

Sharon Bennett

From: elcalebo@gmail.com on behalf of Caleb Anderson [caleb.m.anderson@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2010 2:08 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: Social housing service – submission
Attachments: Social housing service submission Caleb Anderson.doc

To whom it may concern, please accept this submission regarding the draft policy for WCC social housing.
- Regards
Caleb Anderson

Social housing service – submission

Caleb Anderson
259/320 Mansfield Street, Newtown.
Home: 04-3893444. Mobile: 0273186979
Email: caleb.m.anderson@gmail.com

Submissions close 4pm, 26 February 2010.
To: policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz

Yes I would like to make an oral submission.
I am making a submission as an individual.
I am living in Wellington City Council housing.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

No

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Yes

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Yes

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Yes

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Largely. In the discussion after the statement "consideration will be given to the particular community" (second-last paragraph, p10), I would support the following statement: "In some cases, the Council may house individuals or groups committed to community development, even whilst not necessarily meeting criteria for housing need themselves".

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council social housing?

Largely, though consideration may be given to the above points.

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Yes

Please add any other comments:

The draft policy makes a mockery of the Housing Upgrade Program (HUP), especially in the planned reduction of 343 bedsits. Note that the HUP will lead to a total reduction of 208 dwellings, or 145 bedrooms. This proposal appears to be entirely inconsistent with the information and challenges presented in the draft policy, including the following:

- **Affordability** (p6,7,8). If the HUP was to take seriously the challenge of providing affordable homes, it would not reduce the number of bedsits. By the policy's own admission (p15), "many tenants prefer [bedsits] (*usually because they are cheaper*) and they are more space efficient". The currently proposed HUP flies in the face of the challenge of affordability by forcing 343 bedsit-tenants to find more expensive alternatives in an increasingly competitive rental market (p7,18).
- **Increasing numbers of households in housing need** (p7,18). Similarly, the HUP fails to meet the challenge of increasing demand for social housing. The policy makes it clear that this demand is expected to increase for one-person and one-parent households (p7,18). Even now, the demand for bedsits far outweighs demand for other dwelling types (Table 3, p16) and yet the response by the HUP is to reduce bedsits by 343 and only increase one-bedroom dwellings by 92: a *combined reduction* of dwellings suitable for one-person and some one-parent households of 251.
- **Partnership with Housing New Zealand Corporation** (HNZC, p7). Given that WCC wishes to pursue a partnership approach to social housing with HNZC, it would seem obvious that WCC should maintain or increase its current stock of bedsits rather than attempting to provide all types of housing. WCC should be proud of its ability to provide affordable bedsits (p11), especially when there is little alternative provided by HNZC for this demographic (only 41 HNZC bedsits, Table 1, p15).

The only justification the draft policy gives for the proposed reduction in dwellings is to "better reflect modern living standards" (p7) and that "it is not always considered appropriate to live in a bedsit" (p15). For those bedsitters with no other alternative, these minimal statements fail to offset the realities discussed above. Given the long waiting list for bedsits, it would appear that it is not the tenants who have decided that bedsits are "not always appropriate". In whose opinion, then, are they "not appropriate"? And why does that opinion over-ride the obvious and increasing demand?

The HUP gives WCC the opportunity to find innovative solutions for high density housing in New Zealand that meet the challenges of affordability, increasing demand, urban sprawl, and homelessness. In fact good bedsits (more accurately termed "studio apartment" if they have their own bathroom) can be entirely consistent with "modern living standards" if they are well-designed and accompanied by good public space.

The draft policy makes the currently proposed HUP look like a backwards step that will make it more difficult for housing officers to meet the policy aims. Modify the Housing Upgrade Program (HUP) so that it really steps up to the challenges we face.

I myself currently live in a two-bedroom unit, but I know many of my neighbours in bedsits at Newtown Park Flats feel marginalised by the proposed HUP, and worried about moving to a more expensive alternative, or away from the amenities and social services offered in Newtown.

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

6

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

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WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

Social housing service – submission form

Please use

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social housing service.

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Anson SZASZY
 Flat 221
 Newtown Park Flats
 320 Mansfield Street
 Newton

ee meeting, you can make an oral

Submission:

389 4347

I am making

as an individual

on behalf of an organisation

Name of organisation _____

I am a Wellington City Council housing tenant

Yes

No

Enter your name and contact details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr (circle which applies)

First name(s)* ANSON GYÖRGY

Last name(s)* SZASZY

Street address* 221/230 Mansfield St., Wgton

Phone Home 3894347

Mobile None

Email None

Note * Mandatory fields (please use block capitals). All submissions (including name and contact details) are published and made available to elected members of the Council and the public. Personal information supplied will be used for the administration of the consultation process. All information collected will be held by Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington. Submitters have the right to access and correct personal information.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

Comments: Yes

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: Yes

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Comments: Yes.

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Comments: Yes.

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Comments: Yes.

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council's social housing?

Comments: Overall yes. Except in some cases giving a tenant 6 months to find alternative accommodation.

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: Yes

Please add any other comments:

Personally, I ain't interested in modernism, fancy stuff, fashion (luxury), but like simple comfort, clever handy and practical things.

Thank you for your concerns and caring.
Affgarby

**SUBMISSION
NUMBER****7****Sharon Bennett**

From: Warwick Taylor [warwick.weatherman@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, 25 February 2010 10:42 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: Submission on Wellington City Council Housing Policy

Hi,

Below is the submission of the Wellington Residents' Coalition on the Draft Wellington City Council Housing Policy. We would like to make an oral submission. Please phone Maria van der Meel (ph 383-4993) or myself (894-6364) or write to Wellington Residents' Coalition, PO Box 6705, Marion Square. Thank you.

**Regards,
Warwick Taylor
Treasurer**

We have studied the proposed draft Housing Review document and wish to make the following comments:

- 1) We note that the demand for single unit or bedsits is 70.1% which closely matches existing stock at 71.3%. Single bedsits and single room units are used by single women and men.**
- 2) The effect of the Housing up-grade work, and the shift in this proposed policy is to reduce the number overall of this type of unit to meet the present and projected demand needs.**
- 3) It has been clearly promised in the recent past by the WCC that there would be NO REDUCTION in the number overall of the available units.**
- 4) WRC believes strongly that WCC (City Housing) should be INCREASING ITS LOW INCOME HOUSING STOCK, not reducing it at all.**
- 5) We in the WRC are also very concerned that the up graded units will force higher market related rents onto tenants, thus present tenants will be forced out into more expensive accommodation.**

**Warwick Taylor
Treasurer**

Easy Access Housing

274 Taranaki Street Level 01

WN Phone 499 1064 Fax 499 1063

February 23, 2010

Policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz

To: Wellington City Council
City Councilors
Council Strategy and Policy Committee

Dear Council members,

We have reviewed your Draft Policy for Wellington City Council's Social Housing Service Report.

We believe that the improvement you will be making to Wellington City housing stock is important.

We believe that planning to have a mix of accommodation types and sizes will have a positive effect on the stock.

We are however concerned that when the upgrade is completed there will be a net loss of single person accommodation.

Easy Access Housing provides temporary transitional housing for people with experience of mental health issues. Our clients are single and homeless. We help them to find permanent accommodation. There is a shortage of accommodation for singles. At present we find it increasingly difficult to secure good permanent accommodation for our clients. We are very concerned that in the future the pool of stock will be even less than it is now.

We are happy to speak before the committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

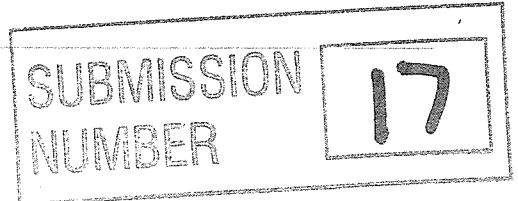
Yours faithfully,

Susan Gordon

Susan Gordon
Coordinator
021 027 09889

Sharon Bennett

From: Susan Gordon [Susan@atareira.org.nz]
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2010 3:00 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission; Bridget Duley
Subject: Submission on behalf of Prisoner Reintegration Network
Attachments: Prisoner Reintegration WCC sub.doc



Susan Gordon, Coordinator
Easy Access Housing
04 499 1064
021 027 09889

Prisoner Reintegration Network

04 March 2010

We would like to speak to this submission

Policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz

bridget.duley@wcc.govt.nz

To: Wellington City Council
City Councilors
c/o Bridget Duley
Council Strategy and Policy Committee

Dear Councilors,

The Prisoner Reintegration Network met today and at the meeting your Draft Policy for Wellington City Council's Social Housing Service Report was discussed.

We all feel that upgrading the WCC housing stock is a good idea. We understand that as a result of the upgrade single person accommodation offered by the WCC will be reduced by between 250 and 300 units.

At present we already find that there is a shortage of suitable accommodation for prisoners upon release. We believe that reducing single person accommodation will have a negative impact on prisoners. We also believe that this in turn will have negative consequences for all the people of Wellington.

We ask that you reconsider the Policy and instead of lowering the number of single person accommodation, you increase it.

Because of the short time left for us to make this submission I have been asked to write to you for and on behalf of The Network.

You can reach me on 021 027 09889 or 499-1064. Thank you

Yours faithfully,

Susan Gordon

For and on behalf of the Prisoner Reintegration Network

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

8

Sharon Bennett

From: Anne McLaughlin [AnneM@nexuspartners.co.nz]
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2010 6:42 a.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: submission on social housing service policy
Attachments: Social housing service submission.doc

Attached is a submission send on behalf of the Wellington Housing Association of Tenants. Any queries should be directed to w.h.a.t@xtra.co.nz

Thank you.

Anne McLaughlin

Anne McLaughlin, Senior Partner, Nexus Partners Ltd
annem@nexuspartners.co.nz www.nexuspartners.co.nz
m 021 660117

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26/02/2010

Social housing service – submission form. February 2010

YES A representative from our organisation would like to make an oral submission

I am making a submission on behalf of an organisation

Name of Organisation:

Wellington Housing Association of Tenants (WHAT) Inc

Name and Contact Details:

First Name: John

Last Name: Bythell

Street Address: 312 Taranaki Street, Wellington

Phone: 04 384 1419

Email: w.h.a.t@xtra.co.nz

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

WHAT offers its support to the overall vision outlined in the draft policy document.

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

WHAT strongly supports a partnership approach to Wellington City Council's social housing service. As well as the individuals and organisations named in the draft document, we publicly endorse our belief that tenants are also considered partners through WHAT's role as the joint voice of tenants. We are pleased tenants have been given the opportunity for consultation in the review of the social housing policy.

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Through our work with the Wellington City Council and other agencies throughout the consultation process we are satisfied that the proposed method for setting rents is fair and reasonable.

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

The proposed package reinforces WHAT's experience that the Wellington City Council provides a good level of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent.

Do you agree with the proposed selection package for tenants in Council social housing?

WHAT supports the proposed selection package that is based on need. We would vigorously oppose any attempt to rank the selection groups in any priority order.

Our concern lies not with the policy – or the actions of WCC staff members – but with the ease in which some people can abuse the eligibility system.

We strongly urge the Wellington City Council to consider reviewing its business processes to tighten selection criteria cover situations such as when:

- Prospective applicants have no assets or income “on paper” yet they have up to two rental properties held in family trusts which provide them with income while they reside in WCC social housing and they still have the benefit of the assets
- Prospective applicants meet the criteria to be 18 years old, meet the income eligibility criteria, yet are still secondary school students and may be not suitable for housing in some complexes

WHAT appreciates there is no simple answer to situations such as those outlined above but would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue in greater depth with WCC Social Housing representatives.

WHAT seeks an assurance that the selection package outlined in the draft document will be supported by business processes that are applied consistently and transparently in keeping operation principles outlined in **section 9 (*Providing a high quality service to tenants*)** of the draft document.

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council’s social housing?

In general terms, WHAT supports the approach outlined in the draft policy document.

However we want to point out that the gap between eligibility at the top end of the WCC housing eligibility criteria and the bottom rung of the private market is an immense gap for many people. This can be a disincentive for tenants to take up more employment and improve their income as they would then be ineligible for continued WCC housing but a long way from affording private sector rent.

This situation - which is in direct opposition to the long term vision of WCC – is not uncommon in our experience.

Our key concerns are:

- The private sector rental market is currently in turmoil as the result of possible Government intervention. While opinions are divided, it is commonly agreed that private sector rents will rise and even further lower the sustainability of WCC tenants being able to move into private sector accommodation when their eligibility for social housing has expired.
- We acknowledge the WCC intention to monitor the market situation and adjust policy accordingly but we are concerned that a three-yearly review may not keep

WCC officers and decision makers up to date with a fast-moving housing environment.

- We recommend a yearly review.
- On Page 12 of the draft document it states “up to 5 percent of the Council’s housing portfolio may be available at market rental to allow for the provisions outlined in *“Moving on from social housing”*”. WHAT expresses their concern that this is a somewhat vague statement. We ask the WCC to offer more assurance around this issue.

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

WHAT confirms its agreement with the overall approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy document. In particular we emphasise the need for continued tenant representation as outlined in the document.

Any other comments:

The proposed WCC draft policy for social housing services is being considered for sign-off at a time of transition for both the Council and tenants of the existing social housing service. Our impression is that it has been drafted to suit a “business as usual” environment. Yet with the housing up-grade project underway we are experiencing “business as unusual”. During this time of change it may well appear to some tenants that decisions – such as letting vacant units – are not in line with policy. Such decisions, of course, may well be influenced by upgrade plans.

WHAT urges the WCC to continue to consult and update our organisation on a regular basis during this transition so that we can convey necessary information to social housing tenants and that everyone involved can understand reasons driving WCC decision-making.

24 February 2010

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

23

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

Social housing service – submission form

Please use this form to give us your views about the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service.

You can have your say:

- online at www.Wellington.govt.nz
- by sending an email to: policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz
- by making a submission on this form and sending it to:
 - Freepost 2199, Draft policy for social housing service, Wellington City Council, Wellington
 - fax to 801 3231.

If you would like to speak about your submission to City Councillors at the Council's Strategy and Policy Committee meeting, you can make an oral submission by ticking this box. We will contact you to organise a time.

Submissions close 4pm, 26 February 2010.

I am making a submission

as an individual

on behalf of an organisation

Name of organisation _____

I am a Wellington City Council housing tenant

Yes

No

Enter your name and contact details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Df (circle which applies)

First name(s)* JOHN MARTIN

Last name(s)* BYTHIELL

Street address* F24 5 KEMP ST (KOTUKU) KILBIRNIE

Phone Home (04) 9343 574

Mobile 0274 418 450

Email c/ WHAT@XTRA.CO.NZ

Note * Mandatory fields (please use block capitals). All submissions (including name and contact details) are published and made available to elected members of the Council and the public. Personal information supplied will be used for the administration of the consultation process. All information collected will be held by Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington. Submitters have the right to access and correct personal information.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

Comments: IN GENERAL

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Comments SO LONG AS ALL IS TRANSPARENT I AM
GENERALLY CONTENT

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Comments: SEEMS TO WORK

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Comments: YES

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Comments: NOT TOTALLY NO WOULD PREFER ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THIS UPGRADE I WOULD RATHER NO MARKET RENTALS AT ALL

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council's social housing?

Comments: SO LONG AS IT APPLIED CONSISTENTLY AND ONCE AGAIN I EMPHASISE THAT IT MUST BE SEEN TO BE DONE

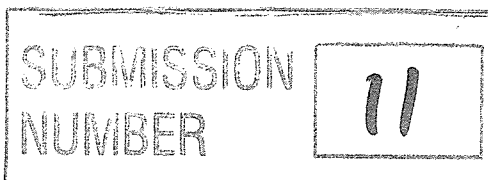
Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: WOULD BE NICE IF THEY ACTUALLY WERE KNOWN TO LISTEN. AS IT IS THE TENANTS WHO ACTUALLY HAVE TO LIVE IN THIS SITUATION NOT THE STAFF.

Please add any other comments:

ONE OF MY MAIN PROBLEMS LIES AROUND THE ASSETS AND WHAT APPEAR TO ME TO BE INCREDIBLE INCONSISTENCY IN RELATION TO THIS

[Signature]



Sharon Bennett

From: Philippa McDonald [dyallg@xtra.co.nz]
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2010 1:39 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: Draft Social Housing Policy - Submission from Disabiltiy Reference Group
Attachments: Draft Social Housing Policy.docx

Attached please find the DRG submission.

Regards
Philippa McDonald
Co-Chair

Information from ESET Smart Security, version of virus signature database 4896
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<http://www.eset.com>

Social Housing Service: submission on Draft Policy for WCC Social Housing Service 2010

I am making a submission

On behalf of the WCC Disability Reference Group

We wish to speak to the submission

I am a WCC housing tenant

No

Contact Name and Details

Ms Philippa McDonald

c/- WCC DRG

Wellington City Council

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

DRG is in support of the overall vision in the draft Social Housing Policy providing that the goal of accommodation which is

- “fit for purpose”;and
- “affordable, available and accessible to all Wellingtonians” means developing housing stock which creates an accessible home for tenants.

In particular, the Objectives of providing

- Appropriate housing;
- Safe and secure housing to a good standard; and
- Support for improvement of quality of life and wellbeing”

will generally support accessible home environments. However, to make the point clear, the term “accessible home environment” should be included in the Vision Statement and list of Objectives. This will to ensure that the word “accessible” clearly includes the physical residential environment.

Easily accessible residential community housing benefits not just the residents but others, for instance visitors and emergency personnel. But there are also demographic reasons to plan for and provide accessible housing now: life expectancy is increasing and our population is ageing. In particular, the Wellington population of older people is expected to increase, as the draft Policy notes. At present around 45% of older people have a disability, and disability rates increase with age. Modifying existing houses to include basic access features eg wider doorways, and building new

stock on accessible principles will cater for current and future needs of residents, and is likely to reduce the need for expensive modifications in years to come.

The DRG notes that current Council statistics about tenants indicate that already more than 50% of tenants on the priority list have a disability or impairment whether a physical disability, low level psychiatric issues, or “multiple disadvantages”. In addition, 10% are listed as “fit elderly” of whom a proportion is likely to develop a disability. Accessible homes for these tenants are a high priority. The statistics support an approach of having all units include standard “accessible” features rather than a small percentage of units per tenancy block.

The DRG would like to make the following points about accessible home environments:

- Home Units/Flats: homes are altered or built with slightly wider doorways to accommodate mobility equipment eg walker/strollers, indoor wheelchairs; wet floor bathrooms are included; light switches are accessible for those in chairs as well as those who stand. These would be routinely included in all stock. About one in ten New Zealanders experience hearing problems. Flashing light as well as audible fire alarms should be included for those with complete or partial hearing loss. Flashing alarms are needed in shared areas eg hallways, laundries, as well as flats. In some cases further adjustments might be necessary to customise a flat for a particular tenant.
- Outdoor access: easy movement from home to surrounding amenities eg laundry room, washing lines, letter boxes, is a major factor in accessible living. Inclusion of ramps as well as stairs, hand rails, and flat entry doorways should be standard planning. Establishing and maintaining clear walkways is also necessary for those using mobility aids, those who are visually impaired or blind, parents with prams, those with shopping trundlers, the community as a whole in fact.
- Lighting: good visibility in moving around a residential community is both a safety feature and important to assist mobility and communication. The DRG has been consulted in the past about outdoor (street) lighting and is able to help with advice on lighting around Council housing areas as well.
- Parking: ideally parking near units, with flat access to front doors and covered walkways would improve access. Visitor parking should be included in the planning for residential communities.
- Signage: clear signage around a housing area is important for residents and visitors. Colour coded signs help those who cannot read or recall words or numbers. Braille signs assist those visually impaired or blind.

The DRG submits that including the above elements in the housing stock will make homes usable now and well into the future for all tenants. Until that goal is reached, it would be useful to maintain a list of all accessible units as a base level performance measure against the increase (and speed of increase) of establishing such is measured.

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

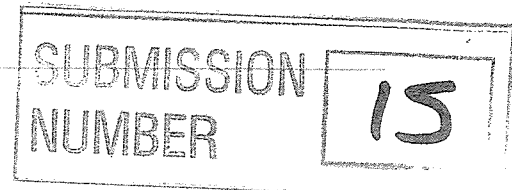
The DRG understands that there are limits on the amount of housing the City Council can provide. Apart from income and residency criteria, the needs assessment process is a way of reviewing the factors affecting eligibility for a tenancy. The factor “special housing needs”

includes “physical disability” but does not mention psychiatric impairment, although “low level psychiatric” is a grouping used in statistics in the document. It is not clear whether this community is covered by the “Special Needs” grouping or elsewhere. In the meantime people on a low income and with a disability face a double barrier in finding a home. If Council adopts a policy to upgrade or build housing units which include standard accessible living features, the need to include disability as an element in the “Special Needs” category will be reduced and perhaps eliminated one day.

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council’s social housing?

The DRG submits that there are special factors to take into account in assessing the income and assets of tenants with disabilities. Often persons with disabilities have needs and expenses over and above those covered by state or ACC schemes. Sometimes a rise in income on paper is used completely or mainly to cover equipment or facilities not otherwise available. The answer is for the income assessment criteria to be flexible enough to allow for this, and for assessment officers to be trained to take this into account.

Sharon Bennett



From: Stephanie McIntyre [director@dcm.org.nz]
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2010 4:38 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: Social Housing Service Submission
Attachments: DCM WCC Social Housing Submission 2010.doc

Please find attached DCM's submission

Stephanie McIntyre

Stephanie McIntyre
Director
Downtown Community Ministry
Tel: 04 384 7699
www.dcm.org.nz

**SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT POLICY:
Wellington City Council's Social Housing Service**

By: DCM (Downtown Community Ministry Wellington Inc)

Contact: Stephanie McIntyre
Director
PO Box 6133
Wellington 6141

Ph: 384 7699
Email: director@dcm.org.nz

Date: February 2010

We would welcome the opportunity to make an oral submission.

SUMMARY

- To enable WCC to fulfill its wider vision of ensuring affordable, accessible housing is available to all Wellingtonians, we urge the Council to demonstrate leadership by picking up the reins to lead the strategy development and implementation of a Regional Housing Strategy.
- We encourage WCC to draw on overseas practice to support the growth of community social housing as a key mechanism to address urgent housing need.
- We remind WCC of the recognised needs of low-income single people living alone, who have been identified as one of the fastest growing groups in serious housing need in our city.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

DCM endorses the overall vision outlined in the draft policy, in particular:

- The commitment to ensuring WCC will continue to provide about 2300 housing units in Wellington until 2037
- The retention of 70% of market value as the rent setting basis
- The recognition of the need to provide housing for people who have barriers to accessing appropriate and affordable accommodation

Our concerns regarding the policy relate to the following:

Addressing housing demand

The document contextualizes the policy within the Council's broader vision as an "affordable" city and envisions a city where housing is "affordable, available and accessible to all Wellingtonians" (Section2: [Our Vision](#)).

Data quoted in the document acknowledges that social housing makes up a relatively small proportion of the total rental accommodation currently available in Wellington (Section 3: Context). The document goes on to describe a number of challenges including the decline in home ownership and the increasing number of households in housing need. Specific reference is made to "accessibility barriers tied to discrimination" (Section 4: Challenges we face).

As the key agency in the city endeavouring to house people from backgrounds of homelessness, we can confirm that these barriers are significant and affect our ability to assist hundreds of people each year. DCM has repeatedly identified a lack of appropriate affordable accommodation as the key barrier to effectively addressing homeless in our city.

The Wellington City Housing Needs Assessment (2006) showed there had been an estimated shortfall of 533 social housing units accumulating between 2001 and 2006 and a projected increase in demand for 980 social housing units over the next ten years, plus an additional 720 units over the following ten years.

In the face of a serious affordable housing shortage confronting our city, WCC gives no indication of how its stated wider vision will be achieved.

As it is clear Council has no plan to increase its own housing stock, it is disappointing that the draft social housing policy is absent of initiatives for how Council will plan for, and promote the expansion of, affordable housing for low-income households.

We urge WCC to demonstrate vision and leadership by picking up the reins to lead the strategy development and implementation of a Regional Housing Strategy; the building blocks for which are already in place.

In particular, DCM urges WCC to support creative ways to expand community housing in Wellington. This would include advocating with central government to follow the examples set by, for instance, Victoria, Australia where there has been a huge growth in community sector housing.

In Australia, currently the proportion of social housing in the total stock of housing is roughly equivalent to New Zealand but their social housing sector is now growing at a rapid rate. Their Housing Minister has set a target of one-third of social housing stock being in the community housing sector by 2014.

The New Zealand sector has demonstrated its willingness to grow, as evidenced by submissions from 48 applications totalling more than \$74million received by HNZC's Housing Innovation Fund (HIF), which had just \$15million to allocate in the 2009-10 year.

Addressing the needs of low-income single people living alone

Appendix A to the draft policy notes that analysis of WCC waiting list data indicates demand is highest for bedsits or one-bedroom accommodation. It also draws on population growth projections for Wellington and states that "the number of 'couple without children' and 'one-person' households is expected to increase quite significantly". Also that, of the 10,188 households estimated to be in housing need over the next 20 years, "most of this growth will occur in those aged 45 and over and in one parent and one person households" (Appendix A: The housing stock, Demographic profile and Total housing need).

The Housing Upgrade Project (HUP) will reduce the number of bedsits by 343 and increase one bedroom units by 92. This is a material loss of 251 units. The policy describes the HUP as changing the stock to "better cater to the housing needs of Wellington" (Appendix A: The housing stock), but given this data regarding both demand and population projections, this reconfiguration adversely affects the group most represented on waiting lists and further reduces their opportunities to access affordable housing.

A particularly adversely affected group, identified in the Salvation Army's social policy report Forgotten People: Men on their own (August 2006), are often older beneficiary recipients who receive little social support.

Their needs further support the requirement for WCC to exercise leadership to ensure the critical housing shortage is addressed.

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

As an agency currently partnering very effectively with WCC, we wholeheartedly support a partnership approach, but request more information on how other partnerships will work and how the success of this approach will be measured. For example, how does WCC intend to ensure all tenants currently on Work and Income benefits receive all the benefits they are entitled to?

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

We support the proposed method for setting rents as it is vital that people on limited incomes have access to rental housing that is within their means. Therefore the continued priority for setting rents should be to make them as affordable as possible.

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

We endorse any ways that WCC can support tenants to remain housed and meet their rent commitments. In our work amongst beneficiaries and low-income earners we regularly meet people constrained by high fixed costs giving them little to spare. In many cases, even with the receipt of an Accommodation Supplement, people struggle to pay 70% of market rates.

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

As a partner engaged with WCC we work closely with City Housing. We are therefore aware of the positive work that has already been undertaken to make improvements in the selection process. The areas that from our perspective still need further attention are as follows:

- Clarity and consistency about how priority is assigned.
- Clarity of the weightings from the factors in the needs assessments and whether this effectively produces a points system, and if so, how this works.
- How the issues of 'discrimination' for people with past histories (and current experience) of alcohol and/or drug use; homelessness; and criminal records can be more adequately addressed.
- How WCC will balance the need for safeguards against discrimination given the desire to retain flexibility e.g. Decisions being made on a "case by case basis".
- The need for more transparency about how the system is monitored including providing results of evaluations. In particular it would be good to be able to see how and where places were allocated in relation to someone's priority status. (For example, Leeds City Council publishes the results of their choice-based letting scheme on a website. It includes information such as how many people bid for each property and the priority status of the person who was successful.)
- The term '*multiple disadvantaged*' needs greater clarification. While we appreciate the need for needs assessment many agencies are now seeking to use a more 'strengths-based' approach to assessment and more strengths-based language to describe applicants.
- '*Low level psychiatric*' is an outdated way to refer to people who have been, or are currently, consumers of mental health services. We question the assumption that only people who are considered to be '*low level*' are '*able to maintain an independent lifestyle with minimum supervision and support*'. Consumer and other mental health agencies can attest to numerous examples of mental health consumers who are able to manage and recover with appropriate support in the community.

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council's social housing?

We believe that people in need of social housing ought not to be prevented from accessing it by tenants outside the criteria. It is important that WCC has mechanisms to be able to move tenants on and we endorse the transition steps as outlined in this policy.

As an exception to the above, we also endorse the involvement of, and possible tenancy, of people actively committed to community development who are willing to work with Council and WHAT to achieve positive outcomes for tenants.

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

- We strongly endorse the commitment to equality, fair treatment and a broader definition of tenancy management in terms of tenants' overall wellbeing but want to know more detail about how will it be implemented.
- Specifically, we would like to know, how Council will target those socially isolated tenants who are least likely to get involved in community activities.
- We encourage the implementation and possible expansion of outreach services that are based on-site.
- We support the four aims of Housing Plus but are particularly interested to know how a case management approach will work in practice and whether WCC intends to be the lead agency responsible.
- Also, how 'high risk/needs tenancies' will be defined and assessed and by whom.

Sharon BennettSUBMISSION
NUMBER

21

From: Bridget Duley
Sent: Friday, 5 March 2010 12:53 p.m.
To: Sharon Bennett
Subject: FW: Submission against WCC Housing
Attachments: Housing Submission.doc

one more

From: Tina Bennett [mailto:tina.bennett@innercityproject.org.nz]
Sent: Friday, 5 March 2010 12:52 p.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission; Bridget Duley; susan@atareira.org.nz
Subject: Submission against WCC Housing

Kia Ora Koutou,

I forward our submission on behalf of Inner City Project who are an organization that is against homelessness in this country, identifies the unmet need and supports the community of Wellington towards mental health and wellbeing.

Naku noa,

Tina Bennett
Inner City Project
Team Leader
Lvl 1, 94 Riddiford Street,
NEWTOWN
(04)3802431
027 2802301

16



Inner City Project Team Leader

Tina Bennett 04 380 2431
Cell phone 027 280 2301
Riddiford House
94 Riddiford House, Newtown

Community Co-ordinator

Stephen Jardine 04 380 2432
Cell phone 027 438 4660

Administrator

Sonia Smith 04 380 2430
Fax: 04 380 2439



5th March 2010

Submission against WCC Housing getting rid of single accommodation

To Whom It May Concern:

Our Organisation is Inner City Project (ICP) we are a community-partnership mental health service based in Newtown. It provides a co-ordinated primary health and social service for people with mental health needs. The focus is on linking people into existing services and advocating for Tangata whaiora.

Inner City Project is governed by six organisations in a collaborative attempt to improve the situation of people who experience mental health illness. The member services are Newtown Union Health Services (NUHS), Atareira (formerly known as SF WGTN), Suzanne Aubert Compassion Centre (Soup Kitchen), Te Aro Health Centre, Wellington Independent Practice Association (WIPA), Wellington Mental Health Consumers Union and Wellington Peoples Centre.

NUHS is the lead agency that employs the staff and manages the organisation on behalf of the ICP/EA Advisory group. The priority is people whose support needs are currently not being met and helping people to access services. I am the team leader and manage this Organisation under the umbrella of Newtown Union Health Services. I write this letter of concern for the community of Wellington and the people that we service within this district.

The upgrading that WCC housing is doing to clean and improve the stock is a great idea. However since the inception of the improved planning this has on several occasions impacted on our mental health services users and it needed to be brought to some ones attention on the lack of consultation with the people currently housed with WCC Housing, lack of understanding that our clients had, and the impact that doing this would have not only short term but long term for our clients.

On WCC housings behalf they did bring in the TLC crew, had several meetings with limited residents at meetings, had bbqs to meet with tenants on the issue of relocation and how the package looked, however like I stated this touched the tip of the iceberg to how it would impact on our clients. The information that was given from the Prison Integration forum was that as a result of the upgrade single person accommodation offered by the WCC will be reduced by between 250 and 300 units.

Inner City Project have at lengths spoken with Vicki McLaren, Adele Thomas and various housing forum meetings on the disadvantage, impact, socially isolating and homelessness that this potential venture is forging at the expense to our single male and female dwellers. Our organisation on a daily basis find accommodation in the Wellington Area for mental health clients and it is very difficult indeed to provide access, break down barriers, and maintain basic living standards for our clients due to limited sourcing of houses.

Inner City Project Team Leader

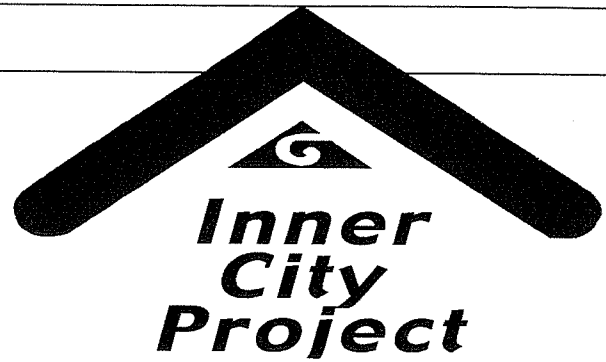
Tina Bennett 04 380 2431
Cell phone 027 280 2301
Riddiford House
94 Riddiford House, Newtown

Community Co-ordinator

Stephen Jardine 04 380 2432
Cell phone 027 438 4660

Administrator

Sonia Smith 04 380 2430
Fax: 04 380 2439



As one can imagine this is a very stressful time for our clients and the thought of being homeless adds more anxiety to our people we service. At present we already find that there is a shortage of suitable accommodation for prisoners upon release and mental health clients and the impact of reducing single person accommodation will have to a homelessness niche we are already servicing, ICP are concerned about. ICP service 500 people currently in the Wellington area, people ranging from mental health issues, families, transgender, homelessness and transient to name a few. The reasons for meeting with such clients have been as high as evictions, short term and fixed term tenancy, relocation, advocacy and accommodation.

Inner City Project request that you reconsider the Policy and instead of lowering the number of single person accommodation, you increase it to support the voices that are never heard. It has been a crucial time for inequalities affecting the community that ICP service, with market rates on rent, low income, social isolation our circle of desolation has been getting bigger. Homelessness is a problem in the Wellington City and WCC Housing were looking to close the gap towards Homelessness in terms of social housing. Who is this initiative benefiting because it's impacting both on agencies that lack the money to support and the people we service.

This letter of submission that I have brought to your attention today brings about unease for the unknowingness and impact it will have on the voices that are not heard. We look forward to your reply in the near future.

Naku noa,

Tina Bennett
Team Leader
Inner City Project

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

9

Sharon Bennett

From: Manu Ward [manu.ward@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2010 8:38 a.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: Submission: draft policy on social housing
Attachments: Submission_ManuWard-social housing policy.pdf

Hi there,
Please see attached submission on the draft policy for social housing.

Best regards,
Manu Ward.

26/02/2010

Social housing service – submission

Mr Manu Richard Ward
93/320 Mansfield Street, Newtown.
Home: 04-3892476. Mobile: 0212375395.
Email: manu.ward@gmail.com

Submissions close 4pm, 26 February 2010.

To: policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz

Yes I would like to make an oral submission.
I am making a submission as an individual.
I am a Wellington City Council housing tenant.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

Yes

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Yes

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Yes

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Yes

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Largely. In the discussion after the statement "consideration will be given to the particular community"(second-last paragraph, p10), I would support the following statement: "In some cases, the Council may house individuals or groups committed to community development, even whilst not necessarily meeting criteria for housing need themselves".

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council social housing?

Largely, though consideration may be given to the above points.

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Yes

Please add any other comments:

The draft policy makes a mockery of the Housing Upgrade Program (HUP), especially in the planned reduction of 343 bedsits. Note that the HUP will lead to a total reduction of 208 dwellings, or 145 bedrooms. This proposal appears to entirely inconsistent with the information and challenges presented in the draft policy, including the following:

- **Affordability** (p6,7,8). If the HUP was to take seriously the challenge of providing affordable homes, it would not reduce the number of bedsits. By the policy's own admission (p15), "many tenants prefer [bedsits] (*usually because they are cheaper*) and they are more space efficient". The currently proposed HUP flies in the face of the challenge of affordability by forcing 343 bedsit-tenants to find more expensive alternatives in an increasingly competitive rental market (p7,18).
- **Increasing numbers of households in housing need** (p7,18). Similarly, the HUP fails to meet the challenge of increasing demand for social housing. The policy makes it clear that this demand is expected to increase for one-person and one-parent households (p7,18). Even now, the demand for bedsits far outweighs demand for other dwelling types (Table 3, p16) and yet the response by the HUP is to reduce bedsits by 343 and only increase one-bedroom dwellings by 92: a *combined reduction* of dwellings suitable for one-person and some one-parent households of 251.
- **Partnership with Housing New Zealand Corporation** (HNZC, p7). Given that WCC wishes to pursue a partnership approach to social housing with HNZC, it would seem obvious that WCC should maintain or increase its current stock of bedsits rather than attempting to provide all types of housing. WCC should be proud of its ability to provide affordable bedsits (p11), especially when there is little alternative provided by HNZC for this demographic (only 41 HNZC bedsits, Table 1, p15).

The only justification the draft policy gives for the proposed reduction in dwellings is to "better reflect modern living standards" (p7) and that "it is not always considered appropriate to live in a bedsit" (p15). For those bedsitters with no other alternative, these minimal statements fail to offset the realities discussed above. Given the long waiting list for bedsits, it would appear that it is not the tenants who have decided that bedsits are "not always appropriate". In whose opinion, then, are they "not appropriate"? And why does that opinion over-ride the obvious and increasing demand?

The HUP gives WCC the opportunity to find innovative solutions for high density housing in New Zealand that meet the challenges of affordability, increasing demand, urban sprawl, and homelessness. In fact good bedsits (more accurately termed "studio apartment" if they have their own bathroom) can be entirely consistent with "modern living standards" if they are well-designed and accompanied by good public space.

The draft policy makes the currently proposed HUP look like a backwards step that will make it more difficult for housing officers to meet the policy aims. Either give better explanation for this step, or modify the Housing Upgrade Program (HUP) so that it really steps up to the challenges we face.

I myself currently live in a one-bedroom unit with my wife and young child, but I know many of my neighbours in bedsits at Newtown Park Flats feel marginalised by the proposed HUP, and worried about moving to a more expensive alternative, or away from the amenities and social services offered in Newtown.

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

2

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

Social housing service – submission form

Please use this form to give us your views about the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service.

You can have your say:

- online at www.Wellington.govt.nz
- by sending an email to: policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz
- by making a submission on this form and sending it to:
 - Freepost 2199, Draft policy for social housing service, Wellington City Council, Wellington
 - fax to 801 3231.

If you would like to speak about your submission to City Councillors at the Council's Strategy and Policy Committee meeting, you can make an oral submission by ticking this box. We will contact you to organise a time.

Submissions close 4pm, 26 February 2010.

I am making a submission

- as an individual
 on behalf of an organisation

Name of organisation ^{SDRP.} CAT, HART, BAB, TIN DO, NPMFTA, RAT, SJent

I am a Wellington City Council housing tenant

Yes No

Enter your name and contact details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr (circle which applies)

First name(s)* BERNARD Last name(s)* O'SHAUGHNESSY
 Street address* APT 239, 320 Mansfield St, Newtown Park Mews
NEWTOWN, WELLINGTON
 Phone Home — Mobile 021.205.3249
 Email Bernardboss@yahoo.co.uk

Note * Mandatory fields (please use block capitals). All submissions (including name and contact details) are published and made available to elected members of the Council and the public. Personal information supplied will be used for the administration of the consultation process. All information collected will be held by Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington. Submitters have the right to access and correct personal information.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

Comments: YES & NO

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Comments WHAT?

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Comments: Within Limits - you have not explained it completely.

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Comments: Sort of.

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Comments: No - this needs true consultation and discussion

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council's social housing?

Comments: NO ! NO ! NO !

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: Present practice raises my objections

Please add any other comments:

I will. I will table, submit & talk to a paper I am preparing.

MORE TIME NEEDED BY RATEPAYERS TO MAKE SUBMISSIONS

SUBMISSION
NUMBER

4

Absolutely

POSITIVELY

ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

Social housing service – submission form

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- as an individual
 on behalf of an organisation

Name of organisation BAB, HART, CAT, NPMFTA, RATA, SCAR

I am a Wellington City Council housing tenant

Yes No

Enter your name and contact details

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr (circle which applies)

First name(s)* Bernard Last name(s)* O'SHAUGHNESSY

Street address* APT 239, 320 Mansfield St. Newtown Park Mews

Newtown WELLINGTON

Phone Home - Mobile -

Email Bernardboss@yahoo.co.uk

Note * Mandatory fields (please use block capitals). All submissions (including name and contact details) are published and made available to elected members of the Council and the public. Personal information supplied will be used for the administration of the consultation process. All information collected will be held by Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield Street, Wellington. Submitters have the right to access and correct personal information.

Do you support the overall vision outlined in the draft policy for Wellington City Council's social housing service?

Comments: NO

Do you agree with the partnership approach outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: NO

Do you agree with the proposed method for setting rents for Wellington City Council's housing tenants?

Comments: _____
_____ No _____

Do you agree with the proposed package of support for tenants who struggle to afford their rent?

Comments: _____
_____ Have Rent to pay _____
_____ scheme _____

Do you support the proposed selection process for tenants in Council social housing?

Comments: _____
_____ No _____

Do you support the approach outlined for tenants to move on from Wellington City Council's social housing?

Comments: _____
_____ WHAT? _____

Do you agree with the approach to tenancy management outlined in the draft policy?

Comments: _____
_____ Discussion Needed _____

Please add any other comments:

_____ See attached _____
_____ total submission _____

**To: Wellington City Council
Draft Policy for Social Housing Service**

Submission.

**I wish to attend on Council and speak to my submission.
Please advise the time and date.**

As an overview the draft policy could be received as an appropriate step into the future. However many flaws are there and need addressing.

On page 19 it is estimated that 10,188 households NOW are in need.

Page 16: Yet this review endorses the Housing Upgrade programme whereby the total units available from WCC is reduced from 2352..... DOWN to 2144.

Page 15 This draft also says "there will be less bedsits" and "The number of units overall will decrease slightly, but the stock will better cater to the housing needs of Wellington".

This reduction and move to 2 & 3 bedroom units flies in the face of the projected population trends of Wellington's (& NZ) ageing and single female of male requirements.

Actually I am opposed to the whole report that is presented to Council.

I will speak to the issues.

**1) Full and reasonable consultation has not been carried out.
WHAT has not made full representations nor had a advocate speak for all tenants.**

2) Individual tenants views have not been taken into account.

I attended two tenant meetings with Council Officers yet such meetings were poorly advertised to any or all tenants.

3) Any and all minutes taken by Council Officers in 2) above should be made available.

4) Council Officers indicated to me that they had "absolutely no knowledge" of an earlier year of when Council itself considered a buy out of units as being an option.

Yet the information is accessible within Council. Even some of the very Councillors who are on Council now were on the Council when the matter was debated, yet the Council Officers claim now reference records of the matter! (It was only in Sept 2004!!!!).

5) Under the Official Information Act I request that Council Officers make available the true figures of;

- a) how many people are on the waiting list**
- b) how long are they waiting for**
- c) why does the Council Officers report not show the true length of time people are waiting**
- d) who and why are people being turned away for consideration of units.**

6) Why is 14% of the units now not rented, when then is such a huge waiting list? And the upgrade project is not an excuse.

7) I have discussed a - "rent to buy" scheme with Council Officers (Vicky McLaren, Bridget, Susan, Helen, of whom I respect, Peter and others) yet absolutely no mention of this has surfaced within the draft policy. I want Councillors to consider the matter.

8) I wish for full transparency of the 'rating' of groups who gain the opportunity to get a unit, and a discussion on that

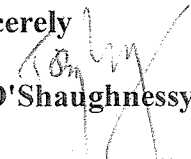
9) In the past the Social Housing Policy has supposedly run complementary and supplementary to the Housing Policy of Housing New Zealand. In some ways that is correct, in other ways it has not been so.

BUT, now the draft policy is neither. Why?

I request the draft policy be:

- a) held over by the Council until**
- b) further correct information is provided**
- c) Council Officers report on a rent to buy scheme**
- d) policy include an increase in the base unit stock**
- e) WCC's policy include a housing unit growth rate.**

Yours sincerely


Bernard O'Shaughnessy

NPM FTA (Newtown Park Mews - Free Tenants Association)

Housing Advocate: Newtown Park Mews

BAB: Bernard against Booze

TIN DO: Try It Now - Dry Out (NPM Wet Hostel)

Advocate: Education/Justice/Law/Health/Immigration
Employment Relations.

Rep in 13 Community Groups

Churches Representative

Political Activist

Mayoral Candidate

Sharon Bennett

From: bernard O'Shaughnessy [bernardboss@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: Wednesday, 24 February 2010 11:15 a.m.
To: BUS: Policy Submission
Subject: SOCIAL HOUSING POLICY - DRAFT REVIEW

I submit the following to the Council.

- 1) I wish to attend and speak to my submission.
- 2) I am opposed to the policy review as presented by Council Officer.
- 3) There are errors therein
- 4) There are inaccurate analyses of the data gathered
- 5) The policy suggested is at odds with the supposed philosophy of the Council
- 6) I wish to see the Council Officers and Council reflect in the policy:
 - a) a priority right of re-entry for tenants who have had many years living in some of the units, without having to face increased rents for two bedrooms!
 - b) a rent to buy scheme
 - c) the Council increasing its unit stock not decreasing it
 - d) that the re location of tenants should not be a dislocation of tenants
 - e) a tenancy manager/caretaker be on the ground in the complexes 24/7 to be available for tenants

Yours sincerely

Bernard O'Shaughnessy

**Advocate/Consultant
NP FTA
BAB
TIN DO
HART
Church Representative
Mayoral Candiate**

Email slow, clunky, unreliable? [Switch to Yahoo!Xtra Mail](#), New Zealand's new email address.

25/02/2010