



Central Lakes Trust

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For immediate release

New housing concept for elderly people to be established in Queenstown

Plans to develop an 'Abbeyfield' Home for elderly people in Queenstown received a significant boost in February with the announcement of an \$800,000 grant to the project by the Central Lakes Trust. Trust Chairman, Duncan Butcher announced the grant this week, noting that the development would be a much needed addition to the affordable accommodation options in Queenstown. The home will be located in Robertson Street in Frankton and will accommodate 10 elderly residents and a live-in housekeeper.

Abbeyfield is an international concept for older persons' housing, originating from England but now in many countries throughout the world. Its aim is to provide affordable, family-style housing for older people who seek independence but also desire the companionship and safety of living with other people. The residents each have their own private suite which includes a bathroom and a small sink bench unit, whilst the shared areas of the house are the dining and sitting rooms, kitchen, laundry and garden. Residents pay an all-inclusive housekeeping charge, deliberately maintained at a level affordable to those solely reliant on state sourced income, and this covers all food, electricity, rates, insurance, maintenance and the housekeeper's salary. The live-in housekeeper is employed to do the shopping and plan and prepare the two main meals of the day.

There are currently five Abbeyfield houses in New Zealand, whilst there are also a number of centres with plans to develop an Abbeyfield home. The Queenstown Abbeyfield House will be the third in the South Island and the first to be built in Otago.

In addition to the funding contributed by the Central Lakes Trust, the project has received significant support from a number of different sources. The Queenstown Lakes District Council has provided the site in Frankton, whilst other funding contributions have come from the Wakatipu Elderly Citizens' Housing Trust and the Amisfield Trust. The total cost of the project is \$2,682,000.

Queenstown is a particularly appropriate place for an Abbeyfield Home because of the accommodation issues which are unique to this area, in particular, the affordability of local housing stock. The members of the Central Lakes Trust were favourably disposed towards the proposal because it offered a great opportunity to support a project that would make a real difference to older people in the Wakatipu basin. Trust Chairman, Duncan Butcher, says that *'although it's a concept that won't appeal to everyone, the Trust believes that the Queenstown Abbeyfield home will provide an attractive lifestyle for ten mature 'flatmates'. It's important for older people to have choice about their housing options and this provides an excellent halfway step for older people who no longer want the burden of looking after their own home, but want companionship and security without losing their independence and privacy.'* Frankton is considered to be an ideal site, being on the public transport route and close to shopping, recreational and medical facilities.

The members of Abbeyfield Wakatipu Inc were delighted to receive the news of the Central Lakes Trust's grant. The group has spent several years planning the development and the Trust's grant has allowed them to reach their fund-raising target.

In the long term, Abbeyfield Wakatipu Inc hopes that the success of the Abbeyfield Home in Frankton will lead to the development of more homes in the area.

For further information contact:

Duncan Butcher (Chairman): (03) 445 0463 or (0274) 343 876;

Rhondda Poon (Executive Officer): 0800 00 11 37 or email rpoon@centrallakestrust.org.nz

Simon Hayes (Chairman, Abbeyfield Wakatipu Inc): (03) 442 7747 (work) or 027 223 3150

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