



Minutes of the Christchurch Housing Forum

15th February 2017

Attendance : Trev Cattermole CCC, Ali Brunel TPA, Louise Lewis Comcare, Bob Hardie Otautahi Community Housing Trust (OCHT), Simon Atkinson , Nicola Fleming Darroch, Kirstan Ward Darroch Fiona Buckley MBIE, Emily Dunstall Waipuna, Sally Carlton HRC, James Hadlee, Jane Denton OCHT, Karen Curtis HNZA, Frazer Benson HNZA, Jay Sepie CCC, Karolin Potter Community Board, Hannah Greenwood Comcare, Amanda Foo Comcare, Sue OShea Comcare G Selbie, Selwyn Eagle Just Dirt Trust, Ann Reeve Princess Margaret Older Persons Health, Nicky Millar Salvation Army Julia Yoo, Penny Arthur Community Law Canterbury, Carmen Lynskey, Annette Sutherland Comcare Sheleagh Docherty Ruth Dyson EO, Leann Apps Poto Williams Office, Gabby Tino Tirikatene MP, Leonie Stephen Tenant, Ameala Lienert, Nathan Beale Vision West Community Gray Crawford City Mission Denise Jackson MSD, Tony Delta Community Trust, Amanda Cook MSD, John Peeze Grace Church.

Facilitator: Lisa Coulter

Note taker Ali Brunel

Presenters: Janette Sprott - Earthquake Recovery Co-ordinator. Penny Arthur Community Law Denise Jackson MSD – Ali Brunel Housing Forum Planning Group.

Lisa welcomed the forum members to the first forum of the New Year, and conducted the Health & Safety Briefing.

Presentations: Janette Sprott – Earthquake Recovery Co-ordinator – Christchurch Community Response Team

Based out of St Christopher's Church Avonhead – been working after 2011 earthquakes
Came about from a church group from Auckland – helped us over the numb stage – helped initially to 10 people 10 days.

Really long term recovery effort – try work out what to do coordinate. From there Christchurch Community Response (CCR) was born. We looked at what we could do. All people helped we had heard about – who don't we know about – how can we help. Volunteers (mostly elderly) 70 volunteers – went into whole communities – didn't wait for people to ask for help and did door knocks. Those at home linked into local agencies – connecting communities. Some people were shocked and isolated. Trying to get people up and linked back into community.

We still door knock – 40 dedicated volunteers 75,000 homes visited – still going into new communities – people still have not had their repairs done – lot of us we have moved on but a lot are struggling. Stresses simmering on surface for many – feel they can't talk with family and friends but can talk to stranger. Offer solutions and guide to helping agencies. People still don't know what they can do.

Task is and has been to try and link into local community – lots of isolation early days (hibernation mentality) promoting confidence to get back into community.

Jeanette outlined two case studies of what they typically see. One was a tenant unaware of their rights. Another was uninsured property owners struggling to do repairs.

Now we are helping a little in Kaikoura and Seddon – experience asked for advice and suggestions what works and not – to help these communities to set up what works for them. No need to reinvent the wheel.

Not legalistic – grass roots just get in and do it. Lots communities don't think there are any issues in their area – very lucky to have been funded since we started MSD; Red Cross; Council – current funding runs out August.

Not sure if we will wrap up in August. Hope we have learned a lot from this experience – as a City we have learnt a lot and a lot of things have been put into place.

Questions and Answers:

Comment: – people still need to be aware there are issues that still ongoing and getting out into the community still need to be reached. – We can be complacent.

Interesting people confessing to strangers - massive drama to get repairs that have to be done fixed or bought up to standard – people are giving up – can't be bothered. People can only cope with so much.

Q: What could we do to make it easier for people (as agencies).

A: Action what you can straight away. One conversation will produce a result. One person at a time hears need, resolve – one person at a time.

K Potter – Community Board – grateful to have the team door knocking in our area – the work wonderful.

Q: How contact earthquake response team?

A: St Christopher's Website <http://www.stchristophers.org.nz/earthquake-response/> and you can also contact one of the City Council Community Development Advisors.

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Penny Arthur Community Law Canterbury – Legal Educator

What community law do/don't do and reasons behind that. Better understanding of why we cannot do certain things.

Firstly what we do moved back into Montreal Street – by the coffee hut. Have a number of outreach clinics as well – we have outreach Christchurch Canterbury Greymouth.

If you are not sure we can help with something feel free to give us a call have chat over the phone – no charge work out if legal or not. We are the “dot the i's cross t” group. We will help get document right - we do legal work well – others do the strategic things. We can work with other agencies. Prefer to work with other organisation to do holistic approach. We do not have social or community workers in our offices it would draw our funding away from what we can do.

Have chat work out if issues are legal – tell the story, have the chat and narrow it down – you do have legal rights and this is what we can do. People feel they need to know what you are ringing for and that is a barrier – not necessary – ‘tell us a story and we will work out if there is a legal issues’.

We do not give advice over the phone – legally can't give advice over the phone unless the information we can give over the phone is so robust and clear they can follow the law. We will need to see the person face to face (reason – can tell them what the law says over the phone but need to see them face to face to give them the more detailed legal advice).

No legal issues – refer onto someone else – try these people – if not ok come back to us. If people have been referred to several agencies – we still cannot help if not legal. Work with TPA – Community Law within Legal Sphere – TPA more strategic. Work closely with TPA.

Penny outlined a case study of the difference between the strictly legal approach and more strategic approach of the agencies Community Law and TPA. This is the reasons both agencies work closely together to achieve best outcomes.

Com Law have been involved with residential advisory service – legal issues over repairs – winding up foreseeable end. If you are still working - get in quick get on books and see them through to the end. Cut-off dates no funding after that.

Best way to describe what we do: – we are community group the law society has given exemption to work in certain areas. So not so much law firm and we don't do some stuff – but in fact the Law Society says you can do these things but these other things you can't.

Don't do work that involves large amounts of money – because around indemnity insurance. Not same cover. Also if you have large costs you can afford a lawyer.

We refer to legal aid – come back if it is turned down.

Don't do conveyancing/ prepare wills/ enduring power of attorney – fall outside of what we can do. We don't help landlords only tenants – landlords make money get legal advice, tenants should not be expected to do that.

No advice to business around employment issues but will help employees – there for the little guy. We will refer onto others.

Start with information line – questions from there.

Outside of housing we do family work – Tuesday evening at the Court forms that can be filled in and filed at the Court. Family Court – Durham Street – there till 6.30 come through main court entrance – to one side Community Law there. **From 4pm to 6.30 drop in first in first seen.**

Questions & Answers:

Q: Education as well – can you do purpose made talks for community agencies?

A: Absolutely. We ask what we can do for your group. Education is tailored to meet need here in Christchurch. This may differ with other law centres in other area.

We also do monthly education days. (Last Wednesday of the month).

Q: How do you establish criteria?

A: If we are doing ongoing work with people we do need to establish if they are eligible or fit our legal criteria. If ongoing we will need to establish criteria. With initial information request this is not necessary, as we offer a drop in centre. Can also empower and support people to do it themselves.

Com Law - Timeframes to see/speak clients – may be a day or two to get back to people – try to ring back 3 times. We are hesitant to call a landline (particularly in family matters) if we have not been left a name. People often ring and forget to leave a number.

If someone comes in to get advice at our Hubs – they get advice on the spot. Sometimes that is enough. If there is a follow up needed – from there if they have not heard within a week – they should follow up. Once someone comes in the file is checked by a second lawyer – takes a day or two to do that. Call back if people need to.

Q: Are they going to talk to lawyer or student?

A: May see either – advice comes from a lawyer – biggest misperceptions – advice still comes from a lawyer. Even if you come to drop-in person introduces themselves as caseworker will talk to lawyer – the advice will come from a lawyer. – Options are questioned to make sure people understand. All work is still checked by a lawyer as well.

Drop In Hours: 5.30-7 Monday Tuesday Thursday evenings. Good for quick questions.

If something more complex – daytime appointment made. Drop-in service quick look - appointment during day few days in advance. Drop in during day emergency situations only. Otherwise – appointment or drop-in in the evening.

We will do our best to see people outside clinics – lawyer to Timaru Temuka and West Coast.

Comment: Community Law helpful as a community worker can run stuff through Community Law for advice and they have also run workshops on different issues for agencies and other community workers.

Denise Jackson

Update from MSD: - 1 update emergency housing and 2 sustaining tenancy initiative.

Lisa is right in her introduction - we continued to change - almost coming up to celebrating 3 years taking over housing assessments. Emergency housing after that – continually improving and finding solutions.

July last year special needs grant emergency housing access. Part of the process contract with housing providers – we are beginning to see some capacity now and are able to refer to contracted suppliers (4 providers – starting to see some capacity).

Continue to develop further solutions.

Change in Emergency housing security deposits this is when referring to a motel. In the past we provided accommodation and security deposit. Security deposit – covers damage theft. Rolled out – not as well as intended – changed process security deposit won't be released immediately at beginning approved but not released until the end if there is damage or theft.

Sustaining tenancies – Joint initiative with HNZA rolled out 31st January - trial two years three cities Auckland Wellington Christchurch. . Clients who are evicted from social housing cycle through emergency housing then return back to social housing. This initiative targeted at this area.

1000 tenants over two years. Two thirds to Auckland balance to Wellington Christchurch. Contracted providers tucked in behind it – address whatever the issues are. Whole intent to sustain tenancies – voluntary – still very much a piece of work that is progressing.

Could not hear Frazer Benson on tape. (Apologies) something about how people will be selected for the programme. 50 names initially – data collecting will refer people with continuing social behaviour over \$1000 debt and hoarding.....(not sound again apologies)..... Property conditions, illicit drug use working with police on these ones, anti-social behaviour, parties, noise, vicious dogs. Some lots of issues some with only one issue.

Referrals already put through – MSD have pulled those on a random basis – Early days yet.

Questions & Answers:

Q: - Voluntary – how will this be presented to the tenants? What is the balance around engagement?

A: Discuss with tenants historically things not working – tenant engaged or tenant not engaged – discussion tried before – in a pool of customers whose tenancy is at risk. May hit a cord with them and may not. Already started

Q: How does first approach start?

A: Contact centre contact initially – then meet – incredibly hard – need to go to the property just to get contact details sometimes.

Q: Who are the agencies? –

A: Comcare one of the providers –(Comcare – Annette Sutherland) comments about the process some is just a work in progress – valuable reason – heavy research component – understanding of what works and how people maintain tenancies – providers working closely together - MSD heavily control the trial – really clear process. Working to how it is conveyed to all parties.

Eight providers across the country – other providers unknown.

Case by case basis. Feedback to the forum in six weeks' time.

Q: Comcare position – works with single people mental health?

A: Working with clients referred

Ruth Dysons Office – Question directed across the floor to Vision West: how successful has it been directing clients to work with social workers. 90% success rate and people have sustained their tenancies. Very successful.

Ali Brunel – Housing Forum Planning Group Member Housing Evaluation End of Year

Discussion of the evaluation 100% agree with purpose of forum most of members – identify great networking and information sharing// Keep updated// and range of speakers and updates and range of housing providers

Like topic and speakers – like that no sector dominated – location seamless – short and sharp.

Drop an email if you want to make a comment or have an issue you want discussed.

Want to see: Small groups and special interest groups panel discussion well planned agenda ahead of time.

Emerging topics, refugees coming in; housing low income single people who cannot live with others; MSD referring back to forum; emergency and transitional housing; vege gardens in homes. Request for treasury to talk stock sale, elderly, youth, pets, damage and insurance. Implications when social housing changes, rental standards.

Strongly – discussion on anti-social behaviour – discussion on intensification of housing learning from European examples.

Finally - Thanks to Comcare – for their help in Forum. CCC City Housing who have paid venue for many years for the forum. We are asking for any groups who would like to take that on.

8-10 groups \$10 per forum or a group with a forum each. Or one group volunteering to pay for a forum.

Still looking for people to put their hand up to become members of the planning group – organise and who will do what over those forums. Return to the beginning – if we have a planning group then we can get the agenda's out early.

A list will be drawn up please let forum know if you can pay for a forum. projectsupport@tpa.org.nz
Thankyou

Notices:

MBIE moved to grand central in the city – nothing on ground floor – go into the lift.

Only people for advice are mediators – but may not be able to see would prefer a phone call and make an appointment.

Simon shared some resources – in particular disabled people in housing printed in 2011.

The regenerate Christchurch residential red-zone consultation out now.

Also environment Canterbury website – people using or not using the busses - survey online.

Have a go bus day 22nd March.

Thanks to everyone for attending – take care go well.

Date	Group volunteering to cover the cost of the Housing Forum Venue \$75.00 (gst inclusive)
15 th February	Tenants Protection Association
29 th March	Otautahi Community Housing Trust
17 th May	Otautahi Community Housing Trust
28 th June	MSD
16 th August	Comcare
20 th September	
1 st November	
6 th December	

Next Housing Forum will be on 29th March – Topic to be advised.