

Hi to all members of our Association. As you will see on Page 2 our submission on the City's Annual Plan reflected the opinions of our members. The response to our survey was fantastic. Only two households did not return a survey form – and they gave reasons for not doing so. Indeed, the mayor expressed her admiration for the response. So this week she came on a thirty minute walkabout in the Picton Ave area to see for herself some of the problems facing residents. These include: developers who put up as many as 15 bedrooms on a site and then only supply 4 single garages (where do all the additional cars go when there are yellow lines and the wide berms end up becoming *de facto* car parks?); developers who 5 years on have not done the landscaping they were required to do as a condition of their resource consent; developers who do not restore the grass verges to their original condition after having parked heavy machinery there during the build; the narrowing of some streets which effectively make them one-way and difficult, if not dangerous to negotiate; the lack of right-hand turning traffic signals. We emphasised the need for facilities for young children in the reserve, the cleaning of the shopping precinct footpaths and how important a community centre (with a service centre and an appropriately sized library) is to members of our multi-ethnic community.

**It is really important that members keep letting us know what they expect to see in the new community centre. There are contact details on page 2 of this newsletter.** Please call or send an email so we can keep advocating on everyone's behalf. Councillor Jimmy Chen and the deputy chair of the Community Board, Helen Broughton, have been excellent but they have been a minority at the Board table. What is shocking is that during the 2013 election, Cr Vicki Buck promised this in writing: "Council has to be open. Every part is owned by, and responsible to all of us. So I want to help make that real...I'd like to ensure that the new Council changes the whole culture of Council. Starting from the idea that the ultimate boss is you, it all needs to be very open... The current model of centralised command is wasteful (of talent and time), inefficient, and simply not working." (And this same councillor has also been extremely vocal about democratic representation being returned to ECAN.) Yet in January 2014 she *opposed* a proposal from Cr Jimmy Chen and Helen Broughton for local representatives to be on a working party to contribute to the design of a new community centre and she told a Board meeting she would work with staff to have a new centre up and running in 18 months. As the *Tui* ad would say: *Yeah, right*. We all know what has happened in the last two and a half years to our facilities - we are fighting to just retain them. Cr Buck did not fight against council staff for the retention of the service centre in central Riccarton nor did she fight for keeping library facilities here. **Let's make sure we remember all this when the election comes along in October this year. Elected representatives are meant to be just that: people who represent the views of the people who live in the area directly affected by their decisions.**

**What we told the mayor and city councillors about the provision of library services in central Riccarton:** Libraries are important as a literate society is more open to ideas. Riccarton is multi-cultural – a library is a meeting place for all cultures. We want to recognise and value cultural diversity. A library is a facility that can be used by all community members. We recognise that young people may use on-line facilities. Physical books are still important. Think of the pop-up libraries that appeared after the earthquake – the fridge library in Madras Street is still used. With the new zoning for intensified housing for our area, the council is increasing the resident population yet reducing facilities available including parking for residents. If I am new to an area a library provides a point of contact. New immigrants need a place to meet with resources in their own language. To support multicultural resources the Council must include library related services in the new community centre. Every Vietnamese speaker, every Mandarin speaker, who responded to the survey, wanted library services retained. 90% of the remaining survey respondents wanted library services.

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## Our Annual Plan submission to the Christchurch City Council 14 May 2016

The Central Riccarton Residents' Association Inc asks for the following proposals to be incorporated in the Annual Plan 2016. This is the result of a written survey conducted among its members in which members had to sign their name to their views alongside their residential address. This was no shonky survey but a survey of real people who live in our area where the population is increasing markedly because of intensification and where the population is becoming ethnically very diverse. We think that since the census of 2013 over 50% of the population is now of what might broadly be described as Asian ethnicity. Also importantly, more than 50% of the population is under 24.

There is urgent need for library facilities to be placed in central Riccarton – not open all hours but at a time late in the afternoon and early evening on *some* days a week when people who work, and particularly parents and young people, can easily access the collection which should include books suitable for children and books written in languages used by the people of the area, e.g. Mandarin. The collection should also include books for the visually-impaired. There needs to be two desktop computers available also. The library facilities need to be above all *functional*, not grand and extravagant. They would be best placed in the Riccarton Community Centre along with the Riccarton Service Centre.

The council has determined that central Riccarton is to be a key **hub** in Christchurch. A hub should surely have a library and such a library needs to be in the midst of where the people actually live and work and that is in central Riccarton, preferably in a room in the Riccarton Community Centre.

The footpaths in the Riccarton commercial precinct, especially the footpaths along the Riccarton Road commercial strip between Clarence Street and Matipo Street, need to be cleaned regularly. It is nonsense to suggest as council staff said that it would be inconvenient to clean the footpaths. Cleaning can be done at night as it is done in cities and towns which respect their citizens. Central Riccarton is the biggest business hub in Christchurch and includes the city's biggest ratepayer. Residents and the many visitors to the area deserve to be able to walk on footpaths free of urine, shakes and spilled fast food and drinks.

Our Association has for years been asking for a simple slide and a simple swing - both suitable for children under the age of ten - to be placed in the Picton Avenue Reserve. The play equipment currently there is suitable only for teenagers. There are a lot of young children living in the area and parents should be able to walk with them to the park and use such basic facilities.

For years our Association has been trying to have installed right-hand turning traffic signals from Riccarton Road into Clarence Street and from Riccarton Road into Straven Road and from Matipo Street into Blenheim Road. It makes so much sense yet the Traffic Engineering Department refuses to listen and instead resorts to quoting some textbook theory about planning for the years ahead before installing such lights. There is urgent need for these signals to improve the flow of traffic in the area.

Every year our Association has asked that people who own multiple properties that they rent out should be paying business rates. Why? Because they are running a business. Why are such people discriminated in favour of by this council? Many of these people are taking in many thousands of dollars a week in income from their portfolio of rental properties. Christchurch residents need an equitable rating policy and Christchurch City needs the rates to pay for facilities.

### Some Contacts:

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