

# New Plymouth District, New Zealand Re-designated International Safe Community



New Plymouth District has been commended as an “outstanding example” of a safe community in a review report released by Safe Communities Foundation NZ this month. The report follows a successful application by New Plymouth InjurySafe Trust for New Plymouth to be re-accredited an International Safe Community. New Plymouth was originally designated a Safe Community in 2005, and has shown commitment to the WHO Safe Communities model demonstrating a collaborative approach to the delivery of evidence-based community safety programmes that target different population groups within the community.

Members of the review team were particularly impressed with the district’s strong network of inter-agency safety groups; each focused on one or more specific areas of safety such as road safety, crime reduction, family violence, older people and youth. SCFNZ acknowledged that many of these groups have grown out of community efforts and concerns, and have then gone on to be supported by government organisations and other groups. The report states: “From both reviewing the application, and especially during the numerous visits to New Plymouth, it is evident that the New Plymouth Safe Communities initiative is community owned”.

Among findings included in the safe community reapplication was data showing graffiti vandalism was heading downwards and New Plymouth police led the country in the 2008/09 year with the number of successful convictions for breach of protection order and male-assaults-female offences. In addition, respondents to a NRB Communitrak survey over the last three years reported the CBD to be safe or very safe at night. Their optimism was growing, the survey showed. On the health front, hospital admissions for falls among pre-schoolers had halved and new ACC claims for fall-related injuries among the over-60s was in line with the national average.

Dr Coggan, the Director of the Safe Communities Foundation NZ, said New Plymouth had robustly analysed its safety data, identified best-practice programmes, recognised stakeholders and leaders and produced a comprehensive application. She praised New Plymouth for the collaboration of its safety-related agencies and said more residents were living, planning, travelling and working safely.

The group behind much of the work was the New Plymouth InjurySafe Trust with more than 10 members, ranging from the District Council and District Health Board to local police, fire, health providers, ACC and the labour department. Andrew Judd, who chairs the InjurySafe Trust, said the re-designation was "very humbling" but being a safe community was a journey. Initiatives continued.



Mayor signing ISC agreement

The re-designation ceremony took place in New Plymouth on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010, officiated by Dr Carolyn Coggan in her capacity as the Director of SCFNZ, a Certifying Centre of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion in Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.

The ceremony also provided a wonderful opportunity to formally acknowledge a number of individuals. At the ceremony, certificates were handed out to more than 30 locals who had contributed towards the safe community status. As Channa Perry, Safe Community Programme Manager for New Plymouth InjurySafe Trust states “these often unsung heroes in our community play a vital role, through their day-to-day work, in ensuring our community remains a safer place to live, work and play. Our re-designation ceremony seemed the most appropriate time to acknowledge the role that these individuals have played in assisting us to gain re-accreditation of our district as an International Safe Community”.



Mayor and Community Champions

Further information can be found by visiting the Safe Communities Foundation NZ web site [www.safecommunities.org.nz/np](http://www.safecommunities.org.nz/np) or [www.safetaranaki.org.nz](http://www.safetaranaki.org.nz)

## Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand (SCFNZ)