

Baptist Care and Islamic Society of SA help barbers offer free haircuts to South Australians sleeping rough

By [Imogen Hayne](#)

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Carol Matthews getting a free haircut accompanied by her dog Walter. (ABC News: Imogen Hayne)

A professional haircut may be a regular occurrence for many South Australians, but for those doing it tough, it is a luxury.

Barbers and hairdressers offered their services for free at the Haircut for Homeless event in Adelaide's CBD on Tuesday afternoon.

Carol Matthews lives on a disability pension and said it was her first opportunity for a proper trim in about three years.

"It just feels nice, just to have someone care and touch you like that," she said.

Key points:

- Barbers offered free haircuts for people sleeping rough
- About \$5,000 was raised for this event which also provided free food and drinks
- Baptist Care SA says more people are seeking help during the cost of living crisis

"Having that attention, it really is a lovely thing."

The 56-year-old could not wipe the smile off her face after her makeover, which was topped off with complimentary eyebrow threading.

"When you wake up and your hair feels neat, you feel so much more presentable," she said.

"A good haircut for a female these days is 100 or so dollars, so it's been out of my range for a while now."



The event was a first-time collaboration between not-for-profit organisation Baptist Care SA and the Islamic Society of SA.

The society's president, Ahmed Zreika, said about \$5,000 was raised in a single day to go towards the services.

Fresh pizza was also offered through a food cart and there were hot drinks for all.

"We come together as [a] Muslim and Christian community to give something back to the community, especially our beloved homeless," he said.

Baptist Care SA program manager Chris Ellinger said it was an important time for people to help out where they can.

"We're seeing a need for help from people we've not seen before, [in] greater numbers," he said.

"Definitely we're observing the cost of living crisis is starting to have an impact."



Many of the barbers who stepped up to the plate were staff from Fandi Scissorhands, owned by brothers Fouad and Luay Fandi who offered 'pay what you can afford' services during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fouad Fandi said some clients who attended the Haircut for Homeless event were encouraged to come in for future cuts, rather than "wait for events like this to be happening".

"We gave them our locations to give them free haircuts to make them feel really good," he said.

Baptist Care SA and the Islamic Society of South Australia are keen to host another similar event soon.

There are hopes other organisations will join in so people in need can access free services regularly.