

Tenants Consultative Forum



Wednesday 23 March 2016, 11.30pm
Salon, Convent Building

ATTENDEES:

John Di Natale, Graham Hardy, Maggie Maguire, Tom Rendell, Charlotte Allen, Caroline Williams, Delphine Laboureaux-Ormancey, Jo Saunders, Sara O'Callaghan, Kate Mair, Felicity Mark, Catriona Black-Dinham, Judith Clifton, Michael O'Hanlon, Ruth Blythman, Robyn De Vries, Arno Gallious & Colin Hopkins

APOLOGIES:

Sal Cooper, Linda Oy Ho, Rick Matear & Sharon Grigg

Item 1: Updates from previous Meeting

Smoking at the Convent:

No Smoking Signs have been placed at all Convent building entries - sadly with little success. There are still significant concerns about smoking underneath the 1st floor of Wellbeing and outside the Providence building. So at those two locations, a more sophisticated 3-5 meter radius of a no smoking area will be developed. If effective, the ACF may extend that initiative to other building entries.

A site wide ban on smoking is well beyond the ACF to resource at this point.

Tenant kitchens:

Felicity confirmed that the ACF will provide cleaning products for the Convent kitchens: paper towels, detergent and will be available the week commencing 28th March.

Hospitality RFP

Positive negotiations are progressing with Lentil as Anything (LaA) and Kappaya. The details of these negotiations are confidential and ongoing. LaA with the help of their new manager Katrina Webb has already introduced some measures to address the impact of their business on the site; including the introduction of the Facility Custodian, who in partnership with ACF Security and staff will take particular care of patrons in the gardens and ensure that rubbish is picked up and any issues are resolved quickly.

Tenants welcomed this news and noted the positive social impact and contribution of LaA to the Convent site.

Item 1: Tenant Survey

Background:

The ACF conducted a Tenant Survey in early 2016. It was circulated to all tenants and the ACF received 36 responses in total. Felicity (Tenancy Manager) and the ACF thanks everyone who participated.

Three main issues arose from the feedback: Signage, Communications support from the ACF and cleanliness of common areas.

Signage:

A revised map providing general information has been placed at the main gate and is far more user friendly.

The ACF confirmed that a firm has been appointed to develop an App for the Convent. It will enable easier access and provide way finding information and improved navigation throughout the site. The App has a tentative launch date of June 2016.

It was suggested that the external doors accessing the Convent building require numbering, to assist visitors to the building. The ACF will trial signing the doors with adhesive numbers, as screwing signs into the heritage building walls/doors is not appropriate.

Communication Support:

The Communications team will be offering an information session about what the ACF can provide to tenants in the way of the E News and social media. There will be an educational component to the session, where new media initiatives, refresher information and optimising social media opportunities will all be discussed.

The possibility of producing an online noticeboard was suggested as a communications tool. Tenants advised that a Facebook page "Abbotsford Convent Tenants Association (ACTA)" already exists within the Tenant community, but is only used intermittently and is not up to date in terms of its membership. The ACF will encourage tenants to join in the coming weeks and will point new tenants to this page in the future. As the ACF will not be involved with this page we ask that Tenants report back to the next TCF on how it is going.

The revival of a tenant communal area on Level one was suggested and will be explored by the ACF.

Cleaning:

The cleaning of hallways and landings is currently not part of the ACF's site cleaning contract but is part of the Site Coordinators' duties. The ACF is investigating moving that job onto to the cleaning contractor as the Site Coordinators are already extremely pushed for time.

The current cleaning contractor (DPS) looks after cleaning of all toilets in the Convent. The Convent Annexe toilets are cleaned 3 times a day, the level 1 & 2 toilets are cleaned 6 times a week (every weekday morning with an additional cleaning on Friday afternoon). Continued feedback from tenants is always welcome as it helps to assess when and where the cleaning is failing and also notes what isn't being done in certain areas or at the right standard. John Mummery (Building & Facilities Manager) alongside the Contract Manager from DPS will make some spot checks and assess the toilets specifically.

Item 3: Tenancy Team Update

The ACF has welcomed Cat Black-Dinham to the Tenancy Management team as Administrator. Felicity and Cat now work from room C2.16, and urge tenants to pop in with any direct issues and to introduce themselves.

Item 4: Car Park Matters

Background:

This matter was raised in the Tenant Survey but was also raised through specific feedback during the month. The following feedback was addressed:

Cost:

Car parking fees are settled and dictated by external and internal influences but with tenants receiving a 75% discount on the public rate, the fees offer good value for the tenant community. A top up system like Myki would be preferable, but that model doesn't currently exist in relation to car parking.

Flexibility:

The ACF can offer a five day reoccurring car park pass, at the current weekly rate for all tenants regardless of which five days they use. For example: Monday-Friday or Tuesday-Saturday will be the same cost. The stipulation is that it has to be a weekly reoccurring timetable. If feedback dictates in future that a 3 day parking pass on the same principle is needed, that can also be offered. (the days will not need to be consecutive, but must be weekly reoccurring.) The price of a 3 day pass will be calculated if tenants want this scheme.

Availability:

It was noted that on the odd weekend, for example when a Market is on, there are limited parking spaces. The ACF is looking into providing signs saying *Tenant Priority Space* to install in the rear paved area rear of the car park. (Note - The ACF must maintain car parks at the front of the lot for people with mobility issues). It was also noted that the car park has an obligation to the Collingwood Children's Farm and hence availability can not be always guaranteed. Gate Two cannot be used for overflow parking as it is a designated area for incoming deliveries, waste removal and for maxi-taxi deliveries/pickups.

Item 4: Sacred Heart

Update:

The ACF is awaiting directions and approvals from Heritage Victoria and the City of Yarra regarding the proposed draft restoration plans. The project is now in the schematics design phase. The actual build is still projected to take 12 months beginning in October, 2016. Issues of flexibility, access and circulation are key design challenges that the architects are working to resolve.

An EoI has been circulated to tenant the Industrial School but with it has not generated much interest, so the ACF is looking at additional ways to create more interest.

Other Agenda Matters/ Matters Arising:

Convent Toilets:

As per the previous discussion from Item 2, the ACF requires feedback in regard to cleaning standards. The ACF will continue to spot check and discuss the results with the cleaning contractors.

Tenancy social event:

There will be a tenant social event on Thursday 28th April 5-7pm. An email invite will be sent out in due course.

Tenant Representative on the ACF Board:

The ACF reiterated that the Board does not deal with individual issues but oversees the management of the Abbotsford Convent Foundation, concentrating on the vision, governance, policies and finance. That being said, the Board is represented at all TCF meetings and is across feedback through the survey process and the feedback register. The feedback form is on the website if there are any issues to report.

Venue Hire for Tenants:

The recent increase to venue hire rates was noted. Some tenants feel it is not clear when the tenant discount is applied. Tenants are urged to talk directly to Michael and Leonie in Venue Hire if they require information and clarification on any venue hire issue. The topic will be raised as a full agenda item for the next TCF.

TCF Agenda:

The E-news remains the main way in which the ACF promotes the date, agenda of TCF meetings. The minutes of the TCF meetings are also distributed via the E-news. Some Tenants suggested that a specific, separate email about the TCF meetings would increase participation. If Tenants would prefer this type of communication please let us know but as far as the ACF is aware, the majority of Tenants prefer to have the many messages from the ACF summarised and collected in the weekly E-news format.