

Remuera Christians Trust Board - Report 2022

Major Change Proposed

For over 50 years, the Trust Board has owned a property in Omahu Road to provide accommodation for mentally disabled men. For many years, the running of the house has been contracted to WALSH Trust and the facility has operated successfully for many years.

Unfortunately, we have been advised by WALSH Trust that the property will not meet health and safety audit requirements imposed by Te Whata Ora (the central health department which has replaced DHBs). Even though, in recent years, there has been one occupant per bedroom, to meet DHB requirements, the requirement is now for each bedroom to have its own bathroom facilities and, as currently configured, the house has only two main bathrooms. WALSH has indicated that its contract with Te Whata Ora would not be renewed if the house remained in its current state. Apart from this specific requirement for bathrooms, the house is old and requires constant maintenance and generally does not align with other facilities operated by WALSH, both as to quality and location.

The Trust Board has decided that altering the existing dwelling is not feasible. Apart from the cost involved, we believe the audit requirements from Te Whata Ora would be onerous now and in the future.

The Trustees expect reluctantly to resolve to close the facility and sell the property. In doing so, the Trust Board's principal concern is for the six existing occupants and, at the time of writing, we are waiting for a clear plan from WALSH for the men's relocation. No final decision will be made until the Trustees are satisfied that the men will be cared for.

The Trust Board would remain in existence, with a capital fund for investment and distribution to entities which meet the Trust's objectives, principally by supporting mental health organisations and initiatives.

The process has yet to be finalised and will probably take several months to complete. There is considerable regret among Trustees that we have been forced into this decision because the Trust was established over 50 years ago as a cooperative project between the parishes along the Remuera ridge and the house has provided a safe and well organised home for many men over that period. However, modern health and safety requirements are difficult to meet.

Miles Brown

3/11/2022 - *Since preparation of this Report, WALSH Trust has indicated that, with completion of some maintenance items at the property, Te Whata Ora requirements may still be able to be satisfied so the Board awaits further confirmation from WALSH, and as a result, the position may not be as serious as first advised.*