

SIGNPOST

News from the Heartlands



ISSUE 2 // FEBRUARY 2011

Welcome to the second issue of Signpost – News from the Heartlands. This newsletter is a way for the Heartlands community to share information with each other about what is happening in their patch.

This issue covers some of the ways that agencies are working together to make it easier for families to get services that make a difference to their lives.

Since the last issue of *Signpost*, the Minister of Social Development has appointed the members to the 14 new Community Response Forums. They represent a new level of partnership between government and the community.

We have also seen the continued rollout of Community Links, which has increased opportunities for collaboration and partnership for the community sector.

Heartland Service Centres continue to play an important role in the mix, making it easier for people, especially in rural communities, to access government services and connect with community-based support. There is a tangible sense of local ownership in each

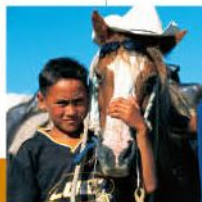
Heartland Service Centre as each has evolved to meet the particular needs of its locality.

Communities around the country have faced challenges over the past months. Families on the West Coast and beyond have been affected by the Pike River Mine tragedy. And, while the Canterbury earthquake has faded from front page news, many families and communities are still struggling to rebuild their lives.

This issue looks at some of the ways that Heartland Service Centres have risen to the challenges arising from the Canterbury earthquake and the on-going aftershocks.

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Heartlands provides earthquake support

Aranui Heartlands has been going all-out to support their local community in the wake of the “big one” of 4 September and the ongoing aftershocks.

“People in Christchurch are still feeling shaken, physically and emotionally,” says Heartland Service Centre Co-ordinator Rachael Fonotia.

“Just when we think things are settling down we get another shake. It’s very unnerving, and we are very mindful of doing all we can to bolster people’s wellbeing. With this in mind we have secured funding to extend our nursing services and provide additional counselling from the community services.

“We are also providing a lot of help with form filling and application writing. For many people, negotiating these kinds of processes is a hurdle at the best of times.

“We are also trying to reach out to those who don’t make it through our door,” adds Rachael. “We have added an extra page in our newsletter, and are including lots of tips on how to stay stress-free and to manage anxiety. We are also providing practical information about where to go for help, and the services on offer by government and non-government agencies.” The newsletter reaches 3,000 homes.

Aranui Community Trust (ACTIS), which is home to Heartlands, is now hosting a dedicated Earthquake Co-ordinator funded by the Canterbury Earthquake Fund. The Earthquake Co-ordinator will provide a case-management service for badly affected families.



ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Following the earthquake, the Hornby Heartlands space turned into a Recovery Assistance Centre, one of four established city-wide. Across the floor, Work and Income became a Welfare Centre. Overall the co-location of Hornby Service Centre experienced one of its greatest challenges ever.

On Monday September 6, it was business in an unusual way, and in the days and weeks that followed it was standing room only as many people came in for help and advice. There was immediate response from a large number of agencies deployed into the region to wrap support around both staff and communities within the centre.

“This support has been so much appreciated,” says June Foster-Campbell, Heartland Service Centre Co-ordinator.

“The emotional impact of the quake on families continues today, and the reality for some with destroyed neighbourhoods and lives is that it will take many years to recover.”

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**Earthquake Government Helpline –
phone 0800 77 999 7**

Community Response Forums: Giving communities a voice

A new model aims to deliver better results for families and better value for the New Zealander taxpayer.

The Community Response Model, announced in July 2010 by Hon Paula Bennett, Minister for Social Development, is designed to transform the way government funds social support services delivered to families and communities.

The Community Response Model is based on the belief that community stakeholders understand their communities best, and that involving local people in decision-making processes will result in services that fit their community's needs. Fourteen Community Response Forums were recently established to lead the new approach.

Forum members were chosen for their local knowledge and networks and expertise in community leadership. They include a mix of people drawn from the community, local government, and government employees from the social service area.

Each forum has been asked to review the impact of current FACS-funded services in their region and develop a new plan for services which takes the views of the community into account. Forums started their process of community engagement in selected areas in November/December, and will spread out to a wider geographic area in the first half of 2011. It will be up to each forum as to how it engages with its community. Innovative approaches

Making community connections is core business for Heartland Service Centres

may be required to bring forward the wide variety of voices that make up the community, particularly those least often heard.

Forums will want to identify community resources and look to strengthen the natural support systems that already exist in

communities, and ensure that community capabilities and networks in the community are put to use to share knowledge and support grass-roots change. Their work is expected to be pivotal in recasting the traditional relationship between government, provider, and people who get services, into a new way of working together – doing things differently.

You can read more about the forums on www.familyservices.govt.nz.

Making community connections is core business for Heartland Service Centres. Your local FACS team can tell you what is being planned in your area.

"I believe that the outcome will be transformational: strengthened communities working together, with services and supports that make a real difference and are delivered in a way that is smart, efficient and inclusive. The best end result will see families who are more connected to their communities and empowered to look after themselves and each other."

– Hon. Paula Bennett
Minister for Social Development

**community
response forums**
transforming social services

Helensville Post Office building: still at the centre of community life 100 years on

Helensville's former Post Office stands out not only as a fine example of the town's historic architecture but as testament to the strength of community.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, there were more than 1,700 Post Office branches nationwide. Sited strategically at the physical centre of towns they provided vital telephone and communications services and fulfilled a range of government functions from the registration of births, marriages and deaths (hatches, matches and despatches) to the issuing of licences for TVs from 1960. Postmasters could even marry people.

The 1980s saw extensive rationalisation of government agencies in New Zealand, and a withdrawal of services from rural and remote communities. People outside the main centres were expected to do business by phone or to travel to main centres to do business with government. Thirty years on a number of fine historic post office buildings still stand empty.

Not so in Helensville, where a partnering of private business, public sector and iwi working with the community has put the post office building right back in the centre of the community.

The private owner of the building partnered with Ministry of Social Development, and Ngati Whatua Nga Rima o Kaipara Trust, creating a community facility which hosts a wide range of both government and non-government social service providers, including Heartland Te Awaroa.

This Heartland Service Centre takes its name from the long river of Awaroa, which was once the lifeline for the township of new settlers welcomed by Ngati Whatua. Then chief Te Otene Kikokiko gave prime land in Te Awaroa for public use to encourage people to settle there and build a township willing to recognise the Ngati Whatua people.

"We give the land you ask for and we give it willingly, without cost. You know my lands; take your railway through them. It will do good. Our land will rise in value. We can travel quickly, provisions and clothing will be cheap, and Europeans will come to dwell amongst us. Kaipara will come to be a dwelling place of chiefs, as Auckland now is. When we die, we will leave our children among a people who will treat them kindly, as we, when living, treated the pākehā."

– Archived Auckland Museum Quote,
Te Otene Kikokiko, Ngati Whatua o Kaipara

Today, the staff and tribal supporters of Heartlands are local whanāu and descendents carrying out their ancestor's aspirations to help families in the community connect with the area.

Glendith Samson, who manages Heartland Te Awaroa, and a team of community resource people, sees this as a realisation of the Treaty of Waitangi.

"A tribe working well with an agent of the Crown in its own tribal area," she says.

Glendith also facilitates the Trust's Marae and Community Health Engagement

portfolio, which integrates services across five marae and the wider community.

Opening up the whole building has also opened many possibilities for families, especially single parent families. At 3pm, school-age children come in to do homework, with year 10-plus able to use the internet for assignments. Rooms are available for family meetings until 7.30pm to suit working parents, and a smart whiteboard is well used to develop family plans so everybody leaves informed and empowered.

A dedicated children's area for CYF and young mums, with space to park-up the buggy and have a coffee with the staff, is well used. And Te Wananga o Aotearoa offers weekly money management classes to improve financial security for caregivers. A Youth Advisory Group to the Waitemata District Health Board, and Youthline 'together time' also meet in Heartlands. "This reflects the sense of connection that these young people feel with their community," says Glendith. As part of a digital broadband push for the region, the Trust provides internet access and a large touch screen for public use. "Grandparents come to use the touch screen with their grandchildren, a great way to bridge the generation gap," says Glendith.

"Our district has the highest Corrections reporting for Waitakere, and many of those coming in to report use the opportunity to meet their other needs such as attending workshops with their partners. We have worked hard to ensure the judgmental treatment they get elsewhere is not duplicated within Heartlands," says Glendith.

Nga Rima o Kaipara Trust co-ordinates community service and will be extending



Heartland Te Awaroa in Helensville

its role with the Department of Corrections bringing environmental and social wellbeing benefits for the wider community.

The Trust also plays a key role in environmental protection. This brings a unique component to Heartland Te Awaroa informing the community early about changes in the township.

Next year will mark 100 years since the Post Office first opened its doors and planning is underway for an historic celebration.

More information

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Community Link rollout

Community Link continues to rollout around New Zealand as part of the Ministry of Social Development's plan to transform all Work and Income sites to Community Links by the end of 2013.

The rollout recognises that families and individuals have complex needs that are unlikely to be resolved by a single agency. The rollout plan focuses on sites with defined communities and known service gaps due to size or geographic location.

Community Link is part of Government's broader aims for social services which includes:

- local solutions to local issues
- putting more control in the hands of communities
- addressing the limitations of social services working in silos.

By the end of 2010 there will be 50 Community Links up and running or in the formal development phase. A further 30 sites are planned in 2011. This includes an additional 10 sites to those already planned in Auckland to ensure each Board of the Auckland Super City is supported.

HEARTLANDS AND COMMUNITY LINK: WORKING TOGETHER

A number of Heartland Service Centres are already working alongside Community Links. One of these is the Taupo Heartlands Service Centre, which was already co-located with Work and Income, and now shares a building with

Community Link. The two bodies have evolved to complement one another.

"The key to our working relationship is about keeping the focus on the people," says Heartland co-ordinator Annette Skeen.

"It's about rising above traditional organisational boundaries, and accepting that the relationships that have been carefully built and nurtured over time are there for the good of the community."

Heartland Services have been in Taupo for eight years, and Annette, who has a background in social services, brought her networks in the community to her role as Co-ordinator. She is always looking to build new connections, with displays at expos, speaking engagements and getting Heartland brochures out.

Annette facilitates regular network meetings with key community providers, and a bi-monthly ROFF (Right on the Frontline Forum) with the government agencies that work from the Heartland centre. She stays in touch with Strengthening Families, taking minutes for its provider meeting [true service] and the Local Management Group. Annette is also on a CYF Care and Protection Panel, and the board of the CAB. Many community-based groups, as well as government agencies, work from the Heartland centre.



“Having Community Link as well as a Heartland Service Centre here means an even better service for people,” says Annette.

“The work that I did as the Heartland Services Co-ordinator, and the relationships that I established were respected by Work and Income. I was part of community meetings in the start-up phase and I continue to participate in their quarterly Community Link stakeholder meetings.”

For Jacqui Arstall, Branch Manager with Work and Income, it was always going to be important that Community Link worked alongside what was already being done by the Heartlands services.

“We worked with Annette and the networks that she has in the community to help establish better relationships with agencies and determine whether they would find working from the Community Link useful to them.

“Partner agencies in Community Link really enjoyed the idea of being part of a collective response to support families, and enjoyed having access to the Work and Income facilities, including meeting rooms, desks and telephones,” says Jacqui.

“We are committed to successful outcomes for our mutual clients and having the Community Link and Heartland Service Centre working together has been powerful in ensuring that this is our focus.”

The branding for Community Link really says it all – “he tangata, he tangata, he tangata the people, the people, the people. “

Youth cards

Senior students at Te Kuiti High School have been working with FACS to develop a pocket sized resource for local youth which lists local services as well as national websites and helplines. Copies of the card are available from

Hilary Karaitiana
c/o Te Kuiti Hospital
Ailsa St
Te Kuiti

Getting ready for Census Day

HEARTLAND SERVICE CENTRES CAN HELP COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR CENSUS DAY ON 8 MARCH.

Did you realise that everyone who is in New Zealand on census day must fill in a census form or have one filled in for them? This includes babies, children and any visitors who may be staying the night of 8 March 2011.

The census is the official count of how many people and dwellings there are in New Zealand, and the results will help determine how billions of dollars of government funding is spent in the community. It is used to help make decisions about which services are needed and where they should be, such as hospitals, kōhanga reo, schools, roads, public transport, and recreational facilities.

You can do your forms online or on paper. Statistics New Zealand census collectors will deliver an Internet Access Code and paper forms to your home before the census. Forms are available in either English or Māori. It is secure, quick and easy to do your forms online, and if all the forms for your household are filled in online, your collector may not need to come back.

Your personal information is protected by the Statistics Act 1975 and is not shared. No other organisation – including the New Zealand Police, Immigration Service or Inland Revenue – can obtain census information that will identify you.

Answers to census questions help local councils understand the needs of the people who live in provincial or rural areas of New Zealand, and which services are needed and where they should be. It is important that you provide full and accurate answers to these questions.

Census information is used in ways that can directly benefit you and your community. For example:

The Pohangina Valley, north of Palmerston North in the Manawatu, is an area of great natural beauty and biodiversity. The valley is handy to Palmerston North: it is surrounded by farm and wetlands, with a population of just over 1,000.

Census data has shown that the total population of Pohangina has remained relatively steady over the last 20 years, but changes in employment patterns have contributed to an increase in the number of workers who make the daily commute out of the valley. The 2006 Census showed that 54% of employed residents worked outside the valley.

The Pohangina community was able to use this information to support the council's application for road improvement. As a result, the main road leading into Pohangina Valley was upgraded in early 2007. Locals and visitors now benefit from smoother and safer access to and from the valley.

For more information visit

www.census.govt.nz



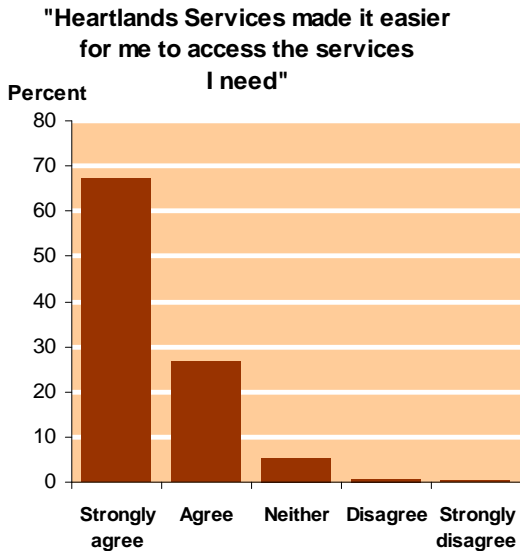
Heartlands makes it easy to access services

A recent survey carried out in 33 Heartlands Service Centres provided a strong endorsement of the work being carried out and highlighted some areas for future development.

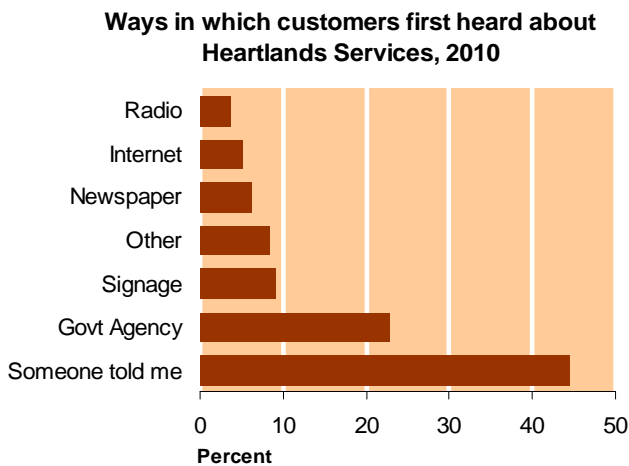
The survey canvassed 773 users of the service, and 366 representatives of government and non-government agencies that deliver services through Heartlands.

When asked if: "Heartlands Services has made it easier for me to access the

services I need, in my community” 94 percent of respondents agreed, including 67 percent who strongly agreed.



“Word of mouth” led the way in putting people in touch with their Heartlands, followed by referrals from government agencies.



These findings please Collaborative Initiatives Manager Paula Strickson the most, because they are so in keeping with what Heartlands is all about.

“There is no stronger endorsement than that which comes directly from the users

of the service,” she says. “And government agencies at the Heartlands referring people to the other services that are available is just the kind of joined-up service that people want to receive.

“The whole idea of Heartlands is to bring the services together in one place and to organise the services around the client. This includes the full array of what is available for people in their community, not just what the government departments can provide.”

Co-ordinators’ contribution

As with previous surveys, the service provided by Heartlands co-ordinators was rated highly.

Of those who took part in the survey, 98 percent of customers and 96 percent of agencies were either satisfied or very satisfied with co-ordinators being welcoming and helpful.

Comments such as: “Heartlands Centre is a great place to come. Everyone is very helpful and friendly,” proves that Heartlands co-ordinators continue to be a vital aspect of the initiative’s successful face-to-face service delivery.

Customers were also asked to think about the services provided by the Heartland’s Co-ordinator, and again high levels of satisfaction were recorded, including a 98 percent satisfaction rating with the welcome customers received.

“Heartlands Service Centres can be busy places,” says Paula Strickson, “and it’s great to see that Co-ordinators fulfil that vision of being there for the people in their community.”

Government and non-government agencies agreed that customers were made welcome, that appointments were

well-arranged and customers well-advised on what to bring to appointments.

The survey did flag physical limitations in some service centres with lack of privacy highlighted by both customers and agencies. There was a call for longer opening hours and limited internet access was also an area where some dissatisfaction was expressed.

On the whole, the survey suggests that Heartlands Services continue to meet the same high standards as in previous years.

In the words of the people...

“*Having the Heartlands Service available here in town provides important access for many people in our community. It provides the important personal 'one to one' meetings with agency support for those of our community that cannot achieve the journey out of town.*”

“Professional with a human touch.”

“We need more services like this.”

“We could not do without a place like Heartland Centre.”

“Always have what I want and with a smile as well.”

“They know a lot and what they don't know they will find out for me.””

➤ **On the road to recovery,** continued from Page 2

Fourteen weeks on and Heartlands has returned to its own area. The Recovery Assistance Centre remains on site somewhat minimised, but continuing to provide support and services for affected communities including helping with Red Cross applications e.g. damaged homes and emergency assistance.

June's extended role as Team Leader for the Hornby Recovery Assistances Centre will continue through the festive season (not including Public Holidays) as the Recovery Assistance Centre continues to support earthquake-affected families.

June's advice: “Sharing a little of my experiences I hope will go some way in helping bring about awareness when it comes to a disaster. Check your emergency plan and get to know what happens in times of a disaster, don't wait until it happens!

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