

Submission to Christchurch City Council

On: Draft Long Term Council Community Plan 2004/14

By: Canterbury Neighbourhood Support.
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Canterbury Neighbourhood Support welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the Draft Long Term Council Community Plan.

Canterbury Neighbourhood Support is pleased that the Christchurch City Council has indicated that a safe city is one of the outcomes it wishes to achieve in the Long Term Community Plan.

Canterbury Neighbourhood Support was established in August 2001 with the aims of

- Encouraging the development of the Neighbourhood Support concept
- Creating safer, more caring communities
- Reducing the incidence and effects of criminal offending
- Strengthening community networks
- Improving the quality of life

Since 2001 Canterbury Neighbourhood Support has formed a District Committee with representatives from Community Boards, District Councils, N.Z. Police, N.Z. Fire Service and Environment Canterbury, has established an office and employed a co-ordinator. At one time the focus of Neighbourhood Support was the reduction of crime but our organisation now works with its partners in the Police, Fire Service and ECAN to provide a broad based approach to community safety.

In 2003 our organisation worked with the Aranui Community Renewal to carry out a survey of the households in Aranui. It was found that most of the residents would like to form a Neighbourhood Support group, 95% of households had a working smoke detector but 44% were not aware where they should go in a Civil Defence Emergency. Interestingly 93% of the residents surveyed felt safe in their homes most of the time during the day. This dropped to 74% at night.

Late last year an evaluation was done of existing Neighbourhood Support groups in Christchurch. This was carried out by the Christchurch School of Medicine Summer Studentship Scheme, in conjunction with Community and Public Health. Over 10% of group leaders were interviewed.

The main conclusions of the study were:

- Neighbourhood Support group members benefit from knowing their neighbours, increased safety and security in their area and getting support from neighbours when they are in need
- Neighbourhood Support provides a positive way to enhance community safety and well being within communities
- Members of Neighbourhood Support groups need more guidance and support
- Programmes need to be developed to encourage and support the involvement of people of different nationalities and ethnicities
- Publicity and education is needed to encourage rental tenants to become part of Neighbourhood Support
- A large proportion felt they needed more guidance and support from Canterbury Neighbourhood Support, the Police and Council
- There is a paucity of groups in lower socio-economic areas

Canterbury Neighbourhood Support is grateful to the Christchurch City Council for the financial support it provides that allows us to work towards achieving the outcome in the Long Term Community Plan of making Christchurch a safe city in which to live.

Ingrid Stonhill,
Chairperson,
Canterbury Neighbourhood Support.

CNS wishes to speak to this submission