
REPORT 3
(1215/12/IM)

TAWA COMMUNITY CENTRE

1. Purpose of Report

To advise the Tawa Community Board of the usage of the Tawa Community Centre in the first seven months of 2008.

2. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Tawa Community Board:

- 1. Receive the information.*

3. Background

The Tawa Community Centre was first opened as a full community centre in May 2007.

The purpose of the Centre is fivefold:

- to provide office space for community groups
- to make rooms available at affordable rates to community groups and commercial groups
- to provide information about Tawa
- to offer a drop-in facility whereby anyone can pop in for a coffee or tea or just to sit down and read the paper(s)
- to initiate and host various community events

4. Discussion

At the start of 2008 four of the five available offices had been tenanted, with the fifth having been offered to the Porirua Police as their Tawa Community Police base. In March 2008 Wellington City Council Push Play vacated its office. In July 2008 the Police base moved into the Community Centre. That means that one office is still available for tenancy.

The Community Centre is the base for the relatively new Tawa Community Patrol, who use it for storage, a meeting point for weekend patrols, and for ongoing training purposes.

Use of the three main 'hireable' areas for has been increasing over time, with Area 3 (the hall) getting most use, partly because it has been available to the community since early 2006. The hall is used every weekday from after school through to mid/late evening, and with increasing frequency on weekend evenings. At this stage none of the rooms gets much use by the community during morning hours, except on a Sunday. More details further on.

The Centre has a wide range of brochures and fliers offering information about Tawa, and regularly provides answers to people's questions, whether they visit in person or telephone for information.

With a team of 10-12 volunteers on board, the Community Centre has been open to the public from 10am to 4pm each weekday since February. Volunteers do a 2-hour shift, 10am-noon or 2-4pm once a week or once a fortnight. The Centre Coordinator usually covers the 12-2pm shift, as well as putting in an average of a further 4-5 hours per day but not necessarily at the Centre. The Coordinator's position was made permanent by the Wellington City Council in May 2008, but the number of hours has not officially increased beyond the original 20 per week.

The number of people "dropping in" to the coffee area is still relatively low. That may increase over time but is only one aspect of the overall operation. Amongst other "attractions" in the Community Centre are 10-12 panels featuring displays by the largest ethnic/national groupings making up Tawa - NZ European, Maori, British, Indian, Chinese, Samoan, etc. Visitors to the Centre are also invited to stick a pin into our map of New Zealand or our map of the world to show where they were born. To date we have more than 470 pins in both maps.

We hosted our first 2-monthly "Tawa Community Pot Luck Meal" at the end of March. Its purpose is to give local residents the opportunity to get together and meet new people, as well as to enjoy a variety of different foods. Two subsequent pot luck meals have been held, the second one with a Sri Lankan theme. Many of the local Sri Lankan community were present, as was the Sri Lankan Honorary Consul for New Zealand. The meal concluded with a few brief items including a Sri Lankan dance. Our most recent pot luck meal had a mid-winter's theme. 60-80 people have joined us on each of these occasions to date, a reasonably wide cross-section of the local community.

Since early May we have hosted a community luncheon every Friday, basically soup and buns. Numbers at this have been modest, ranging from 4 to 17, mostly because we have not publicised the event much at all. We will do so when we have more volunteers to assist with running the event. Those who do come enjoy getting together, and we have a small number of 'regulars'. It is a social occasion, not a 'soup kitchen' as such.

The Centre Coordinator was heavily involved in organising the recent Tawa Community Civic Awards. The occasion itself was very successful, and a wide array of photos is now on display in the Community Centre windows. Photos of

other Tawa events and scenes are also in those windows, and regularly attract a lot of interest.

The Community Centre sends out an email newsletter once a month, providing details of what's happening in Tawa. Community Board information is also included in that newsletter which goes to approximately 600 local email addresses. We receive positive feedback as to its usefulness.

A full-page article on the Community Centre appears in the CityLife Porirua newspaper every two months. We provide the news and various photographs, and CityLife very kindly runs the page at no cost to us.

A colourful promotional brochure/leaflet providing details as to what the Tawa Community Centre is all about (and showing the rooms available for hire) has been available since the beginning of the year. It is handed to most visitors to the Centre and various other potential users.

4.1 The hall (Area 3)

Regular users of the Recreation Area are as follows:

- Tracey Odell School of Modern Dance - 21-22 hours a week in term time
- House of Grace (Samoan Apostolic Church) - Sunday mornings and most Sunday evenings
- All Nations Christian Fellowship (Fijian) - Sunday afternoons

Other weekly users:

- Tai Chi New Zealand - Monday mornings
- Mana Tiaki Kapa haka classes - Thursday afternoons
- Shake the Fat aerobics - Thursday evenings
- Senior Ezy Movers - Friday mornings
- Tawa Cook Islands music/drumming practice - Friday afternoons
- Kapi-Mana Training Orchestra - Friday evenings

There is occasional useage by a Sri Lankan group, an Indian group, and a Filipino group. WCC Push Play use the hall from time to time. Children's birthday parties are sometimes held in there, and it is let out for various other social and recreational events.

Based on a 12-hour day, Area 3 has an average occupancy rate of 43%.

4.2 The Boardroom (Area 2)

During the course of a normal month, the Boardroom is used by the following groups:

- Sri Lankan guitar class - weekly in term time
- WCC Building Consents and Licensing Services Department - twice monthly
- Wellington Amateur Radio Group - twice monthly
- Tawa Community Board - monthly
- Civil Defence - monthly
- Cards Unlimited - monthly
- WCC Knowledge Solutions - one full week 3-4 times a year
- Occasional useage by Stream Walkway group

Commercial hireage of the Boardroom happens occasionally.

Based on a 12-hour day, Area 1 has an average occupancy rate of 20%.

4.3 'Open Area' (Area 1)

Area 1 Meeting Space is used by the following groups:

- GraceNet Community Church - Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings
- Life Vineyard Community Church - Sunday afternoons
- Community luncheons - Friday afternoons
- All Nations Christian Fellowship (Fijian) - Friday evenings
- WCC Knowledge Solutions - one full week 3-4 times a year
- Kapi Mana Toastmasters - twice monthly
- Mana Tiaki kapa haka class - weekly

Occasional useage of Area 1 is as follows:

- Tawa Historical Society
- U3A Tawa Inc
- Cloud 9 Children's Foundation
- WCC Push Play
- Other meetings held by the three church groups listed above

Based on a 12-hour day, Area 1 has an average occupancy rate of 26%.

4.4 Other Areas

There are other smaller rooms/areas in the facility available for use.

Smaller room used weekly by GraceNet Community Church

Smaller rooms used monthly by:

- Tawa Progressive & Ratepayers Assn
- Awhina Wahine Inc

Hon Peter Dunne MP uses a room on a Saturday morning every 6 weeks or so for constituent meetings. There are also one-off or occasional users.

Contact Officer: *Malcolm Sparrow – Tawa Community Centre Co-ordinator.*