to 12 months to get the rental coming in.

"You also don't wait for a new house to be built, you go out and you bid for an existing property."

"What we witnessed was massive demand for existing property and very little new property coming onto the market."

"That policy neglected to focus on new construction."

With that in mind, Mr Marchingo said getting rid of governments, both state and federal, from anything other than facilitation roles, would help reduce homelessness.

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