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## Strategic issues

Christchurch is the largest city in the South Island. It covers a total of 141,260 hectares and stretches from the Waimakariri River to Banks Peninsula and Kaitorete Spit, and from the coast inland to McLeans Island and Halswell. The vast majority of the population of 368,900 lives in Christchurch itself, which is built on the plains and the lower slopes of the Port Hills. Banks Peninsula has around 8000 residents, mostly in the settlements of the Lyttelton and Akaroa harbour basins. Only 12% of Christchurch's total land area is zoned for residential, commercial or industrial use—the remainder is rural, open space, coastal or conservation land.

Over the life of this LTCCP and beyond, the Council and the wider community will need to respond to some major strategic issues. Since the last LTCCP was completed in mid-2006, the Council has undertaken a large number of strategic conversations with the community on key issues facing the city. These have ranged from the introduction of the City's Biodiversity Strategy (2008) and Sustainability Policy (2008) through to a Visitor Strategy (2007) and a plan for the future provision of metropolitan sports facilities (consulted on in 2008). At present the Council is considering a draft Water Supply Strategy, for which public submissions have recently closed.

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This policy and planning work is reflected in this LTCCP, which provides for the implementation of a number of new strategies through the identification of new or revised programmes and services, and capital investment.

The most significant ongoing strategic conversation that the Council has been undertaking over the last three years has been the *Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy* (UDS). The UDS is a partnership between Christchurch City Council, Waimakariri and Selwyn District Councils, Environment Canterbury, and Transit New Zealand (now part of the New Zealand Transport Agency). It establishes a framework for the city’s development, by setting out a land use and transport pattern for the Greater Christchurch area, and high-level policy objectives in areas ranging from education and community development to open space and infrastructure provision. It also commits the partners to a collaborative approach to achieving these objectives.

The key issues currently facing the city are outlined in the following pages, with links to the sections of the Plan relating to relevant Council services and capital projects.

### A changing population

Christchurch’s population is ageing. In 2006, 13% of the population was aged 65 or over, but by 2031 this is projected to increase to 23%, including significant increases in the number of people in their 80s and older.

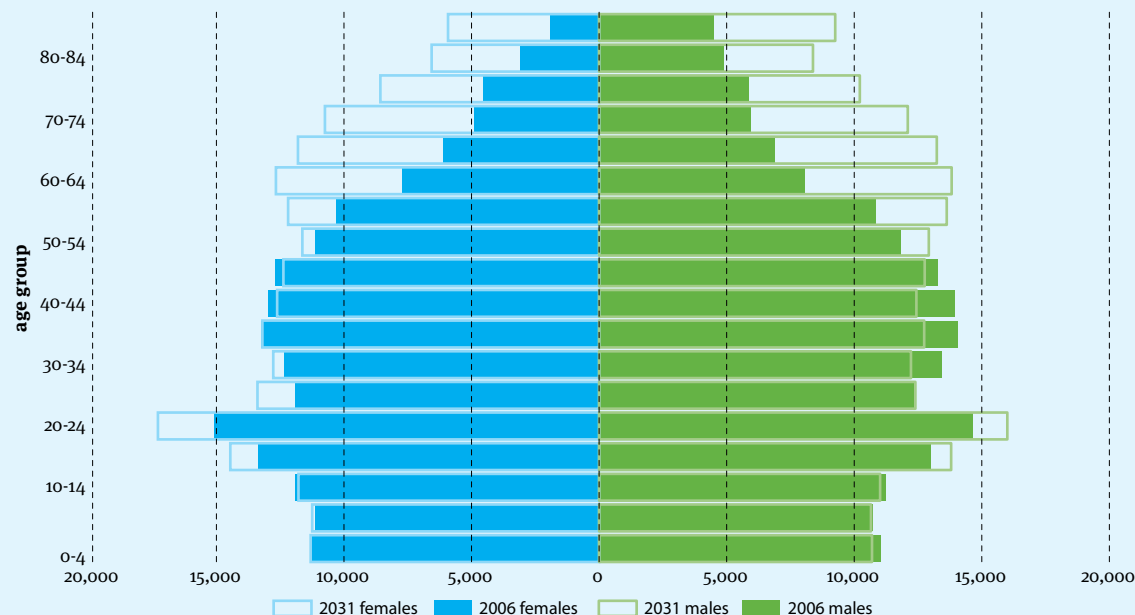
The growing number of older residents has implications for almost every aspect of life in the city, including:

- An ageing workforce: older people will become an increasingly significant proportion of those in work.
- How we design facilities and services, from footpaths and park benches to buildings and recreation and transport networks.
- Demand for different kinds of housing: will older people want to “age in place”, to downsize, or move to a retirement village?
- Demand for health and social support services.
- Demand for different kinds of leisure activities.

The greying of the population is also an enormous opportunity, as older adults have much to give to their communities. The challenge for the whole community will be to make sure that they are not prevented from doing so by social attitudes or by physical and financial barriers.

The ethnic mix in the city is also changing. Christchurch’s population is predominantly New Zealand European, with 86.6% of residents identifying themselves as European or Other in 2006. The Maori (8%), Asian (8%) and Pacific Island (3%) ethnic groups are much smaller, but are projected to grow at a faster rate than the European population in coming years. By 2021, Europeans are expected to make up 81.2% of the population, while Maori will have increased to 9.6%, Asians to 13%, and Pacific Island people to 4%. This changing ethnic make-up will be most marked amongst younger age groups.

Survey data indicates that over the last decade Christchurch people have become increasingly positive about ethnic diversity, with 63% now indicating that it makes the city a better or a much better place to live, compared to an average of 59% in New Zealand’s twelve largest cities overall, and up from 46% in 1999. A growing economy up until 2008 made it easier for new migrants to get jobs, but minority communities—and particularly refugees and new migrants—still find it difficult to integrate into the wider community.



<sup>1</sup> Note, percentages do not add to 100 because people can identify with more than one ethnicity.

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### Educational achievement and socio-economic disadvantage

Christchurch's economic prosperity and community wellbeing depend on making use of the skills, talents and experience of all members of the community. There are concerns, however, about the educational achievement of some groups of young people:

- Maori and Pasifika students are significantly less likely to leave school qualified to attend university than the total population, although the proportions attaining university entrance have been improving in recent years. Maori are also much more likely to leave school before the age of 16 than any other ethnic group.
- As in the rest of New Zealand, children of parents on lower incomes tend to have lower levels of educational attainment, which helps to perpetuate the cycle of disadvantage.

Despite a buoyant economy in recent years, socio-economic disadvantage continues to affect a significant section of the population. In 2006, 16% of Christchurch people were living in the most deprived areas of the city, up from 13% in 2001

### Supporting communities

Primary responsibility for education and social issues rests with central government agencies. The Council supports learning and social connectedness however, through services such as libraries, community centres, recreation facilities and programmes, and through its support for community and voluntary groups. In addition to keeping up with demand for these services, driven by overall population growth, the Council needs to ensure that it is planning to meet the needs of an ageing and increasingly ethnically diverse population. Recreation patterns are also changing, with participation in traditional club-based sports declining and demand for more flexible, and less formal, recreation options increasing.

In the next ten years, the Council plans to:

- maintain existing services provided through its libraries, community centres and recreation facilities;
- continue its support for community and voluntary organisations;
- build new libraries in Belfast, Halswell, Hornby, Linwood and Aranui, as well as a new Central Library;
- build new community centres in Belfast, Halswell and Hornby; and
- build two major new leisure centres in Papanui and in the south-west of the city, as well as upgrade the Centennial Fitness Centre in the central city.

Community safety is a major focus for the Council at present. Although overall crime rates compare favourably with those in other parts of New Zealand, there is widespread community concern about violence, particularly alcohol and drug-related violence. The Council is working, with other members of the Safer Christchurch Interagency Group, to make the city a safer place by reducing crime and injury, and improving road safety. This commitment to a collaborative, community-wide approach to improving safety was recognised in October 2008 when Christchurch was accredited as a Safe City, using criteria established by the World Health Organisation.

The Council is a major provider of low-cost housing for people on low incomes. Historically, it has focussed on the needs of older people and more recently those with disabilities, but there is growing demand for social housing across a range of low-income groups. Looking ahead, the Council will need to consider how it can best work alongside Housing New Zealand and the many non-profit organisations involved in social housing to meet this demand. More immediately, the Council will spend \$53 million over the next ten years on upgrading or renewing its housing complexes. The Council consulted the public in January – March 2009 on options for funding these improvements. In addition the Council needs to consider its future role in the provision of social housing once many of its housing complexes reach the end of their useful lives.

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### Health

The key public health challenge of our generation, in Christchurch as in the rest of New Zealand, is the increasing rate of obesity, which is a risk factor for a multitude of diseases including diabetes, osteoarthritis, heart disease and stroke, as well as some forms of cancer. The reasons for the increase in obesity are many, but physical inactivity is a major factor. Only 59% of Christchurch residents are active for the recommended 30 minutes or more, five days a week.

The environment in which we live and work has a significant impact on our physical and mental health. Active travel—walking and cycling—is one way that people can build exercise into their lives. Having easy access to parks near their homes and workplaces also influences people's exercise levels and has been demonstrated to lead to better mental health. The Council's provision of parks as well as indoor recreation facilities, and its work to make the city more cycle- and pedestrian-friendly are therefore significant contributors to better health.

In the next ten years, the Council plans to:

- spend around \$143 million on maintaining and developing its parks network, including \$74 million for purchasing land for new parks and \$7.5 million on a new visitor centre for the Botanic Gardens;
- maintain current services provided through its recreation and sports facilities, including programmes targeted at groups facing barriers to participating in recreation;
- build two major new leisure centres in Papanui and in the south-west of the city, and upgrade the Centennial Fitness Centre; and
- spend around \$68 million on maintaining and improving footpaths and cycleways.

### Economic development

As in many other urban areas in New Zealand and internationally, there has been a change in the make-up of the economy and workforce since the latter half of the 1990s. Christchurch has begun to shift from an economy dependent on its traditional manufacturing base toward a service based economy with high growth in the property, business, and financial services industries. Since 1997, the percentage of employment in traditional manufacturing has decreased from 18% to approximately 13%, and business services and finance increased from 11.5% to 15%. This trend is expected to continue over the medium term, with increasing investment in the high-tech and business services sectors being likely.

This transformation is critical to the continued growth of Christchurch's urban economy, but it also poses challenges for both business and workers. The Council is committed to facilitating regional economic development in order to enable broad-based wealth creation and higher incomes so that individuals, families, and communities can participate more fully in the life of our city. For the Council, this means:

- Funding the Canterbury Development Corporation to promote the economic development of Christchurch and the Canterbury region.
- Encouraging sustainable economic growth through the provision of high quality infrastructure see Vol. 2.
- Managing land use in the city so as to encourage economic development while protecting natural resources and existing uses, and allowing for residential development.
- Funding Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism to attract visitors to Christchurch.
- Helping to make the city an attractive place to live and visit through the services it provides, including its annual events programme.

### Climate change

Like the rest of the world, Christchurch will be affected by changes to its climate brought about by increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Climate scientists estimate that temperatures in Canterbury become up to 2°C warmer over the next 70-100 years—to put this in perspective, the 1997/98 summer, which many New Zealanders remember as being particularly long, hot and dry, was only about 0.9°C above New Zealand's average for the 1990s.

Although the foothills and the Southern Alps could be up to 25% wetter than they are at present, coastal Canterbury could be up to 20% drier. It is likely that we will experience more extreme weather, with both droughts and floods becoming more frequent. Parts of Christchurch are also at risk from sea level rise, and drier conditions and sea level rise are also likely to have implications for the city's water supplies: see Water, below.

We need to take account of these changes in planning how Christchurch and Banks Peninsula will develop and services will be provided in future, so as to minimise the cost to the community of repairing or replacing damaged roads, bridges, houses and stormwater drains, and of dealing with stock losses and with increased soil erosion.

As a member of the Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, the Council is also involved in ensuring that the community is prepared to cope with emergencies and natural hazards, including the effects of climate change.

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#### Energy

Energy consumption in the city has been growing much faster than the population, roughly doubling every 30 years. We are also using increasing amounts of non-renewable energy, especially oil, which makes up 64% of total energy used in Christchurch.

Our current inefficient use of energy has social costs. Christchurch households spend an average of 30% of their total income on energy, and because of our cold winters and poor home insulation, many people struggle to adequately heat their homes, which contributes to health and social problems.

This pattern of energy consumption is unsustainable. For our own future wellbeing as well as to reduce our contribution to climate change, we need to increase the proportion of our energy that is generated from renewable resources such as wind, hydro, solar, and biogas—at present only 20%—and use energy more efficiently.

The Council is working to use energy more efficiently in its own operations, and to use renewable sources of energy where possible. QEII Park and the Bromley wastewater treatment plant already get their heating and electricity from landfill gas, and from 2010 a “tri-generation” plant will use this gas to power, heat and cool the new Civic Offices. This plant is projected to pay for itself within three years. A further \$3.5 million is budgeted over the next ten years for additional energy efficiency projects.

The Council also plans to establish the Christchurch Agency for Energy to help shift the city to a more sustainable energy future by

- containing the increase in the city’s overall energy use; and
- encouraging the greater use of renewable energy.

Planning for a more compact urban form, and enabling active travel and public transport use, will also allow us to become less reliant on non-renewable sources of energy. See Urban Growth and Central City Revitalisation, and Transport, below.

#### Waste

In 2008, Christchurch sent 682 kilograms per person of waste to landfill. Around half of that amount was potentially recyclable or able to be composted. Although the amount of waste going to landfill has declined since 2005, and recycling has been steadily increasing since 1998, we are still a long way from our target of reducing overall waste to landfill to 320 kg per person per year by 2020.

In 2009 central government will introduce a landfill tax. This, together with rising transport costs, means that it will become progressively more expensive to dispose of waste. Reducing waste, recycling and composting will help to avoid these costs and will make more efficient use of our material resources.

The three bin kerbside collection service introduced in early 2009 aims to help us reduce domestic rubbish going to landfill by a third. See our targets for composting and recycling, and residual waste to landfill, in the section on refuse minimisation and disposal.

The Council is also committed to business waste minimisation through the Target Sustainability Programme and to recovering and locally using materials that would otherwise be sent to landfill. Its new biosolids drying facility, which will be built in the first two years of the Plan, will divert up to 20,000 tonnes per year of “sludge” left over from sewage treatment from being dumped in the Kate Valley landfill.

#### Wastewater

There are no major strategic issues or challenges facing the city in regards to wastewater collection and treatment during the life of this plan. Services will continue to be provided on a business as usual basis. The targets for wastewater collection and treatment may be found in the wastewater collection and treatment section.

#### Water

Urban Christchurch and the Lyttelton Harbour Basin get their public drinking water from groundwater aquifers. Because the groundwater system is pressurised, pumping costs are low, and the water is of such high quality that it does not need treatment. The situation is very different on Banks Peninsula, where the public water supply comes from surface streams and small bores, so must be treated to remove sediment and contaminants, and is at risk in dry conditions.

Christchurch people consume a relatively high amount of water—between 430 and 450 litres per person per day. Two-thirds of this water is used by households, with peak demand in summer, mainly due to garden watering. But the supply of groundwater is not limitless, and drawing too much water from the aquifers affects spring-fed rivers such as the Avon, Heathcote and Styx, as well as risking salt water intrusion into wells close to the coastline.

Under its proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan, it is expected that Environment Canterbury will cap the amount of groundwater taken for Christchurch’s public water supply at around 75 million cubic metres per year. At present, Christchurch uses 54 million cubic metres per year, but if current patterns of consumption continue, we are projected to reach our total allowable consumption some time between 2045 and 2050. This is without taking into account the effects of climate change.

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## Water (cont'd)

Christchurch people have repeatedly expressed the importance of preserving the city’s very high quality drinking water. Success in doing so will depend not only on protecting aquifers, streams, and the public water supply network from contaminants, but also on managing demand for water. Even a relatively modest reduction in consumption would ensure that the city remains within its probable groundwater allocation for the foreseeable future. Over the ten years of this Plan, the Council is projecting a gradual decrease in the amount of groundwater abstracted per household and it is currently consulting on a draft Water Supply Strategy that will provide a framework for managing the city’s water supply sustainably in the coming decades.

In the next ten years the Council will spend around \$53 million to address risks to the water supply. It will focus on Banks Peninsula, in particular in Little River and Akaroa, and on the north-west of Christchurch. See targets for Ministry of Health water supply gradings and capital programme.

## Urban growth and central city revitalisation

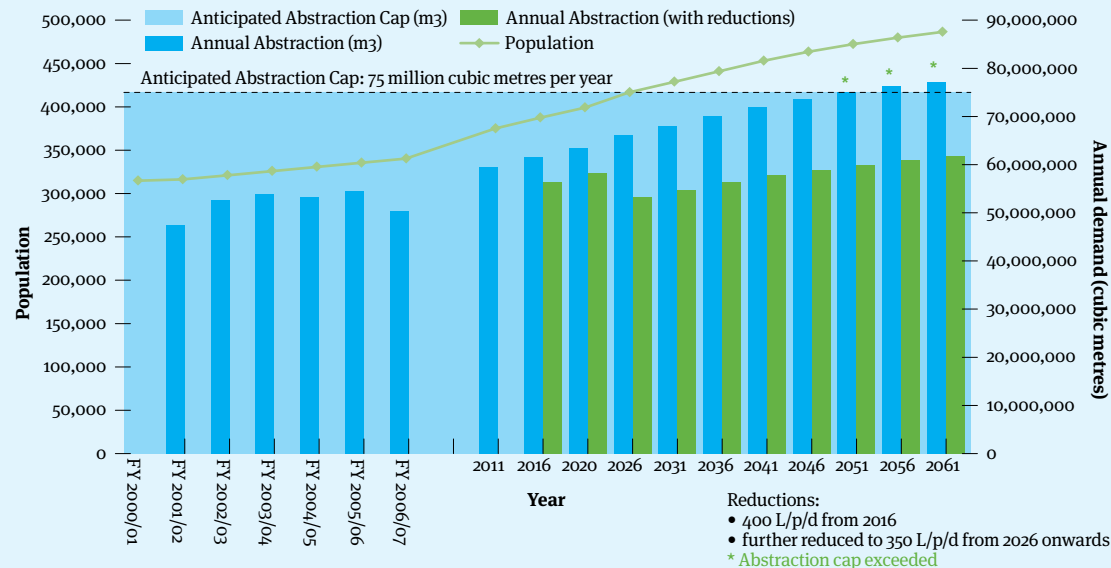
Christchurch and its surrounding districts have experienced significant population growth in recent years. The Greater Christchurch area—which includes the pre-2006 Christchurch City area and the Lyttelton Harbour basin as well as parts of the neighbouring Selwyn and Waimakariri districts—is projected to grow by a further 75,000 households—135,000 people—by 2041.

Since the early 1990s, much of this growth has occurred in new “greenfield” suburban and rural lifestyle block developments. As a result, people are travelling increasing distances to get to work, to visit friends and family, and to access goods and services. Some existing suburban and town centres have struggled to retain their identity. Rural land and natural landscapes have come under development pressure, and councils have been facing significant costs to provide infrastructure to dispersed growth areas.

In order to manage growth more effectively, the Christchurch City Council, along with its partners the Waimakariri and Selwyn District Councils, Environment Canterbury and Transit New Zealand (now part of the New Zealand Transport Agency), developed the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS). The UDS, which was adopted in 2007 after lengthy public consultation, sets out a preferred long-term urban development pattern for the Greater Christchurch area, which would see 45% of all new households between 2006 and 2041 accommodated within existing urban areas—a major change from business-as-usual (25%).

The more detailed planning and action to implement the UDS is now underway. During the next ten years, the Council will:

- Plan for more people to live in higher density residential and mixed-use development in the city. High quality design, the provision of amenities such as parks, and development that is sympathetic to the character of older areas of the city will all be critical to the success of the intensification programme.
- Focus on the central city, where the Council’s 25-year revitalisation programme aims to increase the number of residents, grow the business and commercial sector, improve public spaces and transport networks, and redevelop underused sites.
- Ensure that planning and infrastructure are coordinated to support staged greenfield growth in the south-west of the city and in Belfast.
- Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency and Environment Canterbury to provide an efficient transport system that is integrated with residential development, business and leisure activity. See Transport, below.



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### Transport

The efficiency of Christchurch's transport network is declining as demand for travel in and through the city increases. A high proportion of our journeys—including shorter trips of less than 2 km—are in private cars: walking and cycling have been declining, and although bus use has been increasing since 1993, it still accounted for only 4.1% of journeys to work in 2006. If we do nothing, traffic volumes in the city are projected to increase by 40-50%, and congestion to approximately triple, by 2021—and we will all have to put up with more delays, pollution and noise, with their economic, social and environmental costs.

The New Zealand Transport Strategy stresses the need to integrate transport and land-use planning, make the best use of existing networks, and increase the availability and use of public transport, cycling and walking, alongside investing in critical new infrastructure. These approaches are reflected in the Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy which in turn has shaped the Council's approach to transport in this LTCCP.

The Council will, over time, work to concentrate urban development in order to reduce the distances people have to travel to get to work, and maximise the potential for public transport use, walking and cycling.

During the next ten years the Council intends to:

- Spend \$663 million on maintaining and improving the road network across the city and Banks Peninsula, with benefits for all road users. Of this amount, almost \$450 million is for the renewal and replacement of existing roads.
- Spend \$48 million on existing, and just under \$20 million on new, footpaths and cycleways, and safe routes to school.
- Invest \$162 million in public transport infrastructure, including the new transport interchange and bus priority routes.

The Council projects that walking, cycling and public transport usage will remain roughly constant over the life of the Plan: see Streets and Transport targets.

### Infrastructure investment

In addition to this investment in the transport system, in the coming years, the city needs to invest in the other infrastructure networks that keep the city running, such as water supply, wastewater (sewerage), and stormwater drainage, as well as in its community facilities. This is because:

- New or upgraded infrastructure is needed to provide for the city's growth and to meet changing community needs.
- Many existing assets are now reaching the end of their life and need renewal or replacement.
- The amalgamation of Christchurch City and Banks Peninsula District Councils in 2006 brought with it responsibility for rural infrastructure on the Peninsula that provides a lower level of service than that in Christchurch.
- The Council needs to meet new environmental standards and legislative requirements, particularly for the management of water resources.

Building, maintaining and managing these major infrastructural assets will place the Council under considerable financial pressure, beyond the ten years of this LTCCP.

In prioritising its spending, the Council needs to balance addressing risks to public health and safety, protecting the environment, providing acceptable levels of service to existing communities, and servicing growth.

### Protecting our natural and cultural heritage

Christchurch and Banks Peninsula have a wide range of outstanding natural areas, habitats, and species, and the Council plays a part in their protection, along with Environment Canterbury, the Department of Conservation, landowners, and partner organisations. Collectively, they have achieved some notable successes in conserving and restoring indigenous biodiversity, such as:

- the protection of significant areas of land on the Port Hills
- the protection of Hinewai Reserve and Misty Peaks on the Peninsula,
- the establishment of the dry grassland park at McLeans Island,
- the creation of Travis Wetland, and
- the protection of white flippered penguins at Flea and Stony Bays.

The advent of the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, continuing work by the QEII Trust, and initiatives such as goat and possum control programmes are making a major difference to biodiversity on the Peninsula. However, there are still some major challenges faced in other areas such as the sustainable management of the city's remaining dry grasslands, locally and nationally endangered species, pest control, and the degradation of urban and rural waterways.

The Council owns and manages a network of conservation parks with a total area of over 5100 hectares. The protection of habitats and biodiversity on this land will continue to be a key priority for the Council, with 20–30 ecological restoration projects being undertaken, and 20–30 sites being monitored, at any one time. The Council also works to protect and restore natural waterways, and, through its environmental education programmes, it aims to raise awareness of biodiversity and other environmental issues.

The city's cultural heritage is also a significant asset. In particular, our heritage and character buildings and areas act as a reminder of our past and help to sustain a sense of local identity. In recent years, however, there has been considerable public concern about the loss of the city's heritage and character due to unsympathetic development. The challenge is to balance the need for development — especially as residential densities increase — with the retention of historic character.

The Council plans to continue its active role in heritage protection and management, through regulation, the provision of grants and advice, and the ownership and management of a number of heritage properties. Over the life of this plan, it will also contribute to a number of significant heritage projects, including:

- the seismic strengthening of the Arts Centre, and
- the conservation of the Christchurch Music Centre.

"**Sunrise fisherman**" was taken by Rachel Gordon of Spreydon and entered in the Christchurch City Council's competition to find a cover image for the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-19. In her explanation of the image, she says it shows the Christchurch spirit to get up and do something free and enjoyable.

