



Paul's piece

Nau mai, haere mai and welcome to our last newsletter of 2012. It's almost as traditional as Christmas that we get to this time of the year and reflect on how busy the year has been and how quickly it has gone, and this year is certainly no exception!



A highlight for me was the 30th birthday party of the Trust. This celebrated 30 years of providing affordable homes in Wellington as well as the commitment, hard work and generous support of so many people and organisations who have made this possible.

At the celebration we also talked about our vision for the future, and the need for a new housing trust, and you can read more about setting up Dwell in this newsletter. As part of preparing for the future, and for 2013 in particular, the board recently held its annual planning day. We agreed key priorities and actions for the next 12 months, including:

- Adding to the strength of the board by bringing in additional expertise needed to establish and develop Dwell
- Strengthening our financial capability to better support our work providing better services, more home and strong advocacy
- Continuing to work with like-minded organisations like Mahora House

I'm looking forward to 2013 and the difference that the Trust can help make. I hope you enjoy the Christmas break and best wishes for 2013.

From Wellington Housing Trust to Dwell

We talked in our last newsletter about the launch of our new regional trust and said we'd explain more in this newsletter. Over several years the Trust has given much careful thought to whether it should expand its role beyond Wellington City. Community groups from the wider region have been increasingly approaching the Trust to ask for help, reflecting growing problems of affordability and poor housing. The Trust considered whether it could have a role in helping to meet housing needs in the Hutt Valley, Porirua, and Kapiti Coast and decided to step up to help provide affordable housing in the Wellington region.

The Trust gave a lot of thought to what the new trust should be called. The new name needed to be distinctive, relevant to the work of the Trust, memorable and flexible enough to cover what the Trust does now as well as things it might take on in the future. The name that has been agreed for the new trust is 'Dwell' – a word that is closely linked with housing. 'Dwell' also contains 'well', which helps maintain the link with Wellington and provide continuity with the Trust's history, as well as expressing the Trust's aims of helping its customers to live well and improve their wellbeing through providing healthy, comfortable and affordable homes.

Andrew Fyfe from Enspiral developed the name and logo. This is what he said about the logo: "The identity is created from a single shape (a rhombus) which can be replicated and arranged into different pictures. It is similar to the tangram

game. You are helping people 'shape' their own futures. The Trust pieces together many parts to create a home. In the primary logo, the picture is a



house – two shapes for the roof (half in sunlight, half in shade) and one for the shadow falling on the grass. The negative space shows the shape of the building. The colours - green, red and orange - are vibrant, warm and happy, just like the Trust's houses."

We will be transitioning to Dwell in 2013 and our values, which have underpinned the Trust's work for 30 years, will continue to guide us during this process and as we expand beyond Wellington City. We will continue to focus on better services, more homes and strong advocacy.

Tenant survey 2012

Every year the Trust sends a survey to its tenants asking their opinions on the services we provide. We use the information gained from the surveys to improve the delivery of our services and to identify any areas that need attention. We were once again very pleased to see high levels of satisfaction in this year's survey responses. 94% of the Trust's tenants stated they were satisfied or highly satisfied with the work done by Trust staff and the trades people that were employed to maintain their homes.

Trust Books Online

'More than a Landlord – a short history of Wellington Housing Trust' written by Ben Schrader and 'More than a Landlord: 2007-2012' written by Louise Slocombe, chronicle the history of the Trust and are now available online.

Links to both of these publications can be found on the history page of our website at www.wht.org.nz/history.html

In the media

The last six months have seen the Trust featured or mentioned several times in the media.

Perhaps most dramatically Director Alison Cadman appeared on a number of TV channels when she gave Labour Leader David Shearer and Deputy Grant Robertson a tour around the Trust's latest housing development in Berhampore.

Alison was also quoted in an article on the Social Housing Unit's funding processes in the Sunday Star Times.

The Trust was mentioned in an article on local homelessness in the August issue of FishHead magazine.

Trustee Clare Aspinall, who has undertaken research into local Boarding Houses, was quoted in the Listener, featured in an article in the Dominion Post and presented her findings at a Public Health Association conference.

Links to the full text of those articles that are available online can be found in the news section of our website at www.wht.org.nz/news.html.

Many thanks

Angus Napier, a management consultant, for his support and the work he has done for us.

The Lion Foundation for their grant to replace the flooring in one of the Trust's homes.

David Wong for his spread sheet skills and financial modelling work.

Scott Figenshow for kindly giving up his time to facilitate the Trust's annual planning day.

Andrew Fyfe for his excellent design work on the Dwell brand.

Mike Fox for his work on our new housing project at Vennell Street.

Labour leader visits Trust homes

In November Labour leader David Shearer and deputy leader (and Wellington Central MP) Grant Robertson met with Director Alison Cadman to discuss the current work of the Trust and what it could do in the future. They were also shown our new homes at Adelaide Rd, Berhampore.



The visit followed Labour's policy announcement about "KiwiBuild". The scheme announced at the party's conference aims to provide an additional 100,000 houses over 10 years. Labour wants to build them at an average cost of less than \$300,000 and sell them for around that price.

Unexpectedly the meeting also attracted a large amount of media due to the Labour Party leadership issue so our Director and our fantastic homes received a large amount of media coverage. However, we would have liked to have seen more focus on housing need.

New partnership

Mahora House Inc. is a provider of housing for mental health service users in Wellington. WHT and Mahora have had a strong relationship for many years and during 2012 we have been looking at opportunities for our two organisations to work together more closely. Both boards and staff appreciate our complementary values, skills and services and earlier this year we entered into a memorandum of understanding. Our partnership will enable us to further improve and increase the quality and range of services we currently provide as well as release efficiencies.

The first improvements will see us sharing back-office functions such as accounts and administration happening in 2013.

Homelessness strategy

Wellington City Council has recently released "Te Mahana: a strategy to end homelessness in Wellington". Te Mahana emerged from a practitioner "lock-in" in which more than 100 people representing community organisations, government agencies and people experiencing homelessness attended.

A subgroup was established to mould the wealth of material generated at the "lock-in" into an early version of Te Mahana. The draft strategy has many recommendations with these two being of particular interest to WHT:

- 1. Establish a central tenancy information, application and allocation system for all social and affordable accommodation providers.**
This will make lettings policies and practices more transparent. Information on accommodation providers and available stock would be listed in one location.
- 2. Implement housing solutions to meet the diversity of needs.**
Increase the supply and range of accommodation that provides targeted solutions for people experiencing homeless or are vulnerable to homelessness. Targeted solutions involve integrating support, accommodation, wellbeing, and cultural dimensions.

We welcome and endorse this strategy and are committed to working with other groups, and people in housing need, to achieve these goals.

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