



Minutes of the Christchurch Housing Forum – Youth Homelessness

May 2015

Attendance: Paul Hulse, James Hadlee CCC; Sue Amtman Presbyterian Support; Amanda Foo Pegasus Health; Glen Buckner, Jeff Jones Salvation Army; Anna Langley Early Start Jo Taylor de Vocht Barnardos; Jean Armstrong Presbyterian Support; Denise Huisman Christchurch Resettlement Service; Louise Edwards Canterbury Community Trust; Dan Martin MBIE; Daphne Marsdon Project Ester; Jan Rogers Anglican Care Community Development; Lisa Coulter TPA; Susan Gregory CYF; Bronwyn Kay CYF; Ji Yun Jeong Christchurch Resettlement Centre; Nicole Randall CCC; Wayne Jones; Bob Hardie CCC Social Housing; Simon Atkinson; Danyon New Homeless at 17; Paul Cottam CCC; Michael Gorman City Mission; Jill Hawkey Methodist Mission; Pip Nicoll Presbyterian Support; Marg Weatherspoon Probation; Angela Taylor, Alice Zikhali, Olivia Bissekor CPIT Students; Emily Adcock New Brighton Project; Ray Tye, Alice Daniel-Kirk, Kathy Furfie, Karen Curtis HNZC; Tony Delta Trust; Carl Sheehan Ecotech Homes; Gray Crawford City Mission; Louise Louis, Gemma Selbie, Sue Oshea Comcare Housing; Marc Cruikshank, Karmel Kay Youth Service; Valerie McDonald, Marilyn Gibb Social Work CDHB; Jenny Reid Safer Ashburton District Youth Support Worker; Kii Dench Youth Service; Peter Freeman Mike Greer Homes; Joanna Whitehead Student Probation; Cheryl Hitchcock Community Corrections; Trudie Hakin CDHB Child and Family Safety Service; Jay Sepie CCC Leanne McTear MYD; Josh Briggs Room Maker; Lorraine Boswell, Dyanne Bensley CYF; Kim Boyce, Tanz Escott YCD; Kristi Cowan, Stephen Firth, Lee Sampson CCC; Anni Watkin YCD; Richard Tankersley Human Rights Commission; Penny Arthur Community Law; Amy Burke Help for the Homeless; Renee Willis Accessible Properties; Amanda Cook, Denise Jackson Work and Income; Alice Fletcher MHAPS Youth Peer Support; Ali Woodruff MHAPS; Michelle McConnell; Carmen Shivas Youth Service North Canterbury; Michelle Montgomery Youth Services Rangiora; Karin Brownie Avebury House; Jackie Moore Pathways Health; Bridget Lange CERA; Yunjeong Park CPIT; Rachel Graham Radio New Zealand; S Grant St Andrews at Rangi Ruru St Georges IONA; Leonie Stephen; Katheryn Allen Salvation Army; Emilie Johnson Presbyterian Support; Brooke Benbenek, Heather Batin Presbyterian Support Youth Service; Stacey Holborough CCC Community Advisor Youth, Alma Sturgess Rowley Resource Centre.

Welcome by - Helen Gatonyi - Helen also facilitated the meeting

Karakia - Richard Tankersley

Presentations:

YCD Youth & Cultural Development - Audio Visual Presentation – Youth Homelessness - Kim Boyce & Tanz Escott
Kay Saville-Smith CRESA Centre for Research Evaluation and Social Assessment
Dr Sue Bagshaw – 298 Youth Health

YCD opened the forum with an audio visual presentation created by many of the young people who attend YCD. This was a moving presentation with an “in-your-face” reality of youth homelessness experiences in Christchurch. Kim and Tanz who work with the young people at YCD prefaced the presentation they honoured and praised the young people who made this presentation and they

talked about the passion of the young people working on the presentation. Every snippet and photo has an enormous back story, these kids bravely shared a little bit of themselves with us and for you so you can better understand what they are facing.

Facts from the presentation: 30,000 NZ severely housing deprived nearly half homeless under 25. Many under 18 who YCD work with live on the street or in abandoned buildings. This is the tip of the iceberg. These kids are invisible and homelessness impacts on health education and wellbeing. Image shows a 19 year old girl with a 3 year old child - almost 100 viewings still unable to find a home. Young people are seen as undesirable tenants; young parents experience extreme difficulty finding accommodation.

Young people support each other, often sleeping rough in groups for support.

Slide showed young people talking about being moved on from abandoned buildings often onto the streets.

“We as a community must proceed and put into action solutions so that homeless young people are provided with stable, secure and supportive housing and services that are responsive to their developmental needs. Youth specific housing needs to be expanded and no-barrier housing models need to be developed. Our young people are resilient, and the homeless young people with whom we work inspire and amaze us with their strength and creativity. The greatest challenge we face is their lack of self-worth and the confidence they can proceed. What they often lack is opportunity and hope” - Tanz

The presentation ended with the music from the Lorde song “Team”.

Anyone wanting to talk about this presentation can contact Anni Watkins Manager of YCD direct.

Kay Saville-Smith CRESA followed up with her presentation

Kay started her presentation highlighting the fact that the homelessness shown by the previous presentation was not as a result of the earthquake. They are not about some kids who have got themselves into trouble; they are not about a social problem – all a reflection of the failure of the housing market in New Zealand.

Kay presented a slide show – highlights from the show.

Young people 15-25 years old who are not living with their parents 43% of them have a major housing problem of some kind compares 33% adult population generally (including young adults) Young people bearing the burden of housing in New Zealand

Not just a Christchurch problem – exacerbated here in Christchurch rents 13% increase – compares to 9% nationally. Christchurch has never been a low rent area, rents in the city more like and often exceeding rents in Auckland. Unlike Auckland where a policy deals with Auckland, no policy exists in Christchurch. Young people are particularly vulnerable to that but not the only people.

Reason we have a problem is an undersupply of stock – more houses we would be all right.

In NZ one in ten of every dwelling unoccupied. Look at unoccupied dwellings 2006 - 156,000 2013 185,000 unoccupied – some people away on census night however 139,000 simply empty. No one lives in them! Christchurch dwelling increased by half that’s not why you have a problem 10,000 not occupied (not liveable) 2005 18,000 unoccupied dwellings

How can we have a housing problem if we have unoccupied dwellings? Nationally it is a picture of under occupation. Christchurch has the highest increase (very obvious reasons) increases in all areas except Auckland. Places where we have the highest homelessness also the places where there are large numbers of unoccupied dwellings.

Housing problem is all about inequality. Mismatch between supply and need. It is political, social and economic and market problems not problems physical dwelling.

Building in NZ since mid-1990's entirely focussed on the top end of the market. There has been a decline in dwellings each year at the low end of the market. We see an increase in the top end of the market. (60% new stock added to the market to the top 25% of value). Unless you can be in the top part of the market you can't get into a home. Many unoccupied dwellings at top end of the market. Cheaper to keep them empty and on the market than occupied.

Home ownership in NZ is falling – home ownership has fallen to the same as it was in 1936.

For Young people what does that mean? – Extreme edge already seen today, but for all young people it means that renting is no longer transitional. NZ has the lowest labour force participation rates in OECD. Many of our young people not available for work – can't get stable housing. Can't be work ready if you are couch surfing. Highest participation older people in labour force – society out of balance. Our youth have poor access to housing and poor access to the labour market. Somehow we need to break that circuit? One way to break it is to break the housing circuit.

Intergenerational equity problems – Unfortunately our response is to take from older. Take away deficit model of housing rather than an investment model in young people. If young people had the investment model the older generation had i.e. capitalise benefit – income related loans, we would not be seeing these problems. If not in home ownership by 40 not likely to be in home ownership.

Policy Settings profoundly wrong

Prices fetish - new housing prices going up – bad thing – not a good thing. - feeds misalignment of supply.

Landlord directed to services for young people. Speculation squeeze landlords out of the market – can't afford to get into market can't make a return.

We allow covenants to drive housing prices up – unlike the rest of the world which use covenants to support affordable housing. Fail to use covenant in ways that are good. Persist with an accommodation supplement \$1billion to help people into accommodation untied to housing whatsoever - allows bad landlords and bad tenants to get away with bad behaviour does not support good landlords and good housing.

Finally rental market stigmatises young people – Least preferred renters young males followed by females. Landlords prefer older renters – problem very few older renters.

Whole series of problems with policy settings – do not have housing rights for young people and children have no priority, no professional assistance. In USA – States still have an absolute obligation to provide education (legal obligation)

Landlords and tenants exposed to speculation high landlord churn and belief that renting is transitional when it is not.

Market dominated by an idea that we need big housing, and either renting or owning not looking at intermediate tenure, (Shared ownership. Self-build). Highly unregulated landlord market but bad for really good landlords, because they have an even playing field with bad landlords and treated no differently.

Re-invigorate low cost housing building; covenants to support low cost housing – community sector support for intermediate tenures – support stock diversification - rental market tie accommodation supplements to good housing. Reward good landlords; to recognise the needs of young people. In Christchurch both rent-control 10,000 housing loss gross undersupply situation, not mucking around with a perfect market, this is an – imperfect market. Accommodation Support access at upper levels. Stop speculation-capital gains tax, one of the few countries who don't have it. Deal with Auckland, stop it running housing policy. Give kids a break invest in their future and reinvest in home owning, not burdened by speculation but for use alone.

(PowerPoint is attached with the minutes)

Dr Sue Bagshaw – 298 Youth Health – The Foyer Model Youth Housing

Sue began her presentation telling the story of the development of 198/298 Youth Health – putting the housing model she discusses in context. She discussed the issues of brain development after puberty – brain connection – young people need brain connections with caring adults.

Outlined the Youth One-Stop-Shop history. Cost constraints – then earthquake happened. Provided an opportunity to create youth one-stop-shop and youth hub. Bringing services together – housing, employment, training, and health. Seven houses filled with 20 organisations working together – although the groups did not commit to youth hub however together the proximity ensured and opportunity to work together. 298 Youth Health Centre – only place left now.

To combat the huge housing issues young people are confronting we are organised a group as an action group (Transition housing partners are Korowai, Canterbury Youth Workers Collective, St John of God Trust, Wayne Francis Charitable Trust, Youth Service and Family Works). We have differences in our priorities but housing is our foremost priority.

Looked at a range of Models and settled on the Foyer Model – Housing Transition Model, (See slide). This is the model that the group want to provide. We foresee a self-sustaining development and long term lease for land, contribution from government. Housing is a right like health and education. Community and Business investment important.

Outcomes (see slide)

Location is vital – youth do not have transport – needs to be near bus exchange and near CPIT biggest training institution. For example the south east corner of city.

Negotiation with Ecotech home who can provide prebuilt modular housing which can clip together. Award Winning Architect has designed a space. Ecotech Homes can provide whatever is needed as they are flexible – business underneath and housing on the top. Needs investment and some will to see it through. Young people in the heart of the city giving it a buzz – Young people waiting for a home.

PowerPoint attached with notes.

The presentations were followed by a panel discussion, questions and comments.

Meeting closed at 2pm.