



Lookout Emergency Aid Society

Second Stage Permanent Housing Programs 2008-2009

Lookout offers permanent housing with some support for people with a history of homelessness and who no longer require assistance in day-to-day living, but who require support to maintain and flourish in their independence. Lookout has been providing this “third stage” housing since 1978, starting with roominghouses in the Downtown Eastside, and expanding in 1993 to also offer self-contained housing. All of Lookout’s housing is rent-geared-to-income or set at the income assistance level. BC Housing generously provides the subsidy for all our self-contained permanent housing to ensure that men and women with no housing alternatives can have a home they are proud of. When and where needed, support staff provide assistance and work with residents to develop life skills and link to necessary community services to help residents enjoy successful healthy lives.

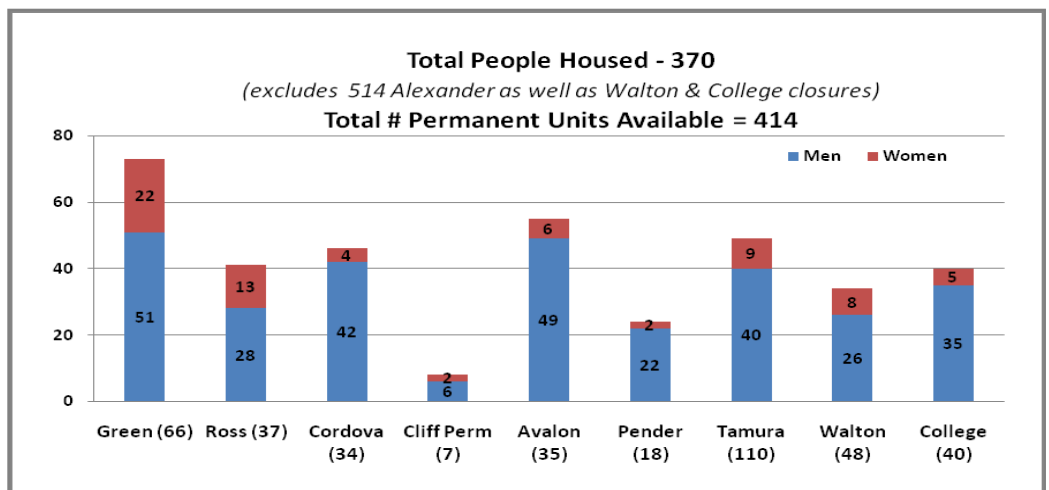
Our housing also honours individuals who have contributed greatly to the resolution of homelessness. The Jim Green Residence is proud to bear the name of one of the Downtown Eastside’s preeminent advocate for safe, secure, and decent housing in the area. The Jeffrey Ross honours a past beloved Lookout shelter manager. Jeffrey was an incredible advocate for people and no matter what, had time and support for everyone.

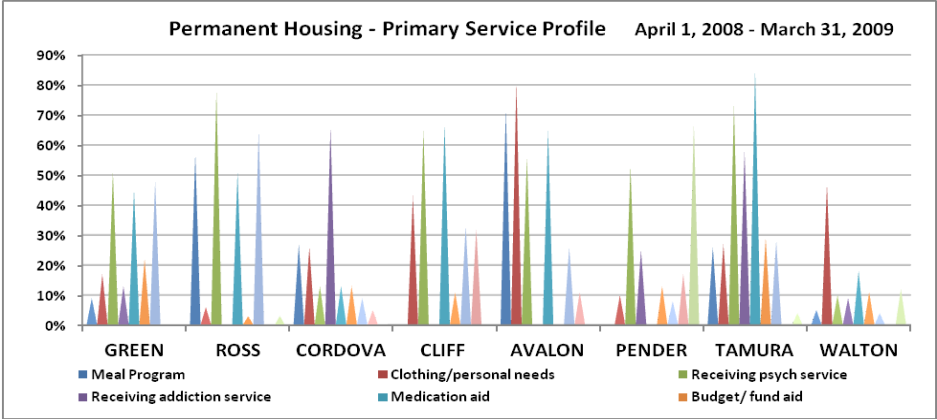
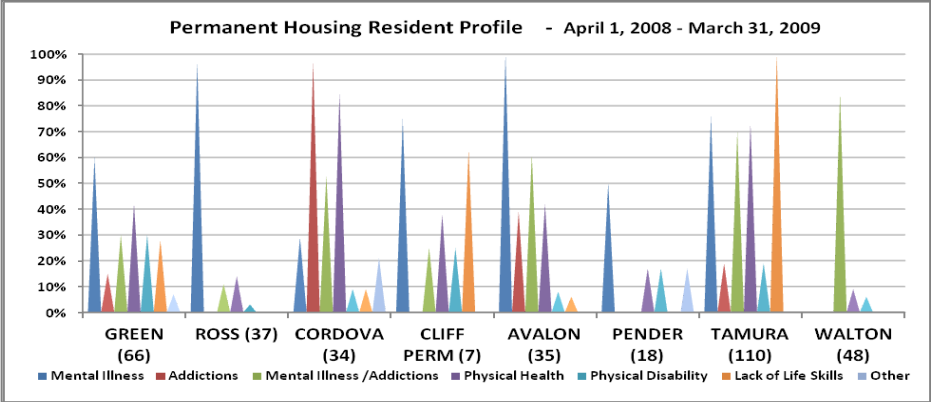
Lookout now operates **414** housing units, up from **323** units last year, thanks to the addition of the rest of Tamura House and the addition of 514 Alexander (called affectionately the mini-Ross) in April 2008. For Tamura this meant that in addition to the 35 units of supported housing we already ran in Tamura, we also had 75 units that we manage for BC Housing under a property management Contract. We are pleased with the expansion of permanent housing with supports, as that is what the critical need is for people with a history of homelessness. The Walton is reducing by three units as they were converted to increase the number of showers and toilets.

NOTE: Our reported occupancy rate excludes College and Walton as both were closed for the majority of the year for renovations. Tamura House also closed units due to flooding and building damage.

**Permanent Housing Waitlist
1900!**

This year the effects of BC Housing’s building closures for major renovation was noted, in that our waitlists have increased to just over **3%** over the past year (up from **1,596** in 2004/5 and **1,706** in 2005/06 and **1,769** in 2006/07 and **1,859** in 2007/08) to **1,900**. We hope that, as the Walton and other hotels reopen in the coming year, waitlists may begin to shorten. However land values and ever-rising rental rates continue to limit the number of housing choices available for growing numbers of people with challenges. Having one’s own bathroom and bedroom continues to be a dream for many. Lookout’s permanent housing provides highly sought after housing: particularly given our minimal barrier, supportive approach. Our tenant selection system is established to ensure that those who have the least housing options and are at high risk of homelessness are those who we house.

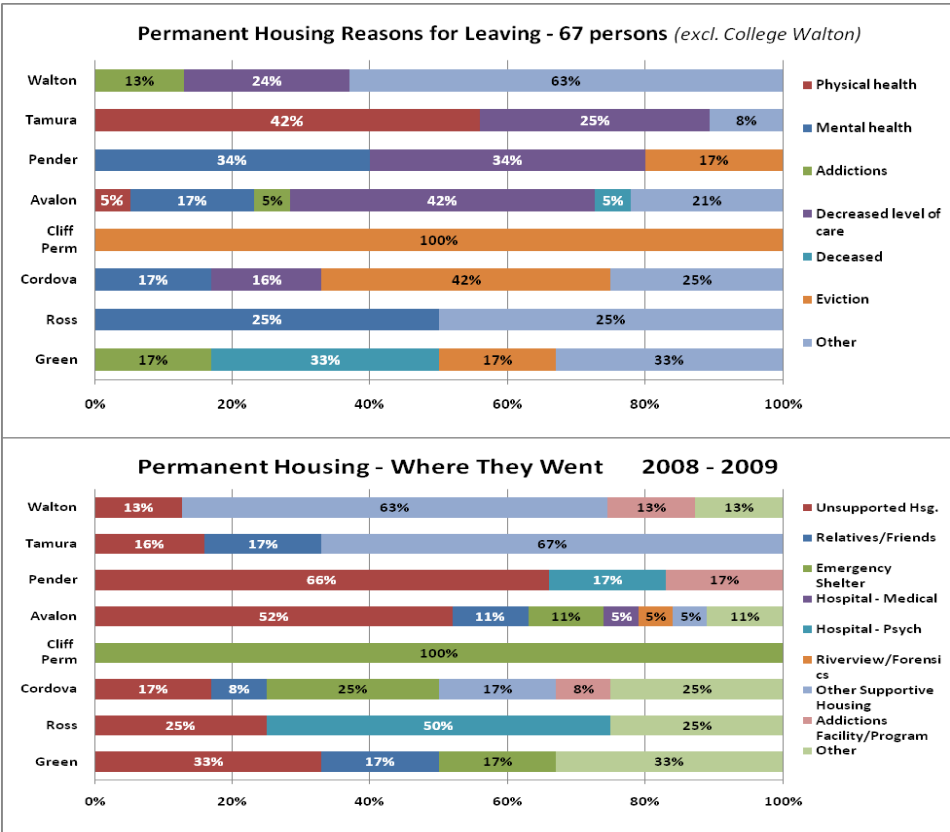




The primary reasons people have so few housing options is that they live with a variety of challenges including mental illness, addictions, both mental illness and addictions, and a lack of life skills such as learning to say no, anger management, poor insight into basic hygiene skills or maintaining their housing (e.g. collectors). Many residents of our permanent housing are live with physical health and/or disabilities.

Generally turnover is low, but as the individual housing reports indicate, people are successfully relocating to housing that best meets their needs, including moving between the various Lookout housing programs with their differing levels of support and interventions. Of the **68** who left (not including College Place and the Walton that temporarily transferred out tenants during renovations), **30 (44%)** were evicted because of safety issues. It takes a lot to get evicted from Lookout housing, and most evictions occurred within the partnership programs reflecting a need to increase staff supports.

68 individuals (excl College) left our permanent housing during the year. All subsequent reports are based on the housing in which Lookout provides support and service. **68** people moved out of these units. Of these **68** individuals, **22 (32%)** went into unsupported housing, while **16 (24%)** moved to other supportive housing, usually within Lookout. **7 (10%)** ended up in shelters, mostly due to addiction issues. Many of our residents live with addictions, and **2** people (**3%**) were placed in treatment. **6 (9%)** went to stay with family/friends; while another **5 (6%)** were hospitalized for long stays within psychiatric hospitals. **4 (6%)** died during the year and **6** people (**15%**) left the programs for other reasons.



Both the Green and the Ross house people who have a history of homelessness and no housing options and offer permanent housing in one bedroom apartments for singles or couples. While there are many similarities to the Residences, they each have a different priority for their tenants.

Jeffrey Ross Residence

The Jeffrey Ross focuses on housing people with disabilities who do not need care facilities.

The Ross continues to be a quiet community, with many long-term residents, including some that have lived there since the building opened in 1993. As last year, only 5 residents were **under 45** years of age (3 men/2 women). The remaining residents are **45 or older**, including 5 men and 1 woman who are **65 or older**. We have 1 couple, making a total of **38** residents in our **37** suites. Only three suites changed hands during the year, the same number as the previous year.

The Ross has benefited from Vancouver Coastal Health’s Clinical Housing Team composed of nurses, a social worker and this year a physician and health care workers. The team provides a weekly nursing clinic with other visits as needed. This has led to better relationships with residents, giving them greater comfort to be more open about their health issues. As discovered in past years, residents may be reluctant to disclose serious health issues for fear of a hospital stay and loss of the best housing they have ever had. Issues with supporting those “who are aging in place” continues to be our greatest challenge, while the number of hospital stays has dramatically decreased to **4 stays** from **16** last year. This indicates the effectiveness of the Clinical Housing Team in bringing health care to those who would not otherwise seek it out. The number of residents that we assist with medication continues at **50%** as greater support and supervision with medication is required to ensure they remain in good health. The number of residents needing home support and cleaning services has increased from **21** to **24**, a reflection of this aging in place and frailer health. A big piece of work is assisting residents get rid of and stay free of bedbugs.

With the help of Christine, our very competent and enthusiastic building volunteer, there are many more opportunities for building socialization and hospitality, including community time with coffee and snacks twice a week in the lounge. Community events provide opportunities to decrease isolation and to promote social interactions and friendships among the residents.

Thanks also to Blue Shell Services and their workers for their excellent cleaning services for a number of building residents. The regular worker Nini has done an excellent job of building relationships with residents.

514 Alexander Street (mini-Ross)

In August 2008, Lookout had the opportunity to take over management of the small rooming house (514 Alexander Street) immediately to the east of the Ross Residence. This building, now owned by the City of Vancouver, is very old but the previous owners had worked hard to upgrade the building as much as was financially possible for them. When Lookout took over the management of the building, **20** rooms were rented; as **1** small room became vacant, it was apparent that room was not rentable as it had no window. Hence, there are now **19** rooms available and rented. A small office at the front of the building was turned into a small lounge where our Ross volunteer has organized coffee times for residents to get together. Residents of 514 Alexander Street are invited to building events at the Ross.

The mandate of 514 Alexander is to provide housing to area residents who are more independent and who do not require a high level of support. The building was **100%** occupied when we took over its management and despite having 1 person pass away and 4 move out, we continue to be full.

One very positive outcome of the takeover of 514 Alexander Street has been the expansion of the Ross staffing to 24 hours each day. With a tenant support worker on each day, maintenance on for a full shift in the evening, and a building attendant overnight – each shift covering the two buildings – building security, cleaning, and maintenance is enhanced. Tenants feel safer with the increased staffing. The Clinical Housing Team is also expecting to expand their services to include 514 Alexander in the coming year. It is also expected in the future that there will be some funding for building renovations and upgrades available.

Jim Green Residence

The Jim Green is unique in that there is no age barrier, but the major focus is on people who have a chronic history of homelessness. The Green also includes a 2-bedroom emergency back-up unit to house families or women in crisis when other local resources are unable to shelter them. The 67-unit Jim Green Residence is proud to bear the name of one of the Downtown Eastside's preeminent advocates for safe, secure, affordable and decent housing in the area.

This year the Tenant Board has grown in their "grassroots" leadership role in the community, hosting numerous social and educational events - some open to other Lookout sites. For instance they held the hugely successful second annual Health Fair and BBQ in August with Lookout residents from all over the Downtown Eastside attending, thanks to the Green residents. The fair was organized again with much assistance and hard work by some of our many Stenberg College Practical Nursing practicum students. Some of the presenters at the Health Fair included Strathcona Mental Health Rehab Program, Pathways Information Centre, B.C. Persons with AIDS Society, Buckshon's Pharmacy and a Naturopathic Medicine Practitioner. There was also a demonstration of Natural Personal and Household Products.

The Tenant Board sponsored a summer BBQ with the residents from the Tamura and Walton as this year's special guests. As well, the Green tenant board began another avenue of reaching out to other Lookout programs, beginning with a visit to the Sakura So Residence to encourage them to develop their own Tenant Boards. The Tenant Board identified some of the special skills and interests of residents and recruited long-time resident, Bernie, to handle the building recycling program. Hilda has been recruited as the resident gardener in chief – spearheading the Annual Garden Work Party which included planting a small herb garden for common use. The Tenant Board also purchased a Costco card and recruited Jude and Michael as bulk shoppers for many tenants. A number of residents received specialized training in being Fire Wardens, including First Aid Training. Kudos go to the Tenant Board – Alexandra, Don, James, Julian, Leo and Michael - for their dedication and leadership.

Another focus has been on providing educational and skill building opportunities for residents in the building. Staff, working in conjunction with the Tenant Board and assistance from practicum students from several colleges, facilitated the following programs: "The Fine Art of Coping with Life" with Linda from the Strathcona Mental Health Team's rehabilitation department,

and separate workshops on Women's Health and Men's Health Issues put on by two BCIT Nursing students. Another student from Langara College organized the Writers, Illustrators, and Storytellers Group. Participants collaborated on writing a short book of short stories and continue to meet weekly. And in March, a student from the Kwantlen College Nursing program organized workshops on Meditation.

As in prior years, turnover in the building has been low, this year with only 5 suites changing hands. Of course the wait list at the Green and Ross grows much faster than the number of units available. The Green and Ross together only had 8 suites become available throughout the year, an increase of only 1 over the previous year. During the year, the residents said goodbye to two long-time residents who will be missed - one left to re-unite with family out of town, the second, sadly passed away. The Green, due to all residents taking responsibility in keeping the building bedbug free, has had relatively few problems with bedbugs this past year. This speaks to the success of community building and good hard work – where the community recognizes that bedbugs are everyone's problem and everyone needs to work together to deal with bedbugs.

The volunteer corps in the building continues to grow steadily; quite a few tenants are now on the CVP program and more tenants are helping the Green community informally. An exercise room was opened in the fourth floor lounge in June with the donation of good used exercise equipment. Also, a 'Family and Friends' lounge has been set up on the fifth floor for private gatherings.

Cliff Block Residence

The heritage Cliff Block has 7 units of permanent housing for local New Westminister residents. It is co-located with 16 units of transitional housing. As with other programs, the staff works closely with each resident to strengthen their skills and abilities, setting goals and creating plans to achieve their highest possible level of independence and self-sufficiency.

One of our 7 tenants moved this year, transferring into the Avalon, one of Lookout's programs located in Vancouver. This meant that one of our transitional housing residents could move into permanent housing. There simply isn't enough housing available that is safe, affordable and supported in the City of New Westminister. We are always 100% full! 25% of the tenants are women. All of our permanent tenants live with mental illness, often complicated by medical issues or disabilities. We are now, quite excitedly, awaiting the opening of College Place and the construct at the Garfield site. We will soon be able to show the community that the creation of more social housing, (with supports) in New Westminister does offer stability and hope to many of the individuals that are or at risk of becoming homeless.

Our tenants are slowly becoming more assertive in their approach to life. Our TSW's continue to work closely with our tenants and impress upon them how important they are in the big picture. The Cliff Block is their home and we are here to help them in whatever way we can. Our tenants tell us that they feel they matter and feel that they are a part of the community. Many of our tenants are finding employment for a few days here and there and as a result they are becoming more self confident and are a great example to their peers. These changes occur when conversations begin. As I said last year, it is not the conversations that deal with professional issues; it's more the **"lets sit and have a coffee and chat about stuff"** kind of conversations that make a difference. When given the opportunity to 'just chat', our clients regain a sense that they matter in the world. Many of our tenants come from a place where they are told to be quiet and not cause any problems or you will lose this or lose that. After a while they just stopped asking questions.

WHAT DO TENANTS SAY?

"You guys have helped me find a new way of living"

"I feel like I'm home for the first time in my life"

"I don't feel judged"

Every citizen in New Westminister, regardless of their life experience, deserves a place to live that is safe, affordable and feels like home. By seeking out new and innovative types of programs and housing and working at changing where necessary Lookout's Cliff Block staff work to ensure that safe and affordable housing is available and support needs are met.

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

Avalon Residence Partnership

The Avalon is a partnership formed in June 2004 under the Vancouver Agreement with the purpose of improving living conditions in SRA (Single Room Accommodation) hotels in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The pilot project demonstrates that with good management of hotels, incentives to upgrade and improve hotel premises, and support services for hotel residents, hotels will be safer and healthier and residents will achieve an improved quality of life. The success that Lookout has had in previous partnerships with privately-owned hotels has provided a model for supported hotels. The Avalon dedicates 35 hotel units to this partnership and receives funding through a grant from B.C. Housing.

Seven days a week, a Tenant Support Worker (TSW) is available on site to provide support for the thirty-five Lookout residents as well as referral information for the rest of the residents in the hotel. As in other programs, Lookout services include assistance with medication, help with money management and budgeting, teaching life skills, referrals to other services and agencies, information, crisis intervention, and monitoring of physical and mental health. The TSW is also able to accompany tenants to appointments if needed, to visit them in hospital and to accompany them on shopping trips to increase their ability to plan healthy meals and improve their nutrition. The hotel's proximity to Chinatown and the T&T Supermarket enables folks to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables and a wide variety of food at reasonable prices.

As in previous years, the majority of new admissions to the program are due to the applicant's need for support and case management. This year, **8** of our new residents (**44%**) came from unsupported or substandard housing (hotels and rooming houses); **3** new residents (**17%**) came from a shelter and **5** new residents (**28%**) were the absolute homeless. Of the **18** new residents, **11** people (**61%**) required support in dealing with physical health issues, including HIV/AIDS. The number of residents needing access to a meal program (primarily the hotel's meal program) continues to be high with **26** people (**72%**) needing help with meeting their nutritional needs.

One very positive trend we saw is a dramatic decrease in the number of hospital admissions for our residents. In the previous year, **33** residents had hospital stays; this year, only **9** residents were admitted to hospital. This speaks to the benefits of early intervention by staff in preventing health crises through referrals to and liaising with health care practitioners when a tenant is observed not to be doing well. This also strongly speaks to the benefits of stable and supported housing in maintaining health. We also saw an increase in residents living with HIV/AIDS – **11** disclosed this health concern. This is primarily due to an increase in referrals of applicants who are HIV+ and who need the medication program that Lookout offers. Many of these new residents have been able to start anti-retroviral therapy and have seen their health and quality of life improve.

A challenge which has always been present, but more immediate this year, has been getting a quick and effective response when residents with mental health issues experience an increase in psychosis leading to unpredictable or aggressive behaviour. Unfortunately, the lack of support from other services has resulted in our inability to continue to provide housing to two residents in a partnership environment. This past year, we saw a slightly larger number of residents leave the program (an increase from **14** to **18** people); the positive side to this increase is that **8** people or **40%** of the folks left as they were able to move on to greater independence.

Unfortunately, early in the year, Rowan, our long-time full time staff at the Avalon, had to go on an extended leave for health reasons. Tenants frequently ask how he is doing; staff and residents all miss him. We again thank the Angelicola family, the hotel's owners, for their support and assistance and their prompt attention in providing supplies and maintenance. Many thanks to Mina Angelicola, to her sister, Felicia, and to Mina's husband, Sergio Baldacci, for the hotel is always clean and in good order, repairs are prompt, and hotel staff are willing to go the extra mile for the residents to ensure they are supported and comfortable. And we thank Gypsy, the hotel manager, for her support, compassion, and willingness to accept our clientele with tolerance and understanding.

Cordova's Residence Partnership

This year there were substantial changes in the ownership and management of the building. The family owners realized that they no longer had the resources or time to continue maintaining the building. At the same time, Martin Mannette, the longtime building manager, realized that it was time for him to move on to new interests. The family, supported by Lookout, approached B.C. Housing to determine if they may be interested in purchasing the building to ensure its' continuation as housing for Downtown Eastside residents. This was a lengthy process, during which Lookout was strongly advocating for the purchase as the building was at high risk for conversion or demolition for new developments. During negotiations between the family and B.C. Housing, Atira Property Management took on the role of on-site management of the site while Lookout staff continued their role in providing support to the building residents. The intent was that Lookout would take over the management of the building by the end of the fiscal year. However, with budget cuts at B.C. Housing, we continue with Lookout and Atira working in partnership for the coming year at least.

Turnover has decreased and the opportunity to build relationships and assess and meet needs has increased. Lookout has provided service to **46** people this past year in comparison to **63** people last year, the majority of them male, as is the norm in Lookout programs. **63%** of our new admissions were homeless when they moved into Cordova's Residence, coming either from a shelter or from absolute homelessness. Most come with minimal, if any, possessions. Getting folks set up with clothing, bedding, and household goods to create a "home of their own" has been the start of relationship building between resident and staff.

Providing assistance with food and nutrition is also a great way to promote relationship building. When able, we share food donations with residents who have difficulties in accessing good nutritious food. Unfortunately, the shared kitchen in the building needs upgrading for health and safety reasons. Until that is done, a community kitchen is not possible.

Most of Cordova's Residence tenants are dealing with addiction issues, generally in conjunction with mental illness or serious physical health issues, including HIV/AIDS. Because of Lookout's harm reduction approach, residents are generally very open about talking about drug and alcohol use. Tenant support workers provide gentle and consistent support in talking to residents about keeping safe when using, trying to reduce alcohol and drug use, and in assisting them in accessing detox and treatment resources when they are open to change.

Cordova's Residence had **12** individuals move on, unfortunately **three** were evicted as they posed a risk to others in the building. Many people who have been homeless live with violence in their lives, often being a victim. Balancing the safety of everyone with our desire to prevent homelessness is a very difficult tightrope. We continue to make eviction a very difficult process within Lookout to ensure we meet our 'safety-net' mandate.

As we move into a new year, we hope for some progress in upgrading the building. Atira, in providing 24 hour staffing at the front office, is maintaining the building security and safety. They are also working on accessing new fridges for those who need them but funding to meet that need is not easy to achieve. Lookout staff will continue to focus on supporting residents so that they can be successful in their housing.

We thank our previous manager and owners, particularly Martin Mannette and Gwen Boyle, for their support and commitment to providing safe and secure housing to Downtown Eastside residents and for their willingness to partner with Lookout. We look forward to a year in cooperation with Atira Property Management with the goal of improving the livability of the building and hopefully, to provide some community space for the community to come together to socialize and hold events.

Pender Residence Partnership

The Pender Residence, an 18-unit Downtown Eastside roominghouse, continues to be a successful housing resource for people staying in the shelters. It is an example of how Lookout and a private landlord can work in partnership to house the homeless. Lookout's Outreach staff support tenants at the Pender Residence as they seek more appropriate long-term housing options, help develop treatment plans for those struggling with addiction, assist individuals with eligibility requirements for all income security programs, explore vocational options, and counsel and direct tenants as required. The Outreach team is called upon for crisis intervention and preventative problem-solving at Pender Residence, driven by a desire to resolve tenant issues and maintain a stable living environment.

Pender Residence has been very stable over the past year with six residents being able to find at least part time work and two of them working full time after undergoing job retraining. Outreach continues to assist the residents with life skills, getting to appointments, filing government forms, searching for better housing and anything else that comes up. One resident is currently waiting for senior's housing due to chronic health problems, another two are waiting for BC Housing while a third is pursuing job training. One of the residents is able to do the janitorial duties for the building at Outreach attends the building once each day and is available by phone for any problems that might arise.

This year Pender housed a total of **24** individuals and had a **33%** turnover rate, with **6** people moving in/out through the course of the year. Only **two** of Pender's tenants were female, which is **one third** of Lookout's 25% norm. **4** moved to independent housing, **1** was hospitalized and the **other** is unknown.

Of all the individuals housed this year, **100%** are coping with serious mental illness, **39%** had physical health issues, **17%** physical disability, while another **28%** live with addictions. Most, if not all of our tenants are vulnerable and have conditions that compromise their health. Outreach deals with any issues that arise when people are not following treatment plans and as a result tenant selection has moved toward dealing with individuals that appear to be stable in their treatment regimens and have some outside support system in order to foster more successful outcomes for the clients involved.

Heidi, the liaison Outreach Worker, and the rest of the Outreach Team continue to do wonders to assist the tenants who have few options and are to be commended for the 'at the drop of a hat' service they offer. We thank them, and the owner of Pender, for continuing to partner with us!

BC HOUSING HOTEL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

In April 2007 the government of British Columbia announced its purchase of 12 Single Room Accommodation (SRA) hotels with the purpose to preserve affordable housing stock for low income people at a time of rapidly increasing property values. Announcements of a further purchase followed increasing the total number to 19. This provided the opportunity to repair and renovate the buildings to an acceptable standard so people could feel more safe and secure in their homes as well as providing supportive service to the tenants. One of several non-profit housing organizations selected to manage the properties, Lookout assumed responsibility for the 51-unit Walton Hotel (DTES) on December 1, 2007, and the 40-unit College Place (New Westminster) on January 11, 2008. Although outside the period covered by this report, Lookout also took on Tamura House (DTES) in April 2008.

This year Lookout expanded our permanent housing base when we took over the property management of the entire Tamura House SRO hotel. Previously we had 35 supported units in the building, where we now have responsibility for 110 in total.

Walton Hotel

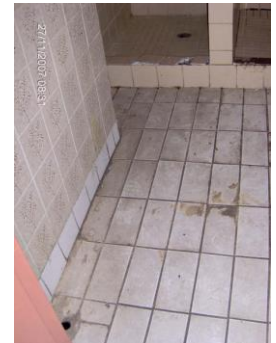
The Walton had 51 rooms available for rental with two shared kitchens on each of the two residential floors as well as shared washrooms. Washrooms specifically designated for women and for men are located in each of the two wings on each floor. Rooms were standard SRA rooms, with larger rooms on the outside walls of the building and smaller ones on the interior. A hotel with significant damage, the Walton closed in May 2008 for extensive renovations by BC Housing.

The original construction plan was for work to occur in two stages, allowing the 39 existing residents to remain in one end of the building as the other underwent renovations. Throughout the early stages of construction, Lookout was able to provide a tenant support worker for three days on site in the hotel. The initial intent was to provide support to residents throughout the chaos and disruption of construction and to begin to build relationships and assess needs with the goal of referring to needed services, such as home support, health care, the mental health team, and in promoting harm reduction.

It became apparent that the condition of the hotel and the scope of the renovations made it impossible for the tenants to remain safely in place during construction. Rot was found in structural beams that made everyone question how the building had stayed upright! Fortunately, there was a number of empty rooms at Tamura House as well as a small number of rooms available in other Lookout sites.



Tenants were very worried initially about whether they would be able to return to what for many, is very long term housing. Only trust of Lookout reduced the stress of relocation. The majority (29) of the Walton residents were able to temporarily move to Tamura. Two residents were placed at Cordova's Residence, several moved to Sakura So and a few have moved elsewhere. Regardless of where they relocated, all have the right to return to the Walton when it re-opens in June 2009.



The Walton staff also moved as a group from the Walton to Tamura, making the transition from contract staff to Lookout employees with the creation of a new job classification – the Building Attendant. Building Attendants are responsible for “manning” the front desk, for building security and property management, and for providing basic assistance to residents.

The move was accomplished by an incredible amount of work by staff and tenants alike. Tenants did heroic work, getting ready to move. Staff and homemakers did enormous amounts of laundry to make the move as pest-free as possible. In spite of all the work and disruption to people's lives, most remained in good humour despite having to pull the move off in just a few weeks.

In the months leading up to the move back to the Walton, tenants have been, and will continue to be, involved in making choices about what their new living space will look like and what will be the guidelines in living there. Tenants met several times to choose colour schemes, to create house rules and to tour the new Walton. Lookout's 'development team' (the Executive Director, Property Manager & Building Support Services Manager) have had significant input into the design and renovation of the building.

Despite looking forward to housing that was being renovated, some 8 individuals did leave the Walton, sadly one tenant passed away. Five left for supported housing, including three (3) individuals who transferred into other Lookout supported housing.

Many thanks to the Tamura tenants who were welcoming of the Walton tenants. Also many thanks to the staff at Tamura for all their support and assistance, including Prosec Security, who provides the security staffing at Tamura. Also many thanks to the Lookout development team, BC Housing and Kindred Construction for creating a wonderful home for us.

College Place

In January of 2008 BC Housing purchased College Place Hotel at the urging of Lookout. Our intent was to save the affordable housing that existed in the building. The College Place Hotel had **55** units of housing when it was taken over, but in April 2008 15 of the units were converted to shelter use. The building was found to be in need of significant repairs including to the mechanical systems, fire system, windows, floors, and in general, just about all needed attention. BC Housing created a renovation plan and with the serious intrusive work needing to be done, the building was closed for renovations. The existing tenants, 25 of them, voluntarily relocated to Peterson Place, a motel run by Fraserside in Surrey, to permit the renovations to proceed in as timely and cost effective way as possible. The tenants are looking forward to returning to their renewed home towards the end of September 2009. All tenants have the right to return to their original rooms (if in existence) when construction is complete in September 2009.

As with the Walton, tenants have been part of the process – helping to choose colours, etc. The excitement displayed at the last meeting was amazing as they were able to see plans and samples of what their redone homes will look like. The hotel, built in 1906, will return to using its historical name once the renovations are complete.

We are very indebted to the tenants who have suffered major inconveniences graciously. We are extremely appreciative of the City of New Westminster for their leadership and support in establishing local solutions to homelessness.

Tamura House

*Originally a partnership program initiated in December 2006, Lookout and St. James Community Services worked together to effectively and affordably meet the housing needs of people coping with challenges. In April 2008, Lookout took over the management of the entire heritage building. The hotel contains 110 rentable units and is owned now by BC Housing. The building overall has **110** rooms available for rental with two shared kitchens on each of the three floors as well as shared washrooms. Washrooms specifically designated for women and for men are located in each of the two wings on each floor. There is also a small TV lounge close to the hotel front desk. Rooms are standard SRA rooms, with larger rooms on the outside walls of the building and smaller ones on the interior.*

*35 units continue as a separate program within the building – providing supported housing for people with a history of homelessness and for those who are currently homeless or at risk in their current housing. This includes people living with mental health issues or physical health problems that do not limit their mobility. A tenant support worker, funded through Vancouver Coastal Health, provides additional support and assistance to these **35** residents. Tenant Support Workers provide a range of services to increase the stability and life skills of these residents, including such services as assessment, referrals/liaison, and management of medications and finances.*

Tamura House Program

From the start of the Tamura program, there were, and continue to be, numerous applicants for the services, indicating the continuing need for supported housing for folks with challenges and disabilities in the Downtown Eastside. As the program enters its third year, there is less turnover and residents are becoming more stable. This past fiscal year, there were **13** new residents, in comparison to the whopping **24** new residents the previous year. New residents came from various locations with the largest group (**7**) from shelters or absolute homelessness.

We have found over the year that we generally had **1** or **2** residents in excess of the **35** rooms we had committed to. This was due to the need to take on residents already in the building in urgent need of program support or to move in folks being discharged from hospital who otherwise would have had to go to a shelter to wait for space at Tamura House.

The majority of Tamura program residents are dealing with mental health issues (an average of **27** residents over the year). Addiction issues are also common with an average of **21** people throughout the year with identified alcohol or drug issues. The number of residents referred to home support or cleaning services continues to increase to a total of **12** by the end of the fiscal year end. And the number of residents requiring support in managing medication continues to increase to an average of **22** over the year. A sense of community is growing despite change and transition and the blending of several groups of people. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we have a Community Kitchen once a week, feeding **30 to 50** people each time.

Tamura Hotel

In Tamura House at large, with Lookout managing the entire building effective April 1, 2008, the staffing profile and personnel have changed dramatically. As noted above, when the Walton Hotel had to close for major renovations, most of the Walton tenants and staff moved to Tamura for the duration of the construction. Building tenants frequently felt unsafe from people coming into the building. This was especially the case with an active drug crowd hanging around the area of Tamura. With approximately **35** Tamura program residents and **29** Walton residents, roughly **40** rooms are available for other residents to rent rooms from Dean, the building coordinator and the front desk staff. The building has also joined the queue of B.C. Housing buildings slated for renovation. While we had hoped that renovations would be extensive, the actual scope of renovations is unclear pending assessment and may not be as complete as we would wish. It appears that renovations will be staged with different systems being renovated at different times. The plumbing is extremely fragile and floods are common; some parts of the building are too hot, other rooms are cold. Washrooms and kitchens are in urgent need of repair. Some repairs to heating and plumbing have occurred to reduce the risk of floods but much needs doing. We look forward to improving the living and working situation for the tenants and staff.