

### 3. RESIDENTS' CENTRE

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The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's endorsement of the concept of a Residents' Centre being developed in Christchurch South to service City Housing tenants.

#### RELEVANT CURRENT POLICY

Current Council Housing Policy provides for a minimum of one residents' lounge being provided annually within Elderly Persons' Housing complexes as they are remodelled.

The Tenant Support Policy has as its goal "To ensure that tenant support is facilitated, in order to assist City Housing tenants to live independently, and achieve a good quality of life".

The policy statements emanating from the policy focus in part on providing/encouraging social and recreational opportunities together with the encouragement of community development initiatives within the complexes.

#### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Residents' lounges have been provided at 20 complexes to date. These lounges are used primarily as a residents' community focal point where residents of the complex are able to comfortably gather and participate in social, educational, physical and other activities. These lounges are also often used to host functions organised by the Activities Co-ordinators involving tenants from more than the host complex.

The intention now is to explore the practicability of constructing a purpose designed Residents Centre (rather than a Residents' Lounge) in the Christchurch South area, which would cater for a number of our housing complexes. Should this exploration prove positive a costed proposal including sketch plan and cost/benefit analysis will be submitted to the Housing Subcommittee for consideration.

The exploration will include consultation with the tenants at the complexes affected, other appropriate community groups and government agencies.

#### BACKGROUND

During 2002 it became evident that Brougham Village, a housing complex consisting of 89 units with a communal laundry, was becoming dysfunctional in terms of tenant relationships and vandalism. Other problems exist at this complex relating to the standard of accommodation but this issue is being addressed in conjunction with the Property Asset Management Team.

In an endeavour to remediate this dysfunction, a programme was put in place utilising two housing officers and an external consultant. This programme involves meeting regularly with the tenants, those who wished to be involved, in the evenings to discuss issues of concern and to identify solutions. Although these meetings do not attract a large number of attendees (approximately 15-20 per meeting) they have been successful. The issue of vandalism has virtually disappeared as tenants are taking greater ownership of their home environment. Those tenants who do attend the regular fortnightly meetings pass the 'news/word' onto other tenants in addition to making use of a notice board in the laundry area.

A barbeque was held late last year at the complex and another is planned for late March. Additionally, tenants are going to hold a garage/car boot sale at the complex shortly. Tenants of the neighbouring Tommy Taylor Courts complex are also being encouraged to become involved by Brougham Village tenants. These activities indicate that a community environment is slowly beginning to emerge.

#### CONCEPT OF RESIDENTS CENTRE

The idea is that an opportunity is available to maximise the potential benefit to tenants by constructing a purpose designed residents centre servicing a number of complexes. The benefits include, but are not limited to:

Cost Effectiveness  
Community Development  
Tenant Personal Development  
Tenant Well Being

It is envisaged the centre would be designed to include a recreation area capable of accommodating activities such as pool, table tennis and indoor bowls. The design should be such that the centre is suitable for community meetings, educational programmes and more informal gatherings. It is also envisaged that two or three smaller rooms be included for use by the Community Constable, Work and Income New Zealand, health professionals and other agencies, including Council officials.

The complexes it is envisaged this centre would serve include Brougham Village, Cecil Courts, Tommy Taylor Courts and Waltham Courts. These complexes are relatively close together and consist of a total of 160 flats, the majority commonly referred to as "Public Rental".

## **CONCLUSION**

This proposal is considered, whilst not aligning "purely" with existing Council policy, to be consistent with the Council's aim of contributing to the social wellbeing of City Housing tenants. It is a departure from past practice where residents' lounges have been provided at 20 complexes and in the main have tended to service the host complex only. This tendency is changing however, albeit slowly, with greater usage being made of some lounges by neighbouring complexes.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council endorse the concept of a residents' centre in Christchurch South to service City Housing tenants accommodated at Brougham Village, Cecil Courts, Tommy Taylor Courts and Waltham Courts.
  2. That a further report be prepared for the consideration of the Housing Subcommittee following appropriate consultation and the development of preliminary sketch plans and estimates.