

Woodsworth's Social Audit 2002 Objective #1

Quality of Housing

To furnish the members with high-quality housing that is properly and efficiently maintained and serviced.

FINDINGS

93% rate the maintenance service as good to excellent, compared to 73% for 1989. 7% were not satisfied with the maintenance service.

When we looked at age, location in the co-op, years of residence and employment status, there were no significant differences for most factors.

76% reported that they had repairs done in the last 12 months and the same percentage reported that there was a response from staff within 48 hours. In 1989, on average 92% of the work orders were completed in the same month.

There were less repairs done to units on the 3rd (57%) and 7th (59%) floor. Wilton Street had the most repairs: 93% reported repairs within the last 12 months.

Long-term Maintenance Problems

Members were asked to indicate long-term ongoing maintenance problems with their units. The most significant problem areas are: windows and doors (34% reporting), ventilation, mould, mildew (30%), floors and carpeting (28%), bathrooms (26%), noise (23%), plumbing (20%), kitchens (19%), balconies and steps (18%), insects and rodents (17%)

In comparing location of unit and length of residence in the co-op, there were some interesting figures.

Windows and doors: 45% of 7th floor members reported problems.

Mould, ventilation and insulation: 48% of Wilton and 38% of Albert Franck members reported problems. In 1989, 60% of the unit inspections reported condensation problems.

Floors and carpeting: 37% of each of George, Albert Franck and Frederick members reported problems. 33% of members who have been in Woodsworth for 6-10 years have problems with floors and carpeting.

Balcony and front steps: only 18% of the general respondents reported problems but 22% of Wilton members have problems with their balconies and /or front steps.

Noise: 38% of Frederick members, 37% of George members. 30% of long-term members (16+ years) reported noise problems.

Kitchens: 3rd and 5th floor members were the only groups who reported no or few problems with their kitchens - only 4 out of 58 respondents. Albert Franck members reported the most problems - 31%. Frederick was 25%, Wilton, 22%, 7th floor, 21%, George, 20%.

Bathrooms: 26% of members reported problems. The highest was Albert Franck (44%); Frederick and the 3rd floor were each 33%.

Plumbing: 20% of members reported problems. Townhousers reported this most frequently, ranging from 25-28%. The incidence (25%) is the same for members who have lived in Woodsworth for 0-5 years and 11-15 years.

Rodents, insects, pests: 17% reported this problem. Albert Franck members overwhelmingly reported pest problems.

Grab Bars

67% of members support installing grab bars, etc. when work is being done in a unit.

Capital Projects

The most popular projects were: install air conditioning (46%), improve soundproofing (43%) and renovate and extend penthouse (39%).

Other projects rated lower with the majority of members:

Provide extra storage space for members (24%), install a fitness facility (20%), renovate 2nd floor office (19%).

Projects getting less than 15% included the lobby, the tot lot and the rooftop garden.

When we looked at location of unit and years of residence, there were some interesting findings.

More medium rise and Wilton members support penthouse renovations. Fewer than average Frederick members support it. Overall average: 39%

Second floor renovation was not strongly favoured: only 19% support it. More people favoured extra storage space, especially medium-rise members.

Soundproofing is a big problem for members on Frederick (71%) and George (60%). Overall the average was 43%.

Frederick Street members favoured air conditioning and insulation (58% for each). 46% overall would like air conditioning and 45% want improvements to insulation.

Tot lot - only 11% supported improvements to the tot lot.

Improved landscaping - only 14% percent favoured improvement.

More favoured a fitness facility - 20%. Only 6% favoured a computer room.

Lobby - only 12 people indicated an interest in this improvement.

Parking continues to be frequently cited by members as a problem at Woodsworth, just as in the 1989 audit.

IMPLICATIONS

The vast majority of members are pleased with the maintenance service at Woodsworth.

The number of repairs are high because of the aging buildings. Capital project work doing co-op wide improvements and renovations has been slow due to staffing and work load. Members may have confused specific repairs to their individual units and co-op-wide initiatives such as major pipe / bathroom reconstruction in the medium rise, the front steps on Frederick and George Street, and window replacements in townhouses.

It is interesting to note the discrepancies between the above and the proposed capital expenditures already in the budget. In addition, aesthetic interests take a back seat to utilitarian ones. Members report more interest in personal comfort renovations and improvements, for example, air conditioning, rather than improvements to common areas such as tot lot, lobby, or second floor staff areas.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

In light of the discrepancies between the survey results and our capital budget as presented to the membership, it is recommended that the board, finance and maintenance committees and staff review and adjust as necessary the capital budget schedule for the next five years.

Based on the finding of ongoing long-term maintenance problems, we recommend that the co-op reinstate unit inspections, either on a rotating or annual basis.

Results from these inspections should be reflected in the five year capital expenditure plan.

The Maintenance Committee should be responsible for setting standards of repair and replacement.

Members are confused about status of their replacement and upgrading maintenance requests. It is recommended that the co-op inform members about the status of their work orders including longterm projects, such as replacement of carpets and large appliances and establish minimum response times.

Because of the reported mouse problem, the co-op develop a ongoing environmentally friendly pest control program.

Because the lack of sound proofing is a day-to-day problem for members on George and Frederick Streets, it is recommended that improvements to these units be fast-tracked.

It is recommended that the co-op set up a health and safety maintenance schedule, including safety systems such as CO monitors and sanitation systems such as drains for both the members' units and common areas.