

Apartments for Life at Ocean Street Community Newsletter

Dear Resident

The ageing of the population raises major opportunities as well as challenges for Australia.

Experts agree that planning is needed to find solutions to cater for the growing numbers of older people projected to rise over the next 40 years, especially the much greater numbers of frail older people.

These demographic changes have considerable social and economic implications for Australians of all ages – especially in Waverley, given its higher than average proportion of older residents. The Benevolent Society decided it was time to pursue a new model of accommodation and care that gave older residents greater independence and community involvement than the traditional forms of retirement and aged care accommodation.

Through Apartments for Life, local older people will be able to stay living in Waverley, close to their established networks of friends, family and familiar services and fully connected to the community.

It will also provide the potential for some 95 per cent of residents to stay in their own apartment until the end of life and never have to move to a nursing home.

This project draws on the highly regarded 'Apartments for Life' model developed by the Humanitas Foundation in the Netherlands.



For some 13 years, Humanitas' Apartments for Life have successfully provided housing, care and support to people in active older age, during frailty and ill-health and right up until the end of life, while at the same time enabling them to remain fully connected to the community.

Sincerely

Richard Spencer
Chief Executive Officer

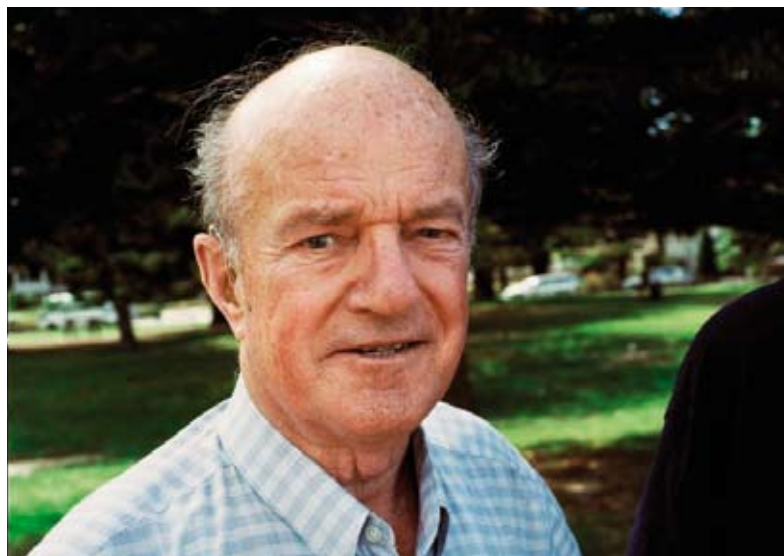
Valuing older people

In the context of demographic changes, it is being increasingly recognised that there is a need to:

- Encourage and value older people's participation in the community
- Create communities that are more 'age-friendly'
- Develop new and better models of housing and support, particularly those that enable people to stay in their own homes and communities
- Enable people to be as self-reliant as possible - most people do not want to have to depend on others any more than they need to
- Develop more cost-effective ways of providing care services to frail older people.



There will be more than 50 apartments specifically set aside for older Waverley residents with no or limited assets and low incomes.



Safety first

The Apartments for Life project will incorporate specific features to address the needs of older people. These include:

- No steps or stairs, and wider than normal doors and hallways that can accommodate wheelchairs and walking frames
- Bathrooms designed for people who are unsteady on their feet or who have disabilities
- Switches and plugs within easy reach
- Kitchens designed to take into account common health problems such as arthritis
- Lifts which are designed so they can be used in the event of a fire
- Provision for installation of non-intrusive ways of monitoring residents' health and wellbeing, for example, sensors to alert staff if a person has fallen and is not able to get up.

For more information see 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