



Notes of the Christchurch Housing Forum – 20th September 2017

Facilitator: Lisa Coulter

Note taker Ali Brunel

Presenters: Lynn Gibbon Age Concern; Rosslyn Brewer/James Hadlee Otautahi Community Housing Trust

Apologies: Our speaker for Abbyfield could not attend Lynn spoke about Abbyfield Model.

Lynn Gibbons works with Age Concern as Community Health Nurse. Part of my work concerns elder abuse. Age Concern is part of EARS Elder Abuse Response Service expansion into Timaru, Kaikoura, and West Coast.

Here to talk about Abbyfield in Christchurch.

- Property is in Hornby; opened in August 2015 it took ten years to establish and is a home for 12 people. There is currently an Abbyfield property in Leeston and another one coming soon.
- Set up for those coping alone in old age – all alone no couples.
- Government strategy – “Aging in Place” great – but also issues of isolation and loneliness.
- 50% over 65 lonely 10% severe loneliness equivalent health effects to that of smoking/ drinking.
- Next 5 years 100,000 over 65. 87% living in private dwellings – retirement villages can be too expensive, rentals too expensive – no savings or saving lost to elder abuse.
- Abbyfield fills the gap. There are 12 Abbyfield properties in New Zealand.

What is it: Abbyfield is independence, companionship, privacy, independent/self-care – community care comes to residents i.e. Nurse Maude, other community agencies. Supports people wanting to live with others - flat sharing 65 – 82 years old.

Benefits: No management worry, linked services, volunteers, managed, companionship.

There are currently 22 on the wait list for Abbyfield. The list is growing going forward

Building is two years old built by Mike Greer Homes. Generally for people with modest assets- not asset tested and rented on a periodic tenancy.

Wheel chair access provisions/help cooking family style house. Bedsitting room flows to garden. There is a communal lounge dining and kitchen.

The key is having a housekeeper – 2 meals a day prepared and served. (Do your own breakfast – come and go as you please). There are no microwaves in rooms to encourage people into communal areas – also keeps an eye on welfare of people.

Cost is \$354 – 365 per week. \$48 fortnight left over – residents get living alone allowance and accommodation supplement.

Volunteering is the cornerstone of Abbyfield model – affordable because of volunteers.

Money paid goes toward mortgage, wages, staff relief, and running costs (organisation keeps afloat no profit). The property is close to everything, shops offices etc. Residents have their own cars/scooters.

An Example of people living in Abbyfield would be a person who lost license – lost sense of independence, isolated and deterioration of health. Quiet uncertain loss of confidence – the move to Abbyfield provides better connection more security.

This model relies on volunteers and goodwill. Model could expand. Variations of model are currently Wesley – new model Maori community – Kaumātua housing. Also those supported in retirement complex.

Rent includes all services. 12 people breakeven costs 14 people better economies.

These properties take a long time to fund and a long time to build. Sally King University of Otago is monitoring the model nationally and internationally.

Residents are covered by the Residential Tenancies Act. – Residents are entitled to a living alone allowance – they are responsible for applying for this. Accommodation Supplement and Living Alone are asset dependent.

Residents get a trial period of 10 days to say if they like accommodation and living and this is a time to judge whether they are compatible or not.

Rosslyn Brewer Placement Officer at Otautahi Community Housing Trust – James Hadley OCHT

Christchurch City Council Flats are now the Otautahi Community Housing Trust (Otautahi Community Housing Trust) OCHT has been running social housing Portfolio for the past 12 months.

There are more tenancy managers per ratio to tenants. More visits, more visible.

What happens when people want to apply for housing?

Firstly we will talk with people and encourage them through the social housing register (if appropriate) so they can receive IRR Income related rent.

However they are able to apply direct. We have a register of housing need – it's a short assessment why/what and hopefully finds the right housing for the right person. Interview talks about situation one-to-one helps to talk.

OCHT does not have dedicated older person housing – it will look at social connections / medical conditions.

Ministry file has first priority.

We have placement meetings 3-4 hours per week to discuss what best placement is. Not always highest need next placement – it's about sustainable tenancy best fit/complex tenant mix.

We can't just house elderly. Yes there are complexes with larger numbers of older persons – some tenants like to be housed this way others do not.

There was discussion in the meeting about the levels of accommodation supplement, levels of rent and IRR.

OCHT assessment officers can go to the person – We have been to Burwood Hospital/ Respite Care, Rest homes and we work with Age concern and elder person care.

We have two Tenant Engagements Advisors and a Tenant Engagement Advisory Group. Some complexes have a lounge.

Relocation is on issues by issue basis. Health reason work to relocate ASAP.

OCHT is currently working on a growth strategy to grow the housing stock.

Supply Issues: –OCHT have 224 active waitlist 45% older. There currently are 2326 units, plus temporary ownership of the Linwood Village.

OCHT have a no dogs policy - not fair on dogs - very few units fenced - can have cat if spayed or neutered.

(Problem with homelessness and animals a challenge) discussion ensued

Some flats have smoke alarms for hearing-impaired clients

Forum ended at 2pm.

Apologies for brevity of notes recording failed.

Next Housing Forum will be Wednesday 1st November 2017 at Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Hall.