

St Albans News

The Voice of our Neighbourhood

December 2011



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by Max Feutz

It would be an exaggeration to say "Tis the season to be jolly" in St Albans, but there are definitely signs that, in the business world at least, things are looking up.

Knowing how desperate we all are to have our old familiar shops and services fully operational again, we recently caught up with as many business owners as possible to find out what stage they are at in the time-consuming process of dealing with EQC, obtaining insurance payouts and finalising building consents. We also have a word each from two women whose help has been invaluable in speeding up the bureaucratic process for business owners. They are Dale Harris, from the CCC and Shirley Waverin of Recover Canterbury. (See page 3)

The most visible progress is of course in **Edgeware Village**, where work has begun on the new **Supervalue**. People are often to be seen at the site, lingering there, taking note of any progress that has been made and chatting to the site foreman, who says he has never had such a warm welcome and so much encouragement from any community.

Owner Stephen Anderson says that his geotech report shows that the land is stable and not prone to liquifaction, but what we can see at present are 139 piles that are being screwed (not rammed) down until they reach bedrock.

He laughingly admits that the building may be "overly engineered." He knows how pivotal the supermarket is to the perception of recovery but can't yet give a prospective opening date – hopefully it will be mid 2012. Some work is still going out for tender and at every stage there have been hurdles to jump, adding to the expense of the project. Engineers reports for instance had to be 'peer reviewed.' In other words, he had to obtain a second opinion on everything, a process which has slowed him down and cost plenty. However, he has welcomed the support from the various agencies, who are doing there best to work together.

There isn't much hope that the **Promed Edgeware** medical practice can return to it's old site in the near future, but there too the signs are extremely hopeful.

Dr Mark Rogers says "I have been advised by the owner that there has been some progression with the insurers recently. The view is that demolition is likely and the owner is keen for a rebuild as soon as possible."

As regards the **Mitre 10**, Jeremy and Vicki say that they are still waiting for the unstable wall of the neighbouring building to come down. They will definitely be back and meanwhile can be found at the Upper Riccarton Mitre 10.

John and Case Thomson of **Hardie and Thomson** are committed to staying

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on their present site, to which so much history is attached, and are currently busy relocating the manufacturing side of their business to a temporary home elsewhere. They have completed the insurance process and are now awaiting their Resource Consent from Chch City Council. Although the process has been slower than they would like, they are effusive in their praise of Dale Harris and Shirley Waverin who have offered invaluable support and practical advice, and put them in touch with the right people to deal with their issues. Most of their older buildings will come down including the large tower/hopper structure which supports the extraction fan and the building on Columbo St which they also own and which housed. **Ahead in Hair and Skin Deep Beauty Therapy.** The Thomsons are very aware that the earthquake has presented an opportunity to think about what Edgware Village as a whole could look like and are willing to be part of an integrated approach to the design of the area if everyone can be brought together to make it happen.

One of the saddest sights is of course the roofless L-shaped building which dominates the Edgware hub, and it is the future of this building which is most surrounded in mystery. A spokesperson for the landlord (Edco Nominees Ltd) has confirmed that there is no land damage or liquifaction, and an application to repair is underway with the CCC. According to the owner, there is no particular impediment or complication, and the delays are the same as those experienced by many people. All the previous tenants are keen to return there with the exception of the T.A.B, which has already found a new home at the back of the mall in the **Edgware Sports Bar**. At this stage, it is not possible to confirm who will eventually occupy that spot.

Sadly, things are not progressing well for Kim & Sue Dale, franchisees of **Brumbies Edgware**, who had

this to say - "Unfortunately, despite the best efforts from our landlord to try and get their insurance company to confirm the process of repair or rebuild, there has been no decision made yet. Until this can be resolved we are unable to make further plans. We greatly miss being part of the Edgware business community and the interaction we had with our valued customers."

Kim and Dale's story illustrates the constant worry and heartbreak that can result from delayed decision-making. With EQC and two insurance companies to deal with, decisions were never going to be fast, but the 'rule' that claims can't be settled until 3 months after any aftershock measuring more than four is the really frustrating thing. And it's doubly frustrating knowing that the assessment isn't overly complicated, with engineers for the two insurance companies involved agreeing that the unsafe wall (closest to Domino's) needs to come down. However, with their insurance due to expire in February, time is running out and they have had no choice but to begin looking for an alternative site. Adding to the stress of all this is the fact that their house is in the Red Zone.

Would it be too much to ask that someone, maybe Roger Sutton - on his bicycle and wearing a pair of fairy wings from the \$2 Shop - go down there one day and cut through a bit of red tape??

In our next issue, we hope to bring more positive news, and we'll also take a look further afield at some of the businesses outside the immediate vicinity of Edgware.

Hopefully, in the New Year we will be looking at things within an overall context of creating aesthetically pleasing precincts throughout the neighbourhood. Dale Harris says that up till now the focus has been on helping individual businesses, but the next question is "How do we now support entire centres?" ☘

The St Albans News relies on your contributions. Please send your articles, letters and notices to news@stalbens.gen.nz. The deadline for the next issue is January 24th 2012

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The opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the St Albans Residents' Association.

Dale Harris

What is my role in your community?

To assist with the recovery of earthquake-damaged suburban centres in Christchurch, the City Council has been providing support in the form of Suburban Centres case managers. These case managers have been working across the City, providing assistance to building and land owners on the rebuild process.

As the case manager for Edgware, I have worked with some of the owners of damaged commercial buildings providing advice on the rebuild process — primarily the resource and building consent processes and providing connections to urban design and transport advice where needed.

A little while back there was a meeting of Edgware business/land owners with myself and a rep from Recover Canterbury. One of the things that came out of that meeting was a sense that with all the empty/broken buildings and shops around Edgware, there is despondency in the community regarding the centre. In response to this it was suggested that having more information (eg

signs on building sites) about what's going on would help, and I believe this will occur at some stage with the Supervalu and 1066 Colombo sites. The Council is also supportive of activities that rebuild confidence in Edgware, such as the upcoming market day event.

What is my background?

I studied environmental management at Lincoln and have been at the Christchurch City Council since I graduated. I have worked on a number of strategic policy/planning projects in Christchurch and Banks Peninsula. I was on parental leave when the earthquakes happened and picked up the case manager role when I returned to work in April (my daughter was only 7 weeks old when September hit). Actually, I live in St Albans so I know the area well and have a vested interest in its recovery. I'm also helping with the Ferry Road Masterplan and the recovery of a number of other centres across Christchurch. From my experience to date, I am of the view that encouraging businesses to work together better, and strengthening the relationship between businesses and the community will be essential for the successful long-term recovery



of the City's earthquake-damaged commercial centres. The challenge then lies in how this can be supported in a time when many businesses and commercial landowners are 'busy enough' coping with the impacts of the earthquake on their businesses or investments. More general information on suburban centres case management can be found on the CCC website:

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/thecouncil/policiesreportsstrategies/SuburbsRejuvenationProgramme/CasemanagementWorkStreams.aspx>

Shirley van Waveren

I am a Business Recovery Coordinator with Recover Canterbury. Since the February earthquake I've been working closely with the Edgware business community. It's been great to see how resilient and positive the businesses have been. Edgware has a great future ahead, both with the rebuild and future new developments, and it's exciting to see that construction has started on the supermarket. The Christmas @ Edgware Event on Dec 17th, which Recover Canterbury is proud to be a part of, is a chance to celebrate the strength of the

Edgware community as a whole and to end 2011 on a positive note for the local businesses and residents alike. Plus the chance to enjoy great coffee, a bit of pre Christmas shopping and gourmet food from the BBQ!

Recover Canterbury is the organisation responsible for helping businesses recover from the Christchurch earthquakes. Through mentoring, grants, training and support, Recover Canterbury is helping Canterbury businesses survive and thrive.

Any business can ask for help from Recover Canterbury, and it's



completely free. Just call 0800 50 50 96 or email

info@recovercanterbury.co.nz



Hi everyone.

I thought maybe I would like to write a negative chairchat about insurance, communication, leadership and regulatory issues. But I must follow the advice I was given a year ago now, when I wrote my first chairchat – 'be positive.'

And that would be my advice to everyone today – be positive. And my piece of advice for our upcoming new year would be – 'what's going to work? Teamwork.' (Just in case you don't have a preschooler, this is from the children's programme 'The Wonder Pets')

We have all suffered this year, including our leaders; Mayor Bob has been dealing with major surgery. Roger Sutton, the long hospitalisation of a loved family member. Gerry Brownlee signed up to be Minister of

the Rugby World Cup and look at what he is being made to do now! Chris Mene is coping with the death of a loved one, Brendon Burns lost his home and Nicky Wagner lived inside the cordon and had/has to deal with the curfews and no amenities.

I would like to thank these leaders and our other leaders, including our local political, business, community and family leaders for their hard work in this time of personal adversity. Thank you all for tackling the challenges you have been given. The St Albans Residents Association is looking forward to working together with you all in the future for the betterment of the St Albans Community.

On behalf of SARA I hope you all have a merry Christmas and as long a holiday as you can! Take care everyone.

Emma Twaddell
Chair of the St Albans
Residents' Association

Will we soon be able to pop in to the 'Pop up' St Albans Community Centre?

by Emma Twaddell

If the interest shown in the last issue is anything to go by, then the answer is yes. Our community, all 20 odd thousand of us (and our family and friends) will again be able to meet at the St Albans Community Centre in Edgware Village.

It seems there is the energy and talent in the St Albans people to make this project happen.

It seems there is the support of our business community. It seems our community groups want to come back. It seems we have the interest of our local Community Board and the CCC.

It seems like it's time to moooove this thing along. Let's give this idea a project number!

Nothing has been formalised as yet but this gives you an idea of the overwhelming support this project has already received

- **NeighbourNet want to open again and several groups have been excited about the idea.**
- **A local man who has been working on the ReStart project would like to be involved.**
- **A local QS would like to help.**

- **Landscaping businesses, shelter retailers and building material suppliers have shown initial interest.**
- **Plumbing and Electrical companies have shown initial interest.**
- **A coffee company is interested in helping with the set up of a coffee shop.**
- **A local lady would like to look at incorporating a children's sensory garden.**
- **There's even a possibility of some containers.**

So this is a really positive start. But of course, there is a long way to go. SARA will work on formalising the proposal with the CCC and meanwhile we would love to hear from you. If you could add your expertise to this project and would like to be involved please make yourself known. And please let us know your thoughts and ideas. Contact us on communitycentre@stalbens.gen.nz or leave us a message on 374 2465. The October edition of the St Albans News, with the article 'Can We Build It? Yes, we can!' can be found at www.stalbens.gen.nz.

Letter to the Editor

In response to Bill Demeter's query in our last issue: CCC Community Services Manager Michael Aitken says that the monies originally allocated to the extension of the now demolished Community Centre are still in the LTCCP, which will not be reviewed until 2013. While it is legally possible for Council to reallocate the money to other uses, he sounded optimistic that the money might go towards a rebuild on the existing site. However, no decisions can be made until a complete review has been made of all community facilities, which might result in some facilities being amalgamated. He therefore cannot confirm a start date of 2014 for the Centre. He is aware of the pressure the Residents Association volunteers are under and has promised to support the community's aspirations for a pop-up community centre if it should prove feasible, although he has not yet had time to look at the proposal closely. (ED.)

Community Constable on the Beat

by Hilaire Campbell

Wayne Stapley is The Palms' worst customer, always chatting never buying, but that's part of his job as a community constable; to get out and listen to locals, pick up their concerns, be the approachable face of the police. He walks the mall a couple of times a week, and checks out complaints with volunteers at the community office there.

Wayne joined the police force 13 years ago aged 38, and has been a relieving community constable for the last two years. Some earlier names he recalls are Megan Evans, Tony Tully and Chris Davies. There are only two women at present, in Aranui and Sydenham. Wayne is one of five community constables operating from the Papanui Police Station and his area covers Mairehau and Shirley, and parts of St Albans and Edgware. As well as weekdays, Community Constables work some evenings and are there to assist the CIB if needed, but they don't generally deal with 'high end' matters. A typical day involves following up complaints – assaults, thefts, Warrants to Arrest, firearms security checks, wilful damage and neighbourhood disputes.

He says the term 'domestic violence' doesn't just apply to families; it might be flatmates, workmates or kids who are doing the fighting. "Many people have moved out, and offending rates in certain areas have declined," says Wayne. "Geraldine St, for example, is much quieter."

Prevention is top priority, so he

visits schools and attends meetings every five weeks with agencies such as Plunket, Pregnancy Help and Age

with people who are repeatedly targeted by criminals, to help them better secure their property, and feel safer. He says there's no police presence after a burglary now unless there's a suspect or someone's seen climbing through a window.

"It's important for a community constable to be highly visible, so plain cars are out, but we've discussed bringing bikes back. I'd like that."

Wayne says there's a knack to spotting trouble before it occurs, but mostly it's common sense. Skinny types with hoodies up on a hot day, in an environment they don't belong – "it's dollars to doughnuts we'll know them." He urges people to call the police if they see something suspicious, even if the suspicion proves unfounded.

The public has been stirred up lately by prostitution in Madras and Manchester Streets, and the police are working with the council and others to reach a satisfactory outcome. "The main problems are the associated noise

in the middle of the night, rubbish left behind, and intimidation when residents ask for the noise to be lowered."

Wayne says people who live in more affluent areas generally keep to themselves. "It's easy to do a home visit in Shirley or Mairehau where there's not even a gate, but Fendalton is bristling with security and it's hard to penetrate."

All community constables are tasked for traffic patrol, sharing the

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one car with radar. Wayne's pet hate is people running late yellows and red lights. "We shouldn't ticket on attitude but we're only human - the driver who swore profusely when I pulled him over got a ticket when I'd only intended to issue a warning. One woman in a convertible had exceeded the speed limit, and as I walked to the driver's door, I could see in the wing mirror that she was lowering her blouse to show more 'skin.' She didn't get a warning either."

From time to time, Community Constables work at events such as Xmas in the Park, the Santa Parade, Coast to Coast, rugby and other sports events, but school visits are Wayne's favourite part of the job. "Kids are so innocent, and they love to see us. But I'd like to make a plea to parents and teachers not to use us as a threat - 'the policeman will arrest you if you're naughty' sort of thing. We want them to see us as helpful." Having said that, Wayne says he'll never forget the time he put the handcuffs on a young boy and realized the keys were back at the station.

Training is ongoing. Wayne says it's a thorough process which includes firearms training every 6 months. "I remember when I went to Police College how accurate I was from 100 metres when I'd hardly ever handled rifles before."

Wayne's big love is football, and he keeps fit by running from his home in Redwood to work and back each day.

He was a FIFA International Assistant Referee from 1997 to 2004, and was fortunate to officiate round the Pacific, with trips to South Korea and Turkey. He is a referee development officer for Mainland Football, based at ASB Park, and runs courses to get new referees.

Wayne has a nice balance in his life. He's friendly and outgoing and enjoys his work. "My nickname is Smiley. I'm what you'd call a glass half full man." ☼

Resilient? What if we are not feeling that?

by Errol Hay, Registered Psychotherapist at Talking Therapy

We are hearing this word a lot at the moment, as Cantabrians are being praised for their strength and resilience. It does feel like the media and speechwriters are trying to make us feel good, but being repeatedly told that we are strong, and stoic can make us hesitant to acknowledge that we may not feel that way, and that it is not ok to have the feelings that we are experiencing and that worse, it is something to be ashamed of.

What if we are not resilient? What if we are feeling overwhelmed by anxiety? Fragmented and scared we will fall apart more- or that the mental exhaustion of all the experiences we have faced (and continue to face) grinds us down?

If you talk with a cross section of the community you will be aware of undercurrents that many people are not coping that well. They are not feeling resilient - they are feeling stressed, uncertain, surrounded by loss and grief, and anxious about their futures.

At Talking Therapy we have been providing free counselling for difficulties experienced with the earthquakes since September 2010 when we provided free sessions, and then later after Feb 22nd 2011 when we were able to access funding via Ministry of Social Development and Relationship Services. This funding is now extended until the end of 2011.

With the passing of time, and the impact of involvement in the Royal Commission of Inquiry and details from the Coroners Court, as well as ongoing land and house decisions, we are seeing more trends emerge with large numbers of people arriving exhausted, burnt out, depressed, frustrated, disillusioned, irritable and angry. We continue to see people presenting for the first time, no longer able to ignore or contain their anxiety

and distress from experiencing the earthquakes themselves. Many of these have held themselves together as they have dealt with EQC issues, or relocated their business, or until their children have settled back into school routines - and then when there is more space for that person to process the events of the past year, and particularly the last six months, they have started to feel the emotions that have been "shut off" while in almost survival mode.

What do people need in this space? They need to feel that there is support around them, that they are understood and that often these feelings are a normal response to the experiences they have had. They need time and space to be allowed to have these feelings and then experience how to cope with them. To be told that we are resilient can mean that it is more difficult to reach out and seek support, as it sets up an expectation that everyone is coping well and how come I feel different? Am I not ok?

And for many people they have always coped quite well with life and it is a difficult experience to acknowledge that they are not, let alone feel isolated and set apart in that. Understanding that what we have lived through in the last year has been repeatedly traumatic and inevitably has an impact is often not fully acknowledged.

So be aware that we are not all resilient; that our friends, family members, work colleagues and others may not be feeling strong and stoic. Try and be aware of listening to them and understanding how they are feeling, and be supportive. Let them know it is ok not to be strong, and that it is ok to seek help. ☼



A St Albans Christmas

Who would have thought over 450 days ago when we were so rudely awakened at 4:30am in the morning that Canterbury would face the worst disaster in New Zealand history? The death and destruction of over 8000 earthquakes and subsequently one of the biggest and most expensive recovery programmes the world has ever seen?

It's been a year from hell. But the recovery is underway and everyone of us is getting used to a new sort of normal. Lots of us have moved but most young people are back in their local schools, neighbourhood shops are re-opening, the bus system is rejuvenated, and pop-up bars and restaurants are everywhere. I love the fact that hundreds of people have enjoyed shopping in the shipping container city mall and we are all looking forward to the new stadium that will provide a home for the Crusaders next winter. Summer is on the way, Christmas is coming and we can now actually see a brighter future for our city.

But we also need to reflect. Last weekend many took the walking tour to get a glimpse into Cathedral Square and over the last few weeks hundreds of people have taken the time to do the bus tour of the city. Seeing everything we have lost in our city is a sobering experience that has changed our community for ever.

However, there have been positives along the way. I have never been so proud to call myself a Cantabrian and New Zealander. The way Cantabs and the whole country have responded to this disaster has been amazing, inspiring and humbling. People everywhere have worked long and hard to help and support each other, neighbourhoods and communities have got together, and others have come to help from all across New Zealand and the world. We've worked, laughed and cried together.

Most of us who have lived through 2010/2011 have developed a different set of values as we've rocked and rolled our way through the past months. If it's true that every experience you survive without breaking makes you stronger, then Christchurch is invincible!

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and safe and happy 2012.

Nicky Wagner National MP

A 'Specials' Message

As I write, around 4000 special votes will decide if I return to Parliament as your local MP. I can only believe the work I have done across the electorate, especially since the quakes, will see me through.

Whatever the result, I am proud to have served Christchurch Central. That work continues. I was back at the electorate office the Monday after the election handling the usual stream of constituents, some I have to say, quite distressed that our service may not continue.

One issue I continue fighting is the latest attempts to install cut-price liquor stores across our communities. Two licence applications were lodged in the last week of the election campaign (while I was a bit distracted) for stores in Morrison Ave and Stanmore Rd. If approved, these stores would be open seven days a week, 7am to 11pm!

I enjoy a drink as much as most people but targeting low-income areas with 16 hour liquor trading is a recipe for more crime, harm and abuse. This is the fourth such application in as many months - we managed to defeat one at the gates of Mairehau Primary School; more are likely until the Government passes new, better laws, already drafted, to give communities more say. I will continue to stand up for Christchurch Central so long as I have that privilege. Philippa and I hope you enjoy a peaceful Christmas break with your family. We all deserve that after the year we've come through, together.

Best wishes

Brendon Burns

Burns Supper Saturday *28th January 2012*

Join the members of the Scottish Society of New Zealand, Christchurch in celebrating Robbie Burns birthday. This is an evening of song, poetry and high spirits. Bruce Lyford will present the Immortal Memory to Burns and a traditional supper of haggis, neeps and tatties will be served. Tickets \$20.00 are available through Graeme Matheson Tel 355 4391. Make up a group and join in the fun. Venue Scottish Society Hall Cnr Edgeware and Caledonian Rds 6.30pm for 7.00pm.

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St Albans Up Close

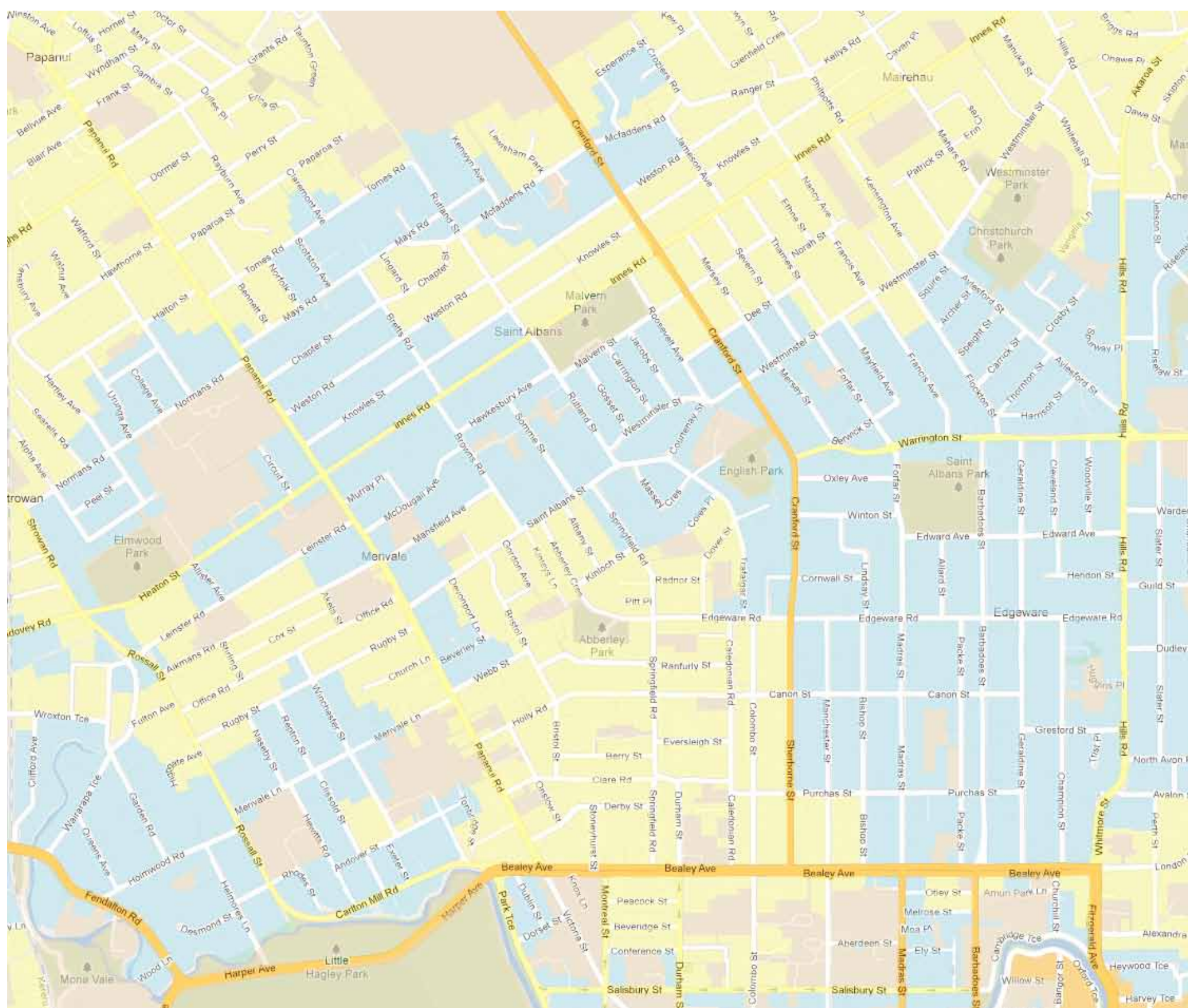
This map, especially prepared for the St Albans News by CERA, shows the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) “technical categories” which are guidelines for foundation design for areas in and around St Albans that may require rebuilding or foundation repairs.

The guidelines recognise that different parts of the city will need different foundation designs to reduce the risk of injury to people and damage to homes in any future earthquake. As the map shows, the residential area here is a mix of technical categories TC2 (yellow) and TC3 (blue). There is no TC1, nor orange or red zoned areas and the brown areas are generally urban non-residential.

The DBH technical categories – TC1 (grey), TC2 (yellow) and TC3 (blue) – are guidelines for new homes and foundation repairs to residential homes. Different parts of Christchurch have different guidelines, designed after analysis of the way land is likely to perform in future earthquakes.

As this is an area-wide classification, site-specific geotechnical assessment is needed to determine the appropriate foundation design for rebuilds or repairs to homes in TC3 areas. In some cases, the TC3 site-specific geotechnical assessment may determine that it is appropriate to use “off the shelf” enhanced foundations (like in TC2).

In other cases it may be necessary for foundations to be specifically designed for the ground conditions and type of building. It's important to note that a property owner has to replace foundations only if their house needs to be rebuilt, or requires repairs to the foundations. Otherwise, no further action is needed (until a property-owner undertakes major renovations that affect their foundations).



- Key**
- Technical Category 1**
Future land damage from liquefaction is unlikely.
 - Technical Category 2**
Minor to moderate land damage from liquefaction is possible in future significant earthquakes.
 - Technical Category 3**
Moderate to significant land damage from liquefaction is possible in future significant earthquakes.
 - N/A - Urban Nonresidential**
 - N/A - Rural & Unmapped**
 - Port Hills & Banks Peninsula**
 - Orange Zone**
Further assessment required.
 - Red Zone**
Land repair would be prolonged and uneconomic.

**Christmas
@
Edgware**

Support Edgware Village & shop for Christmas.

*Come along, relax
and enjoy the festivities.*

Saturday 17th December
10.00am – 3.00pm @ The Edgware Village

To thank locals for their support there'll be plenty of
in store discounts and giveaways.
AND be in to win with a major prize draw.

plus
Santa & Mrs. Claus will be there
Bouncy castle & busters
Great coffee, Peter Timbs sausage sizzle

Proudly supported by Recover Canterbury, Shirley Paparua Community Board, CCC, St. Albans Residents Association.

Mr. Santa Claus, c/- The North Pole

Dear Santa,

I'm so pleased I've actually managed to find the time this year to send you a note.

I like to pretend I'm the uber-organised sort – the kind of woman who sends her overseas post before the cut off date, lovingly hand-crafts presents throughout the year and who bakes her Christmas cake early whilst singing 'Deck the Halls' in a carefree and joyous manner.

But Santa, you know this is not accurate. The truth is in early November, just as the last of the Lindauer bubbles pop over Addington, I get sucked into some weird time continuum vortex. One minute I'm eating candy floss at the Showgrounds and then WHAMMO I'm weeping at the Post Office counter as the overseas cut off date has come and gone, there are next to no shopping days left and I'm staring down the barrel of school prize-givings and last minute Christmas functions, with nary a gift bought nor a hall decked.

But I've learned from my past fraught festive failures. I'm on top of things this year. I've already got all the gifts sorted. Surprised? Yeah, me too! However, it is so much easier when you get everyone the same gift. It's certainly not a glamorous nor imaginative pressie but it is oh-so practical. This year everyone from my Nanna to the milkman are getting a wind up torch/radio/phone charger. Three gifts for the price of one!

Seems to me I've needed to use my own wind up talking torch more times than I care to remember over this bumpy year. And each time I've cranked the handle, illuminated the darkness and taken comfort from the radio announcer's voice, I've thought what a clever wee invention it is.

I tell you, no home should be without one. Perhaps you should get the elves to start making torches en masse for all the unfortunate children who live in earthquake prone areas? You would

have the whole Pacific Rim covered and torches would take up minimal room in the sleigh compared to bikes, dolls and skateboards. Just sayin'.

However, I digress Santa. I know you're an exceedingly busy man this time of year, what with letters to read, presents to wrap and lists to check.

Hmmm, as regards the Naughty and Nice List, I've only been the tiniest bit naughty this year. I will admit to a smidgeon of uncontrolled swearing and the occasional overindulgence in pinot noir. In my defence there is a direct correlation between each of my misdemeanors and unexpected seismic events.

You will be pleased to know that this year I'm not actually asking for a gift for myself. I'm well contented with my talking torch. I'm asking on behalf of my husband.

You see, I think my Beloved would like a pretty nighty – a slinky one with lace or frills. Or maybe even one with lace and frills. Not for himself you understand, but for me.

You see, in those halcyon nights pre-quake, I had been known to sleep "au naturel" or perhaps "au knickers". However, as soon as the ground started rolling and I started jumping in and out of bed with monotonous regularity, sleeping in my skin did not seem like such a sensible idea. I took to wearing pajamas. Thick, fluffy, neck to ankle flannelette pajamas, which served the very valid job of keeping all of my personal and private bits, personal and private. I'm completely covered from the beady eyes of neighbours and/or random passers-by, should I need to exit my house due to any catastrophic night time event.

My husband has not been enamoured with this wrapped-up-in-bed variety of wife. In fact he thumbs his nose at my foible, resolutely refusing to wear night clothing of his own. He has not been intimidated by the possibility of

a naked, late night excursions from the house (a throwback to his student days I suspect).

Of course, as a mega-fit surfer with a whip-like body, he can afford to be cavalier. As the mother of two children, with a fondness for pinot noir and chocolate, I've had to show restraint. I fear my neighbours' eyeballs would melt in their heads, and they would need years of therapy to overcome my nudity being accidentally thrust upon them. Wrapping myself in wincyette each evening is actually an act of civic duty on my part.

However, as Mother Earth appears to be calmer of late (**cue frantic slapping all wooden objects within a hand stretch**), it's reasonable I should be a little less militant with my nocturnal fashion. I need to return to looking more like my Beloved's wife and less like his mother.

'Tis the season to be jolly and it seems only fair I should try and give the poor patient man something to be festive about.

Thanking you in advance. Give my regards to Mrs. Claus.

Meri Kirihimete!

Reetah xxx

PS – Like everyone else in Canterbury, we now have to leave your snack and the reindeers' carrots by the heat pump (for obvious reasons). We're swapping your usual beer and biscuits for pinot noir and chocolate. Didn't think you would mind too much... ☘

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Neighbourhood Week in St Albans

by **Emma Twaddell**

Courtenay Street residents again enjoy their annual barbeque breakfast held on the Courtenay St Green.

They, along with many other streets in St Albans, took advantage of the funding provided by the Shirley/Papanui (and St Albans) Community Board for Neighbourhood Week, which is a yearly fund to encourage getting to know your neighbours.

The residents of Courtenay Street have always enjoyed the friendly, sociable atmosphere of their street. This bond between neighbours definitely proved its worth during the earthquake events of the past year. After each event neighbour worked alongside neighbour to clean up their properties and street, children were cared for by each other so houses

could be put back together and wonderful meals were provided for all to enjoy at the end of a hard day's work.

By working together after 22nd February, it took this neighbourhood only 3 days to clean up! They were sitting back contemplating life and drowning the shock while many others are still staring at the sight of the mess around them. They are a fine example of how being part of a community improves life.



SARA is hoping that next year they too will be able to encourage neighbours to meet and socialise with each other by providing St Albans with a Community BBQ Trailer. More on this in the New Year. ☘

Christmas at Edgware

The Edgware businesses, Recover Canterbury and the City Council are working together to promote Edgware as 'open for business'. The enthusiasm is great to see, and all parties are combining their strengths, ideas and resources to hold a very special event at the Edgware shopping centre on Sat 17th Dec. There will be entertainment, spot prizes, vouchers, sausage sizzle, coffee cart and much much more. The earthquake brought our community together; now we want to keep and strengthen that connection, and celebrate Edgware.

See you all there!

Pauline Cotter



The St Albans Residents' Association is kindly supported by the Todd Foundation

Christmas @ Edgware

**Saturday 17th December
10am – 3pm @ The Edgware
Village**

Support Edgware & Shop for Christmas.

To thank locals for their on-going support there will be plenty of in-store discounts and giveaways.

PLUS

- SHOP & WIN competition
- Santa will be there
- Bouncy castle & live entertainment
- Great coffee
- The legendary Peter Timbs sausage sizzle

Come along, relax and enjoy the festivities.

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Recover Canterbury, CCC, St. Albans Residents Association,
Shirley-Papanui Community Board

What is a Residents' Association?

by **Jarrod Coburn**

They're everywhere you go in New Zealand: residents' associations, progressive associations, ratepayers' groups: organisations formed at the grass-roots level of society who are focused on... what?

I've often wondered what exactly a residents' association is. At aged 19, I became president of one, in Blenheim, but that experience didn't provide any illumination. So when I set off to complete a Masters degree I decided to make residents' associations the subject of my thesis. I want to share with you some of the things I've learned so far.

In my examination of nearly 400 academic papers I found that there are many roles undertaken by these groups. It is interesting to note that residents' associations have provided information for – or have participated in – research undertaken by many universities and institutions around the world.

The common view of these groups is that they fight the local Council. Such opposition can be organised quickly by a residents' association and this can provide a check and balance to unfettered power. But these groups not only use public pressure and local networking to mount opposition. In Wales in 1966 the Aberfan Parents and Residents' Association took action through the courts against the National Coal Board after mining activity caused ground subsidence that killed 144 people, 116 of whom were school-aged children. The resulting cover-up by the government resulted in a mistrust of authority by that community that lasted for many years.

In extreme cases residents' associations have been involved in more direct action, for example using barricades and rocks to resist government and private forces in South Africa. Sometimes the 'fight' might not be directly against

government but against a wider policy objective such as urban planning. When asked about opposition to the establishment of new WalMart stores in the US, a consultant was quoted as saying "local residents' associations usually know what to do".

Whilst residents' associations might not be active all the time they hold knowledge that enables them to act quickly and decisively when needed. Groups can form for a single, specific purpose and afterwards dissipate, or exist as political activism groups – strong when single issues are the focus of popular concern – ebbing and flowing with the influence of membership numbers and power.

In many cases residents' associations promote the interest of local people, but this does not necessarily serve the wider interest. For example, in Toronto an association made submissions and legal arguments to increase physical distance between new homeless shelters being set up by the Toronto municipality. This overt self-interest has been categorised in recent years as "NIMBYism", or "Not In My Back Yard". An example from 2004 cites a person saying that they joined a residents' association to "get rid of" undesirable people in the neighbourhood.

But there is much good in the work these organisations undertake. An example in 2003 saw a ratepayers' association formed in response to "sense of attachment" to community decreasing after a large municipal amalgamation – to "ensure their community was protected". This has particular relevance to the New Zealand situation where we have seen Auckland's Councils merging under one banner and perhaps points to a heightened importance of such groups in the new local governance climate.

Residents' associations often act to improve the community environment. In South America, a residents' association commissioned an artist

to paint houses in bright colours using "visual kinesthetics" to make the community a better place to live. Others have organised information to be broadcast using loudspeakers to create an "acoustic community". Other cases include "living museums" that contribute to a sense of place and – hopefully – an improved economic situation and, in Manchester, an association set up a 'playground' for the elderly, which provides a meeting place and exercise and is well loved by the senior community.

If you've read this far into the article then you – like me – must be in awe of the variety and diversity of these groups around the world. But what is a residents' association?

I like to think of them as vessels for community activity: when the need for political action is required, the vessel fills with that essence; when more inward-focused activity is needed, then that is what fills the residents' association. Sometimes they sit, empty, for many years until a sector of the community needs them. Then activity starts to happen and their dry old walls are refreshed once again with the nectar of community spirit.

Jarrod Coburn is a trustee of the Draco Foundation (NZ) Charitable Trust, who manage the National Database of Residents' Associations and the local government website Council Watch. He is Convenor of the Community Governance: Beyond Resilience Conference being held in Christchurch in 2012. For further information visit

www.residents.org.nz



Community Notices**St Albans Skate Jam**

Date: Sat 28 January 2012. 12 -3 pm

Venue: St Albans Park, Cost: Free!

The St Albans Skate Jam is a fun, free youth event. Skate Skool has equipment to hire for FREE! Get some tips from CCC skate instructor Scotty Buckner. There'll be a competition at the end with lots of awesome prizes and a free sausage sizzle to keep the kid's energy up! See you all there.

St Albans Residents' Association (SARA) Incorporated

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6pm to 6.30pm at Abberley Park Hall on Tuesday 13th December 2011.

Christmas Social to follow after the AGM, open to all supporters, members and volunteers. Please RSVP for catering purposes to communitycentre@stalbens.gen.nz or phone 374-2465.

Mairehau Library - Kensington Ave Open 2-4pm Mon - Fri, 10.30 - 11am Sat

St Albans Art Society

We want to increase our membership so we invite all painters and learners to join us at our rooms. We meet at Forfar Courts at 95 Forfar Street, St Albans Mondays between 10 am and 12-30 pm. We are a community-centered group consisting of all (or beginners) skill

levels using watercolours, acrylics and oils.

From time to time we hold classes with Tutors Call in at Forfar Street any Monday and see what we do - or Phone Ivan Morris on 385 7304

"THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS..."

Christmas Eve Guest Service, St Albans Baptist Church, 64 McFaddens Road

From 7pm to 8pm

This will be a night all the family will enjoy!

Full of fun, laughter and the Christmas story. Come and join in the Carol singing. Sit back and enjoy the creativity of "The Night Before Christmas" Supper will be served afterwards in the Cafe Lounge. If you would like to attend the Christmas Eve Tea at 5pm, Please phone 355 6522 to book.

Vegetarian Youth Group: For youth aged 10-18 years that are vegetarian or vegan, or are interested in learning more about a vegetarian lifestyle. We meet regularly to have fun, cook vegetarian/vegan dishes, and have discussion groups and educational activities on vegetarian related topics, movies, games and social nights. To find out more email: vegeyouthcoordinator@gmail.com, or visit our Facebook site (Vegetarian Youth), or Youth Group page on www.vegetarianchristchurch.org.nz website.

The Mystery Hole in Edgeware, Part 2

The hole in Edgeware Road, featured in the August issue of the St Albans News has now been identified. The cause of the hole has been the West to East major sewer line collapsing. Work has now spread to Madras Street at both the Bealey Avenue & St Albans Park ends. This is the Madras Street & Edward Avenue "T" intersection.

Photo by Maria Hayward

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Computer Guru: Highest quality computer servicing, fixing all

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Counselling: Earthquake trauma has placed considerable pressure on some relationships. As an approved Family Court Counsellor, I am able to help people to access funding to meet with me where appropriate. Website: <http://www.dianecounsell.com> or ph 386 2746, Mob 027 338 5274 Diane Counsell.

Door Specialist: Repairs, adjustments and installation of all doors and locks, ranch slider wheels and locks, garage doors. Qualified Tradesman. Ph Stewart 365 2969 or 021 185 4055

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House cleaning job in St Albans wanted: By honest efficient and reliable lady on a weekly basis. \$25 per townhouse/flat. Excellent references available. Ph. Nicola 386 1118

Painting and Decorating: Internal/external. 22 years experience plastering. Owner operator, efficient service, locally based. Ph Mark 355 7670 or 027 434 3300

Private board. 17 year old Hagley College student looking for a family to private board with

next year. Term one starts on 7 February 2012. Please call Emily 021 972 155.

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ASB Football Park Security re-think

By Mike Coggan
CEO, Mainland Football

Already the benefits from the installation of a new artificial turf at ASB Football Park in Cranford St are significant. The feedback from users and spectators is nothing but positive. Already we have over 350 players taking part in our summer Football 5s' social competition. As word of

mouth spreads we may well reach our maximum number (144 teams per night) of school and adult Monday and Tuesday night teams, ahead of our 2015 goal. With the introduction of field barriers which will enclose each small sided playing field, electronic scoreboards, all new small sided goals and a social function room we have a fantastic environment for all

the different user groups to ensure bite-sized 30 minute chunks of recreational football. Spectators have the comfort of watching either on the side line or in the 500 seat stand.

ASB Football Park is enclosed within a unique suburban setting which does create a great natural environment but it also comes with some disadvantages. Recently Mainland Football has held discussions with Christchurch City Council about how best we can protect this \$4m asset. Mainland Football has a long term 20 year lease with CCC

for the management of ASB Football Park. In recent weeks we have seen vandalism of the new facility in the form of rocks being thrown onto the new turf and damage caused by people setting off fireworks on Guy Fawkes night on the new pitch. This has left burns of about 8 – 10 cm in the pitch, which now need fixing at a significant cost. In the past we have suffered

local residents will also believe that ASB Football Park is available for public use as well. Mainland Football has a 20 year lease with CCC to manage the ground and building and therefore for all intents and purposes it is a private facility. We have over the years developed an excellent relationship with St Albans School who will continue to benefit from

the new facility. We will be looking to work closely with the neighbours who directly border the park to ensure our community is not further compromised by vandalism and graffiti issues. Unfortunately the Park is not protected adequately with fencing and is easily entered on weekends. We are now looking at options with CCC to better secure ASB Football Park in the



Canterbury United Dragons in action 6 November on new turf at ASB Football park against Waikato FC

graffiti and latterly we have found people practicing golf on the park, which again has the potential to cause further expensive damage. With the damage caused by the earthquakes in town much of the seedy prostitution has moved into the car park bordering ASB Football Park. We are now looking for ways to move this activity away from our area.

Because the majority of CCC grounds are for public use many

future.

The St Albans community is close knit and protective of its heritage, parks and community. We too at Mainland Football are very proud to manage this wonderful sporting asset. We also need to be mindful and respectful our resident neighbours. In the near future we would like to discuss with these very people how we can collectively protect the Park and its natural surroundings

Quote of the Month

The worst gift is a fruitcake. There is only one fruitcake in the entire world, and people keep sending it to each other

Johnny Carson

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