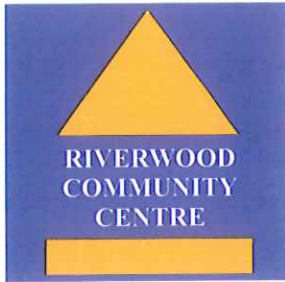


**Submission
No 113**

**INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**

Organisation: Riverwood Community Centre Ltd

Date received: 28/02/2014



RIVERWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE (INC)

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28 February 2014

The Hon. Paul Green MLC
Chair
Select Committee on Public, Social and Affordable Housing
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 200

Dear Chair

Select committee inquiry in to Public, Social and Affordable Housing

Riverwood Community Centre and Central Sydney South Tenant Participation Resource Service

Riverwood Community Centre has had a forty year history of working with social housing tenants locally, throughout the Canterbury Local Government Area and, over the last fifteen years, across our Central Sydney South Region which includes Canterbury to the Inner West, St George, Sutherland and the Eastern Suburbs.

Major issues and concerns that social housing tenants have raised multiple times and that Tenant Resource Workers are continuing to report are:

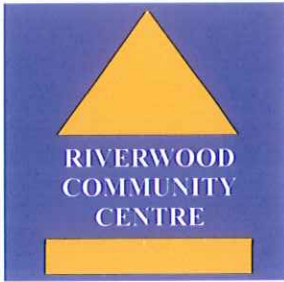
*The need for more housing stock. There are not enough properties available to meet the need.

*The need for more community development tenant workers. When first funded, each TPRS [Tenant Participation Resource Service] covered a region of 16,000 tenants. Mostly these services have 1 or 1.5 worker. While we work remarkably well under such constraints, there are clearly significant limits as to what can be achieved, and much more improved quality of communal and societal life that would be possible with more community development workers working within each region.

*The need for more disability and mental health options [including more disability access units that are not in 55+ complexes].

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* Long term planning of Governments to avoid current stock [further] deterioration; not just short term reduced spend.

*Where public/private housing redevelopments use private developers, the contract must include money for an independent community development worker [not self promotion for the developers] during all stages of the development and for 3-5 years after completion, to help with integration of the new community and new social mix.

Such contracts must also include provision for specific units/buildings for mental health and/or tenants with disabilities.

Example 1: dedicated complexes for frail older parents of adult children with disabilities in one section, and the adult children who need assistance in another, plus a carer or community nurse on 24hr call.

Example 2: dedicated complexes for people with serious mental health issues requiring extra support and living skills to navigate community life.

*The ongoing issue of maintenance required is a constant one across all areas.

*The substantial increase in RentStart applications and the significant increase in provision of information and assistance to those needing this service, gives a picture of urgent need for more social and affordable housing.

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