

LEADING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN

# Canterbury



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
*Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora*



REGIONAL PLAN 2006/2007



**MINISTRY OF  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIDHI  
*Administered by the Ministry of Social Development*



### Cover Photos

- Left: The *Working for Families* package will make it easier for more children to access early childhood education.
- Centre: A client now in work (right), after participating in the *Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes*.
- Right: A trainee participating in the *City Care Pre-apprenticeship* programme (photo courtesy of City Care).

# Leading Social Development:

A PLAN FOR CANTERBURY 2006 / 2007



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# Achieving Better Social Outcomes Together

Our Ministry of Social Development 2006/2007 Regional Plan sets out the priorities and direction for the Canterbury region. It paints a picture of how we intend to achieve the things that will make a real difference in the lives of this region's families and communities.

We can't do this alone! We need to be well connected to our central and local government partners. By working in partnership with the people of Canterbury, our communities will get an accessible service that meets their needs.

Within the Ministry we have a growing number of regional services and activities. Under the leadership of the Regional Commissioner for Social Development the challenge is to ensure that these services are aligned, strongly led and tightly focused on the social development outcomes that matter.

Families are under pressure. Experience shows that they face many challenges. We strive to support parents and families to ensure all children get the best

possible start in life; and that anyone accessing our services is guided through to the right place to get the help they need. Our merger with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services on 1 July 2006 strengthens our ability to achieve these outcomes.

Record low unemployment presents a new set of opportunities for us. Although the number of working-age<sup>1</sup> New Zealanders receiving a benefit has decreased significantly in the last five years, some groups remain at risk of long-term benefit receipt, and therefore lower living standards. There is a real opportunity for us to focus on the groups that need extra help to move in to and hold on to sustainable employment.

We have set these goals because we know that if they are achieved they will contribute positively to the wellbeing of the people of the Canterbury region, they will enrich your communities and improve the lives of all New Zealanders.

We look forward to working to achieve these goals with you!



**Peter Hughes**  
Chief Executive



1. Working-age people are those aged between 18 to 64 years (inclusive).

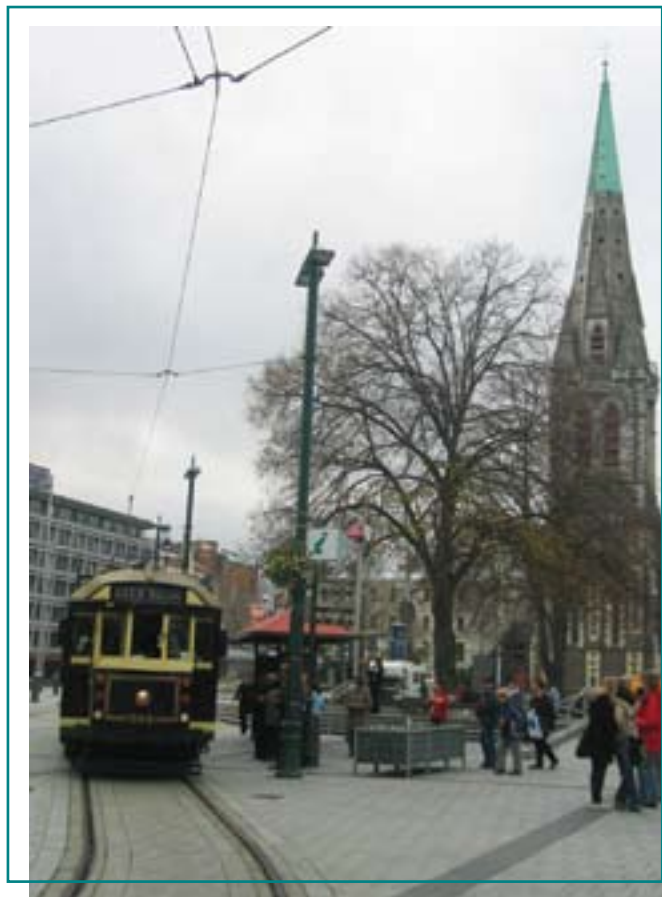
# Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

## Our region

For the purposes of this plan, the Canterbury region is defined as the area that extends from the Conway River in North Canterbury through to the Rangitata River in the south, and from the Pacific Ocean to Arthur's Pass.

With the amalgamation of Banks Peninsula district into the Christchurch City Council catchment, we support the *Community Outcomes* of six local authorities - Hurunui and Waimakariri District Councils, the Christchurch City Council, the Selwyn and Ashburton District Councils and Environment Canterbury.

Statistics New Zealand provisional estimates as at 30 June 2006 puts the usually resident population of the region at 468,500<sup>2</sup>. These estimates show significant growth in both the Waimakariri and Selwyn districts, with projections indicating that rural areas with high urban influence close to Christchurch such as Rangiora, Oxford, Rolleston and Leeston are likely to increase their population at more than twice the national average between 2001 and 2021.



The Square is the heart of Christchurch City.

2. *Subnational Population Projections, 2001 - 2026*, Statistics New Zealand.

## Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

In 2001, 91.8%<sup>3</sup> of people in the region identified themselves as European. However, the region continues to experience an expanding ethnic diversity. Whilst the proportion represented by Māori and Pacific peoples has remained reasonably constant over the past few years, there has been a significant increase in Asian and other minority ethnicities, particularly in Christchurch City.

Youth as a percentage of the projected total population in Christchurch City is expected to decline after a peak in 2006/2007. In contrast, but consistent with overall population projections, continued growth in youth numbers for Waimakariri and Selwyn is likely until 2026.

The March 2006 Household Labour Force Survey shows the national unemployment rate for young people (under the age of 20 years) is three times that of the total working-age population. Our investment in young people has contributed to some positive results, and youth now represent a lower proportion of our unemployed than in the past. However, young people, Māori in particular, remain over represented in the areas of offending and poor educational achievement. Improving educational, employment and social outcomes for young people is still one of the best investments we can make.

Violence has a huge impact on children and families. Due to domestic violence, five people have died in the past year, and police are being called to more than 400 incidents a month in Christchurch<sup>4</sup>. Isolation, poor health, substance abuse and suicide are often connected to situations of violence. Assisting people to live free from violence, abuse and neglect is a significant contribution we can make to our communities.

The Canterbury region contributes 14.6% of the national GDP, second behind Auckland, and regional economic growth averaged 4.8% between March 2000 and March 2004<sup>5</sup>.

Manufacturing, ranging from primary processing to the production of metal products, machinery, equipment and electronics, is Canterbury's most important industry. The agriculture, forestry and fishing industries are crucial in the districts of Ashburton, Hurunui and Selwyn where they represent a significant proportion of local employment and there is also high demand for retail and hospitality staff.

Overall, the outlook for Canterbury's economy suggests we could experience slower growth. However, employment participation levels are predicted to remain high, with unemployment remaining low.

3. *Census of Population and Dwelling, Community Profile*, Census 2001, Statistics New Zealand.

4. *Declaring war on home violence*, The Christchurch Mail, 15 March 2006.

5. *Creating Tomorrow's Canterbury*, Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy 2005 - 2015.

## Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

There are mid-ranging indicators of skill and labour shortages right across the South Island. Despite having low unemployment rates, a significant number of businesses still report having difficulties recruiting the labour they require.

There are 32,741<sup>6</sup> working-age people in the region receiving income-tested benefits. Many of these are sole parents and people suffering from an illness or disability.

Over the past 40 years, the shape and circumstances of families has changed considerably. The number of two-parent families in Canterbury is declining, and around one in five families are now supported by a single parent. These parents have the same work aspirations for themselves and their children as we all do, but often the challenges faced by these families are much greater.

One fifth of all New Zealanders live with a disability classified as requiring assistance. Consistent with national trends, Canterbury continues to see a growth in the number of people receiving income support for an illness or a disability. The *New Zealand Disability Strategy*<sup>7</sup> highlights the Government's commitment to promoting an inclusive society where people with disabilities are highly valued and encouraged to participate fully in their communities.

By working with employers and industry, and enhancing our services to better meet the challenges of today, we can help more of these working-age people take full advantage of the job opportunities that are available.

The 2001 Census showed that 13.8% of the region's population was aged over 65 years. Over the long term, we expect that both the number and proportion of older people will continue to increase.

The wide-ranging effects of an ageing population will become much more pronounced from 2011 when the 'baby boomers' start to reach retirement. Effective planning will be key to meeting the changing needs of this growing population.

### Our priorities and focus

The Government's aim is to promote freedom with responsibility and to support people, families and communities towards independence. This requires a strong economy (business confidence and a good supply of job opportunities) and strong social wellbeing (people skilled to meet the needs of the labour market, who are able to stay in work).

Māori, Pacific peoples, migrants and refugees, young people, single-parent families and people with a disability or illness remain over-represented among those who are most disadvantaged. We cannot afford to have a significant proportion of our population not participating fully in the social and economic success of our region.

### Driving towards success



Work and Income is matching job seekers to companies facing skill and labour shortages.

Red Bus was having difficulty finding staff, so through a partnership approach, Work and Income began referring clients to training provider Driving Solutions to ensure new recruits have the driving skills and necessary licences before being employed by Red Bus.

Eighteen new drivers graduate from courses every six weeks. As at March 2006, 74 Work and Income clients had commenced Driving Solutions' training and 54 had moved into the bus-driving industry. Pictured is Maurice Te Whetu who is employed with Red Bus.

6. All benefit statistics in this Regional Plan have been sourced from the Ministry of Social Development's Information Analysis Platform as at 31 March 2006. Where comparisons are made, these reflect statistics as at 31 March 2005, unless otherwise stated.

7. *New Zealand Disability Strategy*, Ministry of Health, 2001.

## Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

All our activities place significant emphasis on improving the wellbeing of people in these priority groups.

The Ministry's *Statement of Intent*<sup>8</sup> establishes our direction and focus. We seek opportunities that align to the priorities identified, and we aim to ensure people are able to make informed choices and live the type of life they choose.

- We will partner with other government agencies, the voluntary sector, local government, iwi, community organisations, industry and businesses in activities that help achieve the future economic and social success of the region.
- We will strengthen early intervention services for vulnerable children, contribute to the prevention of family violence, and support services that promote positive parenting and the development of children and young people.
- We will work with tertiary education providers and other education sector agencies to ensure students have the best chance to complete their studies with the least possible debt.
- We will assist people to gain the necessary skills that lead to lasting and sustainable employment, provide effective support to keep them in work and make sure that taking a job always leaves them and their families better off.
- We will provide a range of services that allow older people to have choices in retirement, so that they can continue to lead productive and independent lives.
- We will support communities to find local solutions to local issues, help the community and voluntary sector build its capability and help community-based services be consistent, effective and accessible.



Ministry of Social Development staff celebrate the opening of *Heartland Services* in Akaroa.

8. *Moving Forward with Confidence: Statement of Intent 2006/2007*, Ministry of Social Development.

## Opportunities for Action in Canterbury

### SUPPORTING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELLBEING IN CANTERBURY

*Leading social development*

*Helping our children, young people and families succeed*

*Improving opportunities for working-age people*

*Enhancing the wellbeing of older New Zealanders*

*Partnering with our communities*

*Leading for Outcomes, Organised for Delivery*

### Who we are

As a Ministry we have two policy, three service delivery and three corporate groups. This Plan focuses on the services offered in Canterbury by the three service delivery groups, Work and Income, Specialist Services and Family and Community Services, as well as the Ministry of Youth Development.

Through 13 service centres and two outreach centres, Work and Income helps working-age New Zealanders who are able, to move into work that is financially worthwhile; supports families and children through difficult times, especially when no family member is in paid work; and provides people with a retirement income once they reach the qualifying age of 65 years.

Staff in five StudyLink locations work with secondary schools, tertiary education providers and student bodies so that students receive the financial information they need to successfully complete their studies with the least possible debt.

Benefit Integrity Services ensures clients receive their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud. We also arrange repayment options to recover debt and offer services that help people avoid getting into further debt.

As well as StudyLink and Benefit Integrity Services, Specialist Services includes Senior Services which delivers Veterans', War Disablement and Surviving Spouse Pensions through its War Pensions Service, and international reciprocal agreements and portability arrangements through International Services<sup>9</sup>. Senior Services also administers the Community Services Card on behalf of the Ministry of Health, which gives individuals and families access to affordable healthcare.

Family and Community Services has a team that works with government and non-government organisations to strengthen family support services so they can be more effective for families. Through funding and providing

preventative service programmes, our aim is to support families to be strong, violence-free and connected to their communities.

The Ministry of Youth Development has established a regional team based in Christchurch, to work with young people and a range of government agencies and non-government organisations across the South Island. This will ensure the policies and programmes we put in place help our young people succeed.

Through our three Heartlands service centres we partner with staff from other government agencies, community organisations and district councils to give rural and remote communities access to a range of services from a single point.

Our Regional Policy Advisor enables us to better link policy with service delivery by making sure that national policies take regional issues into account.

9. International portability arrangements enable people to take some or all of their New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans' Pension with them if they decide to live overseas.

# Moving Forward

I welcome this opportunity to outline the Ministry's contribution to the social and economic success in Canterbury.

We apply a social development approach to our work. This means increasing our understanding of how the different areas of wellbeing such as health, education, employment and income overlap and work together.

We provide income support and a helping hand for people during hard times, but we also have to look ahead. As we move forward, we will continue to increase our focus on addressing the reasons why problems occur. This means taking a longer-term view - putting things in place to support people now, while looking at what we can do to make things better in the future.

Individuals and families face many challenges and pressures. Many other organisations work with the same people we do, and I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work they do. The complexity of issues can often make finding solutions difficult for just one agency working on their own. Positive change requires a joint approach, and we remain committed to working together on areas of shared interest, so we can all achieve better results.

We are taking a broader and more aligned approach across the range of services we offer in the region. Each of our business units is responsible for delivering a range of outcomes but we are also working together on issues we have prioritised for joint action, including helping people reduce and manage debt, and supporting people to live free from violence, abuse and neglect.

The organisational capacity this provides will strengthen our ability to work alongside community groups, local government and our colleagues in the public sector to provide services that respond more effectively to the issues facing our communities.

We have teams who work with a wide range of organisations and deal with the events, issues and crises that people face throughout the various stages of life. We touch the lives of many people every day, and the commitment and dedication shown by these talented staff is a key factor in our success. Thank you all, you do make a difference, and your work continues to be an inspiration.



**John Henderson**  
Regional Commissioner for Social Development



# Leading Social Development

Given the complex and often multiple difficulties experienced by many people, we are continually looking for ways we can add value and support the work of other agencies and where we may be able to use the expertise of these agencies and other organisations to achieve better outcomes for our people.

Our approach focuses on:

- working in partnership on activities that contribute to social and economic success in the region and making progress on addressing the critical issues identified in *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*<sup>10</sup>
- working with our central government partners to provide government services that are well co-ordinated and can be easily accessed.

*Opportunity for All New Zealanders* paints a big picture of the Government's strategies for protecting New Zealanders who are facing difficulties, as well as investing in the future success of New Zealand and its people.

It targets the roles and responsibilities of central government in respect to social wellbeing and identifies five issues for joint action.

- Improving educational achievement among low socio-economic groups.
- Increasing opportunities for people to participate in sustainable employment.
- Promoting healthy eating and healthy activity.
- Reducing tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse.
- Minimising family violence, and the abuse and neglect of children and older people.

*The Social Report*<sup>11</sup> informs us whether the quality of life in New Zealand is improving over time. The *Report* now includes information about wellbeing across different parts of the country. This information and our participation in key networks helps us contribute to a range of solutions that will help to make positive progress on the regional issues.

We are also committed to ensuring that our work at a regional level reinforces the Government's three priorities for the next decade: economic transformation, families - young and old and national identity.

Regional leaders from central and local government agencies form the Christchurch Social Policy Inter-agency Network (CSPIN). Through this Network we are able to identify areas of common interest and priority, so that we can use our resources more effectively to achieve the best results.

10. *Opportunity for All New Zealanders*, Office of the Minister for Social Development and Employment, 2004.

11. *The Social Report 2005*, Ministry of Social Development.



## Leading Social Development

The broadening of the Regional Commissioner's role to that of Regional Commissioner for Social Development will assist us to develop a Ministry-wide leadership approach to our involvement in social and economic activities. An across-Ministry Leadership Group meets regularly to discuss the needs of our communities and how we can bring the wide range of Ministry activities together to create a more co-ordinated and integrated service.

This year we are focusing on how we can work together more effectively to improve outcomes in two priority areas: increasing financial independence by minimising the effects of debt and fraud and helping families live free from violence.

### Supporting economic success - improving participation in employment

Canterbury has two universities, two polytechnics and approximately 46 private training establishments. As a result, StudyLink interacts with some 15,000 Student Loan and 5,200 Student Allowance applicants in the region each year<sup>12</sup>.

We want tertiary students to succeed in their chosen field of study in a way that minimises their level of study debt. By working closely with the tertiary education sector and other agencies that have an interest in investing in students, we can connect students with a range of services that will help them make informed choices about tertiary education. The education sector's inter-agency *Tertiary Education*

### Studying for a future



Theatre and Film Studies graduate, James Apanui tells his story.

*"In 2001, my Work and Income case manager encouraged me to consider studying towards a tertiary qualification to increase my employment opportunities. My self employment at that stage had bottomed out, which was why I was receiving income support. My case manager set the wheels into action and I started my university career in the second semester, albeit 25 years late.*

*It is easy to think a large organisation like StudyLink only caters for students' financial needs and nothing else. I not*

*only had my finances looked after but had moral support as well. Without this I would not be celebrating the completion of my degree in Theatre and Film Studies.*

*I cannot thank StudyLink enough for their support throughout my studies, and I am now redoubling my efforts to vindicate the trust and faith they placed in me to complete my degree. Thanks again StudyLink".*

Pictured from left are Chrissie Laloli, StudyLink Officer; James Apanui, student; and Kim Ashmore, StudyLink Officer at the Canterbury University Campus Site.

12. Statistics have been sourced from the Ministry of Social Development's Student Allowances and Loans system.

## Leading Social Development

### Making a fresh start



Zane Gray has been assisted into work through the *Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes*, a joint initiative between Work and Income and the Department of Corrections.

Work Broker Daljeet Singh met Zane while he was still in prison. Previously, Zane had worked in driving and labouring jobs but had an uncertain future back in the same work. He had lost his drivers licence as a result of his conviction and was about to be released with nowhere to live.

With Zane's permission, Daljeet approached his former employer Matt Pidgeon of Pidgeon Contracting. Matt agreed to offer Zane a job and to help him apply for an interim work licence for people with driving convictions, as well as offering him accommodation.

Pictured from left are Daljeet Singh, Work Broker; Matt Pidgeon, employer; Zane Gray; and Case Manager, Jeff Herbert celebrating Zane's success in gaining work.

*Roadshow* occurs every three months and is a great opportunity for representatives from both the education sector and key government agencies to share information with tertiary education providers and private training establishments.

We have a lead role (in conjunction with the Department of Labour) in helping people to increase opportunities to participate in sustainable employment. We recognise however, that helping some of our working-age clients secure paid work requires additional specialised services if they are to make this leap.

The *Offender Re-integration Programme: Improving Employment Outcomes* is a joint initiative between the Department of Corrections and ourselves. It forms part of a comprehensive programme that the Department of Corrections has in place to help offenders successfully rejoin the community when they are released from prison.

Prisoner Re-integration teams now work within Canterbury prisons, assisting prisoners to find suitable employment upon release. They also provide *In Work Support* for recently released prisoners moving into work and assist them to apply for the Work and Income financial assistance they may be eligible for upon release.

To support people with ill health or a disability move towards work and independence, we have joined with the Canterbury District Health Board, Partnership Health and the Mental Health Education and Resource Centre to offer a service called *PATHS (Providing Access to Health Solutions)*. The *PATHS* team is committed to working holistically with clients, to reduce or manage the health problems that can prevent a person from working.

A participant of the programme who has been working part-time because of her medical condition, but is very keen to return to full-time work said, "*PATHS picked up that I had fallen through the cracks and I am so grateful for that. I am so looking forward to being well again*".

Networks such as the Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce and the Community Employment Initiatives Group ensure we have the right business environment for economic success. By working together on how we can help create opportunities for skill development and work, we can ensure that employers will have the workers they need both now and in the future for their businesses to succeed and grow.

The relationships we form with industries and employers will also help secure employment opportunities for people who may have been overlooked in the past such as the mature<sup>13</sup> or long-term unemployed<sup>14</sup>, refugees and migrants, sole parents and people with health or disability issues.

13. Mature clients are those aged between 45 and 59 years of age.

14. Long-term unemployed are clients who have received an unemployment-related benefit for 26 weeks or more.

## Leading Social Development

### Supporting social success - improving family wellbeing

Whilst there is diversity in the *Community Outcomes* identified for each of our local authorities, there are some consistent themes. Priorities include ensuring that communities are healthy and safe places to live and that they are supported by thriving local economies, where businesses are diverse, adaptable and growing, and people can gain the skills necessary to support this.

We contribute to a range of activities to make Christchurch a safe and healthy city.

The Canterbury District Health Board has outlined in the *Healthy Eating and Active Living Plan 2005-2010* the scope of work it will undertake with other groups to promote healthy weight, healthy eating and active living in Canterbury. Healthy Christchurch comprises over 200 organisations, which are committed

to improving the health of people living in Christchurch. As a signatory to the Healthy Christchurch Charter, we promote healthy eating and healthy activity through our service centres and we encourage staff to participate in activities designed to get workplaces moving, such as the six-week *Sea 2 Sea Challenge*.

We work alongside other central government agencies, local government, iwi and community organisations under the *Safer Christchurch Strategy*. The *Strategy* provides a unified approach to crime prevention, injury prevention and road safety, aimed at making Christchurch the safest city in New Zealand.

Reducing situations of family violence is a key factor for creating safe communities and is a major priority for us. Changing attitudes and tolerance

toward family violence requires a commitment from everyone. Along with the Families Commission and the Christchurch City Council, we recently hosted a forum for business and community leaders called Igniting for Change. This focused on practical things we could do to eliminate family violence, and further work will be progressed through the *Safer Christchurch Strategy*.

Family safety teams are a joint initiative between New Zealand Police, the Ministry of Justice and Child, Youth and Family Services; established because of an identified lack of co-ordination in services that respond to family violence. With the introduction of our family violence response co-ordinators in the region, there are good opportunities to work together to promote safety and help families live free from violence.

Investing in families and children prevents problems in the future and safeguards New Zealand's greatest asset.

The *Strengthening Families* programme encourages agencies to work together so that everyone benefits. Families are able to meet with the agencies at the same time, so that a co-ordinated plan to address the family's concerns can be put in place. By developing a *Strengthening Families* regional governance structure we will bring together representatives from central government agencies, local communities and iwi. This allows us to regionally co-ordinate both the agencies and programmes so that the services we deliver are more effective for families across the Canterbury region.



Jason Tana is pictured with Work and Income Case Manager, Kath Kahi after receiving the Commanding Officer Award for top trainee on his completion of *Limited Service Volunteers* training.

## Leading Social Development

### Accessible and co-ordinated government services

Heartland service centres enable people living in rural and remote communities to access a range of government and other related services from one single point. In 2005, *Heartland Services* opened in Akaroa and the Chatham Islands.

The Heartland Service Centre located in the community of Hornby is based on the same concept, but is a little different because of its urban location. A number of agencies provide services from the Centre including Career Services Rapuara; Inland Revenue; the Ministry of Justice (Courts); Housing New Zealand; the Tenant's Protection Association; Workbridge; Christchurch Polytechnic; Child, Youth and Family Services; Youth Justice; Plunket; He Oranga Pounamu; budget services; and counselling. Clients can be offered a *Strengthening Families* meeting or participate in a joint interview, so that complex issues can be resolved more easily.

If someone has debts with the Ministry, Inland Revenue or the Ministry of Justice (Courts), they are able to arrange a joint meeting so that the repayment plan meets everyone's needs without causing undue stress to the individual.

Jan Carter, a Career Consultant with Career Services Rapuara says, "*Hornby Heartland Services has enabled me to form great networks with Work and Income case managers and participating organisations, leading to quality client service and outcomes. Working with a client on a career plan and being able to access and introduce the client to course providers assists the client to get information to help them make informed study and career decisions*".

Once or twice a month, a range of agencies also offers an outreach service in a number of other rural locations, including Cheviot, Oxford and Darfield.

Like employment, housing is important for a range of social and economic reasons. The cost, quality and location of housing all impact on family wellbeing.

One of Housing New Zealand's six *Community Renewal* initiatives is in Aranui. We work alongside them, the Christchurch City Council and the Aranui Community Trust to resolve a range of social and housing issues. Supporting the work of their neighbourhood units, Housing New Zealand also provides housing advice and assistance from the Ashburton and Rangiora Work and Income Service Centres and Hornby Heartlands. Child, Youth and Family Services and the Department for Building and Housing have now joined with Housing New Zealand and ourselves to work on an integrated service delivery project.

### A joint approach to debt management



For a client, working with more than one agency can be difficult. Hornby Heartlands has created an environment where everyone can meet around the same table to make arrangements that suit everyone's needs - the clients' and the agencies'.

A staff member from Benefit Integrity Services visits the Hornby Heartland Service Centre two afternoons each week, to work alongside other agencies and conduct joint-agency interviews to help clients negotiate debt repayments that are manageable, realistic and affordable.

Picture from left are Maureen Turner, Housing New Zealand; Gina Grigor, Inland Revenue; Lynda MacDonald, Heartland Services Co-ordinator; Shelley Anne Lagan, client; and Mike Hughes, Benefit Integrity Services.

## Leading Social Development

*Rent help for Tenants in Difficulty* is a joint initiative between ourselves and the Department for Building and Housing, to help keep tenancies viable for both the tenant and the landlord. The aim is to improve the situation where a tenancy is at risk, by offering the tenant an opportunity to discuss with Work and Income any options they may have in terms of financial assistance.

Debt also plays a critical role in social development. 'Good' debt that is manageable such as a mortgage, or a student loan that helps a person get the education required to help them get a job, can be positive. 'Bad' debt such as debt from fraud, people borrowing

more than they can afford to repay or fines, create barriers to employment and financial hardship that impacts on health and increases stress. One of our primary roles is minimising 'bad' debt.

A key feature is looking at ways of minimising the creation of debt, so that when clients no longer need to receive a benefit, they have no more debt than when they first applied for a benefit.

At a national level, we are leading the *Debt to Multiple State Agencies* project. Debts to multiple agencies can place heavy financial burdens on people, undermine efforts to reduce client disadvantage and pose collection problems for agencies. We are working

with Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Justice and Housing New Zealand to address these issues.

We are proud to work alongside our central and local government partners, community, iwi, industry and business partners, to ensure we can achieve social and economic success in our region.

## Employment solutions in Aranui



In Aranui, unemployment levels were three times the city average, with Māori and Pacific peoples making up a significant proportion of the Aranui community. In response, the *Aranui Community Renewal project* was established, as a collaborative venture led by Housing New Zealand and the Christchurch City Council. The *project* is also supported by local community workers and a number of government agencies including Work and Income.

Work and Income has employed Helen Potter (pictured) as an Employment Solutions Broker, to match local people to work or training opportunities that are available. This successful initiative has seen more than 306 people placed into work between March 2003 and January 2006, and 79% of these people have remained in work for more than 12 months.

# Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

Tomorrow's adults, workers and parents come from today's families. Family living and support is seen as the single greatest influence on an individual's life. Poverty, parental unemployment and poor educational attainment increase the risk of poor outcomes for families including poor health, low educational achievement and young people not being able to make a successful transition into adulthood.

We will continue to help our children, young people and families succeed by:

- improving information about and access to, family support services
- building family resilience through services that support and encourage families to move forward in a positive way
- helping our young people develop the skills and attitudes required to make a successful transition into adulthood
- supporting people to live free from violence, abuse and neglect.

## Building family resilience

Our first step in helping families succeed is improving the level of information about and access to, family support services.

The *211 Directory* (formerly known as the Family Services National Directory) lists family-related services, programmes and resources available in communities across New Zealand. *FamilyWeb* links people to websites that can offer advice on raising children, supporting young people and growing older<sup>15</sup>.

*SKIP (Strategies with Kids: Information for Parents)* supports parents to feel comfortable about how they manage their children's behaviour. A range of resources is available to help community organisations promote positive parenting, including how to bring up children in a positive way, using love and nurture as well as setting boundaries to guide and teach them.

A group of Somali women attended the first *SKIP*-funded parenting course run by Refugee Resettlement Support in Christchurch. One of four programmes planned for specific ethnic groups, it focuses on the needs of refugee parents with the format changing depending on the needs of each group.

Elizabeth Uttley of Refugee Resettlement Support says it can be difficult for resettling families raising children in New Zealand. *"All have moved from one culture with its own parenting practices, roles and expectations, to living in a different culture with different values, rules and customs"*.

## Families working towards a better future



A sole parent's nine years on the benefit are over now that he has found work close to home.

Dylan Hutley (pictured right) had been struggling to find work to fit in with his children's school hours and that did not incur high transport costs. However, Dylan found the support he was looking for from the Work Peninsula Charitable Trust, a Banks Peninsula community-based employment service that matches employers with job seekers. Work and Income Case Manager, Ruby Nepe also worked with Dylan to increase his chances of finding suitable employment and to ensure he was receiving his *Working for Families* entitlements.

Dylan says he is benefiting from working. *"Before, I was living from week to week. Now I am even able to put a bit away and I have been able to get the car fixed"*.

Dylan is pictured with his team of supporters, from left Ruby Nepe, Case Manager; Barrie Greenwood, Work Broker; and Noeline Allan, Work Peninsula Project Manager.

15. Information about these services can be accessed via [www.211.govt.nz](http://www.211.govt.nz).

## Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

### Home-grown talent supporting youth



*Te Mana in the Park* is an annual event that uses 'home-grown' artistic talent with bands and emerging artists such as Nesian Mystik, Katchafire and Scribe to promote positive messages to rangatahi (youth) around health, further education and employment, culture and heritage.

StudyLink has been a part of *Te Mana in the Park* since 2003. It is a great way to get out and about, to meet the community and other key stakeholders.

We are proud to sponsor and be part of this fun way of making a positive impact in our community.

The group who attended this course had 20 children, with one of the women expecting her first child. They enjoyed learning through sharing information and their experiences of bringing up children in a different cultural setting.

Every family has strengths. With the right support and encouragement, all families can take steps that will help them to move forward in a positive manner.

*Strengthening Families* offers co-ordinated support for families who are dealing with more than two agencies. Agencies work together with the family to address the family's concerns and improve their wellbeing and future opportunities.

Agencies involved in *Strengthening Families* like the solution-oriented approach to meetings, and feel it assists those involved maintain a focus on the families' current needs in a positive and constructive manner. Doctor Matt Eggleston from Child and Family Specialty Services, Canterbury District Health Board says, "*Meeting face to face with those involved with a family assists in breaking down potential tensions between agencies*".

The *Family Start* initiative provides intensive home-based support services for families with high needs. The aim is to ensure that the children of these families have the best possible start in life.

In a recent evaluation, the *Early Start* programme operating in Christchurch and funded through the *Family Start* initiative, has been recognised as a world-leading family support service<sup>16</sup>.

### Assisting the transition to adulthood

Young people play a vital role in every New Zealand community. The *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*<sup>17</sup> outlines how government and society can support young people aged 12 to 24 years, and how young people can develop the skills and attitudes they need to play a positive part in society, both now and in the future.

We support a range of services that assist young people to develop life skills that will help them build resilience and prepare for life as independent adults.

Tertiary education helps create the skills and knowledge required for a thriving economy. Our *On Course* programme provides information and advice to Year-12 and 13 secondary school students. It gives an insight into the realities of student life and encourages them to think about their study choices and options to fund their study.

16. *Early Start Evaluation Report*, Ministry of Social Development, November 2005.

17. *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*, Ministry of Youth Affairs, January 2002.

## Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

### Assisting families to achieve independence

*Te Mana in the Park* is an annual event that uses 'home-grown' artistic talent to promote positive messages to rangatahi (young people) about health, further education, employment, culture and heritage. We are proud to sponsor this unique event which is a great way to make a positive impact on the young people in our communities.

Between now and 2007, we are co-ordinating a comprehensive survey of the health and wellbeing of young New Zealanders. The *Youth2007* research project, led by the University of Auckland, will target 10,000 12 to 18 year olds from 100 different New Zealand secondary schools to determine what action is required from key agencies going forward, to improve the health of our future generations.

Providing ways for young people to speak and be heard, as well as increasing the ways that young people are involved in decision-making means they can be part of making a real difference in New Zealand. *Aotearoa Youth Voices*<sup>18</sup> is the banner under which the Ministry of Youth Development promotes youth-participation activities. *PROVOKE* is one such initiative, which involves secondary school students and adult liaisons around New Zealand, and provides them with a range of ideas and tools to assist young people get their voices heard.

Most people in New Zealand live free from harm and abuse, but we have high rates of violence within families and one of the highest rates of children dying from intentional injury in the developed world. We cannot allow children to live with abuse, neglect and family violence, and we are involved in a range of programmes focused on these issues.

Because our staff work with large numbers of clients, they will inevitably meet people who are living with violence. A timely, supportive response may save someone's life.

Through the *Family Violence Intervention Programme*, people who are living with violence are able to discuss their situation with a supportive Work and Income staff member who is able to explain their options for income support and refer them to services available in the community.

There are direct links between debt and fraud prevention and the wellbeing of people and families. Debt is a growing problem. In April 2005, *When Debt Becomes a Problem*<sup>19</sup> was published. The report indicates that up to 15% of New Zealand households may have debt problems at some point in any 12-month period.

For this reason, we are moving away from just managing debt, to providing services that reduce the chance of debt being created due to error, abuse or fraud. We also support people to access services that will help them develop financial-planning skills so they have some choices about how to spend their money.

By reducing the chance of income overpayment, we can remove a debt burden from many of our clients as well as increase their financial independence. Our *Early Intervention Programme* involves staff visiting clients in their homes. By assessing each individual's circumstances, staff ensure people are receiving all the assistance they are entitled to, and that they understand their responsibilities while receiving income support and the consequences of fraud.

On behalf of the Ministry of Health, we also administer the Community Services Card. This contributes to financial independence by helping people who are eligible and are on low to middle incomes or receiving income support or New Zealand Superannuation to reduce the amount they pay for doctor's fees, prescriptions and health services provided through public hospitals.

18. Further information about the *Aotearoa Youth Voices* programme and contributing projects can be accessed via [www.youthvoices.govt.nz](http://www.youthvoices.govt.nz).

19. *When Debt Becomes a Problem: A Literature Study*, Ministry of Social Development, 2004.



## Helping our Children, Young People and Families Succeed

There is increasingly robust evidence of the role of housing as a key factor affecting health and wellbeing.

Well insulated homes are easier to keep warm, which means that occupants not only save money on heating costs, but can be more comfortable and healthy. Other benefits include an identified drop in energy usage, a reduced number of visits to GPs and hospitalisation, days off school and days off work.

Over the past year, we have promoted programmes developed by Community Energy Action and Mainpower that assist low-income households to make their homes warmer, drier and more energy efficient. We will continue to look at ways we can support people to access good quality, sustainable housing.

A recipient from the Warmer Homes project said, *“I would like to thank you very much, as it has made a huge difference to my family. The house is heaps warmer and we are not running heaters all the time. When I received my electricity bill, it was an estimated read, so I rang up and did a phone read, and there was a \$30 difference on the bill. Even after just one month I am saving money on my power and I am so grateful. Please keep up the good work, as projects such as this make a big difference to ordinary families”.*

Building strong families today will ensure that our children and young people can take positive steps forward, and in time build their own strong families and communities.

## Helping families to be safe



Work and Income clients experiencing family violence can now get specialised assistance from their case manager through the *Family Violence Intervention Programme*. Case managers report that having had family violence intervention training, they now have the knowledge and confidence to handle serious and sensitive situations. As part of the *Programme*, two family violence response co-ordinators have been appointed to support case managers and build links with family violence prevention agencies.

Case Manager, Angela Doyle (pictured) arranged an appointment for a client with a social service agency after the client disclosed she was a victim of family violence. Discussions with the client about options and the assistance available from Work and Income led to the person deciding to go to Women’s Refuge while awaiting a council flat.

# Improving Opportunities for Working Age People



Actionworks staff at the *Specifically Pacific Careers Expo*.

Employment is a key ingredient in achieving positive social outcomes for individuals and families. As well as generating income, helping people move into work is likely to improve the health and wellbeing of both the individual and their families.

We will improve opportunities for working-age people by:

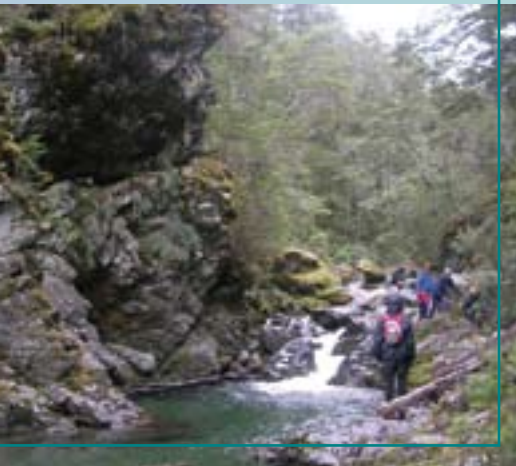
- assisting people gain the necessary skills that lead to a sustainable job
- providing effective support to keep people in work and making sure that securing a job leaves them and their families better off
- supporting people to remain financially independent by minimising benefit fraud and helping individuals to make informed choices about their educational investment and ways to reduce and manage debt
- investment that helps businesses create employment for disadvantaged groups and communities.

As the unemployment rate continues to fall, with the right support, working-age people not necessarily viewed as potential job seekers in the past, can help meet the skill and labour shortages currently being faced by our employers and industry, while also having the opportunity to participate more fully in their communities.

For some working-age clients, going into work may not be realistic, but for many, it is a good option. The biggest challenge we have, is how we adapt our services to ensure these people have the skills and support necessary to take advantage of the opportunities available.

## Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

### Planning for a better future



The *Conservation Corps* programme links young people to their community and helps them to plan for their future, identifying further education, training and employment opportunities. Makere Hubbard, a two-time participant in the *YMCA Conservation Corps* programme said, “We did the most awesome activities including rock climbing, kayaking, tramping, camping and the best thing was going to all the different places around the South Island.

*The trips we went on were awesome though challenging. We did a track called Pinch Gut Hut; it was so hard at times I wanted to give up but no one would let me. I got stressed and frustrated which caused me to be in a grumpy mood till we reached the hut. The gorse was so bad, not to mention fixing the track was worse, but don't let that stop you. We reached the hut and everything was well worth it - the site was amazing”.*

Many people are telling us they want to work and participate in their communities, and as a result, the way we deliver services to our clients is continuing to evolve. This is demonstrated by the *New Service Approach* being delivered in all Work and Income service centres.

The *New Service Approach* provides clients with access to a range of employment programmes and support services at their first point of contact with us based on their individual needs, regardless of their benefit entitlement. Sole parents or people with ill health or a disability are now able to access support and employment services which were traditionally more readily available to people receiving an unemployment-related benefit<sup>20</sup>.

The *New Service Approach* was trialled in 12 service centres around the country, including the Riccarton Service Centre, before being made available nationally in May 2006.

### Improving outcomes for youth

The choices young people make between adolescence and adulthood shape the course of the rest of their lives. Good education and training outcomes are critical to preparing young people for social and economic success.

We provide a range of services to help young people make informed education, training and employment decisions. Our work contributes to the goal of the *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs*<sup>21</sup>, a joint memorandum between the Government

and mayors, and the priorities identified by members of the Christchurch Social Policy Inter-Agency Network in *A Collaborative Plan for Christchurch Youth 2003-2006*. We target key points of transition such as leaving school, to bring about better education, training and employment outcomes for vulnerable young people 15 to 19 years of age.

The ActionWorks partnership with Canterbury Development Corporation offers a one-stop service for young people aged 16 to 19 years. The effectiveness of this approach is evident by the reduction in unemployment achieved regionally for this age group. For the period 1999 to 2006 (the length of time a partnership has been in place) there has been an 87.4% reduction in the number of youth receiving an unemployment-related benefit compared with 74% nationally. In contrast, we achieved an 79.7% reduction for the total number of clients receiving an unemployment-related benefit across the region.

This is a wonderful result, however, there are indications that the number of young people leaving school is likely to increase until around 2010. Furthermore, a greater proportion of these youth will be represented by Māori and Pacific peoples. A continued focus on helping young people make a positive transition from school will be important as we move forward.

For our economy to thrive we need people with the skills and knowledge businesses are looking for. We have a range of initiatives that will help students make informed choices about investing in

20. An unemployment-related benefit includes the Unemployment benefit and the Unemployment Benefit - Hardship.

21. The *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs* goal is that by 2007, all 15-19 year olds will be engaged in work, education or training, or other activities that contribute to their long-term economic independence and wellbeing.

## Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

tertiary education, ensure that they are financially supported to undertake study, and are able to successfully complete study with manageable levels of debt.

Providing services on campus is one of the many ways we interact with students and education providers. Students are able to access information and apply for financial assistance on campus at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch Polytechnic, Christchurch College of Education and Tai Poutini Polytechnic.

We also offer a service where we discuss the various options for funding tertiary education and provide information about the implications of borrowing to study. This service also connects students to a range of agencies and services available to help them make informed tertiary-education decisions.

We fund youth-development programmes such as the *New Zealand Conservation Corps*, *Youth Service Corps* and *Limited Service Volunteers* (hosted by the NZ Defence Force at Burnham Military Camp), which provide an alternative education pathway for young people. Programmes include personal development, linking young people with their community through projects or community work, planning for a job and identifying opportunities for further education, training and employment.

Makere Hubbard, a recent participant on a *YMCA Conservation Corps* programme says, *“This course has done me great; I lost weight, gained confidence - which I had very little of, and given me another way to look at life. I’ve learnt so much in the 40 weeks and by the end of it I still didn’t want to leave. I had become attached to the course and John was like an uncle to me. What are you waiting for? Check it out! I’ve come from the bottom to the top since I did this and I’m very thankful and not to mention lucky”.*



### Keep on truckin’

After a period of unemployment, it was a meeting with Work and Income Work Broker, Megan Pfeifer that got George Walford on the road to success. Megan referred George to a *Straight 2 Work* programme designed to move participants into immediate employment in the transport industry. George is now drives trucks for Denton Transport.

The *Straight 2 Work* driving programme is a joint initiative between Work and Income, the Tertiary Education Commission and the Combined Owner Driver Association (CODA), with local employers closely involved with the programme.

George says the programme gave him opportunities he had never had before. *“My job is the greatest job I have ever had. I get to do deliveries all over Christchurch and to meet a lot of different people throughout the day”.*

## Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

### Partnering for success

The *Youth Development Partnership Fund*, administered by the Ministry of Youth Development, enables us to respond to emerging youth needs by partnering with local authorities on projects that benefit young people in their communities. The theme in 2006 was education, training and employment and is aligned to the vision of the *Mayors Taskforce for Jobs*.

*Local Industry Partnerships* programmes complement those of national *Industry Partnerships*. These are designed to address the needs of industry by delivering targeted industry-specific skills training, while at the same time securing jobs for programme participants.

A pre-apprenticeship training scheme with City Care Ltd. is proving a winner. The programme offers a return to practical on-the-job training with the opportunity of employment on completion, and a brighter future for young people who may experience difficulty moving into work without support.

*PACE (Pathways to Arts and Cultural Employment Programme)*, a programme for people wanting to become self employed and make a living from the Arts, supports the diverse need of people looking for work and encourages entrepreneurial growth in Canterbury.

Economic success requires an environment that supports skill development and business growth. Our Labour Market Development team will continue to work closely with community organisations, employers and other stakeholders to address regional skill and labour shortages and ensure we are in the best position to respond to regional employment issues.

Māori unemployment continues to be a cause for concern. Despite significant economic growth over the past three years, the reduction in Māori unemployment has not been as good as we have achieved overall. At 15.7%, the proportion of Māori receiving an unemployment-related benefit has increased. The numbers of Māori



### Stepping into a great career

A partnership between City Care Ltd. and Work and Income was set up to address local skills shortages through the delivery of targeted skills training, while at the same time securing sustainable and lasting work for clients.

The 12-month programme offers long-term unemployed youth and school leavers the opportunity to participate in paid employment, in a range of City Care departments such as building services, gardening, waterways maintenance, civil construction, road maintenance and underground services. Upon successful graduation, trainees are offered apprenticeships.

Pictured are participants taking part in a team-building exercise.

## Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

receiving income support due to illness or as a sole parent also shows greater increases than for the population as a whole, and against trends for Māori nationally.

Increasing whānau income has been identified as a key factor for improving health and wellbeing in the Ngai Tahu Rohe. He Oranga Pounamu, initially focused on Māori service provider development, has added this new focus to their *Strategic Plan 2004-2009*. We are looking at ways that we can support their *Māori Employment Labour Market Strategy* which aims to improve Māori income levels through access to sustainable jobs, skill enhancement and career development.

The challenges faced by both migrants and refugees in their host community including language and literacy issues, often contribute to unemployment and isolation. We work alongside the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, Pacific Employment Education and Training Organisation (PEETO), the Tertiary Education Commission and Career Services Rapuara, with both employers and migrants, to match employer needs with migrant skills.

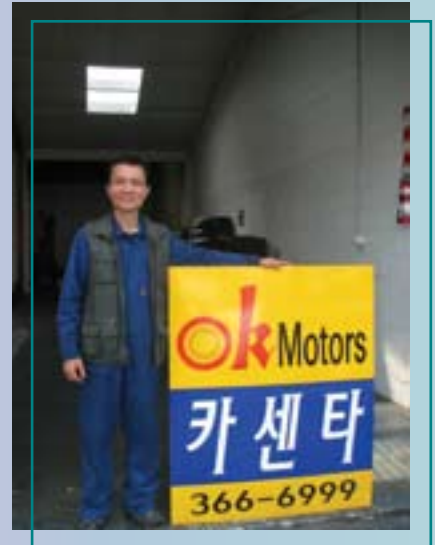
Enterprising Communities assistance provides locally-based advisory services and funding. It is focused on non-profit community enterprises and organisations, whose needs and characteristics are traditionally different from business enterprise, and is designed to help community organisations create employment opportunities.

The Christchurch Small Business Enterprise Centre identified that there are many migrants in Christchurch who wish to start up their own businesses or enter into employment but do not have a strong background in English or in New Zealand business requirements. With the help of an Enterprising Communities Grant, the Centre has started programmes to help address barriers including business courses, group facilitation and mentoring, all in the migrants' own languages so that they will be able to get past the difficulties they commonly face.

Lindsay Jeffs, the Manager of the Christchurch Small Business Enterprise Centre says, *"Our experience working with migrants shows that they are highly skilled, qualified and motivated to establish their own business or find employment. What they need is to be given basic information in their own language to help bridge the gaps in their knowledge of the New Zealand business culture. Follow-up and peer support are vital ingredients to enable migrants to access business and work opportunities"*.

We know that business decisions aren't always easy, and many businesses experience difficulty getting the staff they need. We have a range of employment programmes, wage and training subsidies that we can offer to individuals and employers. This can assist businesses to offer staff the supervision and training they need to acquire the necessary skills to do the job.

### Migration to independence



New migrants to Christchurch are being assisted into self-employment thanks to funding from Work and Income's Enterprising Communities Grants, to the Christchurch Small Business Enterprise Centre (CSBEC).

CSBEC supports migrants with less than two years residency to start up their own business, to invest in an existing business or find employment. The Centre offers a mentoring service, training and information on all aspects of developing and running a business in New Zealand and arranges for business plan development. People have regular access to a business advisor and an interpreter is available if needed.

Pictured is Tony Wie, a successful graduate from the Centre's programmes, who now runs his own business. Tony says he is *"just so happy to be in the Land of the Long White Cloud"*, and he has to now work hard to give something back to New Zealand.

## Improving Opportunities for Working Age People

### Making work pay

For many low-income families, the monetary gains of being in work can be minimal once other costs such as childcare and accommodation are taken into account. However, the *Working for Families* package, implemented in partnership with Inland Revenue, aims to reduce financial barriers by putting more money in the pockets of low- and middle-income working families. It also ensures that parents moving off benefit into work are financially better off.

Childcare co-ordinators support the *Working for Families* package by ensuring that parents considering a move into work are able to access quality and affordable childcare.

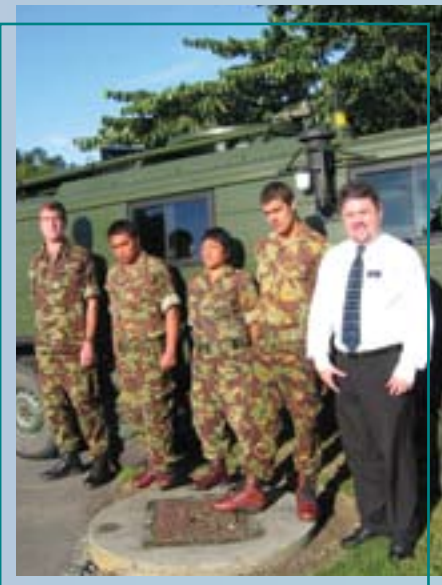
Debt can impact on a person's ability to get and stay in work. To assist us to reduce and prevent fraud and debt, we talk to participants on programmes such as *Turning Point* for sole parents and *Limited Service Volunteers* for youth about the consequences of fraud and people's responsibilities when they are receiving a benefit.

We provide *Return to Work* packs and work with employers to ensure their employees are aware of any additional assistance that they may be entitled to. We encourage people to take the steps necessary to avoid benefit overpayment, and use this opportunity to promote the products and services we have available

to support employees once they have moved into work. This service to employers for the benefit of their employees is helping prevent debt and fraud and has been applauded by the many companies who are now working with us.

We are committed to helping businesses get the workers they need by helping people gain the skills they require, and making sure that people in work continue to be better off.

## Taking a new course in life



*“New Zealand Defence Force and the Ministry of Social Development are partners in conducting the successful Limited Service Volunteer course for unemployed young adults. Benefit Integrity Services plays a very important and complementary part in the conduct of the course.*

*During the six weeks of the residential course at Burnham Military Camp, trainees are challenged to accept responsibility and consequences, and to make a new life for themselves where they can contribute to society as part of being a good team player. They are exposed to the concept of being honest to themselves and to others, to be able fully reach their potential and to lead a full and worthwhile life. These values are very much what Benefit Integrity Services advocate with trainees and their responsibilities toward receipt of benefits.*

*The idea of claiming only what they are entitled to, making the choice of notifying the Ministry of changes, and accepting that there are consequences for poor or wrong choices all reinforce in practical and immediate terms what the Limited Service Course instills”.*

I. M. Lattimore, Major, Officer Commanding LSV Coy & YLS

Pictured from left are I. M. Lattimore, Major; programme participants Hoani Richards, Hariata Kaiou, and Andrew Crockett; and Greg Canton, Benefit Integrity Services.

# Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Older people are important members of our communities. They have skills, knowledge and experience to contribute, and the expected growth in the proportion of older people during the coming years will provide us with a valuable resource.

Of the 94,609 people who receive income support in our region, 64.1% (60,611) receive New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans' Pensions.

It is in everyone's interest that older people are encouraged and supported to continue their contribution to the wellbeing of their families and communities, and ultimately themselves. The *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*<sup>22</sup> seeks to promote positive ageing in policy and service development, so that older people are able to participate in the ways that they choose.

We can enhance the wellbeing of older people today and tomorrow by:

- providing information and services that enhance older people's ability to enjoy a secure and adequate income and standard of living
- providing timely access to information and services that will support older people make choices later in life about where they live (to 'age in place' as they choose)
- seeking to anticipate and understand the impact of an ageing population on social wellbeing.



Mrs Morgan, a New Zealand Superannuitant, is interviewed in her home by Case Manager, Heather Steele.

22. The *New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy: Towards a Society for all Ages*, Ministry of Social Policy, April 2001.

## Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

We deliver a range of community seminars throughout Canterbury for people who are nearing entitlement to New Zealand Superannuation. These seminars ensure that people are well informed about their entitlements and can make knowledgeable choices moving into retirement. They also provide an opportunity to talk to older people about the work and training opportunities available, should they wish to remain or re-engage in employment.

We work in a number of ways with the Christchurch City Council Housing Unit. We offer a more effective service and ensure minimal interruption to older people by working together to simplify the payment adjustments required when rent increases occur. We are also available to attend joint interviews, community days and present information to community activities groups.

We attend the annual South Island Hui hosted by Ngai Tahu, looking at how services can better support older Māori, and our close working relationships with the Pegasus Group, the Canterbury District Health Board, Grey Power and Age Concern help us ensure older people can enjoy a secure and adequate income and standard of living.

New Zealand has formal social security agreements with eight countries - Australia, Canada, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. International Services, (part of our Senior Services group) administers these and other 'portability' payment arrangements for countries not covered by agreements. This allows people who have lived and worked in New Zealand to take some or all of their New Zealand Superannuation

or Veterans' Pension with them if they decide to live elsewhere in the world.

The Community Services Card Centre (also part of the Senior Services group), administers the Community Services Card on behalf of the Ministry of Health, enabling those older people who are eligible, to access subsidised health services.

A key priority for us over the coming year is our review of service delivery to older people. This is seen as a one-time opportunity to prepare for the challenge of New Zealand's ageing population and provide a more fully integrated service to older people.

The review seeks to understand what outcomes we should be aiming to achieve for older people over the longer term, what services we should be providing and how these services should be delivered.



The first graduation group of SAGES mentors pictured here with the Waimakariri Mayor and Mayoress, Jim and Mary Gerard (pictured in the front row, second and third from left).

## Enhancing the Wellbeing of Older People - Today and Tomorrow

Through our War Pension Services (also part of our Senior Services group), we administer War Disablement, Veterans' and Surviving Spouse Pensions on behalf of Veterans' Affairs New Zealand.

The Government has designated 2006 as the Year of the Veteran so our communities can commemorate and honour the sacrifice and service of our servicemen and women. A *Year of the Veteran Community Grants Fund*<sup>23</sup> has been set up to assist local communities provide ways of recognising ex-servicemen and women.

SAGES is a programme that involves older people providing one-on-one life- and home-skills mentoring to families and individuals in need. SAGES mentors help families and individuals develop their skills in areas such as home management, cooking, budgeting and parenting.

We fund family service providers to recruit volunteer mentors that have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to provide practical assistance and support to families.

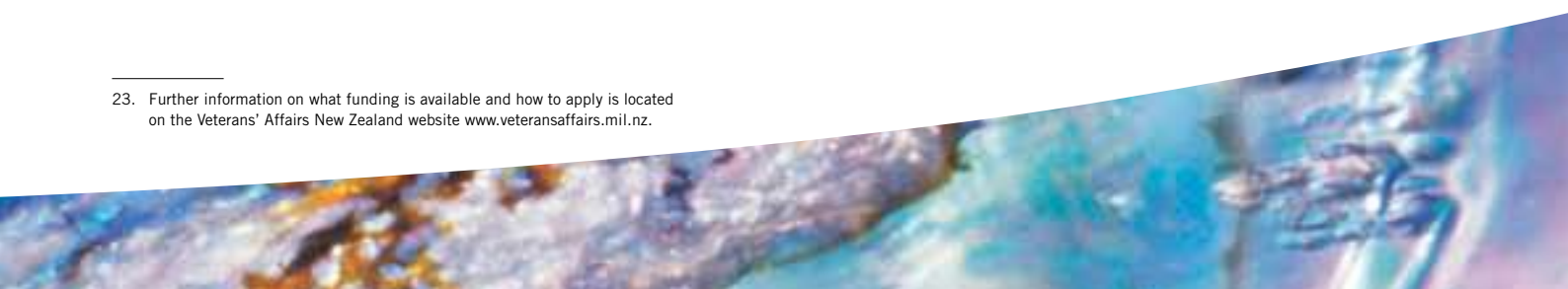
Over a three-year period, Presbyterian Support Services, North Canterbury will recruit and train 60 mentors to provide a SAGES service to 50 families in the Waimakariri and Hurunui districts.

*"There is a lot of excitement locally about SAGES, as it captures people's imagination and provides a positive opportunity to be able to put supports in place for a family before crises overtake",* say Valda Reverely, Manager of Presbyterian Support Services, North Canterbury. *"The Mayor and Mayoress of the Waimakariri District Council, Jim and Mary Gerard, are patrons of the SAGES programme. We are doing considerable networking with other community agencies such as Probus to recruit the SAGES mentors".*

We are engaged in policy and research to improve our understanding of elder abuse and neglect. We work with the Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Network to identify what works best in terms of prevention, intervention and to raise public awareness. The *Elder Abuse and Neglect Fund*, available through Family and Community Services, is designed to support the Network's service providers undertake specific projects or activities in the region.

Age Concern works closely with our service centres and are funded to raise public awareness of elder abuse in their local communities. They provide assessment and support for elderly people referred to their services, and since July 2005, an estimated 66 referrals have been received. They have also presented a range of public talks and education sessions to a mix of community groups, rest home and home support staff.

23. Further information on what funding is available and how to apply is located on the Veterans' Affairs New Zealand website [www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz](http://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz).



# Partnering with our Communities

Communities are at the heart of our approach.

Our communities have broad cultural and social diversity and are home to children, young people, parents and grandparents. Communities support individuals and families who are not working, are affected by illness or a disability and parents who face bringing up children on their own.

*Local Services Mapping* involves government agencies, local authorities and community organisations working together to identify the services a community has and what services it needs. Action plans will be developed that set out what everyone will do to find practical solutions to meet these needs.

*Local Services Mapping* is well underway in both the Waimakariri and Ashburton districts. A community report for Waimakariri will be available mid 2006, with a report for Ashburton due for release early in 2007.

John Leadley, Deputy Mayor of the Ashburton District Council says, "*Ashburton District Council welcomes the involvement of Family and Community Services in establishing their Local Services Mapping project in the district.*"



A Christchurch art icon, The Chalice.

## Partnering with our Communities



Pre-school children enjoy picnic time in the garden.

*Council is mindful of its involvement in social issues with advocacy and support to local organisations being a key component. The Local Services Mapping project will enable this work to focus where needs are greatest.*

*Devolution of responsibility from Central to Local Government looks likely to continue. It is imperative for Council to respond in the appropriate areas. I see this project delivering positive outcomes”.*

We take an active role in the community, raising awareness about our products and services. We deliver presentations to a variety of external agencies and community groups who regularly work with the same people we do.

A meeting initiated between ourselves and a range of advocacy groups has proven to be very successful. The meeting provides us with an opportunity to cover changes that may impact on the work that they do, as well as discuss any concerns. Since it started, the number of groups attending has grown from four to eleven.

We recognise that community and voluntary organisations make a vital contribution to improving the quality of life in communities. Organisations need good quality support and information so they can focus their effort on delivering services and contributing to their communities. To help organisations be successful, we are working on a range of activities aimed at the community and voluntary sector.

## Partnering with our Communities

The *Managing Well* resource lists over 120 written resources, websites, newsletters, manuals and information sheets, as well as a directory of relevant organisations, and is designed to help groups run their organisations.

A skilled workforce is more likely to achieve positive outcomes for children, young people and their whānau. Family and Community Services offers NGO Social Work Study Awards, to support non-government organisations to meet the costs of improving the qualification level and competency of their care and protection staff.

Through Family and Community Services, we fund a number of community providers across Canterbury to offer budget advice and education to local communities. The Ashburton, Christchurch, Rangiora and Kaiapoi Budget Services as well as Kingdom Resources, Pregnancy Help, Supergrans and the Family Support Agency North Canterbury provide these services to an estimated 1,200 people annually.

The *Family Violence Funding Circuit Breaker* seeks to reduce compliance costs for the many organisations whose family violence prevention services are funded by more than one government agency.

In Canterbury, the *Family Violence Funding Circuit Breaker* group consists of representatives from Accident Compensation Corporation; the Christchurch City Council; the Department of Corrections; Child, Youth and Family Services; the Department of Internal Affairs; the Ministry of Justice; and our service line Family and Community Services. This group has already gathered information on the range of prevention,



Pictured from left are John Henderson, Regional Commissioner for Social Development and Gilbert Taurua, Chairperson Hornby Operation Management Group, at the opening of Hornby Heartlands.

## Partnering with our Communities

crisis and rehabilitation services that are funded in the region and will provide an updated report on where funding for 2006 was allocated for family violence initiatives in Canterbury. This work will help identify funding priorities for the next three to four years.

The youth development sector is dynamic and diverse. Youth workers are passionate and dedicated to youth development. We aim to improve the delivery of services for young people by creating developmental opportunities for youth workers and strengthening community-based youth development agencies.

The Ministry of Youth Development provides resources and training around the country for people working directly with youth and organisations wanting to improve the way they engage with young people.

The *Keepin' it Real* workshops are based around *Keepin' it Real: A resource for involving young people*<sup>24</sup>. The aim is to provide tools and techniques that help organisations involve young people in decision-making processes more. *E Tipu E Rea* has been designed to contribute to Māori development at whānau, hapū, iwi and community levels in support of the goals and visions in the *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy*<sup>25</sup> and *Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa*.

Although the New Zealand population in general is ageing, the Māori and Pacific

populations are likely to remain relatively youthful for some time. This means that increasingly, people of working-age will be of Māori and Pacific descent.

*He Oranga Pounamu* successfully supports the development of Māori service providers which ensures that Māori living in the Ngāi Tahu Rohe have access to a wide range of services. We work alongside them and other stakeholders to maximise opportunities to address Māori needs.

Gilbert Taurua, Business Manager of *He Oranga Pounamu* says that their relationship with Family and Community Services has enabled their organisation to work strategically towards addressing some of the wider health issues that impact on positive outcomes for whānau. *"At the end of the day, it has been the relationships that have worked, rather than any formal agreements. Local Services Mapping in the Southern region is an example of shared consultation and action planning with iwi, and one of the successful factors for Hornby Heartlands is that it has not been left to one partner to make it"*.

Canterbury has an increasing Pacific population. The emergence of Pacific strategies have resulted from recognition of the growing significance of Pacific communities across New Zealand and the social and economic disparities that Pacific people often face.

## Commonwealth youth representative



Kevin Grimwood is New Zealand's representative to the Commonwealth Regional Youth Caucus. As well as this, he is also the co-ordinator for the Canterbury Youth Workers' Collective.

The *Commonwealth Youth Programme* is an international development agency that works with young people in Commonwealth countries to ensure that they are provided with every opportunity to develop their creativity, potential and skills.

The *Programme* has four regional centres and Regional Youth Caucuses in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

Kevin is New Zealand's representative to the South Pacific Caucus. Other members include Australia, the Cook Islands, the Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

24. *Keepin' it Real: A resource for involving young people*, the Ministry of Youth Affairs, March 2003.

25. *New Zealand Suicide Prevention Strategy: A Life Worth Living: Consultation document*, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Youth Development, April 2005.

## Partnering with our Communities

The *Strong Pacific Families Strategy*<sup>26</sup> focuses on building awareness and changing attitudes towards violence in Pacific families. Last year a community forum brought local Pacific leaders and families together to increase knowledge and understanding of the issues, as well as encourage communities to take action to change the future for themselves.

Through the *Settling In* project we work with the Office of Ethnic Affairs, the Christchurch City Council and community-based services to help both refugees and migrants to identify their social needs, and provide support that enables them to settle more easily and take part in community activities.

Project staff have also been involved in establishing a Christchurch Refugee Council. The idea of a formal refugee council in Christchurch was floated after a series of open public refugee meetings. Through the discussions, it became clear that a collective refugee voice was wanted when liaising with local and central government and other organisations.

The aim of the council is to promote public awareness of refugee issues in host communities and serve as a networking and information exchange. It also provides for advocacy needs and represents the refugee voice in Christchurch on refugee policy.

By working together we can support our communities determine and achieve their vital and unique social, economic and cultural goals.

## Supporting refugee parents to raise strong families



A group of Somali women attended the first *SKIP* parenting course run by Refugee Resettlement Support in Christchurch, focusing on the needs of refugee parents.

Parent educator Patricia Allan (pictured seated left) is working with an interpreter to explore the six positive principles of effective discipline that sets boundaries for children in a positive and loving way. These principles are used as a focus for discussion each week alongside resources developed by Patricia, and are a great way to engage with our migrant and refugee stakeholders.

26. The Ministries of Social Development and Pacific Island Affairs developed the *Strong Pacific Families Strategy* in collaboration with Pacific peoples and other government agencies, under *Te Rito, New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy*, Ministry of Social Development, February 2002.

POLICY

**Social Development Policy and Knowledge**

- Strategic Social Policy
- Regional Social Policy
- Social Inclusion and Participation (including the Office for Senior Citizens, the Office for Disability Issues and the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector)
- Centre for Social Research and Evaluation.

**Social Services Policy**

- Ministry of Youth Development
- Working-Age Peoples' Policy
- Child, Family and Community Policy
- Older Peoples' Policy
- International Relations.

**Ministry of Youth Development** promotes the interests of young people aged between 12 and 24 years. By listening and responding to the needs of young people, we seek ways to help ensure that young people are valued, nurtured and challenged to reach their full potential.

SERVICE DELIVERY

**Work and Income**

- 11 Regional Offices
- 141 Service Centres
- 46 Outreach Centres
- 5 Contact Centres (which includes a Multilingual Contact Centre).

**Work and Income** offers a single point of contact for people needing work-search support to secure employment; in-work support that assists people to stay in employment; and income support to people who require temporary assistance or additional income to supplement their earnings.

**Specialist Services**

- StudyLink (which includes 6 Outreach Offices plus numerous campus services, 2 Contact Centres and 1 Processing Centre)
- Senior Services
- Benefit Integrity Services.

**StudyLink** administers financial assistance to students and works in co-operation with secondary schools, tertiary education providers and student bodies to ensure students get the finance they are entitled to so they can complete their study.

**Family and Community Services**

- 4 Regional Offices
- Co-ordination of 34 Heartland Services.

**Senior Services** includes administration of the Community Services Card, which gives people access to lower cost health care; International Services, which pays benefits and pensions to people who come to New Zealand from overseas, and New Zealanders who leave the country; and War Pension Services, which administers services to veterans.

**Child, Youth and Family (from 1 July 2006)**

- 52 Site Centres delivering services
- 12 Service Centres managing Sites
- 3 Specialist Service Units
- 7 Secure Residences for children and young people in youth justice or care and protection.

**Benefit Integrity Services** includes Benefit Control, the National Data Match Centre and Debt Management. It helps to ensure clients are receiving their correct entitlement to financial assistance with an emphasis on preventing and minimising debt and fraud.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND RISK

**People, Capability and Resources**

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Information Technology.

**Corporate and Governance**

- Planning, Purchase and Governance
- Communications
- Legal
- Ministerial and Executive Services
- Client Representatives and Review of Decisions.

**Family and Community Services** helps to build connected communities and strong, resilient families. We co-ordinate government and non-government organisations to support families to be well resourced, violence-free and connected to their communities. We do so by providing leadership, information and funding social service providers.

**Risk and Assurance**

- Internal Audit
- Risk Management
- Internal Fraud
- Security.



### **Ministry of Social Development**

Regional Office  
7 Winston Avenue  
Papanui  
Christchurch  
[www.msd.govt.nz](http://www.msd.govt.nz)

### **Benefit Integrity Services**

0800 558 008 (Debt Enquiries)

### **Community Services Card**

0800 999 999

### **Family and Community Services**

[www.familyservices.govt.nz](http://www.familyservices.govt.nz)

### **International Services**

0800 777 117

### **Ministry of Youth Development**

[www.myd.govt.nz](http://www.myd.govt.nz)

### **StudyLink**

[www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)  
0800 88 99 00

### **War Pensions**

0800 553 003

### **Work and Income**

[www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)  
0800 559 009



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