



**Minutes of meeting for Newtown Residents Association
Monday 17th August 2026 at 7.30pm
Newtown Salvation Army Worship & Community Centre , 4 Normanby Street**

Present:

Merio Marsters (Chair), Rhona Carson (Secretary), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Sam Somers (Treasurer), Cheryl Robilliand, Steve Dunn, Warwick Taylor, Helen Blenkin, Nicholas Pointon, Hilary Watson, David Jenkins, Jane Patterson, Wendy Blue, Bryony Hales, Same Chandler, Laura Zhong, Kassie McLuskie, Tommy Berridge, Vania Szymkowiak, Lainey Cowan, Don McDonald, Carol Comber, Mike Scott, Stephen Pritchard, Kerry Finnigan, Cr Laurie Foon, Christina Tyson (Salvation Army), Ingrid Downey (Dwell Housing), Gazelle Moinfar (Aoraki Construction),

Apologies:

Cpt Andrew Wilson, Keith Powell, Daphne Pilaar, Michelle Wolland, Kathiy Benseman, Martin Hanley, Anna Kemble Welch, Cr Nureddin Abdurahman, Jamie Shackleton (Te Toi Mahana), Sarah Willson (Kainga Ora), Jo Burleigh (Kainga Ora)

Motion to approve the Minutes of the July Newtown Residents' Association Meeting -

Proposed - Steve Cosgrove

2nd - Sam Somers

Carried.

Guest Speakers:

Salvation Army - Christina Tyson, National Manager Frontline Welfare Service was speaking on behalf of the housing team as Cpt Andrew Wilson was out of town. Photos and a display of SA plans for development were at the meeting - available on the back table.

The new housing development at 182a -194 Owen Street is under construction. The tenanting process begins in April, new tenants move in July, via housing register.

- 25 where plus a community centre, 3 levels apartment block with 15 units - a mixture of 1bdrms, 2bdrm and 3 bdrm in each block, also a row of townhouses.
- 5 units have some accessibility features, no lift but design minimises stairs.
- SA also has seven renovated 1980s buildings in the vicinity, including a building at 226 Owen St (opposite the Zoo) which previously housed women who were Salvation Army Officers; it was nicknamed 'The Nunnery'.
- Site costs in Wellington delayed the start of the new building but is all in hand now.
- Mix of elderly, families, singles to help with community building.
- Tenants come from a variety of sources and are long-term tenancy, not transitional.
- Site is steep, including gardening and paths.
- There will be an event for those in the social housing community and services to engage with the new site.
- Community focus. Full time housing support manager and officers on site.
- Parking - some parking on site.
- All tenants are totally covered by Residential Tenancy Act. The Salvation Army owns property and land. Florence Booth heritage site and trusted in their care.
- Kaupapa - Tenancy with heart. Always help whanau to sustain their tenancy.
- Security cameras and lighting on site.
- High standard, longterm, well managed.
- Completion of Hamilton development and celebration.
- Under construction, heavy earthworks, its off limits to view, shared as a health and safety statement.

Salvation Army Special National Housing Report has been released recently

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/news/home-truths-salvation-army-says-housing-crisis-is-shifting-to-the-regions/>

Dwell Housing - Ingrid Downey, Project Manager

Acknowledges Salvation Army work in developing social housing. Dwell awarded 3 contracts - 10 homes in Waiwhetu - develop, own and operate these homes.

Others developments are leases - owner developer 25 year lease.

- Partnered with Aoraki Construction - 12 apartments on 25 Hanson St, Mt Cook - Hanson Mansion. Aoraki owns the land, leased to Dwell for 25 years. After lease expires returned back to Aoraki as agreed.
- Four story building, 3xbrdm & 9x2brdm units.
- Goal to be completed expected in March / April 2027.
- Gazelle (Project Manager) from Aoraki Construction.
- Very close to Whakamaru (transitional housing). There is potential for tenants to move from Whakamaru to Dwell and keep contacts and stability.
- IRRS eligible tenants ideally could share a two bedroom apartment to reduce loneliness.
- In the future, after 25 years and within funds, Dwell will be able to purchase the building from Aoraki.
- Dwell Housing purchased and owns 17 Gordon Place development which has been declined three times. It is a significant challenge, and plans to get feedback from the government and what to do next with this site. They are prepared to listen to any suggestions for use of this land in the meantime. Await for the next funding round.
- In general Dwell has a rates exemption but has to pay water levies, active or not.
- Share information about funding applications and competing against each housing development and market.
- Big risk to sell the property, won't be able to afford in Newtown market but does not want to sell.
- Dwell has been serving the community for fifty years and is confident they will find a solution for this site, which requires about an investment of about \$3 million to get started.
- Kilbirnie, used as an example - sold 12 bedrooms and built 19 bedrooms. No more properties to sell.
- Hutt City and Wellington Councils have waived developer contributions and are grateful.

General questions:

Add solar panels on these houses. MCERT - Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport will not approve this (yet).

Currently there are about 6000 people on the social housing lists for Te Whanganui-a-Tara.

In 2021 there were 9000 houses. That number has only increased to 10,300 houses in 2026. Social housing is the best way forward to stability.

Gordon Place sitting until new plan options. Suggestion from the meeting - GST exemption example used and expenses as an NGO, options to be explored to free some funds.

Council Update from Laurie Foon:

- Don raises concerns about IOA request processing.
- The sudden death of Cr Tony Randle a week ago has had an effect on all areas of Council, special memorial and will be missed. Acknowledgement from the Association, our condolences to Cr Randle's family, councillors and council staff.
- A majority of the Council preferred and via survey feedback, as a 'Metro' council, but not including Wairarapa. The Mayoral forum put in two proposals: One for the entire region; One for the two Metros and Wairarapa. Council will continue to progress work, particularly discussing representation models of how many Councillors, local Council, etc. Outcome will be in September.
- Arlington Apartments are 'a cup third full'. In 2019 of 300 homes, until recently reduced to 104. There will be development by Kainga Ora, but not as much as is needed. Council has also got \$6 million towards supporting those in need, with tight controls. The Council has agreed to consult with the community before confirming acceptance of this process.
<https://www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/arlington-housing-site-proposal>. Council has agreed to consult with the community and then make a decision, stay open-minded.
- Acknowledges Laura and 285 Mansfield Street matter, the derelict house has been demolished. This is significant. Work is proceeding with work on that site, particularly tracking down the owner. There are still some challenges to be addressed in this neighbourhood. A process to fast track or data collection of homeowners and their location. No focus on what now? The owner still owns the land

but will be up to the owner to decide what to do with it. Adelaide Road property used as an example as a vacant land, garden and flowers.

- The Council has long-term plan decisions and Eastern Bus Spine are on-going projects.

There was a general discussion about the rights and responsibilities of the Council when dealing with challenging properties.

Matters arising:

September AGM: An update on nominations for executive. Financial year started 1st July, people encouraged to renew membership or join the Association, online membership form or available in paper form at the back table.

Meet the candidates:

Some candidates have confirmed their attendance, but there are more who we are confident of attending. Meeting on 13 October. Geographical boundary for Wellington Bays (including the Chatham Islands)

Heritage festival exhibition:

Volunteers are needed. Rhona will follow this up, any suggestions on an area of history in Newtown.

Newtown Festival:

2027 stall bookings are open. There are a large number of applications after just a few days. Last year 432 stalls booked.

Newtown Resilience:

The public meeting was adversely affected by the weather. Community Hub event and a future plan is being developed. Anna at Newtown Community Centre would like to hear from anyone who could help with meeting businesses and updating the broader plan developed in 2014. Newtown School organised an Emergency Preparedness Scavenger Hunt (with WREMO) on Friday 7th to create community preparedness and awareness, with plenty of engagement from tamariki and their families in different activities. Further work will be undertaken to pursue plan development. The Newtown community also connects and assists neighbouring communities with their own resilience plan for all of Newtown and surrounding suburbs. Communication and working together to develop a great plan.

Other Newtown matters:

- Laura expressed her appreciation for the support she has received from the residents association and the community.
- Announcement Taiki Wai protest Thursday 20th, 11:30am at Frank Kitts Park to Parliament.

Meeting closed at 9:01pm