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Hackett brushes up to lure new tenants

Grooming Hackett: George Duckworth, left, was among local residents who cleaned up at the Hackett shops yesterday. Picture: ADAM McLEAN

By GRAHAM DOWNIE

With about half of the Hackett shops empty, 55 people got stuck in yesterday to clean up the centre.

Their work included removal of dust and cobwebs and pressure-cleaning windows and walls of the centre. They removed all posters, changed potting mix in planter boxes and re-planted. They also replaced asphalt with cement filling.

The catalyst for yesterday's clean-up was a community meeting on April 3 attended by about 150 people. It encouraged the Neighbourhood Watch group to arrange yesterday's clean-up.

The initiative attracted the presence of three members of the ACT Legislative Assembly Planning Minister Simon Corbell, Opposition spokeswoman on planning Helen Cross and Greens MLA Kerrie Tucker.

Organiser Jolanta Gallagher said yesterday she was delighted with the support by the politicians and the people who had helped with the clean up. "We were wanting to assure the long-term sustainability of the centre," she said.

It has a supermarket, a shop selling alternative and Chinese medicine, two hairdressers, a restaurant and a bakery.

"We just needed to indicate we are interested in maintaining interest," Mrs Gallagher said.

It was hoped publicity would interest potential tenants. "We need to have a coffee shop, book shop and perhaps art gallery," she said.

Some type of health service and community space would also be welcomed.