

# Queen's Community Housing Resident's Association

6 December 2023

Community Housing Administration  
169 University Ave,  
Kingston, ON K7L 3P5

Subject: Concerns and consultation on proposed fair access policy changes

Dear Queen's Community Housing,

We, the Queen's Community Housing Resident's Association, are writing to express our thoughts on the proposed "Fair Access Policy Changes" for community housing buildings owned by Queen's University.

While we appreciate that the intention behind these changes is to ensure fair and equitable living conditions, we feel it is essential to address some of the many concerns that are being felt in our community. We support any change that may be beneficial to both residents and the overall community. As low-income tenants, we know firsthand how important affordable housing is, especially during the current cost of living crisis. We believe that everybody should have fair access to affordable housing, and, for this reason, we support the stated intention behind the proposed "Fair Access Policy Changes."

Many of us even support some of the proposed changes, such as the introduction of a lottery-based system for determining access to the limited housing that is available at John Orr and An Clachan. Even though the underlying issue is not an unfair selection process, but an inadequate housing supply, this may be a "fairer" way to determine access. As you well know, these homes are incredibly sought after, and for good reason: they have been a vital lifeline for us, the hundreds of residents who call Queen's Community Housing home.

There are other proposed changes, however, that have raised deep concerns among Community Housing residents. These concerns include lack of transparency around proposed rental rate changes, the fact that these changes are being announced to tenants individually, lease term caps that do not reflect

time to completion, and a lack of information around displacement strategies during re-development at An Clachan.

While Queen's University is claiming certain exemptions from the Rental Tenancies Act, as our landlord, you are not exempt from consulting with an established association of residents. As you may be aware, the residents of An Clachan and John Orr Tower held a town-hall on the 30th of October. All tenants were made aware of the town hall by hand-delivered invitation. At this town hall, tenants voted unanimously to form the Queen's Community Housing Residents Association to serve as a representative body for tenants.

It is our belief that any changes to rental policies, especially those with such potentially devastating impacts, must be made subject to thorough consultation with the resident community. To this end, the Residents Association is ready to facilitate that consultation.

It is our wish to start a dialogue that can lead to a more positive relationship between community housing tenants and our landlord, Queen's University, while also respecting the broader interests of Queen's students and Kingston community members who do not yet have access to affordable housing.

In line with this, we ask that any proposed "Fair Access Policy Changes" undergo a transparent and inclusive consultation process before being implemented. Only through this process can we be sure that our concerns and perspectives, the concerns and perspectives of your tenants, are adequately considered before any final decisions are made.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to the opportunity for constructive dialogue on these proposed changes. You can reach us at the email address listed below. We await your response to coordinate consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Queen's Community Residents Association, An Clachan and John Orr Tower

<qchra23@gmail.com>