

6. DALLINGTON COMMUNITY COTTAGE

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Corporate Plan Output: Community Facilities 6.1.15	

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the progress with the assessment of accommodation options for the Dallington Community Cottage.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

In 1995 a recreation and community activities survey was undertaken in Dallington by Glen Greer of Lincoln University. The findings from this study were that:

- The sample distribution was skewed towards older residents and included a high proportion of female respondents, therefore the results of the survey are likely to understate the level of recreational activity.
- The population of Dallington as at 1991 Census was 3,100. It is older than the population of Christchurch City as a whole and there is a higher proportion of family households. There is a lower Maori population in Dallington than in Christchurch. The population is less well qualified and has lower income levels on average than other Christchurch residents but lower unemployment levels. A higher proportion of residents receive income support, particularly National Superannuation. There is a higher level of motor vehicle ownership in Dallington than in the City as a whole.
- The majority of Dallington residents (51.3%) does not believe that it is a distinct area, separate from neighbouring suburbs. Burwood Park and St Paul's Church are most frequently seen as the central focus of the area.
- The community facilities most frequently cited as being needed in Dallington were a community centre (18%) and a swimming complex (14%).
- When prompted, 82% supported provision of a community recreation centre (that is, a facility for both physical leisure activities such as keep fit/aerobics, badminton etc, and non-sporting activities such as art and craft activities. Provision of a community house was supported by 66.3% (that is, a meeting place for social and cultural activities and non-sporting leisure activities).

In 1998 further research was undertaken to investigate the needs of the Dallington Community (André Degreef February 1999). Degreef found the demographics essentially the same as Greer (1995) and described the population as "essentially a stable, white middle class, working neighbourhood of homogeneous population and environment...Dallington is a suburb that has a higher living standard than the Christchurch average, and is substantially better off than many, particularly its Eastern neighbours" (Degreef:10,14). There is a much larger percentage of the population in the 65 plus age group (18% compared to Christchurch as a whole, 13%) and slightly more children under 15 (21% compared to 19%). Residents of Dallington are more likely to be in a stable relationship, have children, and a higher level of home and car ownership.

Previously the Baptist Church ran a Community Centre from a converted shop at 24a McBratneys Road which served as a focal point, and a senior citizens group was run from there. The Degreef research was carried out at the time the Church was disbanding, and it considered the impact on the community if the Community Centre was no longer available.

The needs identified by the research were for:

- An Out of School Care Programme.
- Re-energising and developing the senior citizens group.
- Developing the Dallington Community Centre (24a McBratneys Road).
- Raising the profile of events and increasing information in Dallington.
- Continued development of local Residents' Association.
- Employment of a part-time Community Facilitator.
- Improved Council consultation.
- Monitoring of traffic issues.

In April 1999, a worker was employed to develop the recommendations and establish the Dallington Community Cottage in the premises previously used by the Baptist Church at 24a McBratneys Road. This is a joint initiative between Anglican Care, the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board, and the community of Dallington. The Community Board gives a bulk payment to Anglican Care who hold the lease, pay the rent and provide other resources. This arrangement has come about because the Community Board lacked the infrastructure to supervise a community development worker.

The current lease requires the Cottage as lessee to be responsible for the cost of all repairs and maintenance and any renovations or alterations. However the property is old, the roof is in need of extensive repairs, and over the Christmas/New Year period suffered considerable water damage, and the Trust has commenced efforts to relocate.

The owner is now considering sub-dividing the property, and had offered it for sale to the Council. At the last Board Meeting notice had been received that the owner had indicated she would pay for re-roofing and maintenance, and the existing building could remain after a future subdivision. This new information meant that the Community Cottage Working Party could reconsider the status quo as an option. However, events happened rapidly from 25 January onwards. Further heavy rain caused the roof to leak badly, considerable damage was caused to the interior, and the building was evacuated and is no longer useable.

The Property Unit has also advised that contrary to the advice given by the owner to the Trust, that is, that she would pay for repairs to the roof and maintenance of the property, this is may not be the case.

The Trust now needs to find new premises as soon as possible. All other buildings in the area such as the Scout Hall, the Trade Aid Importers premises in Gayhurst Road, and the two schools in the area, St Paul's and Banks Avenue School have been reviewed and rejected as unsuitable for various reasons, including lack of accessibility and visibility. The Cottage's Relocation Working Party has assembled the following list of features required

VISION - The Ideal Building:

Location:

- The current location is ideal (24a McBratneys Road)
- Passing traffic and foot traffic, the majority of users walk to the Cottage

Accessibility:

- Must be visible, approachable, and secure

Space required:

- Need for space to work with youth to meet funding requirements
- One Room classroom size for groups of up to 45 (not required often - possibility of folding doors to double the room size when needed?)
- Space for Craft Group to have craft tables set up permanently (9 members)
- Space for Cyber Café, increased number of computers (6 ideal)
- Kitchen facilities
- Office space
- Private space for one-to-one situations
- Storage
- Access to a garden - for Garden Club or Community Garden
- Outdoor space for games for children, possible child care facilities
- Possibility of renting out the property for birthday parties etc.

At a meeting between Sam Ryan, Community Development Advisor, Don Rowlands, and Rodney Routledge, Team Leader, Family and Community Division, Anglican Care on 17 December 2001, the following options were proposed:

1. To lease/rent a suitable house in the area, preferably close to McBratneys Road, as the current site traffic-wise is ideal.
2. For Anglican Care to purchase a property and lease/rent it to the Community Board with the rent/lease paying off the mortgage on the property.
3. To continue to seek to get the Council to purchase 24A McBratneys Road, but this is probably not really an option.

4. As part of the above options, the Community Board pays rent and other expenses for the cottage so it would be just a matter of increasing this rental to current market levels and there are precedents for the Council to do this at Addington and Waltham Cottages.
5. Average price of property in the area is between \$130,000 and \$150,000.
6. A detailed budget and proposal has to be put forward to the Community Board by late January, with a strong case made identifying the options and their costs.
7. A start can be made on looking at the Scout Hall, St Paul's School and Banks Avenue and the Quakers, to see if they were possibly suitable venues for the continuance of the project.
8. The Burwood Pegasus Community Board, at its last meeting, supported in principle the notion of a cottage in the Dallington area.

The preferred option of the Dallington Committee at the 5 February meeting was to purchase a house in the locality. The following resolutions were passed:

1. Goal to seek new premises for Dallington Project as soon as possible.
2. That agreement in principle be sought. Submission to Anglican Care to finance the purchase of a property up to the value of \$150,000.
3. Community Board and Council to purchase the property and/or service the mortgage interest costs based on precedent of Manuka and Waltham.
4. Property Unit be asked to investigate or identify properties in area and report on resource consent and structural changes, including financial costs.
5. Investigate sources of funding for resource consent, feasibility study and initial changes to allow building to be used.
6. Investigate temporary premises in the interim.

A proposal has been put by the Family and Community Division of Anglican Care to their Finance Committee to finance a property (up to \$150,000) but no decision has as yet been received. If this decision is positive the Property Unit will investigate suitable identified properties in the area and report on resource consent issues and any proposed structural changes.

At the Community Board's special meeting on Wednesday 20 February 2002, the Board decided to allocate \$20,000 for the community development and social support services run by the Trust. The Board also resolved:

1. That should Anglican Care purchase a new property, the Board consider a grant to cover the interest on the mortgage repayments on a loan up to \$150,000.
2. That other options are also pursued in the meantime.

- Recommendations:**
1. That if Anglican Care is willing to acquire a property for the project, the Board provide financial backing to meet the cost of mortgage repayments, and the work necessary for resource consent.
 2. That the Board seek Council assistance to purchase a property under the precedent set by Addington and Waltham Cottages.
 3. That the Trust be encouraged to seek funding for refurbishing of a new property.

Chairperson's Recommendation: That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.