

**RENTAL HOUSING & SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
SURVEY OF MARLOTH GARDENS  
(Owned by Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council)**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR) acknowledges with deep appreciation Hemalini Naidoo's painstaking assistance in making this study possible. The tenants of Marloth Gardens are also thanked for taking time to respond to the questionnaire. Sue Gosnold of Marloth Gardens in particular needs to be singled out for her liaison between the OCR and the tenants and for taking the responsibility of administering the questionnaires, collecting and delivering them to the OCR.

We extend our appreciation to officials of the Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council who were very co-operative in providing background information.

**Angel Paulsen**  
General Secretary

June 2001

## MARLOTH GARDENS SURVEY RESULTS\*

**Sample Size:** 48 (100%)  
**Number Responded:** 38 (79%)  
**Period under Review:** May/ June 2001

### 1. METHODOLOGY

#### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

##### **Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR) and Marloth Gardens' Tenants**

The OCR has been working for the past 15 months with a group of tenants living in buildings owned by the Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council. The tenants are predominantly "white" women occupying 48 units in four blocks called Marloth Gardens situated at Evered Poole Place, off Sydenham Hill, opposite the Botanic Gardens. Last year, the OCR successfully persuaded Council to install a remote controlled security gate after years of ignoring the requests and petition of tenants. The OCR has been further mandated by the tenants to investigate the possibility of their blocks being sectionalised, thereby affording them the opportunity of buying their individual units.

#### 1.2. PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

The OCR conducted a survey in Marloth Gardens in May 2001 in an attempt to determine the attitudes of the tenants to sectionalising the buildings, the socio-economic conditions and other matters related to tenancy. Thirty eight out of forty eight tenants responded to the survey.

#### 1.3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are to: -

- (i) identify briefly the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents;
- (ii) identify the household size;
- (iii) determine the period of tenancy and the conditions under which the respondents live;
- (iv) ascertain whether the respondents prefer owning their present rental accommodation;
- (v) develop a proposal to Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council based on the findings of the study.

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\* This study was made possible through the funding by Albaraka Bank, Durban

#### **1.4. STUDY AREA: MARLOTH GARDENS**

Marloth Gardens, which occupies approximately 6 acres of land was purchased by Council in 1929 for £4 620. It consists of 4 blocks of 12 flats each, which were constructed in the 1940s from funding provided by the Durban City Council. Initially, it was used solely to house people from the “white race group”, especially war veterans. Since 1992, in keeping with changing policy requirements of the Durban Metro Council people previously excluded because of “race” have been afforded the opportunity to acquire rental accommodation at Marloth Gardens.

#### **1.5. SAMPLING FRAME**

There are 48 tenants, all of whom were sampled for the study. The overall majority of the tenants are “white”<sup>1</sup>.

#### **1.6. DATA SOURCE**

A questionnaire provided the basis for the investigation to obtain the necessary data. OCR’s involvement with the tenants and representation on their behalf to Council on matters relating to their tenancy as well as their concerns about Council’s reluctance to sell the individual units directed OCR to formulate a constructive strategy to deal with the question of possible ownership. The structure and design of the questionnaire were therefore influenced by the aims and objectives of the study. To facilitate the process of analysis, questions were structured, with one question being open-ended for responses.

The questionnaire was divided into: -

- Socio-economic characteristics:  
Variables included age, gender, occupation, level of income, household size, number of dependents, breakdown of household and period of residency.
- Conditions of tenancy:  
Variables in this section included rental, receipts, dwelling size, agreement and conditions therein.
- Conditions pertaining to flats / buildings:  
Variables included maintenance and specific problems.
- Ownership:  
Respondents were asked whether they were interested in owning their flat.

#### **1.7. INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE**

OCR approached representatives of the Tenants’ Committee to carry out the survey because of the excellent rapport between the committee members and the rest of the tenants.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix

The tables and graphs below provide an overview of the responses of the tenants surveyed.

## 2. ANALYSIS

### 2.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

#### 2.1.1. Age:

Age Category	No. of Respondents
25 – 35 years	4
36 – 45 years	5
46 – 55 years	12
56 – 65 years	5
66 – 75 years	5
76 – 85 years	1

#### 2.1.2. Gender:

Male	14
Female	24

#### Age - Gender

Most of the respondents (47%) are between 46 and 55 years, 26% between 56 and 75 years and twenty four percent between 25 and 45 years (Table 2.1.1.). Of these, 63% are female and 37% are male (Table 2.1.2.).

#### 2.1.3. Are you employed?

Yes	27
No	7
Retired	2
Part – time	2

#### 2.1.4. Occupation?

Administrator	1
Book keeper	2
Book keeper / secretary	1
Buyer	1
Clerk	2
Computer clerk	1
Disability grant	1
Driver	1
Hairdresser	2
Handyman	2
Housewife	2
Import manager	1
Machine operator	1

Manager	1
Pensioner	4
Receptionist	1
Salary administrator	1
Sales	1
Secretary	4
Supervisor	1
Supervisor / pensioner	1
Switchboard operator	1
Temporary assignments	1
Wage clerk	1
Welding foreman	1
No response	2

### **Employment - Occupation**

Seventy one percent of the respondents are employed full time, 5% hold part-time employment, 18% are unemployed with 5% retirees (Table 2.1.3.). Occupation varies from white collar to blue collar work with one person receiving a disability grant, two are pensioners and two did not respond to the question (Table 2.1.4.).

#### 2.1.5. Income per month?

<b>&lt; R1 000</b>	5
<b>R1 000 – R1 999</b>	4
<b>R2 000 – R2 999</b>	7
<b>R3 000 – R3 999</b>	8
<b>R4 000 – R4 999</b>	3
<b>R5 000 – R5 999</b>	-
<b>R6 000 – R6 999</b>	3
<b>R7 000 – R7 999</b>	-
<b>R8 000 – R8 999</b>	-
<b>R9 000 – R9 999</b>	-
<b>R10 000 and above</b>	1
<b>Collects Unemployment</b>	1
<b>“Did not Disclose” – personal/confidential information</b>	3
<b>No response</b>	3

### **Income per month – Individual respondent**

Thirteen percent of the respondents earned R1 000.00 or less, 11% between R1 000.00 and R1 999.00, and 18% between R2 000.00 and R2 999.00. Twenty one percent received an income of R3 000.00 and R3 999.00 with 8% receiving between R6 000.00 and R6 000.00. One person received an income of R10 000.00 and above and one percent in receipt of UIF (Unemployment Insurance Fund). Eight percent did not disclose income information stating this information to be personal or confidential with 8% not having responded at all.

#### 2.1.6. Total income of household?

<b>&lt; R1 000</b>	1
<b>R1 000 – R1 999</b>	2
<b>R2 000 – R2 999</b>	5
<b>R3 000 – R3 999</b>	11
<b>R4 000 – R4 999</b>	5
<b>R5 000 – R5 999</b>	1
<b>R6 000 – R6 999</b>	3
<b>R7 000 – R7 999</b>	-
<b>R8 000 – R8 999</b>	-
<b>R9 000 – R9 999</b>	-
<b>R10 000 and above</b>	1
<b>Personal / confidential information</b>	3
<b>No response</b>	6

### Total income of Household

The total income per household ranged from one household's income being R1 000.00 or less per month, 5% between R1 000.00 and R1 999.00, and 13% between R2 000.00 and R2 999.00. Twenty nine percent have a total income of between R3 000.00 and R3 999.00 with 16% between R4 000.00 and R6 000.00. Eight percent had a total income of between R6 000.00 and R6 999.00 and 3% between R10 000.00 and above. Eight percent did not disclose this information stating this information to be personal or confidential with 16% not having responded at all to the question.

#### 2.1.7. Number of dependents:

<b>1</b>	6
<b>2</b>	11
<b>3</b>	1
<b>4</b>	5
<b>5</b>	1
<b>None</b>	13
<b>No response</b>	1

### Dependents

Twenty nine percent of the respondents had two dependents while 16% had one dependent, 3% had three dependents, 13% had four dependents and 3% had five dependents. The majority of the respondents had no dependents (34%) and one respondent did not respond to this question.

#### 2.1.8. Number in household:

<b>1</b>	4
<b>2</b>	10
<b>3</b>	12
<b>4</b>	5
<b>5</b>	4
<b>6</b>	2
<b>No response</b>	1

#### 2.1.9. Breakdown of persons in household:

<b>Spouse/partner</b>	<b>Yes</b>	15
	<b>No</b>	16
	<b>No response</b>	7
<b>Children</b>	<b>Yes</b>	27
	<b>No response</b>	11
<b>Other</b>	<b>Specified</b>	6
	<b>No response</b>	32

- Other specified includes: sister-in-law, 3 grandchildren, mother / father / mother-in-law, mother-in-law, sister and mother

### **Number in Household and Breakdown of Persons in Household**

The number of people living in a flat varied from 1 person to 6 people with 32% having 3 members in the household and 5% having 6 members in a household. The number of respondents having only 1 person and 5 people in a household were equal at 11% each while 26% had 2 people in a household and 13% had 4 members in a household (Table 2.1.8.).

Thirty nine percent of the respondents had a spouse or partner while 42% did not have one and 18% did not respond to the question (Table 2.1.9.). The majority of the respondents (71%) had children living with them while there was no response from 29%. Sixteen percent of the respondents had other members of their family besides spouses or partners and children living with them. These included parents, in-laws, siblings and grandchildren.

#### 2.1.10. Period of tenancy

<b>1 – 12 months</b>	1
<b>1 – 2 years</b>	3
<b>3 – 5 years</b>	4
<b>6 – 8 years</b>	3
<b>9 – 10 years</b>	5
<b>11 years and more</b>	21
<b>No response</b>	1

#### 2.1.11. If more than 11 years, please indicate period of tenancy.

<b>12 years</b>	3
<b>13 years</b>	2
<b>14 years</b>	1
<b>15 years</b>	1
<b>16 years</b>	2
<b>17 years</b>	2
<b>18 years</b>	1
<b>19 years</b>	2
<b>21 years</b>	1
<b>22 years</b>	1
<b>23 years</b>	1
<b>25 years</b>	1
<b>26 years</b>	1
<b>30 years</b>	1
<b>32 years</b>	1

### **Period of Tenancy**

This varied from a few months to thirty two years. Twenty one percent lived at Marloth Gardens for five years or less which was the same for those who lived there for 6 to 10 years, 13% for 9 to 10 years and the majority of respondents (55%) have been tenants at Marloth Gardens for 11 years and more (Table 2.1.10.).

For those tenants that lived at Marloth Gardens for more than 11 years, 14% indicated 12 years and 13% lived at Marloth Gardens for a period ranging from 13 to 32 years..

## 2.2. CONDITIONS OF TENANCY

### 2.2.1. What is your rental?

<b>R835.00</b>	1
<b>R840.00</b>	1
<b>R845.00</b>	18
<b>R845.00 + garage</b>	1
<b>R845.00 + maids quarters (R33.00)</b>	1
<b>R845.00 + electricity (R62)</b>	1
<b>R845.00 + garage (R84.50)</b>	1
<b>R845.00 + R90 for garage &amp; electricity</b>	1
<b>R850.00</b>	2
<b>R850.00 + garage (R88)</b>	1
<b>R875.00</b>	1
<b>R878.00 excl. vat &amp; electricity</b>	1
<b>Approx. R900.00</b>	1
<b>R929.50</b>	1
<b>R929.50 (incl. garage)</b>	1
<b>R966.00 + electricity, water, etc.</b>	1
<b>R980.00</b>	1
<b>R1 050</b>	1
<b>R1 160.00</b>	1
<b>No response</b>	1

### 2.2.2. How is it paid

<b>Weekly</b>	-
<b>Monthly</b>	38
<b>Other</b>	-

### 2.2.3. Do you get a receipt?

<b>Yes</b>	28
<b>No</b>	10

### Rentals, Payment and Receipts

All the respondents (100%) paid their rentals on a monthly basis (Table 2.2.2.) with 74% being issued a receipt (Table 2.2.3.). Rentals paid by each tenant varied from R835.00 to R1 160.00 (Table 2.2.1.), with the majority (60%) paying a rental of R845.00. Of these, 8% paid additional rental for garages and quarters for domestic staff.

#### 2.2.4. Size of the flat

<b>1 Bedroom</b>	-
<b>2 Bedrooms</b>	38
<b>3 Bedrooms</b>	-
<b>Lounge</b>	31
<b>Dining Room</b>	6
<b>Kitchen</b>	34
<b>Other</b>	23

<b>Other Includes:</b>	
Unspecified	5
Porch	11
Sleeping porch / bathroom	1
Verandah	2
Porch / toilet / bathroom	3
Toilet / bathroom	1

#### Size of the Flat

All the flats have two bedrooms. Other features included lounges, dining rooms and kitchens. Eighty two percent of the flats had a lounge while 16% had a dining room and 89% a kitchen. Sixty one percent of the respondents indicated “other” and of these five respondents did not specify what “other” was, 11 indicated that it was a porch. Two respondents also indicated that they had a combined lounge and dining room while one had 2½ bedrooms.

#### 2.2.5. Did you sign a lease agreement?

<b>Yes</b>	33
<b>No</b>	3
<b>No response</b>	1
<b>Not sure</b>	1

- The respondent who did not respond to the question could not remember signing a lease agreement.

#### 2.2.6. Were you given a copy of the lease agreement?

<b>Yes</b>	31
<b>No</b>	5
<b>No response</b>	2

- The respondents with no response indicated that (s)he could not remember.

#### 2.2.7. Were the conditions of the lease agreement explained to you?

<b>Yes</b>	28
<b>No</b>	9
<b>No response</b>	1

- The respondent with no response indicated that (s)he could not remember.

### 2.2.8. Do you know what the conditions of the lease agreement are?

<b>Yes</b>	32
<b>No</b>	4
<b>No response</b>	2

- Of the 2 no responses one could not remember and the other was not sure

### **Lease**

Regarding the signing of a lease agreement, 87% said they did, 8% indicated that they did not sign and 5% were not sure.

As for copies of the lease agreement, 82% of the respondents said they were given copies while 13% did not receive copies and 2 did not respond at all. The conditions of the lease agreement were explained to 74% of the respondents but 24% indicated that the conditions were not explained to them. There was one no response.

Regarding knowledge of the conditions of the lease agreement, 84% indicated they were aware of the conditions, 11% did not know what conditions the lease contained and 5% did not respond to the question.

## **2.3. CONDITIONS PERTAINING TO FLATS / BUILDINGS**

### 2.3.1. Are you satisfied with the maintenance of the premises:

<b>Internal</b>	<b>Yes</b>	8
	<b>No</b>	25
	<b>No response</b>	5
<b>External</b>	<b>Yes</b>	18
	<b>No</b>	14
	<b>No response</b>	6

### **Maintenance**

The majority of the respondents (66%) were not satisfied with the internal maintenance of their flats, 21% said they were satisfied with 13% not having responded at all. Regarding external maintenance, 47% were rated as being satisfied, 37% not satisfied with 16% not having responded.

2.3.2. If not, what are some of the problems?

<b>Interior:</b> Leakage	12
Plumbing	14
Window frames	20
Electrical problems	10
Structural problems e.g. cracks in the wall	21
Other – <i>specify</i>	16
<b>Other includes:</b>	
Bathroom	1
Bathroom leakage ceiling	1
Borer in woodwork	1
Bugs and borers	1
Dampness	1
Dampness / borer	1
Dampness causing paint to peel	1
Dampness in the kitchen	1
Doors	1
Doors need to be fixed / new toilet set / painting	1
Flooring	1
Paint peeling / borer	1
Painting	2
Painting / floorboards	1
Woodborer / paint peeling	1
<b>Exterior:</b> <i>specify</i>	16
<b>Other includes:</b>	
Brickwork on stairwell not completed properly and road to garage in a shocking condition	1
Children dirtying corridors – needs to be washed by cleaners / need to wash and polish stairs	1
Corrugated road behind flat / fence / gate locks	1
Dampness	1
Garage roof leaks	1
Garden untidy and wash-lines broken	1
Gardens / fence / backgate / garage door	1
General appearance including painting, gardens, road and clothes line	1
Improve driveway and garage areas	1
Painting	2
Plumbing / peeling paint / electrical / flooring / leakages	1
Problems re garden service / stairs are cracked	1
Problems with outer walls between kitchen and bathroom	1
Tiles	1
Windows need to be cleaned	1
<b>No response at all to the question</b>	7

## Problems

Interior problems included leakage, dampness, wood-borer, floorboards, doors, painting, plumbing, window frames, electrical and structural problems. The most common problem was structural problems (55%), followed by window frames (53%), plumbing (37%), leakage (32%), and electrical (26%).

Forty two percent of the respondents experienced problems with maintenance to the exterior of the building, the gardens, driveway and garage. Eighteen percent of the respondents did not respond to the question at all.

### 2.3.3. Are your complaints regarding the premises attended to by the landlord?

Yes	15
No	15
No response	8

## Complaints

Regarding attendance to complaints respondents were equally divided to their complaints being attended to (39%) and not attended to (39%). Twenty one percent of the respondents did not respond to the question.

Although 39% of the respondents indicated that their complaints were attended to, some qualified their response by stating that a delay often exists in their complaints being attended to or not always attended to.

## 2.4. OWNERSHIP

### 2.4.1. Are you interested in owning your flat?

Yes	37
No	1

## Ownership

Ninety seven percent of the respondents said they were interested in owning their respective flats. Only one respondent said that he / she was not interested because of relocating.

## 2.5. ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

The respondents' comments to this open-ended question included: -

- Being afforded the right to buy / own their individual flats
- Concern about whether renovations would take place prior to the sale of flats
- Need for recreational facilities for children, more carports / garages, resident caretaker and cleaning services
- Council unable to maintain or attend to repairs on a regular basis because of lack of funds
- Compliments to the Marloth Gardens Tenants' Association
- Council needs to deal with rent defaulters.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council's policy is based on the National Government's vision and belief that all South Africans on a progressive basis will, through the establishment of viable, socially and economically integrated communities, have (*inter alia*) access to a permanent residential structure and secure tenure. Council has emerged as a "leader" in housing delivery among local authorities in the country (Mercury, High Road, October 26, 1999). The First Metro Housing Company has embarked on a very ambitious and laudable project that of developing rental housing stock with the option to its tenants to buy their respective units.

According to Kentridge (1996) housing does not exist in isolation, its policy and delivery program co-exists with other socio-economic factors. Economic growth, income distribution and employment are some of the factors that impact on housing and *vice versa*, being an integral part of the macro-economy.

At Marloth Gardens most tenants are economically active-settled community with a large number of tenants have been renting from Council for 11 years, up to 32 years. The Durban Metropolitan Unicity Council needs to consider sectionalising the four buildings at Marloth Gardens to afford these tenants the opportunity of ownership.

The sale of the flats will generate "substantial" income to Council as well as regular income through rates.

In determining the selling price it should not be market related in view of the age of the buildings, its original construction costs and the fact that the market values in and around the vicinity of Marloth Gardens is artificially inflated by very affluent developers and owners.

As long as Council remains a landlord, it needs to ensure regular and efficient maintenance and repair work, deal equitably with rental arrears and assist destitute tenants through its hardship funds.

## APPENDIX

### “Racial” Breakdown of Tenants

	<b>Wylie Court</b>	<b>Bews Court</b>	<b>Sim Court</b>	<b>Burchell Court</b>
<b>1.</b>	White	Indian	White	White
<b>2.</b>	White	White	White	Black
<b>3.</b>	White	White	White	White
<b>4.</b>	White	White	White	White
<b>5.</b>	White	Indian	Coloured	White
<b>6.</b>	White	Black	White	White
<b>7.</b>	White	White	White	Coloured
<b>8.</b>	White	White	Black	Black
<b>9.</b>	Indian	Coloured	Indian	White
<b>10.</b>	White	White	White	Indian
<b>11.</b>	White	White	White	Black
<b>12.</b>	White	White	White	Coloured

Whites: 34  
Blacks: 5  
Indians: 5  
Coloureds: 4  
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