

Month February Year 2007

REDWATER NEWS



The Redfern and Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Boards Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 1

Allocations and Social Housing

In early 2006 written submissions were sought by the Public Bodies Review Committee from interested organisations, groups & individuals to comment on the allocations of social housing in NSW. The Inquiry was conducted with emphasis on:

- Current levels of funding for the development of new housing stock
- The effectiveness & appropriateness of housing allocations
- Role of community housing in meeting the demand for social housing
- Social housing allocation systems in other jurisdiction
- Any other related matters.

The following excerpt is from the Chairman's foreword to the Report from the Public Review Committee Inquiry into the Allocations of Social Housing in NSW.

Committee members from both metropolitan and non metropolitan areas of NSW agreed that social housing was an important issue.

This quote outlines why allocations are intricate to the social housing system: "Allocations systems lie at the core of social housing. They determine who is eligible for housing, the order of providing assistance, and the matching of households with specific properties. In so doing, they affect the circumstances and wellbeing of individual households and the composition and capacity of local communities.

Allocations systems also affect all aspects of housing providers' operations, including tenancy management, asset planning and management, rent revenue and, ultimately, financial viability." The allocations policies employed by public housing authorities are significant. The same report outlined how just 5% of Australian applicants in the greatest need account for 38% of the housing allocations made.

The Committee received submissions stating that the waiting time for public housing in NSW is twelve years. Strong demand is not being matched by strong growth in social housing. The net increase in public housing stock as at June 2006 was 451. In all of the evidence presented to the Committee one message was clear - that there is a critical need for growth in social housing.

The Committee are of the view that there is scope for improvement in the way core tasks like allocation are currently carried out. It is feasible and desirable that choice for tenants, transparency of the allocation system, and levels of tenant participation increase. Highlighted to the Committee were the importance of consultation with tenants and the clear delivery of relevant information to tenants. The Committee understands that the NSW Department of Housing are working to break down concentrations of disadvantage in public housing estates.

The Committee affirms the role of social housing as the provider of secure accommodation for those unable to access alternate forms of housing. The Committee would like to see the NSW Department of Housing progress social housing for the benefit of the State.

HOUSING APPEAL COMMITTEE

A lot of tenants may have heard about the Housing Appeals Committee but are not sure what they actually do. The following are some often asked questions.

What is the Housing Appeals Committee? It was established in December 1994 by the Minister of Housing and commenced operation in early 1995. The Committee is an independent monitoring agency that reviews certain decisions made by the staff of the DoH. The Minister for Housing has approved the expansion of the Committee's jurisdiction to include clients of community housing providers.

What is the role of the Committee?

To determine whether the housing provider:
has taken all relevant information into account
fully considered the appellant's circumstances.
Applied and interpreted policy correctly & fairly.
Has conformed to the principles of procedural fairness.

To provide feedback to the Minister for Housing and the housing provider. The Committee can make recommendations that the decision be changed or it may agree with the original decision. They have recommendatory powers only and it is still up to the housing provider to make the final decision.

Who can use the Housing Appeals Committee? Tenants and applicants of public housing and now community housing who have applied for a housing service and are not satisfied with the decision of the housing providers first level review. A first level review must be completed before you are able to lodge an appeal with the Committee. A Complaint or Appeal? An appeal is different from a complaint. An appeal is a request for reconsideration of a decision. A complaint relates to the standard and type of service that was provided to you or the manner in which a matter is dealt with by an organization. They only deal with appeals.

How to lodge an appeal? An appeal is usually lodged by completing the second level appeal form. Your housing provider should provide the appeal form when you receive the outcome of your first level review. If you need assistance the staff of the Secretariat would be happy to assist you to lodge your appeal over the phone.

Who are the members of the Committee? The committee currently consists of twelve part-time Committee members, comprising the Chairperson, Lynden Esdaile, two Deputy Chairpersons and nine members. Committee hearings usually consist of a presiding Chair and two members. The sitting Committee is drawn from the overall panel of members.

What happens at a Committee Hearing? Hearings are usually held by phone although in some circumstances you may be offered a face-to-face interview. The whole process of the hearing is designed to be informal and to provide an opportunity for you to present a picture of your situation. They will generally speak with you for 30-40 minutes. If you need an interpreter this will be arranged by the Secretariat, it is not possible to have relatives interpret for you.

What happens after the hearing? They aim to finalize their recommendations within two weeks after the hearing. A copy is sent to you and the housing provider. The housing provider is required to report back to them with the outcome of its determination within six weeks.

Where is the Housing Appeals Committee? Level 4, 9 Deane Street Burwood NSW 2134 Contact them: Office hours: 8.30am-4.30pm Monday to Friday Postal Address PO Box 1206 Burwood NSW 1805 Telephone (02) 9715 7955 Free call:1800 629 794

Michael M Shreenan – New HCAP Community Development Worker

Originally from the West Coast of Scotland Michael started his career working with the local church as a youth worker. Then he went on to become a Team Leader/ Tutor for five years at Scotland's largest Citizens Advice Bureau and served as member of the Board of Directors for Glasgow's LGBT centre for two years.

Michael says "I am looking forward to working with the brilliant team at the Factory and the Waterloo and Redfern community. This challenging new role will involve assisting organisations, groups to sustain the already successful services in the area and to develop new ones which will be lead and owned by the local Residents."

HCAP is funded by the Department of Housing and managed by The Factory Community Centre. The aims of the project is to:

- Help improve the quality of life in the local community of Redfern and Waterloo
- To assist people in participating fully in Community life.

RESHAPING PUBLIC HOUSING CHANGES TO TYPES & LENGTHS OF LEASES

The nature of the changes

Fixed term leases are a new concept in public housing in NSW. Whereas previously tenants could stay in public housing for life, from 23 October 2006, the Department of Housing will offer new tenants fixed term leases of 2, 5 or 10 years. The length of lease offered will match their housing needs.

The new leases will apply to people currently on the Housing Register and new applicants for public housing, and cover both Department of Housing properties and Aboriginal Housing Office properties managed by the Department.

Over time, the move to fixed term leases will allow the Department to house more people.

Deciding on the length of lease

In deciding on the length of lease, the Department will examine the circumstances of each household and take account of such factors as:

- the age of household members
- type of income, for example, a Disability Support Pension
- the medical condition or disability of household members.

End of lease review

Before a fixed term lease ends, the Department will again consider the tenant's household circumstances and, if they remain eligible for public housing, offer a new fixed term lease. Should our assessment show that the tenant is ineligible, the Department may assist their transition to the private rental market.

Promoting understanding of the changes

The Department is committed to promoting understanding of the *Reshaping Public Housing* reforms within the public housing sector and is communicating

around the precincts of waterloo

PEOPLES

Another year has gone. I trust that the New Year will be even kinder than the last one for you.

The DoH changes their staff so often it is hard to keep up with their names. This has had a bad effect on the maintenance and other issues around the Precinct. A large building in Redfern has been given to Community Housing.

The Redfern Waterloo Authority is going to look at the Waterloo Estate in the next round of the Built Environment Plan. Their Human Services Plan is now in its second stage.

There has been no more news of the DoH's Human Services Accord. When some does come in, it will be handed out at the next Precinct meeting.

Remember to write down the Job Number when asking the DoH for repairs. It makes it easier if you have to go back.

The new rents and water charges are out now. Remember to pay the water charges separately if you pay your rent at the Post Office.

Ross Smith
Precinct Rep

Charles Henry Leaver

The tenants of Waterloo, and especially Matavai, lost a very good friend when Charles Henry Leaver was laid to rest on Monday 13th November at Pinegrove. Over fifty people travelled out to the chapel to attend the service and pay their last respects.

The service provided few details of his past beyond the date and place of birth, parents' names, and last two working occupations. This however was consistent with his very nature, always concerned with the wellbeing of others whilst seldom talking about his own lot in life.

His kingdom was Waterloo, his court the Matavai common room, his law book the Webster's Dictionary besides the Scrabble Board, and his dining room the Salvos in Cope Street. Those who were privileged to have sat in his presence and enjoyed his company will always recall the half turned head with the quizzical little smile, the sparkle in the eyes and the raised eyebrow.

This memory will always remain with those who were fortunate enough to have known Charlie.

Ross Smith

SOLANDER

Our Precinct Representative Laurie Marshall passed over on Sat 29 April 2006 and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

We would like to give a big thank you to all the tenants who attended our meeting in November.

We wish all tenants a Merry Xmas and safe and Happy New Year,

Olivia and Carolyn

Valle John Kenane

It is with great great sadness that we say farewell to John Kenane who passed away suddenly on the afternoon of 21 December 2007. John lived in Waterloo for many years and was an active and vocal member of his community. He loved a laugh as much as a good argument (in the best of humour) but most of all he loved life and people & was always the first to put up his hand to lend a hand and the first to give a kind word and a shoulder on which to lean. He was an active precinct & assistant rep for Marton as well as being integral in the volunteer group which for some year ran the Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre for the community.

With the wit & charm of the Irish & always one for a cuppa & a chat he leaves us all too soon. You have left a gaping hole in this our Waterloo. Love you John.

Prue Rheuben – Co-ordinator
UNSW Community
Development Project

CONSUMERS AND CONSULTANTS - WE WANT YOU

Opportunities for gainful employment in non-discriminatory workplace environments rarely present for people with mental health condition or generalised anxiety disorders.

Make no mistake – the workplace is progressively becoming more amenable to people with disabilities, and the increase in the demand for workers in the mental health sector is creating exciting opportunities for people who might previously regarded themselves as excluded from the workplace.

In the “north-east cluster” of SSWAHS, positions for people with a mental health condition to fill positions as consumer consultants are opening up. People in these roles attend the acute inpatient ward, the community health centres and attendant living skills centres for the purpose of giving advice and recovery instruction to patients, their carers and their families alike. No prior training is required and on-the-job instruction and training is given to women and men both. The positions are typically part-time and based on a rotating shift arrangement with another.

In addition, volunteer roles as instructors and facilitators are to become accessible for programs in alleviating smoking, day activities and women’s only groups.

Further, the anticipated flow of funds from COAG and various levels of government will soon lead to part-time positions in non-government organisations (NGOs), across the state, in all manner of occupations, from health promotion officers on the telephone, to project development officers and first-aid course instructors. All will be in demand.

Workers with enthusiasm and dedication and little previous experience or formal education are presently being sought, and the opportunities to develop careers is a once-in-a-lifetime chance (and to resurrect lost careers for grey nomads may also be the case). Anyone with nursing or customer-service experience in a former life, will not be short of an opportunity. Expect an increase in the number and diversity of one and 2-day conferences and courses hosted by NGOs and employment consultants as the money begins to flow through the channels to the peak

agencies. Brush-up on your public speaking skills and powerpoint slide preparations, as the number of speaking engagements to peers in the mental health sector progressively increase. The number of contracts for caterers and facility and conference managers is set to boom. If all you can do is make sandwiches, do that.

For those who have had past experience as self-employed businessmen or consultants to business, the path is paved with introductions. Get to the Department of Fair Trading and sort those forms, for your time is nigh.

Even accredited training course will be increased, and the peak NGOs in the sector will soon offer a rash of diverse training catalogues and handbooks.

Consumers and others with mental health condition – pick yourself up, and get employment ready. We want you.

**By Larry Billington,
Elected Consumer
Representative/mental
health,
SSWAHS Eastern Zone.**

PLANTS AND PEACE

The NSW Govt recently announced that it is going to spend money on parks and education in Dept of Housing areas. In our "mixed housing" precinct we only have tiny Redfern Park which the Council is about to swallow up with expanded sporting facilities on the adjoining demolished football oval complex– with no extra parking being provided. DoH has ignored our pleas for a Community Room (as access to the Roundhouse meeting place in the ex Rachel Foster Hospital will disappear into highrise flat redevelopment in a few years) so there is no site within our Precinct area for any of the promised community education schemes to be operated.

NOTE: full version of this article is on [http:// publictenantsrights.blogspot.com](http://publictenantsrights.blogspot.com)

MCKELL

Thanks to the tenants who gave me their support in 2006 and hope they will continue to do so. Thanks also to John Perry for our new book shelves in McKell library, after four years. Thanks to Paul Moulds, our handyman for installing them.

On August 3rd 2005 tenants were informed that fly-screens for laundries and drying rooms to keep pigeons out, were being made and would be installed as soon as possible. Eighteen months on we are still waiting. What happened to these fly-screens?

Department of Housing we are still waiting for them.

Denny Powell
Precinct Rep
/

PHOTO VOICES

Photo Voices was a project initiated by the HCAP worker at the Factory, Orna Marks. The idea of the project was to give Housing residents disposable cameras and to get them to photograph their environment for later discussion and display. The core group of seven snappers and other interested parties met a number of times showing their photos and describing their reasons for taking them. The photos revealed the major concerns of the photographers from the isolation of John Il de Quillettes photos to the fears and frustrations felt by public housing tenants. The graffiti, the garbage, the vandalism were juxtaposed with the hope of the Chinese gardeners, in a series of photos that told the stories of the photographers' day to day lives.

At a series of workshops each person chose three images and told the stories that accompanied them. The group then discussed what to do next with their project and how to exhibit it. The group decided to show it at the at the NCOSS (NSW Council of Social Services) conference at the Australian Technology Park on 25 September. The photos were then mounted with their story labels added. The photos were exhibited on boards around the central conference area and were viewed by the conference attendees during their meal breaks. Much interest was shown in the photos which are now on display at The Factory Community Centre. Anyone interested in seeing

the exhibition or taking part in the Photo Voices project should contact Michael at the Factory on 9698 9569 or drop in at 67 Raglan Street, Waterloo.



Farewell to my friend Don Grave

A man who lived on the same floor as me passed away recently. He went quietly and without warning... but not unnoticed or uncared for. His name was Don Grave. Me and my girlfriend got to know him little by little in the two and a bit years I've lived at Kendall.

When we would see each other in the corridor we'd say "G'day, how ya goin ?", but that's all. He struck me as a solitary & independent man who liked to mind his own business; some might say the "perfect neighbour".

We would see him at the local, head in a book, a schooner of "old" in front of him. He still had an eye for a pretty girl & was always pretty chuffed when my girl would strike up a chat. Though he admitted openly that he had his regrets, Donny led a full life and still enjoyed it to the full. He'd previously been married & spoke of grown kids with kids of their own.

He carried himself with a quiet dignity & in a funny sorta way you might even have described him as stylish. Don was a good natured & decent sort and really what higher praise is there?

Wherever you might be Don I hope you find something good.

Thinkin' of ya Don & only wish we'd known you longer.

Dale & Yasmin

A new Lions Club has been established in Redfern and Waterloo.

Lions Clubs provide opportunities for members to work together to fulfil community needs.

Some major projects Lions International has been a part of include:

- Lions Christmas cake sales support the Save Sight Foundation and in fact Lions got the late Fred Hollows started in his early years.
- Lions Cord Blood and Childhood Cancer Research Foundation which assists with research into curing cancer and other illnesses in children.
- Youth Exchange programs where young people are hosted in other countries to experience their culture and families here host international students and Lions Leo Movement which offers our youth a chance to assist and work in the local community helping the Lions Clubs do their work here at home.

For further information please contact
Victor 0418 639026 John 0416 048932
Norma 0404 094249

* Free Chinese New Year
* Lunch

Where:

Waterloo Neighbourhood
Centre
Shop 5/95 Wellington St,
Waterloo

When:

Tuesday 27th February, 2007
1 pm- 3 pm

Mabel Chang Tel: 9319 7786
Waterloo Community
Representative



THE BEST ROOSTER STORY

Max the farmer was in the fertilized egg business. He had several hundred young layers (hens), called pullets and eight or ten roosters, whose job was to fertilize the eggs. The farmer kept records and any rooster that didn't perform went into the soup pot and was replaced. That took an awful lot of his time so he bought a set of tiny bells and attached them to his roosters. Each bell had a different tone so Max could tell from a distance, which rooster was performing. Now he could sit on the porch and fill out an efficiency report simply by listening to the bells. The farmer's favourite rooster was old Butch, a very fine specimen he was too. But on this particular morning Max noticed old Butch's bell hadn't rung at all! Max went to investigate. The other roosters were chasing pullets, bells-a-ringing. The pullets, hearing the roosters coming, would run for cover. But to Farmer Max's amazement, Butch had his bell in beak, so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job and walk on to the next one. Max was so proud of Butch, he entered him in the county fair and Butch became an overnight sensation among the judges. The result - the judges not only awarded Butch the "No Bell Piece Prize" but they also awarded the "Pullet surprise" as well.

Clearly Butch was a politician in the making.

community noticeboard

South Sydney Community Aid
Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre
73 Garden St, Alexandria (Alexandria
Town Hall)

NSW 2015 Tel: 9319 4073

Fax: 9319 4741 Email: mnc@ssca.org.au

Join in our programs. Come and meet us and have a free cuppa and a bikkie. We welcome volunteers too!

- Free Computer Training for people aged 45-65. To book call Sydney Community College on 8752 7555. From March 2007
- Multicultural Mothers Art Group exhibition - April 2007.
- Multicultural Sewing Group - Mondays . Advanced - 10-12 pm; Beginners 1-3pm.
- Russian Community Support Group – Thursday 11-12pm
- Free English classes on Mondays, from 1-2pm advance level and from 2-3 pm for beginners

- Free “Klick Clack” Knitting Group – Mondays 10-12pm
- Intro to jewellery making and beading class – February 2007
- “Walking Together” program - starts 8th February 9am-3pm, Department of Corrective Services.
- Methadone Anonymous Group - 2-4pm Fridays.

Multicultural Bus Trips 2007

For more information please call us.

15th January ; 2nd February ; 12th February ; 2nd March ; 12th March ; 30th March.

We can also help you with:

- Information, Advocacy, Referral & Support
- Free telephone & telephone interpreting, fax, photocopying and internet services (conditions apply)
- Free Tax help and budgeting advice.

RedWater News is the Newsletter of the Redfern and Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Boards Produced for and by Redfern and Waterloo public housing tenants.

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CONTRIBUTIONS ALWAYS WELCOME!

Articles contributed by individuals/groups do not necessarily express the view of the Editorial Committee, which reserves the right to accept or reject articles according to the rules of publication and the Terms of Reference of the Redfern and Waterloo Neighbourhood Advisory Boards.

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE :

23 APRIL, 2007

Redwater News wishes to thank the City of Sydney Council and the Dept. of Housing for their on-going support.

FOR THE FRIDGE

Department of Housing

WATERLOO: Drysdale

9310 8666

REDFERN: The Pottery

9319 9333

Poet's Corner

9698 1284

DoH Maintenance - 24 hours

13 15 71

South Sydney Comm Transport 9319 4439

UNSW Comm.Dev. Project 9245 1841

Factory Community Centre 9698 9569

Waterloo Recycling Workshop 9310 1890

Redfern Police 8303 5199

HCAP Worker 8399 1011

Interpreter Service 13 14 50