

# Ocean Street Site Community Newsletter



Issue No. 1 December 2006

## Dear Resident

Welcome to the first edition of the Ocean Street Site Community Newsletter – the newsletter that will keep you updated with the Benevolent Society's plans for our landmark site in Ocean Street, Bondi.

We want to develop a shared vision for the future of the site that will create real innovation in housing and associated support for older people.

The Benevolent Society has had a presence on this site since 1916. We know the local community values our continued involvement. We want to create something which supports, cares for and enhances the lives of older people in a way that has not been done before in Australia.

We want to create a new form of housing and services for older people that, unlike many retirement complexes, is very much part of the local community.

The Benevolent Society has made a series of decisions to take this important project to the next level.

We have decided to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study and detailed planning studies. At the end of this process, we will make a final decision on whether to proceed with the project.

Our plans at the moment are only in the very early stages. Integral to the project is a community engagement process involving local residents, providers of services to older people, Waverley Council, other government agencies, other key stakeholders and, most importantly, older people who live in the local area.

We are looking forward to working with you on this exciting project.

Yours sincerely

Richard Spencer  
Chief Executive Officer



**Heritage-listed Scarba House on the site**

## The life journey

The ageing of the population is one of the most significant challenges facing Australia. At the Benevolent Society, we want to help meet this challenge.

We know that older people prefer to live as independently as possible in their own homes and that they move to supported accommodation very often because they have to, rather than they want to.

Our proposal would enable people to 'age in place' or have 'homes for life'. This means living independently but enjoying the security of coordinated services to provide important support when it is needed.

We aim to create somewhere where older people, whether in early or late old age, will want to live for the rest of their lives.

The site would be specially designed to be 'age friendly'. It would include public space and other community facilities for use by the surrounding community as well as residents.

The Benevolent Society would coordinate support services for the residents as they need them.

We have done extensive research, both here and overseas, and we believe this model represents the future in housing, support and care for older people.

## Benefits for the local community include

- An enriched and strengthened local community that is more connected, healthy and safe.
- More opportunities for people to be connected with each other and become involved in community activities based in and around the site.
- Support for community initiatives, leadership and skills development.
- Local older people involved as primary partners in the planning and implementation of the new complex.
- Some new community facilities that are currently lacking in the area, available for use by local community members of all ages.
- Formalising of the existing informal access into and through the site.

## Benefits for those who live there include

- Residents can live fuller and more meaningful lives with a greater sense of autonomy, independence and purpose.
- A better quality of life than in residential aged care and better than being housebound and isolated 'at home'.
- Residents can participate fully as members of the local community.
- A complex that is specifically designed to help older people live independently for as long as possible.
- Most residents, around 95 percent, can stay for the rest of their lives, with the support of community care services, help to navigate the health and care systems and assistance from neighbours and families.

## Did you know?

Like most of the world, Australia is in the midst of major demographic change.

**The number of Australians aged 65 and over is projected to rise from 2.6 million or 13 percent in 2004 to 4.6 million, about 19 percent, in 2021 and between 7–13 million or about 26 percent in 2051.**

**The population aged 85 and over will double in the next 20 years.**

## Consulting with the community – from vision to delivery

Our plans are in the very early stages. Through community engagement specialists, Elton Consulting, we will be consulting the community from 'vision to delivery'.

We hope to be in a position by mid 2007 to know what the project would look like in more detail and to decide whether to proceed.

An extensive community consultation process will start in February. We will provide more details in the next edition of this newsletter and on our website, which will be launched shortly. See [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au) and go to Ocean Street Site.

**For additional copies of this newsletter ring 9339 8000 or see [www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au)**

## Contacting Us

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