

Seaside Sanctuary Closure

Seaside Sanctuary has been the embodiment of a Sanctuary for the elderly on Waiheke Island since 1984 and has become an integral part of our Waiheke Community. A high proportion of local residents either knows someone at Seaside or has known someone who has resided at Seaside during this time. It isn't just a place where elderly folk reside. Seaside Sanctuary has become an extension of our homes on Waiheke where we all visit and mix with our Mums and Dads who are simply unable to reside by themselves any longer. The folk we are talking about here are Waiheke residents with Waiheke families. They want and need to remain Waiheke residents and certainly don't want to be exiled off to unfamiliar territory in Auckland or elsewhere, at the most vulnerable time of their lives. However residents and families have been told by The Seaside Charitable Trust, (the Trust that runs seaside), that over the past 18 months they have been reviewing the sustainability of the rest home in the face of the changing landscape of health needs, compliance requirements, increased operating costs, decreasing real income and, significantly, the difficulty in recruiting suitable qualified professions they have decided to close Seaside. Absolutely no indication has been given to any resident or family member of this 18 month review and the Bombshell notice of closure 3 weeks ago was completely out of the blue. Residents would have to have "Their medical needs reassessed and be relocated to Auckland" they were told. It's trustees are quite happy to see these 21 (sometimes more) residents displaced from their families and sent to places unknown in Auckland. The reasons for closure are a financial crisis and the inability to find a replacement for the incredible talents of Pat Orchard, who has run the place so admirably for such a long time. This is a Charitable Trust, setup in perpetuity for the sole purpose of supporting these vulnerable older folk. Why has the trust values changed so radically now? Financial assistance for Charitable Trusts is available from many organisations to assist with the costs highlighted by the trust. Why does Pat Orchard's replacement need to be a registered Nurse in order to manage a rest home? Indeed what will happen to the valuable property and buildings of Seaside if it does actually close. (Currently valued at over \$5.4 million dollars). There is absolutely no valid reason to close this unique and important part of our Waiheke community.

Despite a meeting of 25 health service providers and politicians a week ago, which included MP's Nikki Kaye and Jacinda Ardern, there is absolutely no resolution on the horizon for the unfortunate elderly folk who currently reside at Seaside Sanctuary. The only idea brought to the fore at this meeting is Home Based Care "Tailored to the needs of the individual". The meeting was told of a "New Model" of care currently in use in Auckland, which had the potential for actually increasing the level of service and providing a better quality future for older citizens. This group actually spoke of small groups of residents being housed in a small group home with support provided and did not consider the lack of respite care facilities on Waiheke as a problem.

Nikki, my Mum still resides at Seaside and my family is at its wits end trying to work out what has happened here and why and what the future holds for our 89 year old mother. She has resided on Waiheke for 30 years and her family lives here, Auckland is not an option for her to live.

Are you able to ask a few questions and give us some answers please Nikki, the closure of this facility is going to be on the agenda of many local residents for a long time.

Rob Griffin