



Paul's piece

Nau mai, haere mai and welcome to the latest Trust newsletter. It's been a busy few months for the Trust and you can read more about some of what we've been doing later in the newsletter.



We've also been working hard on establishing a new housing trust which we launched at our 30th celebrations. Reflecting on our 30 years of providing affordable rental housing in Wellington, I've been struck by both how much the Trust has achieved as well as how much there is still to be done. Despite some of the recent headlines in the Dom Post Wellington remains very unaffordable for people on low and moderate incomes and the level of housing need increases every year. Not just in the city, but the Hutt Valley, Porirua and Kapiti too.

Our new trust will enable us to provide quality affordable homes right across this area for the first time to help meet these growing needs.

We'll talk more about that in our next newsletter. In the meantime enjoy this latest update from the Trust. Naku, na - Paul.

Board news

Trustee Peter Schroder resigned in April due to him taking a position with the Social Housing Unit!

We wish Peter well in his new role and thank him for all his work for the Trust during the 18 months he was a board member.

Tenancy management work in-house

As of 1 April 2012 the Trust's tenancy and asset management services are now being managed in house. In 2011 the Trust reviewed its tenancy and asset management services and decided to bring this work back in-house. This will help us continue to improve and develop our housing services, in line with the Trust's values and aims, and make more effective use of our resources. It will also give us the capacity and capability to manage more homes as we grow. In January we welcomed Fiona Burke to our team as our new Housing Officer. Fiona will be responsible for the management of our homes. She will also work along side the Director to support our business development work.

In late December 2010 Fiona returned to NZ after living in London for 8 ½ years. Fiona has considerable experience in the social housing sector gained from working in the Housing Provision Department at the London Borough of Hounslow Council. "I am loving the challenge of implementing and developing this service for the Trust and the difference we make to people's lives" says Fiona.

Fiona and our Housing Administrator Chris Coles quickly and effectively managed the transition from Accessible Properties to in-house and we are very pleased with how this has gone.

We once again thank the team at Accessible Properties for all their work over the last four years and look forward to working with them in other ways in the future.



Fiona Burke, our new Housing Officer

All together we can achieve more

The trust is working in partnership with the Sisters of Compassion on a housing project for refugees in Wellington. The Sisters of Compassion are a congregation committed to work to meet the needs of the aged, the sick, the oppressed and the powerless in our community. Refugees are one of the most disadvantaged groups within our community, so the Sisters of Compassion are very pleased to be part of this project helping to reunite and support refugee families in need.

The Sisters and the Refugee Family Reunification Trust are using one of the Trust's homes for families who are new to the country until they have resettled and found a permanent home. Amanda Calder, QSM, who is also the Chairperson of the Refugee Family Reunification Trust, and a long-time refugee advocate, is helping with the overall implementation of this project. "It is wonderful to finally have a much needed home available for refugees in Wellington. It will really help with their resettlement and make them feel welcome in our community. Sincere thanks to the great team at the Wellington Housing Trust for all your support."

National Māori Housing Conference

Our Director Alison Cadman attended this conference organised by Te Matapihi He Tirohanga mo te Iwi in association with Community Housing Aotearoa.

It was in the beautiful setting of Paihia in March and some of the themes that were covered included Whanau Ora and housing; homelessness; social housing; PPPs; substandard housing; and quality design.

In the media

We continue to raise awareness about the lack of affordable housing in Wellington and NZ when we can and Trust Director Alison Cadman continues to be contacted by local and national media. As well as speaking out on this important issue it also helps raise the profile of the Trust and what we do.

We have even gone international with Alison and Trust chair Paul Scholey writing an article for the UK's Chartered Institute of Housing's international newsletter. A link to the article can be found on our website at wht.org.nz/news.html.

Australian Housing Institute awards

The Australasian Housing Institute (AHI) is the professional body for everyone who works in social housing across New Zealand and Australia. Each year the AHI offers awards in six categories.

The AHI Awards provide an opportunity to showcase social housing success stories. The Awards formally recognise and reward excellence in professional practice, from the grass roots to the most senior levels. They promote to our colleagues and the community at large the difference that social housing professionals make to people's lives.

Director Alison Cadman had the pleasure of being on the judging panel for the NZ awards this year.

"The standard of the nominations this year was very pleasing and some of the decisions were a challenge", says Alison.

Alison was also privileged to be asked to present the Inspirational Colleague award at the awards ceremony in Wellington on 3 May 2012.

"I was so delighted that the award went to Vicki McLaren, Group Manager, Wellington City Council. Vicki's win was much deserved. She was nominated by her team which is a credit to her and I was very privileged to be able to present the award to her."

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Funding

In our last newsletter we highlighted the changes to social housing funding and talked about the new Social Housing Unit (the SHU) which was established by the government last year.

Applications for its growth fund were due at the end of January. We applied for a project in Porirua East to build 22 homes. The project outcomes were to:

- work with HNZC to reduce the high concentration of state housing in Porirua East
- contribute to meeting some demand for 1, 2 and 4+ bedroom homes in Porirua East
- introduce a rent to buy home ownership scheme in the area
- contribute to meeting some of the housing needs of Pacific communities, in particular with home ownership schemes
- establish the trust in Porirua
- develop and manage more affordable housing there in the future
- carry out a pilot project demonstrating how groups can work together to help develop and support a local housing strategy

We were very disappointed that this project was not selected for funding and we have been discussing this further with the SHU and the housing minister Phil Heatley.

In common with some other housing organisations we have also been asking the SHU for more transparency in the application process and the criteria the SHU uses to assess applications and organisations.

We have also asked the SHU and the government to do more to support the community housing sector to grow and take a more strategic approach to this at the next funding round.

We can't thank enough **Callum McKenzie** from McKenzie Higham Architecture who worked with us on the project design and scheme.

30th Anniversary and the launch of Dwell

On the 20th June the Trust held an event to celebrate its 30th anniversary and to launch a new regional trust. We were proud to celebrate 30 years of providing affordable housing in Wellington. Chair Paul Scholey reflected on how many people the Trust has helped in all those years - the total is unknown but will be in the thousands. At the celebration were past and present trustees, staff and tenants.

There are no organisations like the Trust in places like Porirua or Kapiti and, over recent years, the Trust has been approached by organisations and people throughout the Wellington region to see if the Trust could help them with housing need in their areas. The Wellington Housing Trust deed states that the Trust can only work in Wellington City and this could not be changed. So we needed to establish a new Trust to take us into the future and the region.

The name and logo of the new Trust were launched at the event. Director Alison Cadman launched Dwell Housing Trust and talked about both trusts and their aims for the future. In our next newsletter we will let you know more about Dwell and our plans for the future. Please also check out our website for news and information.

AGM

The Trust 2011 Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 16 August at 12 noon at the Trust's office – Level 5, Century City Tower, 173-175 Victoria Street, Wellington.

This newsletter is produced by the Wellington Housing Trust



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