



Halswell
Community
Project

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



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HALSWELL COMMUNITY PROJECT INC

The Halswell Community Project began as a small group of volunteers interested in promoting Halswell and its clubs, groups, activities and businesses to local residents and those of surrounding areas.

After two years of operating informally, Halswell Community Project was incorporated in 2013 and became a registered charity in 2022. Over the last ten years, the organisation has grown and now operates out of the Halswell Community Hub as a key leader in the provision of community services and programmes in Halswell focused on connecting, empowering and strengthening the local community.

As an organisation, we are made up of a dedicated volunteer committee, a small team of contractors and a number of volunteers who are involved in different aspects of the project such as Facebook, staffing the Hub, delivering newsletters and helping to run events and activities.

Our vision is to create a connected, resilient community which fosters engagement, inclusion, participation, a sense of belonging and pride and brings about better outcomes through those improved connections and information sharing.

Our projects cover a wide range of activities and services including:

- Running the Halswell Community Hub as a welcoming community facility, open to all.
- A monthly community newsletter, welcome bags, Halswell Community website and a number of large Facebook pages all of which have wide coverage and are key connecting agents within the local community.
- Local events such as Celebrate Halswell, Childrens day, kids' markets and school holiday activities.
- Monthly network meetings and workshops for the local community covering a range of issues and topics of interest.
- Weekly activities such as coffee morning, Mahjong and coffee and games to bring people together.
- and, more recently, our Youth Pilot Project aimed at connecting with the young people in our community in order to identify their needs and to build the networks and relationships needed to lay the foundations for future youth work in the area.

Through all of our projects, we aim to:

- Build resilience through Community Connections.
- Encourage participation through the sharing of community information.
- Provide social connection for isolated and vulnerable people in our community.
- Encourage people to connect and work together to bring about positive change.
- Foster a sense of community, celebrate and share different cultures and traditions.
- Ensure newcomers to our community are connected with what they need to integrate well.
- Create opportunities for people to develop skills and connections.

Over the last few years we have seen the difference that meaningful connections can make in a persons life, whether that be in person or online through our facebook pages. Over 500 people a week come through the Community Hub, for a variety of reasons - to attend a group or activity, to seek information about an aspect of Halswell, to borrow a book from the book shack, to reach out for support due to losing a job, struggling to make ends meet, feeling cut off and isolated or fearful of the future. Over 19,000 people actively engage with our biggest Facebook page and visitors to our recently redeveloped website are growing. In addition to the electronic version of our newsletter, we now print 1000 newsletters each month which are distributed through local organisations and businesses as well as household deliveries. We saw over 700 people attend the Celebrate Halswell event in 2022 and saw a huge turn out at the Lions Carols the following day. Our 50 plus volunteers give over 3500 hours of their time each year and we have seen how generous our community is when we have put the call out to help someone finding themselves in need. We have seen members of our coffee morning reach out to each other in support, picking up older folk who want to come but can no longer drive. We have seen how a listening ear and a kind word can make a huge impact and this is what we aim to provide.

Our challenge going forwards is how we reach those in our community who are unable to connect with us at the Hub, those who are most at risk of social isolation in our growing community. And so we are looking at new ways to get out to the suburbs developing within our suburb, to connect with those who struggle to connect.

Theodore Roosevelt said *"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care"* Together with our partners we aim to build a community that cares, where people feel welcome, safe and connected and have a sense of belonging to something greater than themselves.

2022 - 2023 Committee

Chairs	Chrys Horn, Adele Geradts
Treasurer	Ros Thornley
Secretary	Karen Upton
Committee	Ross McFarlane, Alison Maccoll, Anne Gibling, Tony Gibling
Project Managers	Kate Cleverly, Keri Glassenbury
Youth Worker	Iri Matakatea

The committee and management team brings a wide range of networks across all sectors of the community, excellent administrative, facilitative and management skills, energy and enthusiasm for individual projects, as well as the whole vision for Halswell as a community.

Thank you to our Funders for 2022/2023



CHAIRS REPORT

Chrys Horn and Adele Geradts - Co-Chairs Halswell Community Project Inc

It has been good to see the Halswell Community Project continue to be well funded and acknowledged as an important addition to, and support for, the many community groups in Halswell.

First, as ever, a huge vote of thanks go our two coordinators Kate Cleverly and Keri Glassenbury. Both continue to hold the reins driving change and maintaining the Hub, the facilities it provides and the groups that continue to use it regularly.

Increasingly, people are coming to the Hub for information, social connection and assistance of various kinds. The Halswell Directory has been a major project and has been well received and our local newsletters continue to get longer and more sought after.

Another aspect of their work is collections of stuff that might otherwise go to landfill but instead is directed to further use. Examples are the bras that are collected for use by women, both here and in the Pacific Islands, the thousands of milk bottle tops that go to Neith, a young man who makes them into planter boxes, and skate boards as a fundraiser.

Thank you, too, to the team that manages our very active 20,000+ strong Facebook group. This is Keri, Kate, Anne, Belinda, Ben and Kimberly who look after the group pretty much all day, every day. Their work is considerable and it is the reason why 96% of the people who are members of the group continue to actively engage in it.

A big thanks to:

- Mike, who helps out wherever he is needed. He has helped this year with deliveries, maintenance around the hub, odd jobs, and mahjong, to name a few.
- Philippa covers the front desk regularly helping out anyone who comes in with whatever they need. She helped us update information for our website and in printed material. She has also sorted out donations of bread tags/plastics, also delivered newsletters and leaflets. It has been wonderful for Kate and Keri to be able to have some time away from the centre because of this work.
- Dave and Jason. Dave bakes and donates regularly to coffee morning, provides a lot of IT help, Jason helps out with general clean ups and both of these blokes also help out with pretty much anything else their wives ask of them.
- Noel, and his team who run and teach mahjong each week.
- Mary, who organises our veggie co-op.
- Bev, who leads coffee and games each week.
- Tina, who delivers newsletters each month to the new subdivisions and anywhere she thinks looks like they have new people.
- Sarah from Harcourts, who prints a number of newsletters for us each month and supports events throughout the year.

Thanks too, to the community of volunteers that keep an eye on the property and pick up rubbish and clean up the sharing shacks.

A very big thank you to our committee who meet every month to oversee, and assist with the work of the HCP. Adele, Ros, Karen, Ross, Alison, Anne and Tony all give freely of their skills and ensure that the Halswell Community Project functions well, can take on new projects, copes with shifts in direction and ensures that the money we get is spent to best effect to achieve that.

We particularly want to acknowledge Ros, our long serving treasurer who tirelessly manages payments, reporting, tax, and our systems for managing this. Karen, our secretary keeps the show on the road producing agendas, minutes, and keeping track of members, correspondence and meeting dates.

This long list above is by no means exhaustive. Many in the community have helped out with newsletter and leaflet deliveries and looked after our Book Shack and Sharing Shack amongst other things.

In addition to all this we'd like to thank the generous people throughout our community. HCP has had generous donations of books and food for our sharing shacks and to our collections of bottle tops, bread tags, blankets, and most recently, bras, all of which turn up in enormous numbers and are sent on to help a range of people here and even overseas.

The generosity of this community also spreads to helping others out by donating all sorts of things to people who find themselves in need of a hand. It is always heartwarming to see the many gifts brought in for our Christmas Giving Tree which then go to make the Christmases of people across Christchurch more special. More recently people have kindly donated heaps of socks for people who need them.

We must also say a huge thank you to our funders who make all of this possible. They are:

- The Christchurch City Council who provide considerable funding and "in kind" assistance from their wonderful staff,
- The Halswell Hornby Riccarton Community Board who approve and allocate most of that funding,
- The Rata Foundation,
- The Department of Internal Affairs- Lottery Grants Board
- The Department of Internal Affairs Community Organisation Grants Scheme
- Harcourts who have helped with printing our newsletters for all of last year and most of this year.

We have also had some very generous donations from our local community from time to time which have helped us manage a few specific issues that cropped up.

We stand in awe of the community of people who make our organisation tick and who help make the lives of others better. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

MANAGERS REPORT

Kate Cleverly - Project Manager

Halswell continues to grow rapidly and is becoming increasingly diverse with a wide range of ages, cultures, backgrounds and languages.

Residents need ways to connect into their local communities when they move into the area and as their needs change over time. This is particularly difficult where English is not a first language or a person is not able to get around independently.

As our community grows, we see a need to have activities, services and programs in place to support new residents and to help them feel connected as quickly as possible regardless of culture, age or other demographic.

The area has a lot of young families moving into it and with that there is call for activities etc for young people and families. Likewise there are numerous retirement villages being built in and around the area and there is a need for activities to help older people feel like they belong to the wider community. Surveys show that young people in our community attend high schools spread right across Christchurch. This makes it difficult to foster a sense of belonging to their local community.

In addition to the issues caused by a rapidly growing community and a lack of infrastructure, Halswell organisations have highlighted a growing risk of social isolation due to the effects of the COVID pandemic. This has been evident through the number of people seeking connection or support at the Halswell Community Hub.

The goal we share with many in our community is to create a connected, resilient community. A vibrant community with a sense of connection between residents and their community which fosters engagement, participation, a sense of belonging and pride in where they live regardless of age, race, culture or other demographic.

At the Community Hub, we have seen the difference that meaningful connections can make in a persons life. These connections do not come about at large community wide events, although there is definitely a place for these. Meaningful connections come about over a shared cup of coffee with a small group of people who then invite a new resident to join them at another activity such as the garden club, football club, community garden or scouts. At the Hub we have seen the natural evolution of the facility into a space where people do just that. New residents drop in to find out what is going on around the community, stay for a coffee and leave knowing other local people. Our regular groups such as Mahjong and coffee morning go further and connect people outside of the interactions they have at the Hub as people meet for coffee, an activity or a chat. We have had several people anxious to join a big group who have come along early, met a couple of people and been invited to another group. These connections are the base for a community. Without them, you simply have a group of people living in the same area.

As Halswell grows, the temptation is to develop large community centres or hubs in spaces seen to be the geographical centre, like the Domain. But, in actual fact, what we need is smaller neighbourhood level facilities where young people can skate or play basketball and anyone can share a casual cup of coffee, chat and connect over shared interests without having to travel far, cross major roads or worry about their children doing so. Newer subdivisions and developments such as Longhurst, Aidanfield and Country Palms are developing their own flavour within the wider community and are looking to develop a neighbourhood identity separate to that of just "Halswell". When we have those deep connections at a neighbourhood level, people have greater capacity for caring, volunteering and support which then enables those larger aspects of our vision such as events, transport, social capital, safety and community engagement in decision making. When people know that others care, they feel welcome and have a sense of belonging to something greater than themselves. We believe that together we can build a community where people feel welcome, safe and connected.

Key Outcomes 2022 - 2023

Manage facilities and activities to enable people to connect, participate and engage with the wider community

- Finalised building consent and transfer of ownership of Halswell Community Hub.
- Developed annual maintenance plan to meet building Warrant of Fitness requirements.
- Identified and prioritised improvements to the Hub - both major works requiring funding and minor works that can be carried out by volunteers or community working bees.
- Managed the Hub as a place for people to connect, participate and engage with the wider community.
- Navigated COVID restrictions to keep the Hub open and groups running.
- 500 people per week access the Hub for activities, groups, information and support.
- Provided office and meeting space for Halswell Community Project, StarJam, Pegasus Health Counsellor and Recreate NZ.
- Provided space for twelve weekly community activities and monthly meetings for four community groups as well as one-off events /activities for others.
- Expanded the sharing shacks to include three book sharing shacks.
- Developed our recycling / collection points to include:
 - Bedding and blankets for Blanket Bank and City Mission Outreach.
 - Sports gear for Give Gear Get Great.
 - Bras and swimwear for Project Uplift.
 - Aluminium wine bottle tops and can tabs for Halswell Lions / Kidney Kids.
 - Plastic milk bottle tops for Over the Top Recycling.
 - Paper bags for Bellyful Charitable Trust.
 - Old and foreign currency for Halswell Lions /Heads Up for Kids.
 - Wool and yarn for volunteer knitters at Creative Hands.
 - Toiletries for people on the streets.
- Key staff and volunteers completed first aid and mental health first aid courses.

Building resilience through community connections

- 50 Volunteers, 3500 volunteer hours covering activities such as being on the Halswell Community Project committee, helping with staffing / providing cover at the Hub, administering social media platforms, delivering the newsletter, developing the information booklet, running / assisting with groups, driving / picking up group attendees, and assisting with repairs and maintenance of the Hub.
- Worked with CCC staff and local organisations to develop a shared vision for Halswell.
- Presented the shared vision and the vision for Halswell Community Project to the new Community Board.
- Worked with CDEM and CCC staff towards developing a community resilience plan.
- Developed a list of helpful agencies for those seeking support and information through the Hub.
- Developed relationships with Housing First, City Mission and the Blanket Bank to get bedding and toiletries to those in need.
- Provided gifts to Housing First and Open Home Foundation through our Christmas Giving Tree.
- Held nine Halswell Connections meetings for local groups and residents with a speaker and opportunities for groups to connect and network.
- Ran weekly Coffee Morning with an average of 15 people attending
- Ran weekly Mahjong with over 30 people attending
- Started weekly Coffee and Games which is growing, currently 20 people attending.
- Ran a series of small local events - Celebrate Halswell, School holiday craft activities.
- Planned Children's Day event - unfortunately cancelled by bad weather.
- Started new monthly Adoptee Support Group.
- Worked with Community Board staff to provide RAT's to the local community.
- Supported a number of people (individuals, families and groups) through providing information, donations and connecting to services.
- Held a number of information sessions on issues such as online safety and banking.
- Held 9 community meetings for residents with speakers on topics/issues relevant to Halswell
- Positive feedback from community about the groups offered at the hub. in particular coffee morning - gives people a reason to go out on cold, wet, dark, wintry days.
- Partnered with Hell Pizza Wigram to distribute free vouchers for pizza to local volunteers.

Youth Pilot Project

- Engaged a community Youth Worker to connect with the young people in our community - currently working in three local schools - Halswell, Oakland and Knights Stream Schools.
- Made valuable connections with a range of different students in these schools by spending time in the classroom, engaging with them during breaks and attending school events.
- Attended the Huritini Student Council meetings.
- Connected with young people from several other schools through attending the Thursday Takeover at Te Hāpua Halswell Centre after school. (Christchurch South, Hillmorton, Cashmere, Cobham and Kirkwood)

Findings from the youth pilot project include:

- Aspects of Halswell enjoyed by students - the library, the pools, skatepark, domain and that they can live in Halswell and be safe.
- One thing students would add to Halswell- more food shops and spaces for youth to hang out.
- Many youth ranging from year 6-8 do not use social media but the majority do use Youtube.
- After school, the majority of the students like to play PC, console, ipad, phone games. While many students do after school sports, most prefer to relax, hang out with friends or go to the park.
- Through discussions with students and staff at the schools, established the future need for youth workers in all local schools working with Year 7 and 8 students.

Encourage participation through the sharing of community information

- Produced 12 monthly newsletters and distributed them through ten local organisations and businesses as well as household deliveries.
- Positive feedback regarding the content of the newsletter.
- Manage a variety of social media pages/sites to provide the community with a place to share information and connect online, including Halswell Community Website, Halswell Community Group Facebook group, Halswell Community Project Facebook page, Halswell Pay it Forward page, Halswell Community Hub Facebook page, Halswell Businesses Facebook group, Halswell Youth Network Facebook group and Instagram.
- 19,984 people engage with the largest Facebook page.
- Developed new Community Information Booklet combining useful information about Halswell such as transport, facilities and amenities, residents groups and representatives and local activities and groups.
- Distributed 250 welcome bags to new residents.
- Managed and maintained the Halswell Community website



Next Steps - 2023 - 2026

Having established a firm foundation for our organisation and having taken ownership of the Halswell Community Hub, our challenge going forwards is how we reach those in our community who are unable to connect with us at the Hub, those who are most at risk of social isolation in our growing community. We are looking at new ways to get out into the community, to connect with those who struggle to connect.

Having a physical community hub is pivotal in developing connections as it helps to bring people together and provides local groups and organisations with much needed office space, space to hold sessions and activities such as integrated dance, music therapy, craft groups, youth groups and drop in sessions.

As well as all our key projects and events that bring people together, we are looking at how we can support the growth of meaningful local neighbourhoods within the wider Halswell community, working on building networks and relationships to connect our young people and having Community Activators meeting people out in the community, identifying those at risk of social isolation and connecting them with the people, activities and services who can support them.

Our Priorities are:

- Tackling Social Isolation.
- Managing facilities and activities to enable people to connect, participate and engage in the wider community.
- Expanding the Youth Project to make a positive impact in the lives of the young people of Halswell through engaging with the schools, events, and other activities.

We will:

- Continue to manage facilities and activities to enable people to connect, participate and engage with the wider community.
- Support community-led activities and events.
- Look for community connections not already catered for.
- Manage the Hub as a sustainable community facility.
- Work with local groups and event organisers to develop a calendar of existing community events and identify opportunities for new events.
- Engage a Community Development Worker to assist with the integration of new residents moving into Halswell and ensure that new residents to the area are connected into the local community and experience belonging
- Expand the Youth Pilot Project to make a positive impact in the lives of the young people of Halswell through engaging with the schools, clubs, events, and other activities.
- Build the networks and relationships needed to support and grow youth engagement across Halswell.
- Connect with the young people in our community in order to identify their needs and identify potential projects, services and programs that could meet those needs.

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