

Help for hoarders

Vote to fund support pilots

By KIRSTY JAGGER

FORCING people with hoarding issues to clean-up is an expensive process that is often ineffective.

A modern approach to community well-being, with a focus on hoarding and domestic squalor, was put forward by Canterbury Council at the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW annual conference.

The recommendation, asking that the association makes representations to the State Government to contribute funding to extend pilot projects to establish permanent regional support services, was fully endorsed.

Canterbury Greens councillor Linda Eisler who was at the conference said the councils did not have the resources to deal with hoarding issues appropriately.

"They are hoarding for a reason and that reason isn't changed by a court order," she said.

"They are already alienated because of their behaviour and the court proceedings increase the alienation."

The State Government funded and Catholic Community Services operated Severe Domestic Squalor Project - which only services 19 Local Government areas - is coordinated by Susan Graham who said "just doing a clean-up alone doesn't help".

"Hoarding is not a lifestyle choice, it's a disorder," she said, pointing to undiagnosed mental health issues and age-related illnesses, such as dementia.

"People need ongoing follow-up support services to help them manage their problem over the long term."

The project aims to facilitate holistic assessment and support for people who are living in squalor, foster sustainable solutions for clients, and educate service providers about how to respond when situations of squalor are encountered.

Cr Eisler said the expansion of these services would benefit all involved and she hoped "the State Government will take it on board".

"The community benefits because the issue is resolved, the people benefit because they are no longer marginalised and council and ratepayers benefit because they save money," she said.

If you, or someone you know, suffers from hoarding issues, call 1800 225 474.



Ballerina cracks role

RIVERWOOD'S very own dancing queen has been selected to appear with the Australian Ballet in Sydney's season of the Nutcracker.

Eleven-year-old Sophia Kaloudis (pictured) has made her mark on the dancing scene at both national and international levels. Earlier this year, Sophia pirouetted her way over to Las Vegas to compete in the the most elite dance competition in America - West Coast Dance Explosion - and since her return, has taken out 10 first places in regional competitions.

Her dance teacher, Rebecca Davies, said Sophia "has the focus and determination of an Olympic level athlete with the artistry of a seasoned ballerina".

Now, before competing for the title of Dancer of the Year on the Gold Coast in January, Sophia will take to the Opera House stage for Sir Peter Wright's

production of the Nutcracker from December 3-22. Tickets, \$29-\$160. Bookings, 1300 369 741.

Bush

From page 1

Cr Byrne said that with way of natural heritage "immense pressure to remaining valuable have".

"The Labor Government full responsibility for assert its authority and deliver on its promise land to the people," she

An RTA spokesperson "some land near Woll be required" for the Mission but said that plan