

# Apartments for Life at Ocean Street Community Newsletter



Issue No. 22 February 2010

## Dear Resident

The recently released Federal Treasury's third Intergenerational Report projects that the number of Australians aged 65 years and over will increase from a total 3 million this year to 8.1 million people by 2050. The number of people over 85 will quadruple.

One positive way for Australia to meet the projected demand for aged care and accommodation is by helping older people to remain in their neighbourhood for as long as possible.

Research shows that older people have a better quality of life and are able to give more back to the community if they are able to stay in the home and area of their choice.

Family members and friends also play a vital role in supporting older people, but this is much harder to do if their older relatives (or friends) have been forced to sell-up and move elsewhere because of housing pressures, lack of services or outdated accommodation.

Sadly, many older people are facing relocation to places outside the area they have lived in for a long time and are most happy in.

This issue is confronting communities across Australia and is one of the key reasons behind the Society's ongoing commitment to the proposed Apartments for Life project.

The Society has incorporated universal design principles into the project, to ensure the apartments meet the changing needs of older people, and are accessible for people with disabilities. Experts say that better design will reduce the incidence of accidents, resulting in health improvements and a decrease in pressures on the medical system.



Our design for AFL includes:

- no steps and stairs
- wider than normal doors and hallways, for people who use walking frames or wheelchairs
- bathrooms designed to be safe for people who are unsteady on their feet or who have limited mobility
- kitchens designed to take into account common health problems such as arthritis
- moveable internal walls, e.g. for ceiling hoists to be installed (for people who need them to be helped out of bed)
- personal alarm systems
- enough space so that a family member or friend can stay overnight.

A support team will be available to help residents obtain community care services when they need them. The proposed complex will also provide green open space and gardens for residents and the surrounding community to enjoy.

Yours Sincerely

Richard Spencer, Chief Executive Officer

## Feedback from the community



“If you know the full background to this project you would realise it isn’t about the money, it is about providing quality options for elderly citizens in Bondi. It will negate the need for them to go into traditional nursing homes and truly allow people to age in place without the horrendous trauma of moving while at their most vulnerable point.

It creates genuine opportunity for life-long independence within an exciting living environment situated in a vibrant suburb. This is a visionary endeavour and should be supported by the community. The Benevolent Society has given legs and momentum to the dream of so many who don’t have a voice. Bondi is surely big enough for the Apartments for Life and all that it wants to achieve for older citizens.”

**Viv Allanson, CEO Maroba Living Communities**

“Those, who like me, are already quite old and in reasonable health thanks to careful diet, regular exercise and good medical care, are more anxious about decreasing physical strength, increasing burden of home maintenance and reduction in social contacts. It’s people like me – and we’re the majority, both now and in the future – The Benevolent

Society has in mind in its plans for Apartments for Life.

And we all hope that the Land and Environment Court will understand our needs. Are people to be denied the comfort of physically and socially appropriate housing as they age?”

**Joan, Bondi resident**

“We love the district, but I guess the time really is approaching when we’ve got to make some provision for older age, when we won’t be as agile as at present. What is important is that while people may be old, they’re still people. People may even not be very well, but they’re still people and they want to be able to say ‘I would like to do this or that’. With Apartments for Life, we thought, what a terrific idea. And why hadn’t someone come up with it before.

When the time comes... or, if one of us passes on, then it’s nice to know that there’d be somewhere like this that might be available. If it’s a goer, then there are going to be long waiting lists. And I’m 85, so I don’t want to have to wait too long.”

**Bob and Heather, Bondi Junction residents**

**For more information see [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au) and click on Apartments for Life at Ocean Street, or contact Lindy Ryan, The Benevolent Society: 9339 8000 or [oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au](mailto:oceanstsite@bensoc.org.au)**