

**9. BURWOOD/PEGASUS ACTIVITIES PROJECT:
SIX MONTH REPORT (JULY TO DECEMBER 2002)**

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The purpose of this report is to update the Board on progress and achievements to date of the Burwood/Pegasus Activities Project over the last six months (July to December 2002).

BACKGROUND

This project was initiated in 2000 by the 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 Centre, 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 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 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. The Activities Coordinator's position was then increased to 30 hours per week.

BURWOOD/PEGASUS COMMUNITY CENTRES

1. Ascot Community Centre

Of the four community centres in this project, Ascot Community Centre was the most under utilised, with only three regular weekly users, two of which, the Parklands Playcentre and the Seniors Table Tennis, were 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

Christchurch City Council Leisure 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. Research also suggests that older people who are actively involved in recreation, fitness, arts and the community enjoy enhanced social wellbeing, reduced loneliness and greater independence than inactive older people.

With this in mind, work began to develop Ascot Community Centre as primarily a centre for older adults, while still being available for general community and casual use. Ascot Community Centre, being fully accessible with ramps, disabled toilets, good heating and close parking, was considered ideal for these purposes.

(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 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 average weekly attendances of 15 per session.

(d) **Petanque**

The Ascot Community Centre was host to a run down petanque court. A local community advocate for third age activities asked for help in redeveloping the old courts. After consultation with her, a mail out promoting petanque was sent to the local community, including existing community groups. The mail out yielded some great results with between 15-20 adults attending twice weekly to play and socialise.

The Activities Coordinator and the Parks and Waterways Area Advocate worked together to have the courts upgraded with the addition of an extra court being laid.

(e) **Tai Chi**

Due to demand from existing users a Tai Chi class has been set up at Ascot beginning Term 1 2003. The class is targeting older adults with a focus on improving balance and co-ordination and ultimately reducing the incidence of falls and associated health problems.

Summary

Ascot 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.

As the needs of the local community are identified every effort will be made to accommodate these within the resources available. Where appropriate and possible all new programmes will work towards community ownership and self-sufficiency. This will enable long-term sustainability with minimal cost to the Council in terms of dollars and people resources.

Future Direction - 2003 Onwards

From the core group of current users it will be possible to explore other potential programmes. Already a number of suggestions have been made regarding the establishment of new programmes; for example, scrabble club, walking group and yoga.

As new programmes become established and work toward self-sufficiency, the Activities Coordinator can withdraw, leaving the Community Recreation Adviser to provide whatever on going support/assistance that may be required.

2. 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.

A community consultation process was already in place via the Aranui Community Renewal prior to the Activities Coordinator commencing work on this project. Through this process the decision was made to hold the Aranui Youth Forum, which highlighted and reinforced the need for programmes targeting children and young people.

New Programmes Established

With the recreation needs for young people in this area clearly identified, work began on establishing programmes to meet 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 Co-ordinator'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. This programme is currently running this summer, with a significant increase in numbers attending the junior league. This has been so successful that the coordinators involved are in the process of setting up other sports programmes and activities to complement what is already being offered.

(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 four to 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**

A local community group was funded to run two holiday programmes for five to 12 year olds over summer 2001/02, based at Wainoni Primary School. One was held before Christmas and the other in the last week of the holidays.

(e) **Youth Holiday Programmes**

A change in Focus to coincide with the Aranui Community Renewal saw the Holiday programme develop under the Stay Real youth agency located in the heart of Aranui. This programme has been very successful with 100 attendances per programme for the 2002/03 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 will be distributed to all local schools and community groups.

(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 now coincides with the office times of the lawyer for safety, better space utilisation and opportunities for the Activities Coordinator to promote activities in the centre to people attending Maori Legal Advice.

(h) **Tai Chi**

As part of the Active Christchurch citywide Tai Chi programme, the Activities Coordinator has assisted in the establishment of a Tai Chi class at the Family Centre.

The class is targeting older adults with a focus on improving balance and coordination and ultimately reducing the incidence of falls and associated health problems. This class was started on Term 1 2003.

(i) **One off programmes**

Break Dance Workshop - A pilot break dance workshop was run in the July School holidays 2002. 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 fundraiser. Over 80 Aranui young people attended this concert.

Summary

The above youth programmes have met some of the immediate recreation needs of this community, as identified through the Aranui Youth Forum, Housing New Zealand research and the Parks and Waterways Unit's Wainoni Park community consultation. There have been approximately 400 attendances in these programmes. There are still a significant number of recommendations that are yet to be considered and actioned.

Future Direction - 2003 Onwards

While undertaking this project the Activities Coordinator has uncovered some real and perceived barriers to utilisation of the Wainoni/Aranui Family Centre.

Although positive steps are being taken to address these issues it will take time to redress some community perceptions about the accessibility of this facility.

3. Aranui Community Hall

During the first year of this project the Aranui Community Hall received minimal attention due to the demands of Ascot and the Wainoni/Aranui Family Centre. As a result of the Activities Coordinator's involvement, the facility now enjoys a relatively high level of usage with regular weekly groups.

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 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 who were in need of a meeting place to gather on Sundays. A meeting was set up with church group and the management committee who were eager to see the building utilised. Te Kupu Ora now hold church services at the hall 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.

(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 attractive to potential users.

Summary

The increased levels of usage at this centre show there is a demand for activities by the local community.

Future Direction - 2003 Onwards

The future focus for the Aranui Community Hall will be assisting current users to promote their programmes and to look for opportunities in the local community to establish new programmes as space allows. The proposed new renovations will make this a more desirable facility.

4. 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.

5. 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.

The management structure and the school's use of the centre is currently being negotiated and may result in more opportunities to schedule additional community programmes.

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

6. 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 June 2003 as an indoor, winter activities promotion.

CONCLUSION

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

This project is contributing 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 is also enlivening under-utilised community centres and bringing them back into focus as places where people can gather and meet each other.

Once community centres in the Burwood/Pegasus area are "humming" and closer to capacity, it will become the role of the Community Recreation Adviser to maintain this activity and continue to work with community centre management committees, Council community development staff and local community workers to promote community centre activities and to keep up with programming which meets trends. It is therefore not envisaged that this project would require funding beyond the Board's present commitment of 2002/03.

Note that the Community Recreation Adviser's position is now a full-time one, combining the previous two part-time positions. Citywide management of the holiday programmes is no longer handled from the Shirley Service Centre.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the information be received.