

# **MANAWATU TENANTS UNION**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2012**

**“SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS AND  
OBLIGATIONS OF TENANTS”**

## 2012 Coordinator's Report

The Manawatu Tenants Union [MTU] has completed another year of providing advice, information and support to landlords and tenants, while continuing to represent and further tenant's interests.

Despite the uncertainty of funding, it is great to report that the MTU has been able to maintain support from the community.

The most basic fear of all individuals is being without sound, secure shelter. There is no place like home, it is the cornerstone of family life, and the link to the community in which you live.

Unfortunately in New Zealand today, decent affordable housing is out of reach of some of our neediest citizens. Rental accommodation is now the only option for an increasing number of New Zealanders, who have been excluded from the home ownership market.

It has been reported in the print media that 80% of all house sales are to investors and not first home buyers, this is a trend that will continue as the housing market remains fractured.

The rental accommodation market is in crisis, as there is a shortage of decent affordable accommodation around the country. Adding to this crisis are the changes to Housing New Zealand policy, where the eligibility rules are making it very difficult to access a state house.

- New 'tenancy reviews' every three years will bring their own problems around security of occupancy for struggling families.
- There are plans to divest 20,000 state houses to social providers, and to increase the number of homes being leased from the private sector. Auckland is the main focus for changes in housing provision as it faces the greatest unmet need for accommodation.
- Housing New Zealand is being privatised and state houses being rationed, with private landlords being the winners, another nail in the coffin of state housing provision in New Zealand. Taxpayers subsidize



landlords to the tune of \$1.2 billion every year and this is expected to blow out to \$2.2 billion in the coming years.

It is time that all political parties show some commitment to housing provision, instead of sound bites. Housing is central to community life and cannot be ignored.

The Centre for Housing Research has now been disestablished by the government, after being established by the Housing New Zealand Corporation Board, and launched in 2003. It provided up to date information and research into the housing sector in New Zealand, and many agencies contributed to the Centre's achievements. Some interesting research findings include the projection that renter households will increase by 30% to 665,800 by 2016 and despite declining home ownership rates, aspirations for ownership remain strong.

Early in the year the MTU hosted a visit to the city of a South African housing activist S'Bu Zikode, who was on a speaking tour of the country. He spoke to a big crowd at the Diocesan Centre on the injustices and inequality that still exists in South Africa despite the end of apartheid.

There has been a significant increase in the number of tenants calling into the office at the Community House—King Street, seeking assistance with their housing issues. The number of tenants going to the Tenancy Tribunal is also increasing, which is encouraging, and they have had a fair outcome.

- Problems with the 'room to let' has seen a number of tenants took their issues to the Tenancy Tribunal and had their day in court. They tend to be International Students, female and locked into fixed-term tenancies at various locations around the city.
- Affordability still remains the big issue for many tenants, not just here in Palmerston North but around the country.

The Local Government Review, has seen a number of local authorities sell off their pensioner housing stock around New Zealand. Palmerston North City Council still retains a strong commitment to its housing stock, and provides a good practice model for private landlords, who control 80% of the rental market in Palmerston North.

The MTU is still committed to introducing a Certificate of Fitness for all rental accommodation in the city and will continue to push this responsible policy, as so much well being is tied into decent, safe housing, the cornerstone of family life.

The MTU works with other housing agencies in Palmerston North:

The Housing Advice Centre

Manawatu Community Housing Trust

Palmerston North Housing Needs Monitoring Group

Community Housing Aotearoa

We also have extensive networks and contacts around the city and the wider community. A big advantage in being in the Community House is that we often get referrals from other agencies who share the premises, which is good for the wider community.

I would like to thank the MTU committee for their support over the last year.

The Manawatu Tenants Union also had the services of Geraldine Holmes a social work student from Te Wanganui-a-Mata who did her placement with the agency, she updated some of our office procedures, which was good, so thank you Geraldine.

The culture of renting is now well established in New Zealand so it is vital that the Manawatu Tenants Union continues to support tenants in their disputes with their landlord.

STATISTICS FOR 2011---- 2012

Phone : 1022 Personal Visits : 376



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT*****To the Members of the Manawatu Tenants Union***

We have audited the accompanying statement of cash receipts and payments of the Manawatu Tenants Union for the year ended 31 March 2012. The financial statement has been prepared using the receipts and payments basis.

***Committees' Responsibility***

The Committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with the cash receipts and payments basis, this includes determining that the cash receipts and payments basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statement in the circumstances, and for such internal control as the Committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand). Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Other than in our capacity as auditor we have no relationship with, or interests in the Manawatu Tenants Union.

***Basis for Qualified Opinion on Financial Position and Financial Performance***

Control over receipts prior to being recorded is limited and there are no practical audit procedures to determine the effect of this limited control. Consequently, we were unable to determine whether any adjustments to these amounts were necessary.

***Qualified Opinion on Financial Position and Financial Performance***

In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, the attached financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Manawatu Tenants Union as at 31 March 2012, and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the cash receipts and payments basis of accounting.



Cotton Kelly  
28 May 2012



# **MANAWATU TENANTS UNION**

## **OFFICERS 2011 – 2012**

### **CHAIRPERSON:**

▲ GARRY BUCKMAN

### **SECRETARY:**

▲ CAROL PHILLIPS

### **TREASURER:**

▲ LEIGH BASILE

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

- ▲ MARLENE TAYLOR
- ▲ DOROTHY HOLLAND
- ▲ JOHN HOLLAND
- ▲ NOORANGI PULEOSI
- ▲ KEREN MARTIN

### **CO-ORDINATOR:**

▲ KEVIN REILLY

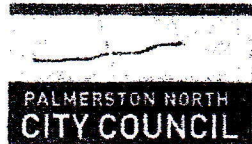


## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

- **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (M.S.D)**
- **COMMUNITY ORGANISATION GRANT SCHEME.**
- **LOTTERY COMMUNITY**
- **PALMERSTON NORTH COMMUNITY SERVICES COUNCIL**
- **THOMAS RICHARD MOORE TRUST**
- **MASSEY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**
- **COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND (M.S.D)**
- **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PALMERSTON NORTH**
- **MR MARTY GUNN – AUDITOR**

**AND TO ALL OUR VALUED SUPPORTERS IN THE WIDER  
COMMUNITY.**





DM#:481863

27 May 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am pleased to take this opportunity to voice my support for the work of the Manawatu Tenants' Union.

Manawatu Tenants' Union offers a valuable service to the community of Palmerston North by providing advice, support and advocacy around all aspects of tenancy.

They have an excellent working relationship with the Palmerston North City Council and other housing providers within the city including Housing New Zealand.

I believe they are a very worthwhile organisation and do much to ensure tenants within Palmerston North are well supported and informed about their rights surrounding tenancies within New Zealand.

Yours sincerely

Nicki Hanna  
PROPERTY & LIAISON OFFICER  
PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL



Manawatu Neighbourhood Unit

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Palmerston North 4440

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[www.hnzc.co.nz](http://www.hnzc.co.nz)

1 June 2010

**Manawatu Tenants Union  
PO Box 2060  
Palmerston North**

**Dear Kevin**

I'm writing to express Housing New Zealand Corporations appreciation of the work that you do with our mutual clients, that is, the people of Manawatu who have some form of housing issue.

The Corporation has a long standing relationship with the Manawatu Tenants Union and considers the service you provide to be an integral element in the provision of independent advice to the people of Palmerston North, as well as the various Statutory and Community agencies that have an interest in Housing issues.

I always find your approach and your dealings with Housing New Zealand and it's customers to be professional and invariably end in positive outcomes for all concerned.

Thank you Kevin, also for your support in managing the numerous "grizzles" you get from the Corporations tenants and applicants. We certainly look forward to a continued successful relationship.

Yours sincerely



Keith Ellison  
Housing Services Manager – Manawatu/Levin