



Positive Ageing — Taupaenui

Issue 5 — JUNE —2014

Editorial...

Housing for the Elderly...

The NPDC has decided to put their proposals to deal with their 145 'housing for the elderly' units throughout the district out for community consultation.

There is a long waiting list for getting into these units and criteria to do so is strict. Occupancy rates are high—between 98% and 100%.

At a recent Council Policy Committee—one long-serving Councillor asked why tenants of Council housing should be treated differently than all other older residents. The reason simply is that these are among our most valuable citizens who could not afford to live on the open market.

To be eligible to apply for a unit, tenants must be over 65 years of age and possess assets below \$40,000. Clearly, tenants are among the most financially vulnerable members of our community.

Selling the units off must seem a very attractive option for a cash strapped Council. After all, they are valued at almost \$12m. But, the loss on rentals is about \$100,000. If the Council is unable to find another organisation to sell the units to—an organisation that has the interests and welfare of the tenants as paramount, then, effectively, they are condemning current tenants to a very uncertain and frightening future.

Our Council does have a social responsibility to all its citizens, particularly those with too few resources to manage without additional support. Certainly, the Council should be looking at Central Government...

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Coming Events—June 2014:

Mon: 2nd: Queen's Birthday Weekend—Bless her.
Tue: 3rd : Health for Older People—TDHB 1.30pm
W/T: 4/5th: "Stay Well" Diabetes Course 1.30-3.30
at the Taranaki DHB Educ. Centre
Wed: 11th: Positive Ageing Trust meeting
Mon: 16th: PA Trust—General meeting 9am

This space is reserved for your coming events...

Chairman's message...

In 2011, the first of the baby-boom generation turned 65 years old, signalling an increase in our ageing population. Every year from now on we will see more and more people over 65 living in our community. New Plymouth, we are told, will see increases over the national trends. Your Positive Ageing Trust recognises this and is actively working to ensure areas that effect this growing age demographic are identified, discussed and submitted to the people that make change. Our membership stands at around 40 organizations. Not all these organisations actively get involved with our Trust. All have some interest in what our older population has to offer or need.



Chairman Jeff Blyde

As a group, this aging demographic have the discretionary dollars. They add weight to local Council and National politics through our voting systems, we saw this in the last Council elections. They offer experience in the work force and is seeing many working well into their 70's.

I make these points to emphasise the importance our aging population means to this country. I don't believe public perception sees it this way. They are often seen as a financial drain within our communities.

Ideally New Plymouth Positive Ageing would like to see its membership grow. Those already listed as members actively take an interest by attending our monthly meetings. If you are reading this newsletter and have some passion and time to get involved with Positive Aging we would love to hear from you. Being part of our organising team for planning and running our seminars, volunteering time to do duties at these seminars, working on submissions that ensures as a group we are heard, or attending our meeting and offering your thoughts. No matter what level of involvement you choose we would welcome you.

It is in all our interests to see Positive Aging grow to meet the needs of our growing aging demographic. If you are interested phone (06) 759 8046.

Together we can make a difference

Jeff Blyde, Chair, Positive Ageing

A Newsletter for those interested in improving the quality of life for older persons in Taranaki.

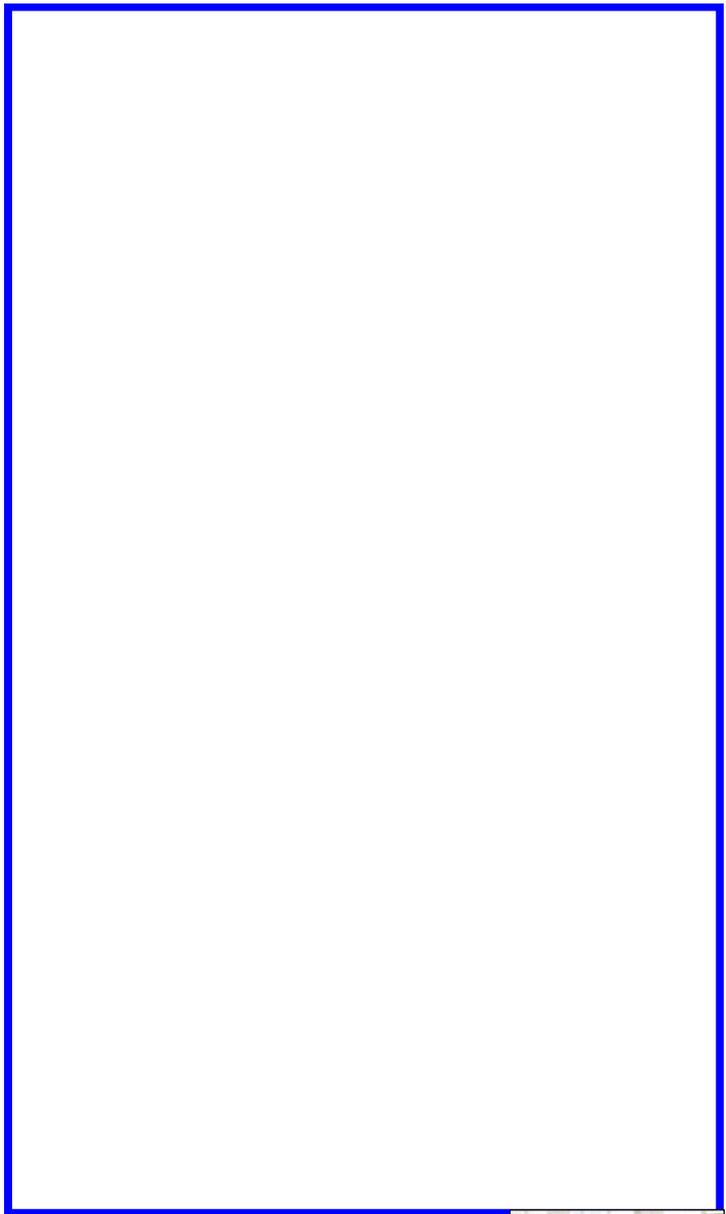
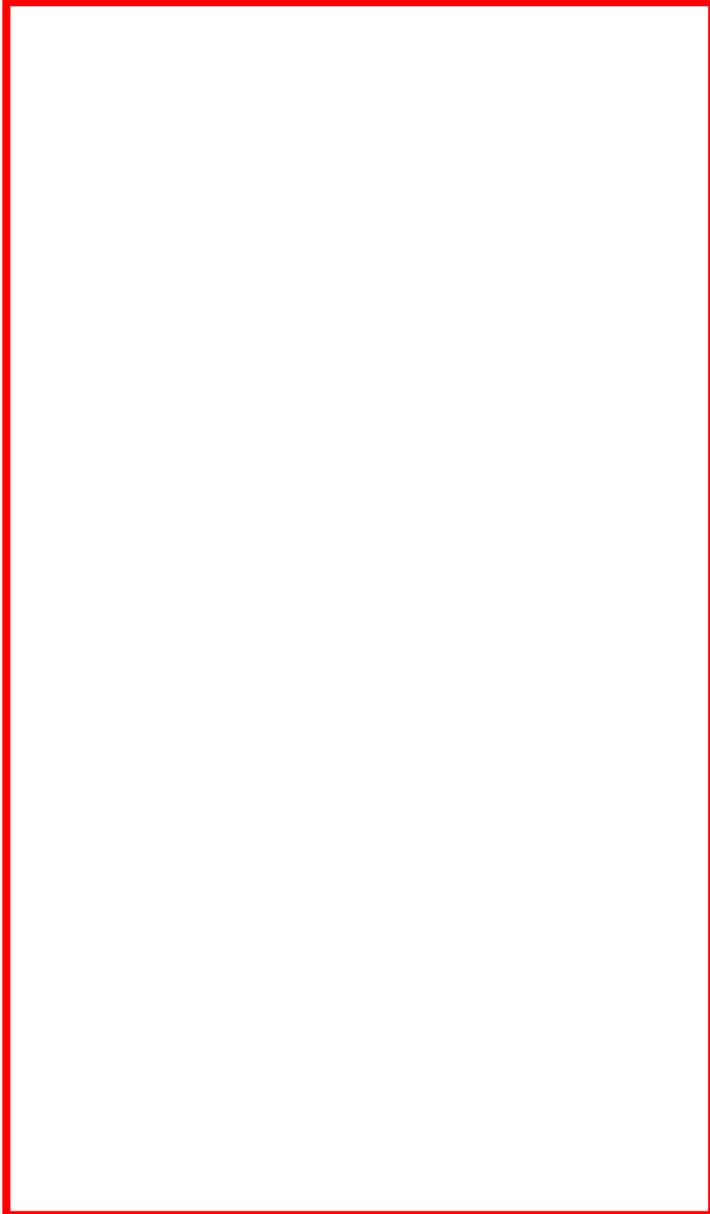


Supported by the
TSB Community Trust

WHAT'S ON NGĀ KAUPAPA O TE WĀ

Issue 82— *Compiled BY people on limited incomes FOR people on limited incomes...*
Please place on a notice board somewhere where people on limited incomes will notice it...

JUNE—2014



Coming up... help is at hand for information on IT—made understandable...
Following last year's rip roaring success with Guest Speaker Grant Sidaway, National President of Senior Net, there will be another — **9.30am, Monday, 2nd July... at the NPDC.**

"What's On" is emailed to almost 300 organisations in Taranaki and sent on to 100s more via their email networks and displayed on many notice boards etc. It has become quite wide-reaching and could be worthwhile for you to consider using it to promote your educational and/or recreation activity.



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Every Tue Active in Age Programme—TSB Stadium. 10am-12pm—Tai Chi session 11-12pm. **\$3**

Every Tue Migrant Women Meet - Puke Ariki - 11am-12:30pm, Community Lounge, Level 1. **FREE**

NEW ** Every Wed ** NEW—Walkway Weeders wanted! 10:30-noon. This group is looking for more people to join it to keep the section of the Te Henui Walkway from Cumberland St to Durham Ave looking good. Meet at the walkway down from the Hartland place entrance. For more information call Carolyn: 758 2813. **FREE**

Every Fri Tai Chi—Stratford War Memorial Facilities Room, Miranda St, **STRATFORD**—9:30-10:30. **\$5**

Every Thur E-book Troubleshooting—Puke Ariki - 9:30-10:30am - **EVERY THURSDAY**. Come along and learn how to download free e-books on to your device. **FREE**

Every Sat Mah Jong—Beach Street Hall, Fitzroy. 1-4pm The small charge per person includes a cup of tea and biscuits and there is a small prize for the hand of the day. Everyone is welcome. For more information phone Betty: 757 5913. **\$3**

Table Games—1pm—3pm—Community House, McLean Street **WAITARA** On the first and third **Wednesdays** of the month. Come along for a game of cards or scrabble, and a cuppa too. **FREE**

Knit and Natter—1-3pm—Community House, McLean Street **WAITARA** Every **Friday**. This knitting group is now meeting every Friday and also concludes with a cuppa. All are welcome. **FREE**

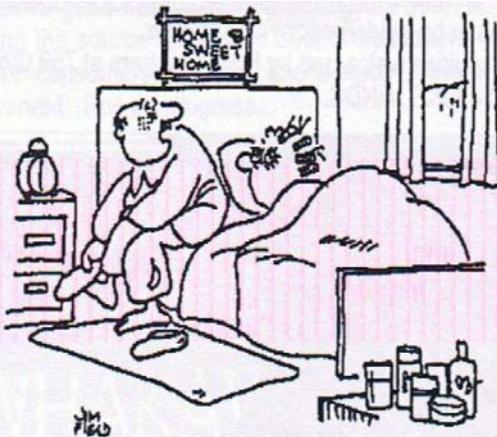
This space could be used to promote one of your events, please contact

Stephanie Mapley at Like Minds Taranaki

We are very keen to hear of events from Central, Coastal and South Taranaki - ring us on 0800-454-536 or email us here at Like Minds Taranaki at

mental.health@xtra.co.nz

The next "What's On" will be in late May for June.



'When you look at it, we spend half a lifetime going to bed when we aren't tired, and getting up when we are. . . .'

Housing for the Elderly...Continued from page 1

agencies to recover more of the shortfall—and this should be a priority.

The Council should be congratulated for at least having these units and servicing them as well as they do. However the demand for the units, combined with the high occupancy rate, indicates a clear demand for more, not less, such units.

Opinion—Gordon Hudson

Rural Community representatives met with the Taranaki DHB...

In a bid to set up an avenue for real dialogue and ongoing ability to work closely together, representatives from the Taranaki rural community and Like Minds Taranaki sought and now have had a meeting with the Taranaki DHB CEO and senior staff.

High on the agenda was how the rural sector could become an integral part of the assessment of need and delivery of services to better meet the mental and physical health needs of rural communities—and how they can collaborate better, together, now, and in the future.

The Taranaki DHB senior management have been most receptive to the idea and have agreed to establish a core group to represent the rural sector, complete with Terms of References etc.

This has got to be a positive first step.

Aged Care Commissioner in the wings?...

In an important policy announcement, Labour Leader David Cunliffe is proposing to establish an Aged Care Commissioner to investigate claims of elder abuse, neglect and financial mismanagement.

This is going to be a seriously busy role as such elder abuse, particularly financial abuse has significantly increased in the past year with agencies struggling to manage case loads.

"The elderly are some of the most vulnerable in our society and they need a dedicated Commissioner who has their best interests at heart," says Cunliffe.

This certainly is a move that will highlight and hopefully help resolve some of these issues and certainly is a step in the right direction.

Your order for lessons in patience has been received - please allow six months for delivery

Jane Seabrook

**Submissions
to NPDC...**

An important aspect of the work of Positive Ageing is ensuring our voice is heard when and where it matters—about issues that affect the lives of older people—and as we are very much part of the wider community—about issues that affect our whole community.

That is why Positive Ageing made submissions to the NPDC about their 145 'Houses for the Elderly' and about the Council's Local Alcohol Policy.

We should also consider being an integral part of the wider community's concern about psychoactive substances as, like the Local Alcohol Plan, these drugs, and alcohol, affect our youth who, when adversely affected by these drugs can create havoc in our City centre, sometimes in our suburbs, in our hospitals (earlier this year 8% of attendances at the Taranaki DHB Emergency Department were for psychoactive substance misuse) as well as the carnage to others on our roads and the drug induced violence that too often occurs.

Currently, we have a breathing space while producers of psychoactive substances must prove their product to be safe before sale. We need to use this time wisely to ensure that we all, young and old, feel safer.



Jill Baker is the newly appointed Secretary for the Positive Ageing Trust.

Jill manages a Bupa Care Services residential home in New Plymouth called Riverside Care Home & Hospital. Jill is a Registered Nurse with post graduate management qualifications, and has managed several residential care homes in Taranaki over the last 15 years.

Jill received a Citizen's Award from the South Taranaki District Council in 2001, and is passionate about ensuring the very frail and very old citizens of New Plymouth have their needs addressed and rights acknowledged.

Jill is looking forward to serving the older people of New Plymouth by assisting the Positive Ageing Trust achieve its goals.

Positive Ageing is fortunate to have Jill on board!

50,000 Lonely elderly in New Zealand...

The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved"

- Mother Theresa.

If you've felt lonesome lately—you are not alone.



The "Loneliness in New Zealand" Report indicates that nearly a million New Zealanders reported feeling isolated at least once a month. 10% of those aged 65 and older reported that they felt severely or chronically lonely. That is almost 50,000 people.

It has been well proven in overseas research that loneliness is a major risk factor for mental and physical health issues—particularly depression and dementia.

An older person who is chronically lonely and depressed is almost twice as likely to enter residential care and die sooner.

What New Zealand needs is more research as to differences between aged say 65 and 75 and 75 and 85 and 85 and older... as this latter grouping has the highest incidence of suicide of all age groups in New Zealand.

Groups that are most at risk are:

- Lower socio-economic
- Widowed
- Physically isolated
- People who have recently stopped driving
- Those with sensory impairment
- The very old.

Last year, in Taranaki, 2 men aged 85 and over completed suicide. It is not good enough to ever think it is acceptable and normal for older people to experience chronic depression and isolation or that it is acceptable that such despair being one of the most common risk factors for suicide in older people.

Health professionals, indeed, we all can help by assisting older persons experiencing depression and anxiety by remaining abreast of community based referral options for people whose primary need is for more company.

Shortly, Like Minds Taranaki will be producing an updated version of their 32 page Directory of services in Taranaki. That may be a good start, but it is only a start.

"Positive Ageing—Taupaenui" is edited by Gordon Hudson. Your news and views are eagerly sought.
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July 2014 issue will be distributed in late June. Contributions by Friday, 20th June please.