

# Graduate Housing Consultative Council Door Knocking Campaign Spring – July 2023

## » EVENT SUMMARY

On **Monday, July 24, 2023**, Campus Housing staff knocked on doors throughout the CLV Graduate Housing community to talk with students about any/all topics that residents felt were relevant to the graduate housing experience.

The objective of the evening was to:

- Provide Graduate Housing residents with an outlet to share what they enjoy about living in CLV, and to raise questions or concerns on any topics/issues relevant to their time in residence.
- Create transparency around any Campus Housing decisions or practices that affect Graduate Housing residents in CLV-North & CLV-South.
- Gather meaningful information directly from graduate residents about their overall Campus Housing experiences.

To facilitate the event, **24 Campus Housing staff** were divided into teams to engage in discussion with Graduate Housing residents. In total, **65 CLV townhouse units** (of 175 occupied units) and **over 75 graduate housing residents** (21% of community) were engaged, providing valuable feedback on how to make CLV the best community for graduate students.

## » STUDENT FEEDBACK THEMES

**Maintenance & Unit Conditions** - Generally, residents had positive things to say about their experiences interacting with maintenance in CLV. There were also suggestions for future features in townhouse units, e.g., air-conditioning. Specifically:

- CLV maintenance interactions were generally described as being “*responsive*”, “*helpful*”, and timely.
- **The most popular request from residents was for air-conditioning** (or alternative temperature control options) to be available in the townhouses. Several residents even commented that fans do not work well against high humidity in spring terms.
- Other future furniture/unit suggestions included:
  - a. larger mattresses for bedrooms,
  - b. larger fridges/freezers for kitchens,
  - c. removal of carpets (hard to clean!), and
  - d. more ergonomic chairs/desks.
- Overall, residents appreciated that CLV townhouses are already furnished for grad residents.



## **Programming & Community Events** – Majority of students that participated in the Spring 2023 CLV Door

Knocking Campaign generally had a positive residence experience at CLV. Specifically:

- Residents really appreciated the Grad Don teams' responsiveness and community building efforts.
- Many residents enjoyed attending CLV programs (particularly the pancake breakfast and other food events!) and getting to know others in the community.
- Lots of comments highlighted the benefits of diverse programs, newsletters, and the Teams channel.
- Residents shared it was great meeting new people in CLV, and that they appreciated connecting with others directly through the school. It is clear that the residents living here are the heart of the CLV's strong community.
- A few comments included suggestions such as: more tournaments (e.g., tennis, volleyball), and more community center equipment sign-out options (e.g., more ping-pong paddles, etc.).

**CLV Greenery** – Many residents commented on the opportunities to enhance CLV's outdoor greenspace and landscaping. More specifically:

- Majority of residents appreciated the greenery surrounding CLV, enjoying the environment where they get to see animals and plants.
- When discussing the greenery around CLV, several residents complained about bugs in their units and would prefer having inspections for pests/bugs. A few comments also requested more support on how residents can deal with local pests (e.g., beetles and spiders in summer, etc.).
- A few residents suggested beautifying CLV's landscape with flowers, bushes, or more trees. Others had more practical sustainable and community-oriented suggestions, such as: collecting rainwater, creating a compostable area, or establishing a CLV community garden (very popular suggestion!).

**Application Process** – A few residents mentioned the application process, mostly describing the application and renewal process positively. Specifically:

- Majority of residents described the application process as straightforward and "*smooth*".
- The renewal process was well-received. However, a few residents commented on how early renewals happened, describing it as stressful experience for residents that had just moved in.

## **Miscellaneous** –

- Overall, residents spoke openly, positively, and constructively about their CLV experience.
- Numerous residents spoke highly of their roommates and enjoyed sharing their spaces with other students.
- A couple of residents expressed a desire for direct cable internet (in addition to wireless).
- A few comments suggested safety enhancements in the community (e.g., cameras, SCS presence, etc.)
- Many residents shared examples of positive interactions with all of the CLV FDAs (ResServices), the Grad Dons (ResLife), Nick (London Properties), Sheila & the After Hours team (Facilities), Abbey (Grad RLC), and the Central Housing inbox team (Housing Advisors/CODs). Thank you!

## APPENDIX: Additional Comments

(supportive examples of themes above and/or additional comments not included in summary themes)

### Is there anything specific that you would change or keep the same about your CLV experience?

- Air Conditioning! high humidity in summer makes a simple fan not effective.
- Not a fan of carpet; Vacuuming carpet is hard; need some carpet TLC.
- Compost program; Organic bin, one that's closer.
- Steps to the community center needs replacement
- Need deep cleaning of carpet once a year.
- Current bug deterrents don't work; worse when windows are open!
- Garbage removal is too early at 8am
- 1 bathroom for four people isn't enough.
- Small bathroom, low water pressure; Bathtub is old and fractured.
- Draining system needs improvement.
- Backdoor key, future planning
- Want full sized fridge and dishwasher, microwaves, toaster to share as roommates; One fridge for 4 people is not enough; No rack in freezer, small.
- Need better mattresses, small size is not appropriate.
- Loved that it was furnished. Didn't have to buy anything.
- Unify the newer furniture; Make it a bit more modern; Make quality furniture consistent, some are old/used.
- Want ergonomic chairs, adjustable height + arms; Desk is too short, chair is too high, so chair doesn't tuck; Stiff after long periods of time; Need desk light, attached bar light with chord strung through desk shelf section.
- Want reach-out emails before move-in with roommates.
- Roommates are all computer science, variety would help.
- Want preference form for roommates (loud sounds, sleep time, etc.); Form where students can specify preferences and get closer to perfect matches, will run into fewer issues between roommates.
- Lawn mowers came very early (7-8am) prefer later time to avoid being woken; Lawn mowers are here too often, makes grass look dead and brown; Please change time for lawn mowing to 5-6pm
- Permission, space for gardening; Community Garden and/or composting
- CLVS picnic tables on the north side
- Wish for direct internet hookup (better than Wi-Fi); Need cable internet for certain majors like computer science.
- Want SCS to do more rounds again, safety.
- Renewal is too early; Didn't give a time estimation, got it right at start of moving in which was so stressful for a new international student that didn't have plans together; Flexibility regarding contract renewals would be beneficial as predicting your stay can be challenging – push back dates for renewals.
- Regarding the environment, many residents would like to see compost and recycling bins be installed.
- Increase in low flow water.
- Specific furniture change requests by residents: Tables are rigid and cannot be adjusted; Desk chairs give residents back pain; Chairs have no arms; Fill basement with more furniture – feels better utilized; Larger beds; Add more furniture (extra sofas and chairs) to make home feel cozy; Add outdoor furniture, such as park benches.
- One resident wished for CLV to allow pets.
- Residents enjoy that packages go to the front desk as this way, they do not have to worry about packages being left on their porches; One resident mentioned that they enjoy receiving the notifications about their packages being ready for pick-up.
- Some residents would prefer a more welcoming orientation.
- Residents would like to be notified when maintenance staff is swinging by; Fire extinguisher checks.
- Residents enjoy the consistent communication that takes place via email.
- One resident asked to remove the \$500 admin fee.
- Residents would like that the pathway lighting be fixed around the whole community.



- Though the buses can be infrequent on the weekends, residents understand that walking can be an option.
- Some residents expressed that sometimes, it gets quite loud during the night, making it hard to sleep.
- Residents mentioned that the “connection between family and grad students seems good.”
- Garbage tends to get left around dumpsters.
- Residents tend to feel safe living at CLV as it is affiliated with the University of Waterloo
- Residents would prefer having contact information readily available for emergency calls.
- Residents would like their units to be cleaned thoroughly before move-in to replace and refine old furniture.
- Residents would like free parking in the summertime.
- Residents appreciate the prompt responses from maintenance.

#### **Other Questions or Notes:**

- Reasonable distance to campus
- Reasonable price for what is being offered.
- Residents would like the shuttle bus to be restored.
- One resident preferred direct delivery of mail to units instead of the CC
- One resident would have liked to meet for Canadian and International students to become more fluent in English
- One resident noted that they were very grateful for the Campus Housing community
- When thinking about the safety of children, residents would like speed limit signs and speed bumps added in-between units
- Information is communicated accurately and in a timely manner
- Good value for the fees that residents are paying
- Snow can get a bit heavy in winter to shovel out snow around car