

10. BURWOOD/PEGASUS ACTIVITIES PROJECT: FINAL REPORT

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The purpose of this report is to present to the Board a final report on the three-year Burwood/Pegasus Activities project.

BACKGROUND

This project was initiated in 2000 by the then Burwood/Pegasus Community Board, with the following aims:

- To increase the utilisation of community centres in the Burwood/Pegasus area, in particular the Wainoni/Aranui Family Centre, Aranui Community Hall, Ascot Community Centre and the Parklands Community Centre.
- To ensure residents of Burwood/Pegasus are aware of and have access to recreational, sport, arts, and cultural programmes offered by community centres in their area.
- To coordinate the provision of programmes offered by community centres, to avoid duplication and to best utilise Community Board, Council and community resources.

The Community Board was concerned about the under-utilisation of community centres in its area, particularly given the large investment by the Council in these centres, and also wished to increase community participation in recreation activities. The Board recognised that voluntary management committees often lacked the programming and marketing expertise to establish new activities at their centres and could benefit from working with a trained Activities Coordinator.

Prior to the appointment of an Activities Coordinator to undertake this project, the Pegasus Community Recreation Adviser carried out research on the above community centres to determine current levels of use, gaps in recreation provision and to identify programmes occurring in the immediate area. From this research recommendations were made on types of programmes to implement and future direction for these centres.

Commencement of the project was delayed by the unavailability of office space at the Shirley Service Centre, which meant that the two part-time (10-15 hours per week) Activities Coordinators who had been appointed found other employment in the meantime.

Ken Howat, Pegasus Community Recreation Adviser (20 hour per week position) was then appointed as Activities Coordinator in April 2001 for a further 20 hours per week, to work as a catalyst to initiate new programmes and to work alongside centre management committees to promote existing programmes and attract more users to these community centres.

In April 2002 Ken Howat left to take up the full-time permanent Fendalton/Waimairi Community Recreation Adviser's position and was subsequently replaced by Shannon Drew in the Activities Coordinator role. The Activities Coordinator's position was then increased to 30 hours per week.

BURWOOD/PEGASUS COMMUNITY CENTRES

Ascot Community Centre

Of the four community centres in this project, Ascot Community Centre was the most under-utilised. There were only three regular weekly users, with the Parklands Playcentre and the Seniors Table Tennis only there temporarily while the Parklands Community Centre was under renovation. The other regular user at the time was the Handiscope group, which is a recreational club for older adults with disabilities.

New Programmes Established

The Leisure Unit research clearly identifies older adults as a rapidly growing segment of our population, with the Canterbury region having the second largest population aged 65 and over of any region in the country. This is also evident in the increasing demand citywide for recreation programmes for older adults; for example, walking groups, social clubs and gentle exercise programmes.

With this in mind, work began to develop Ascot Community Centre primarily as a centre for older adults, while still being available for general community and casual use.

(a) **Table Tennis**

The table tennis group had been struggling for some time to find members, with only two to three regular players. They were also having difficulty with the tables, which were heavy and difficult to set up, especially for seniors. This group was supported by the Activities Coordinator with newspaper promotion and funding assistance via the Hillary Commission Community Sport Fund to purchase two easily manoeuvrable tables. Membership increased to 12 regular players with interest shown in establishing a second weekly session. The club has since returned to Parklands Community Centre and maintained a player base of 15 regular members.

(b) **Sit 'n Be Fit** (Chair Based Exercise Programme)

Term 4, 2001 saw the start of a chair based gentle exercise targeting older adults who were either new to exercise or had mobility problems. This programme was very well supported from the outset and now has 30 members. The group celebrated its first birthday in October last year. They are now self-sufficient with the revenue generated covering all expenses.

(c) **Ascot Leisure Club**

Term 4, 2001 also saw the establishment of the Ascot Leisure Club which followed the successful formula of other leisure clubs provided by the Recreation and Arts Team around the City. The programme involves a variety of social and recreational activities and targets those aged 75 plus, who may be socially isolated or experiencing difficulties in becoming involved in their local community. Activities are low cost and transport is available for those who have a genuine need. This programme continues to be well supported with an average weekly attendance of 15 per session.

(d) **Petanque**

In November 2002 an approach was made by local residents for assistance to establish a petanque group. After discussions with the Parks and Waterways Area Advocate the existing two petanque courts were upgraded.

This programme is very popular with two sessions per week attracting between 15-20 participants per session.

(e) **Tai Chi**

A Tai Chi class was set up at the beginning of Term 1, 2003. However, this did not attract sufficient numbers to justify continuing the programme. Another attempt will be made to establish this programme at a later date with increased promotion.

Summary

The Ascot Community Centre has the capacity and potential to offer more programmes for older adults and has a very motivated group of local users who are willing to assist in developing new activities at this facility. Suggested activities are a craft and a cooking programme.

With ample parking, ramp access, accessible toilets, an upgraded heating system and the recreational needs of the younger age groups catered for at nearby QEII, Ascot Community Centre is considered an ideal facility for programmes targeting older adults.

Wainoni/Aranui Family Centre

The Aranui and Wainoni communities demonstrate a range of needs very different from other communities in the Burwood/Pegasus wards, particularly around the Hampshire Street area. Key issues are high unemployment, low income, a high percentage of Maori and Pacific Islanders and the high number of community groups that appear to be operating in isolation, offering a range of community services, educational programmes and recreation activities.

Aranui has been the subject of extensive ongoing research by the City Council, Housing New Zealand and other government agencies, all of which has clearly identified unmet recreation needs for this community, particularly for young people.

New Programmes Established

With the recreation needs for young people in this area clearly identified, work began on establishing programmes to meet some of the recommendations from the research, within the scope of the Activities Coordinator position and resources available. All programmes to date have been the result of supporting local community groups to set up and manage the programmes independently, with seeding funding provided for programmes to cover set up costs.

(a) Hip Hop Dance Group

This programme began in September 2002 after an approach by a local youth agency seeking funding assistance. Initially one programme was set up targeting children up to 13 years of age. However, demand was such that a second programme was established for young people 13 years and over. The junior programme is held in the Family Centre and the seniors use the performing arts facility at Aranui High School. This programme has proved to be very popular, with up to 30 children and youth attending each session. Seeding funding for this was provided through the Activities Coordinator's budget and the Community Response Assistance Fund.

(b) Junior Touch Rugby

There have been numerous requests for activities to take place on Wainoni Park. One local group, Canterbury Maori Touch, took the initiative and set up a junior touch module at Wainoni Park on Friday afternoons. With funding assistance via the Hillary Commission Community Sport Fund and the Activities Coordinator's budget, they were able to purchase equipment and meet the costs of promotional material needed for this programme. The programme ran from October to mid December 2001.

Canterbury Maori Touch continue to run this programme during the summer months.

(c) "A-Town" Drop-In Holiday Programme

The most recurring demand for programmes in this area has been for a youth drop-in centre. However, the reality of this community is that any drop-in type programme will attract children of all ages. Teenagers are often in charge of younger siblings and consequently any drop-in type programme must acknowledge this and be able to accommodate an age range from 4-18 years. There are a significant number of young people in Aranui who are in this situation and for whom the traditional holiday programmes are not appropriate.

"A-Town" drop-in programme recognised this and offered an alternative. The programme was based in the Te Kupenga building adjacent to the Family Centre that was empty over January. This provided an ideal opportunity to run a pilot programme during the holiday period of January 2002. Two local community workers were employed as supervisors and a local community organisation took on the administrative responsibility and provided supervision for staff and volunteers.

Following on from the success of "A-Town" the local community requested that the programme continue to be offered during term time. For this to happen a pool of volunteers was required to provide the necessary supervision. A volunteer training programme was set up with the aim of training a pool of local residents who would then assist the Programme Supervisors to run the programme. Unfortunately no one turned up for the training; consequently "A-Town" has been put on hold until community support is available.

(d) Children's Holiday Programmes

Holiday programmes for children aged 5-12 years are run from Wainoni Primary School during each school holiday period. While the provision of these programmes is not directly related to increasing usage of the targeted Council facilities, it is included here to show what is available in the local community.

(e) **Youth Holiday Programmes**

The Stay Real organisation is contracted to run a youth holiday programme based at its centre in the Hampshire Street shops. This programme caters for up to 20 youth per day and is run during each school holiday period.

(f) **Youth Agency Directory**

The Children and Youth Subcommittee of the Aranui Community Renewal identified the need to look at ways in which the many community agencies could promote themselves to the local community. As part of this project the Activities Coordinator has compiled a directory of all youth agencies in Aranui giving details of their programmes and services. The directory is available from the Aranui Housing and Information Centre in Marlow Road and the Community Recreation Adviser is in the process of having it placed on the Council website.

(g) **Maori Legal Advice**

The placement of a free community lawyer from Maori Legal Advice was facilitated by the community development staff operating from the Aranui Housing and Information Centre in Marlow Road. The Activities Coordinator's office time at the Family Centre coincided with the office times of the lawyer. This allowed for safety of the staff based in the building, better space utilisation and opportunities for the Activities Coordinator to promote activities in the centre to people attending Maori Legal Advice.

(h) **Tai Chi**

A Tai Chi programme was piloted beginning Term 1, 2003. However, there was insufficient interest to for it to continue.

(j) **One-off Programmes**

Break Dance Workshop - A pilot break dance workshop was run in the July 2002 school holidays. The response from local young people was positive. However, feedback suggested that Hip Hop dance was preferred. Consequently the Hip Hop dance programme was established.

Community Development Workshop - In October 2002 a two day Community Development Workshop was held at the Family Centre. The Activities Coordinator was instrumental in this happening in the Family Centre.

Barn Dance - In November 2002 a barn dance was held at the Family Centre and organised by a local community group with assistance from the Activities Coordinator.

Youth Dance - In November 2002 a youth dance was held at the Family Centre to help fundraise for the Te Ora Hou youth group. The Activities Coordinator helped in an advisory role for this event. Over 80 Aranui young people attended this concert.

(k) **Performers and Artist Database**

A database of performers and artists has been put together to assist local groups sourcing people for programmes and events.

(l) **Advisory Work**

As some local groups chose not to base their activities at the Family Centre (see comments under Summary below) it was considered appropriate that the Activities Coordinator act in an advisory role to assist in the establishment of new programmes in the immediate area.

These included Te Rongapai Youth programme based at Agape Street Ministries, a social and recreational youth programme running Friday nights and an Alternative Education programme also based at Agape.

Summary

Every attempt has been made to increase the use of this facility with some successes. In the past there have been significant barriers to establishing programmes at the centre, some perceived and some real. The Council and the Management Committee are working together to increase usage and community involvement and to change the perception of barriers to usage. For the centre to become the focus of the local community these issues need to be resolved.

Aranui Community Hall

During the first year of this project the Aranui Community Hall received minimal attention because of the demands of the Ascot Community Centre and the Wainoni/Aranui Family Centre. As a result of the Activities Coordinator's involvement, the facility now enjoys the highest level of usage from regular weekly groups in the Burwood/Pegasus area.

New Programmes Established

(a) Line Dancing Classes

The hall has become a line dancing haven with three groups per week using the hall for competition practice and performance. The groups were made aware of the hall through word of mouth and approached the bookings officer to obtain their booking. Although the groups only consist of three to four persons per session, they are happy with the cheap cost and the layout of the facility. The first Sunday of every month the hall is used for a line dancing performance meeting.

(b) Te Kupu Ora Church

The Activities Coordinator was made aware of a local church group needing a meeting place to gather on Sundays. A meeting was set up with the church group and the Management Committee who were eager to see the building utilised. Te Kupu Ora now holds church services at the hall on Sunday mornings and evenings.

(c) Israeli Dance

An Israeli dance and social group has been running weekly sessions since November 2002. Support has been given to help promote the programme to the local community.

This programme has seen slow, but there has progressive growth.

(d) KiwiKonnnect Security Training

The KiwiKonnnect Security Training school is now using the hall to run security training courses. These occur on Wednesday evenings and are available to people interested in this line of work. The Maori Wardens are receiving training from this organisation.

(e) New Management Committee

The Activities Coordinator has worked closely with the Management Committee, which has recently taken on new members and is working towards making this facility more attractive to potential users.

(f) Bands - Jam Session

Various local bands and musicians now gather on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays to play local flavoured styles of music in what is becoming a popular music practice venue.

(g) Holiday Programmes

The Aranui Fun Attack programme for children aged 5-12 years is now based at the hall. The hall Management Committee plan to promote this facility as a venue for more holiday programmes.

Summary

The increased levels of usage at this centre on top of the existing activities show there is a demand for activities by the local community. With the re-structuring of the Management Committee and the high level of use, this facility will continue to be an integral part of the local community.

Parklands Community Centre

The Parklands Community Centre is back at full occupancy since the completion of the renovations and does not require additional input over and above the support given by the Community Recreation Adviser.

South New Brighton Community Centre

The main user of this facility is South New Brighton School with a number of groups using the centre outside of school hours.

(a) Lazy Sunday Youth Event

A youth music event called "Lazy Sunday" was held in September 2002 and was a complete success with over 300 young people attending.

(b) Arts Programme

A nine week term time pilot arts programme was established for Term 2, 2003. The programme is run on Tuesdays from 3.30-6.30 pm targeting secondary school students.

At the conclusion of the programme an exhibition of student artworks will be held in a local gallery.

Summary

This facility has potential to host various youth events and programmes and also older adults programmes, in particular gentle exercise classes and leisure/social clubs.

North New Brighton War Memorial Hall and Community Centre

The Activities Coordinator has been unable to work with this centre pending its review and plans for upgrading.

OVERALL MARKETING OF COMMUNITY CENTRES IN BURWOOD/PEGASUS

In June 2002 a two-page, full colour advertisement entitled "What's On At Your Local Community Centre" was published in the Eastern Mail newspaper. This summarised all activities across Burwood/Pegasus and gave better promotion than several small adverts inserted at different times of the year for various activities.

It is planned to repeat this again in July 2003 in the Pegasus Post as an indoor, winter activities promotion.

CONCLUSION

This project has met its original aims and contributed much benefit to the residents of the Burwood/Pegasus area, creating opportunities for people to socialise, enjoy leisure activities and feel good about the community in which they live. The project has also enlivened under-utilised community centres and brought them back into focus as places where people can gather and meet each other, particularly the Ascot Community Centre and the Aranui Community Hall.

A significant amount of time in all areas of this project has been spent establishing dialogue with local community groups, particularly with the Aranui community. Development of networks and lines of communication between Council staff and community groups has also required significant commitment.

Rather than providing activities and programmes, the Activities Project has been focussed on acting as a catalyst for communities to establish and manage their own new activities. For example, the Sit 'n Be Fit class at Ascot Community Centre is managed by a group of participants and is financially self-sufficient. From this class several additional social activities have been developed, such as a mid-winter Christmas dinner. However the programme will continue to be overseen by the Community Recreation Adviser for issues such as sourcing replacement tutors, support to the volunteers, marketing advice, etc.

While the voluntary management committees in the Burwood/Pegasus area in the main do an excellent job of maintaining these facilities, they require ongoing programming and marketing input in order to offer what residents want in terms of leisure programmes.

The Community Recreation Adviser will continue to provide ongoing support to ensure the work done to date continues and to develop new programming as the need arises.

Staff would like to thank the Board for its support of this project.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

- Recommendations:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That the Leisure Unit be commended for initiating many valuable and innovative programmes within the Burwood/Pegasus Activities Project.
 3. That Shannon Drew be thanked for his contribution in the Activities Co-ordinator position.
 4. That two local newspaper promotions of the community centres be run annually, one in February and one in July, with supplementary funding to be considered from Discretionary funds.
 5. That a further report from the Leisure Unit be prepared to outline future strategies and promotions at the Burwood/Pegasus community centres.
 6. That the management committees of the community centres be involved in the process for developing the strategies and promotions.