

# 'City in breach of court order' as Culemborg homeless site deadline missed

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**Homeless Action Committee's Carlos Mesquita says the City of Cape Town has broken its promise and has not communicated with them.**

Refilwe Moloto speaks to the Homeless Action Committee's Carlos Mesquita, about how the City of Cape Town has missed a deadline to rehouse them, and how two people in their group have since tested positive for Covid-19.

In the meantime they are all staying in the Community Chest building, relying on the organisation's generosity and help. Their CEO, Lorenzo Davids talks about the suffering he sees there every day.

The City had promised the Culemborg site would be ready to house Cape Town's homeless community by 1 June. However, those in need of this shelter are not in the venue as yet.

*They are not yet there and I am not a happy man this morning  
Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

What went wrong?

*We have no idea. There is no feedback or updates on the site that was supposed to be done on 31 May.*

*Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

He says the group was dumped next to the Culemborg site eight days before it was supposed to open.

Zahid Badroodien, Mayco Member for Community Services and Health [spoke to Refilwe Moloto on 22 May](#) and said that the group had opted to go back to the streets.

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*There is something monstrously cruel about dumping people under a bridge where they can see the construction of a new home for them and not talking about them going in.*

*Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

Davids explains how Community Chest offered the group of around 170 people their offices as a place to stay.

*They have been there now...and they have been amazing. They've looked after the building, they've cleaned it, they've kept it going, fed people.*

*Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

What next?

*The City has to engage with us. They must stop playing this game that they are lord of people's lives. Individuals have agency and, in fact, we have a culture of human rights in this country that we should be advancing.*

*Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

*The fact that homeless people are always treated as if they have no voice, no rights, no access to an engagement with the City that is professional and dignified is so disappointing.*

*Lorenzo Davids, CEP - Community Chest*

Mesquita says the City has not done what it promised regarding the Culemborg site.

*The promise has not been kept.*

*Carlos Mesquita, Member - Homeless Action Committee*

He says the City reduced the number of people who would access the Culemborg site to 96, and even these 96 have not yet been able to move in there.

The only communication has been the handing over of a list of names to the City's Street People Forum of those needing to go into the site.

*Since then not a word from them.*

*Carlos Mesquita, Member - Homeless Action Committee*

Rumours as to why there is a hold-up abound but Mesquita says he would rather stick to the facts. Mesquita questions Badroodien's claim that people chose to leave.

*With regards to our group that is totally incorrect.*

*Carlos Mesquita, Member - Homeless Action Committee*

He says the group has asked their attorneys to review the court order and issue the City with a letter of demand that Culmeborg be opened.

*They are now in breach of a court order that says these people must go to Culemborg.*

*Carlos Mesquita, Member - Homeless Action Committee*

**Listen to the interview below:**