

MANAWATU TENANTS UNION

HOUSING Annual Report 2013

“TENANTS MAKE CITIES”

The Manawatu Tenants' Union Inc.

Mission Statement

The Manawatu Tenants' Union aim is to:

- a) Protect, promote, and generally advance the rights, interests, and welfare of tenants in the Manawatu region
- b) To advise, assist, and generally support tenants in their dealings and disputes with landlords and other authorities in the Manawatu
- c) To make submissions to both central and local government on issues and laws affecting tenants.
- d) To monitor demolition of rental housing in Palmerston North and to make appropriate submissions to local bodies about increasing the rental housing in Palmerston North.
- e) Educate the public about laws regarding tenants.

Coordinator's Report

The Manawatu Tenants Union celebrates 30 years of service to the community of Palmerston North this year. Over this period the agency has offered tenants advice, information and vital support in resolving disputes with landlords.

At present, housing is the largest weekly expense for most people, yet the affordability of housing does not get the same attention as the weekly costs of other essentials such as food and fuel. While everyone has the basic human right of a place they can call home, all political parties must recognise that solving the affordability crisis is as fundamental as funding health and education. Rental costs continue to rise despite a drop in demand for accommodation around Palmerston North and other cities (except Christchurch and Auckland).

Central Government has failed to provide affordable decent housing for the poor, and Housing New Zealand continues to be downsized. The recent budget announcements about the future provision and management of state housing have confirmed the government's intention to withdraw from the provision of state housing.

What is of concern is the growing number of state houses made vacant around the city of Palmerston North, due to the risk of liquefaction and ground shaking. Both these fears have been reported as being of low to moderate risk. This move is seen by many as part of an exit strategy by central government from the provision of affordable housing for increasing numbers of struggling families. The dwindling number of affordable homes could have serious implications for the future population growth of the city.

The need for 2 bedroom flats is also a concern. For many, who require that extra room so they can have access to their children at weekends and during school holidays, this is a growing problem.

It should be noted that the Salvation Army Women's Hostel has closed down due to funding issues. Camellia House is running to full capacity as is the Manawatu Community Housing Trust. The Palmerston North City Council has a strong commitment to the provision of affordable housing and to the unmet needs in the city.

Along with affordability, the condition of the property is of concern to many tenants. It was good to note that the present Government intends to trial a Warrant of Fitness for state houses. This was first suggested some 15 years ago by the Manawatu Tenants Union, for all rental accommodation. One small step for state tenants but a huge leap forward for all private rental tenants.

Other issues include the 'room by room' lets, along with fixed term tenancies, and the many problems they cause. Concerns with bond refunds, repairs, the loss of quiet enjoyment of the property, harassment by landlords and property managers, appear to be on the rise. In New Zealand society there appears to be a growing prejudice against the poor. They are portrayed in the media and by the government, as being outside the mainstream and marginalised accordingly. The fact of the matter is that they are the new generation of renters, and the products of failed housing policy. It has created a country of two halves.

Enquires:	Phone	1072
	Visits	293
	TOTAL	1365

Manawatu Tenants Union

Officers 2011 - 2012

Chairperson:

Myra Shotton

Carol Phillips - Acting Chair

Secretary:

Carol Phillips

Charlotte Philips

Treasurer:

Leigh Basile

Committee Members:

Marlene Taylor

Dorothy Holland

John Holland

Thomas Robertson

Noorangi Puleosi

Keren Martin

Garry Buckman

Coordinator:

Kevin Reilly

Acknowledgements

- Family and Community Service (M.S.D)
- Community Organisation Scheme (C.O.G.S)
- Lottery Community
- Palmerston North Community Services Council
- Mr Marty Gunn – Auditor
- Catholic Diocese of Palmerston North
- Massey University Students Association
- Pub Charity

And to all our many valued supporters in the wider community.

Housing New Zealand

1 June 2010

Manawatu Neighbourhood Unit
111 Broadway Avenue
PO Box 243 Palmerston North Centre
Palmerston North 4440
Free phone 0800 801 601
Tel 06-355 0122 Fax 06-355 0123
Email info@nzcc.org

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 Wilson
Housing Services Manager - Manawatu/Levin



DMF:481063

23 April 2013

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Manawatu Tenants' Union

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

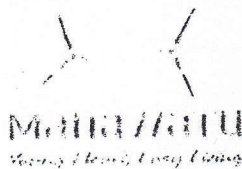
Vicki McKeeman
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OFFICER

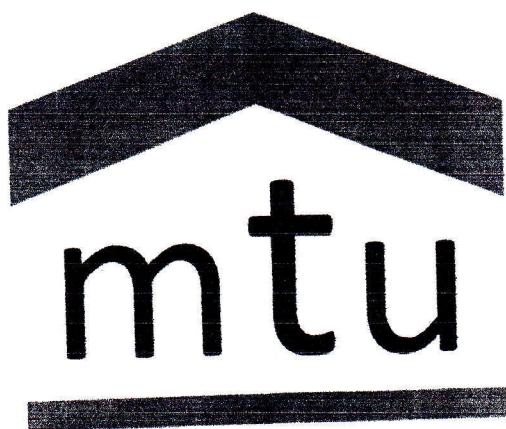
Dispute processes
Tenancy Tribunal procedures and bonds
Flatmate agreements
Problems with neighbours
Security of tenure

for free advice
Ph. (06) 3577435 or
021 207 6655

or call into the office in
Community House
King Street
Palmerston North

or go to
mtenuion.blogspot.com





Manawatu Tenants Union

Advice and information for tenants

Fixed and variable term contracts

Landlord responsibilities

Tenants' rights and obligations

Dispute processes

Tenancy Tribunal procedures and bonds

Flatmate agreements

Problems with neighbours

Security of tenure

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