

Community MOVES

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December 2016

ihc
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Personally Speaking



I'd like to thank the many people who attended the IHC Workability International Conference in September. These kinds of events, whether here or overseas, are vital for connecting with others and for striving to achieve more.

IHC has always shown leadership – always challenged, advocated and driven improved conditions and opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. In turn we have sought partners like Workability International and Inclusion International so that we can share experiences and learn from each other.

I was very pleased with the calibre of the speakers and the challenging thinking around employment for people with disabilities. We had a good number of staff there and we all appreciated the many members, Association Chairs and supporters who committed time and effort to attend. We also held the AGM and some separate sessions for staff and members. You can find out more about what happened at the conference on our website ihc.org.nz/ihc-workability-international-conference-2016.

I have just returned from this year's Inclusion International conference, *Shaping the Future*. While there I was proud to see the launch of a new self-advocacy website for providing and sharing information, experiences and resources around the world. Selfadvocacyportal.com has been developed by our own IHC web specialist Ma'ao Vaireka working with Inclusion International and is a great example of us using our skills and generosity to support people with intellectual disabilities internationally. Once again our Director of Advocacy Trish Grant and Self Advocacy Coordinator David Corner gave strong presentations to delegates. I stepped down from my role of General Secretary of Inclusion International and was honoured to be presented with a life membership. This life membership reflects IHC's leadership and longstanding commitment to inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities.

IHC remains a committed member of Inclusion International. Our work internationally allows us to share information and support each other, and gives us greater strength to be influential in our own countries.

There is more to do here in New Zealand to ensure we meet our obligations to people with intellectual disabilities and ensure that the New Zealand Government's interpretations of the United Nations conventions match our own. We are fortunate that we are held in high regard overseas and were therefore able to persuade the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Catalina Devandas Aguilar, to visit us. Catalina gave a keynote speech at the *Make it Work* conference and we also arranged for her to meet many political leaders and government and sector organisations.

We will always be an advocacy organisation, unafraid to be provocative and determined to stand up for people with intellectual disabilities here and internationally. It is this, combined with community initiatives, good housing and services, that makes a difference in people's lives.

Finally I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas, a happy and safe holiday season and all the best for 2017.

Ralph Jones
Chief Executive

Partners for the long haul



Service users from Powderham Street day service and St Aubyns Street retirement house with crew from the HMNZS *Endeavour*.

Over Labour Weekend crew from the Royal New Zealand Navy came ashore to devote a day to some heavy-duty gardening at two IDEA Services centres in New Plymouth.

Nine sailors and officers from HMNZS *Endeavour* turned up in overalls to help spruce up the gardens and grounds. They trimmed overgrown hedges and pulled out flax bushes at the Powderham Street day service and St Aubyns Street retirement house – and were rewarded with a barbecue lunch shared with service users.

The Navy has had a special relationship with IHC in Taranaki ever since the frigate HMNZS *Taranaki* chose IHC as its nominated charity in 1976, says former Area Manager Clive Pryme. New Plymouth was its home port. After the *Taranaki* was decommissioned the relationship continued through HMNZS *Wellington*, another frigate, followed for the past 30 years by HMNZS *Endeavour*, a fleet-refuelling tanker. A similar relationship exists between HMNZS *Te Mana* and IHC in its home port of Tauranga.

“We are never short of volunteers,” says *Endeavour* Commander Martin

Doolan. “This was a wonderful opportunity to interact with the residents and gain an insight into the facilities,” he says. During two visits to New Plymouth this year, the ship has been promoting the Navy’s 75th anniversary.

IHC Member Council Chair Barbara Rocco says the relationship between IHC and the Royal New Zealand Navy is just one example of the many organisations and individuals who have continued to support IHC over a very long period of time. Barbara says as the new Council gears up to boost participation of members in local communities it has an extremely strong base of Kiwi support to draw on and is enormously grateful.

“This year alone we have seen the Dannevirke Indoor Bowling Club’s IHC 45th annual charity tournament in July, the 50th anniversary of the Gisborne Charity Dog Trials (see story page 14), and the 51st annual IHC Charity Golf tournament in Winton in November. All these and many other organisations are raising money on our behalf for people with disabilities,” she says.

“There are also new partnerships being forged – such as the IHC North Canterbury Association’s October art exhibition in collaboration with

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COVER IMAGE:
Robert Coley faced his fears and mastered the high ropes on his Outward Bound course. See story, page 11.

Accessible Properties – committed to IHC housing

This year has been a significant one for Accessible Properties. The business has grown and IHC's property company is proud to be providing more good quality homes for people on low incomes, older people and people with disabilities.

"We finish 2016 in a very different place from where we started," says Accessible Properties General Manager Andrew Wilson. "We have signed a number of deals to grow the social housing part of our business and have more in the pipeline, but we are also doing a lot of work to make sure our homes for people with intellectual disabilities provide choice and meet people's changing needs."

IHC and its property arm (Accessible Properties since 2012) have been in the housing business for more than 60 years. More than 730 of the properties Accessible Properties manages belong to IHC, with IDEA Services the biggest tenant. It also manages a further 350 properties owned by others, and leased to IDEA Services.

"We work hard to make sure the homes match what IDEA Services and the people we support need," says Andrew. "We are continuing to adapt the portfolio to provide more choices for people with intellectual disabilities." In recent years there has been an increase in people wanting to live alone or with a flatmate, rather than in a larger group home.

"We are always looking for good small homes. We often purchase or build a small number of homes

together so that people have company and can still be well supported.

"There is a real shortage of homes that are suited to the needs of people with disabilities. We are progressively adding to this stock by making sure all our new-build homes meet these needs."

In the past four years 178 homes have been built in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Hamilton and Tauranga. This year Accessible Properties also took over more than 340 homes in the Hamilton City Council's older persons portfolio, signed a deal to provide more than 350 extra social housing places in Auckland and was chosen as the preferred bidder for more than 1000 Housing New Zealand homes in Tauranga.



Andrea Wade (rear) and Krystal Hyslop at their IDEA Services home in Dunedin.

"The amazing thing about the scale of the business is what each home actually means to our tenants," says Andrew. "We have tenants who were sleeping in cars or garages or were in situations that were dangerous or made living with disabilities difficult before they moved into our homes."

Accessible Properties CEO

Greg Orchard will be managing both new and existing business for Accessible Properties from the start of 2017.

Greg, who has served on the Accessible Properties' Board since 2012, is taking up the role of Chief Executive. He is currently Chief Operating Officer at Wellington City Council.

"A good home can be life changing for people," says Greg. "That's why, while social housing can be challenging, it's a fantastic sector to work in."

"I am very much looking forward to my new role and being able to do more for the many, many New Zealanders in real need."

At the same time I am also looking forward to continuing to provide the best possible housing to people with intellectual disabilities."



Greg Orchard CEO

Greg is a chartered accountant with a strong housing background. His previous roles have included Chief Financial Officer and General Manager of Asset Services for Housing New Zealand. He has also held board positions on Wellington Waterfront Limited, the Australasian Housing Institute, the University of Canterbury Quake Centre and the Building Research Association NZ.



Ashlynn struggles to understand how to play with other children, but making bubbles is one activity she can't get enough of.

When school's out for summer, family stress kicks in

With the Christmas holidays coming, many families are looking forward to trips to the beach or a break away. But Michelle Wigmore is dreading the long unstructured days with 10-year-old Ashlynn.

Michelle has been caring for her granddaughter for nine years – ever since her daughter called asking her to take her 11-month-old baby Ashlynn for the weekend. The baby wouldn't stop crying and her daughter was afraid she might hurt her.

From that weekend, Michelle became the primary caregiver for Ashlynn, who has high-needs autism and an intellectual disability. Ashlynn does not speak and has very challenging behaviour. She has frequent meltdowns and runs away and Michelle has a constant fear that Ashlynn will hurt herself or others.

One thing that keeps them both going is the routine of school, and they dread the summer isolation.

"Ashlynn likes the routine of going to school, so a long break like this really upsets her. I'd love

to be able to put her into a day programme during the Christmas holidays, even just for a couple of days during the week," Michelle says. "But to take Ashlynn, they need staff with the right training available to help look after her. Places in programmes where Ashlynn could go fill up fast. There are so many other people like me who need this help and so few places available."

Two afternoons a week Ashlynn attends after-school care in Palmerston North for three hours, and she stays over with respite carers for one night. "The support I receive from IHC really makes a difference. Ashlynn doesn't sleep much at night so this gives me a chance to catch up on sleep and recharge my batteries too."

Michelle and Ashlynn's story features in this year's IHC Christmas Appeal to encourage donors to help fund our respite care and other support programmes.

Suzanne Downes, IHC Family-Directed Support Service Programme Leader, says life is demanding, challenging and exhausting for parents and

caregivers, many of whom are supporting people with disabilities 24 hours a day, every day.

For the past year, Suzanne has been researching the support needs of families caring for people with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder in the Manawatu area. She says families want support in their communities that's flexible, responsive and focused on solutions.

But they face a number of barriers in trying to get help. There are rigid eligibility criteria and a lack of flexibility in carer relief hours and respite. As well, there are long waiting lists for assessments and holiday programmes and inadequate after-school care programmes.

IHC has a number of pilot initiatives under way to provide direct help to families in Manawatu, including plans for: a specialised short course for support workers to equip them with necessary skills and strategies to meet the complex needs of children with autism and related conditions; more networking opportunities for families with informal parent/caregiver evenings; and a young adult support group for social activities.

Online legal guide will help vulnerable people

An online guide for assisting vulnerable people is being developed for lawyers, judges and police to ensure fair treatment under the legal system.

The online toolkit, called Benchmark, is being put together by a team of New Zealand disability, child witness and legal experts and funded by the IHC Foundation and the New Zealand Law Foundation.

The project follows New Zealand Law Foundation-funded research done in 2014 that revealed people with intellectual disabilities were vulnerable in our legal system.

The research found that some people detained under compulsory care orders were serving much longer sentences than if they had gone to prison, they were vulnerable to pressure to confess and plead guilty and they found it more difficult to access parole. Research conducted in 2010, funded by the New Zealand Law Foundation, found that child witnesses were similarly vulnerable.

The new web-based resource responds directly to the 2014 research, says Dr Brigit Mirfin-Veitch, Director of the Donald Beasley Institute, who is leading the project. She says the research highlighted the ways in which people's access to justice was being impeded – and how it could be enhanced.

The new resource is inspired by the toolkit on the United Kingdom's The Advocate's Gateway, a series of guidelines being used successfully by legal professionals in England and Wales. The original developers of the British resource, Dame Joyce Plotnikoff and Dr Richard Woolfson, have waived their copyright fee and are collaborating with local researchers on the project.

In New Zealand there will be a total of 10 guides – developed collaboratively. They will be peer reviewed by both local and international experts. Four are being developed this year and



Dr Brigit Mirfin-Veitch, Director of the Donald Beasley Institute, who is leading the online toolkit project.

the remaining six next year. Accompanying the guides will be a large collection of case law for reference.

The IHC Foundation is contributing \$80,000 to the project over two years and the New Zealand Law Foundation is contributing \$218,000.

The team includes Professor Kate Diesfeld from Auckland University of Technology (AUT), who collaborated with Brigit on the initial research, and Dr Emily Henderson and Dr Kirsten Hanna (AUT), who are recognised experts on children's testimony and participation in legal cases.

IHC Foundation Chair Sir Roderick Deane says the online resource will be an important way to improve access to the law for vulnerable people. The IHC Foundation is keen to fund projects where there is a clear, tangible benefit for people with disabilities.

New Zealand Law Foundation Director Lynda Hagen says the



The guides will cover:

1. Case management in cases involving vulnerable witnesses and defendants
2. Interviewing a child or adult with a learning (intellectual) disability
3. Interviewing a child or adult with a neurodevelopmental disability
4. Questioning children and young people
5. General principles for working with witnesses and defendants with mental distress
6. Interviewing a person who is Deaf
7. Responding to ethnicity and culture in New Zealand
8. Role of communication assistants
9. Effective participation of children, young people and vulnerable adult defendants
10. *(Still to be confirmed by the project's Steering Committee.)*

Law Foundation is delighted to support this multi-institutional collaboration that will bring about real change in New Zealand. "This project is the first of its kind in Australasia and has the potential to significantly advantage a range of vulnerable people who come within the legal system – and fill an acknowledged gap in legal education."

Kristoff wins the battle of the fatted calf



Ashleigh Wenham shares the moment with Kristoff the winning calf.

Kristoff is 225 kilograms worth of cute. But he hasn't got that way by accident. For months he has been carefully fed at Lye Farm ready for the great weigh-in against his rival Alex from Scott Farm.

For years the two DairyNZ research and development farms on opposite sides of the road in Hamilton have been battling it out to see who can raise the heaviest calf. After three straight years as winners, Scott Farm was decisively beaten this year by Lye Farm. Kristoff was 52kg heavier than Alex.

Pampered and preened by calf-rearer Ashleigh Wenham, four-month-old Kristoff was scoffing warmed milk morning and night, along with a secret blend of moozlee and molasses, hay and lush pasture grass. It paid off. He weighed in at 225kg, while Alex only managed 173kg.

But Lye Farm manager Bruce Sugar says there was a bit of skulduggery involved.

"We had two of the Lye Farm staff sneak across to Scott Farm one night dressed as different staff members. They swapped a smaller calf for their bigger one," he says. But they didn't get away with it. "They were caught on the security camera."

The two farms have been engaged in the good-natured rivalry for eight years. Bruce says last year Scott Farm produced an impressive 237kg calf that had been impossible to beat.

Each farm chooses two calves every year through IHC's Calf & Rural Scheme and donates the biggest and best to be sold in the IHC Frankton sale on the first Monday of November each year. The Frankton sale is one of 19 sales auctioning IHC calves between now and February.

Each calf sold for \$685 and both were bought by Calf Scheme volunteer David Wearne, who says they were great value per kilo. He spent four days travelling a total of 577 kilometres before the Frankton sale, picking up more than 70 IHC calves for the sale.

DairyNZ has been supporting the Calf Scheme for 15 years and helping farmers raise more than \$1 million a year for people with intellectual disabilities.

"In the 32 years the IHC Calf & Rural Scheme has been running, it has raised more than \$30 million. Waikato farmers are among our strongest supporters," says Eleisha McNeill, IHC National Fundraising Manager.

Eleisha says farmers have dug deep this year to donate more than 3000 calves nationwide and, like the farm staff rearing the Lye and Scott calves, many have chosen to give their biggest and best for the benefit of people with disabilities.

"Farmers should be so proud of the support they provide. Giving a calf is a huge help and a generous donation, and we are very grateful.

"Now we just need people to come along to the sales and buy all of these fantastic calves."

You can find your local sale by visiting

ihc.org.nz/calf-and-rural-scheme.

Employers can't afford to ex

International speakers have warned that employers – and countries – cannot afford to ignore the pool of workers with disabilities.

Delegates at the IHC Workability *Make it Work* International Conference in September were told that the changing job market was opening up opportunities for people who have been traditionally disadvantaged. And disability advocates were challenged to focus on building job skills so that people with disabilities were ready to take advantage of the change.

Catalina Devandas Aguilar, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, said there was increasing evidence of the cost to a country's economy of excluding people with disabilities. This could be as high as 1–7 percent of a country's GDP.

"The exclusion of people with disabilities is far more costly than their inclusion. We need to use these arguments to say look, you have to invest in people with disabilities," she said.

"We need to advocate for a systemic change. We need to look at the structural barriers that we are facing." She said it didn't matter how many opportunities there were to work if you couldn't access the transport system or public services.

Sports journalist and disability advocate Michael Pulman identified a major barrier. "The harsh reality is that many employers believe that hiring somebody with a disability just isn't good for business. Another reality is that for those people with disabilities who actually do find some sort of work, often they will be receiving pay equal to, or beneath, the minimum wage," he said.

"For many of us, how we see ourselves is based on how the people around us view and treat us. It isn't fair that our Government has such low expectations of people who identify as disabled, because we want real jobs with real money.

"Let's invest in all, not just some. Let's invest in a better future, because I promise you, society does benefit when we can get it right for people with disabilities."

Australian employment market analyst Steve Shepherd pointed to ageing populations and the decline in birth rates. "As a society we are getting much, much older. Largely we have been ignoring that. Our baby boomers are retiring.

"It's going to mean that employers will have to look in other parts of the market in which they have traditionally engaged to find the workforce of the future. So this is going to be, I think, one of the most significant opportunities."

He said jobs were opening up now that people couldn't have imagined 10 years ago. "Who would have thought a drone operator could be a thing? When most of us left school or university we wouldn't have any dreams of being an app developer – they didn't exist 10 years ago.

"I believe that this new future of work is actually going to create new and greater opportunities, particularly for those workers who have been traditionally more disadvantaged in the workforce."

Phil O'Reilly, former BusinessNZ Chief Executive and current Iron Duke Partners Chief Executive, said it was important to develop the talent pool of people with disabilities. "People don't get jobs because they have got rights. People get jobs because they have skills."

Phil, an expert in domestic and global employment relations and diversity issues, said employers needed to plan how to integrate



Make it Work conference delegates (from left) Trudy McNamara, Trudy Pollock and Katrina Sneath from Wellington.

workers with disabilities, and advocates had to learn how to better engage with business.

Brent Wilton, Director of Global Workplace Rights at Coca-Cola in the United States, said the opportunities for people with disabilities had never been greater. Companies were open to the challenge, but needed help.

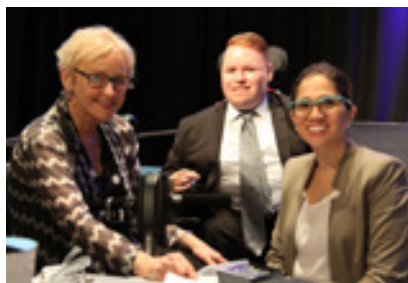
"People are scared sometimes of having a disabled person in front of them at an interview, or what they perceive to be the role of having someone with a disability in the business."

He said businesses have traditionally overestimated the average cost of making 'reasonable accommodations' for people with disabilities. Widening a door was not expensive. Giving someone special access to a computer was not expensive. Only 44 percent of people with disabilities needed any accommodation.

Exclude disabled workers



Neil and Sophie Simpson, Service Managers for IDEA Services in Gisborne, and self-advocates Janiece



UN Special Rapporteur Catalina Devandas Aguilar (right) with IHC Director of Advocacy Trish Grant and disability advocate Michael Pulman.

Companies were now looking for diversity and were being ranked on their diversity. "If the community in which you operate doesn't like you, then you are not going to be around for very long. As a consumer-facing brand that we are, we need to appeal to everybody."

Around 380 delegates from 20 countries attended the two-day conference at the SKYCITY Auckland Convention Centre and Auckland War Memorial Museum.

The disability job market

- 45 percent of New Zealand's total disabled population is unemployed.
- It is three to four times more difficult for a person with an intellectual disability to find a job.
- New Zealand has no specific employment targets for a person with a disability.
- People with disabilities who do find work often receive pay equal to, or beneath, the minimum wage.
- Many employers believe that hiring someone with a disability isn't good for business.



Catalina Devandas Aguilar –
United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

"It doesn't matter if you live in a rich or poor country. People with disabilities will always be over-represented under the poverty line."



Michael Pulman –
Sports journalist and disability advocate

"Let's invest in all, not just some. Let's invest in a better future, because I promise you, society does benefit when we can get it right for people with disabilities."



Phil O'Reilly –
CEO of Iron Duke Partners

"Getting work of one sort or another gives choice. It gives economic choice. It gives social choice because you can go and get the next job and the next job and the next job hopefully."



Steve Shepherd –
Employment market analyst

"I believe that this new future of work is actually going to create new and greater opportunities, particularly for those workers who have been traditionally more disadvantaged in the workforce."



Brent Wilton –
Director of Global Workplace Rights at Coca-Cola

"Business, in terms of the issues around diversity, is largely dominated at the moment for good reason by the gender issue. You need to make diversity in terms of disability the hot topic."



Jan Dowland catches up with IHC Waikato West Association Chair Owen Cathcart at the IHC Workability International Conference.

Jan Dowland – a one-woman think tank

IHC's newest Life Member, Jan Dowland, has turned the smallest office in IHC into a personal think tank.

Jan, a former IHC Chief Executive, was named a New Zealand Life Member at the recent IHC Workability International Conference in Auckland. The announcement came with warm personal tributes from Chief Executive Ralph Jones and former President Barbara Rocco, who worked closely with Jan when the two women led IHC in the 1990s.

"She works out of the smallest office in the building, an internal one with no window, yet the amount and quality of work that pours out of it is staggering," Barbara told conference delegates.

Jan Dowland became CEO in 1998 after JB Munro retired. She had spent the previous four years working as General Manager of the Central Region.

"JB had been in charge for 20 years. He was a visionary, a risk-taker and passionately determined to see people with intellectual disabilities

take their place in the New Zealand community. For many of us it was hard to imagine what life in IHC would be like without him.

"So along came Jan. As she herself has said, 'The threads of my life were now neatly pulled together to fully prepare me to run a care-giving charity in a business-like way'.

"Jan, though she had the same vision and passion as JB, brought her sense of order and systems to IHC. We established a Board of Governance rather than trying to govern via a New Zealand Council of 52 branch presidents," Barbara said.

"At the same time she was prepared to take risks – we set up Timata Hou because she saw a gap – the need for a service for those who come through the justice system. Jan's commitment to those people was unwavering."

Jan has worked as an accountant and in a variety of roles in the health and disability sector. She was part of a small team commissioned in 1980 by Director General of Mental Health Dr Basil James to examine life in New Zealand's large

psychiatric institutions. That experience set in train a lifelong commitment to including people with an intellectual disability and experience of mental illness as valued members of their communities.

Jan obtained a first class honours degree in psychology and later an accountancy qualification from Victoria University of Wellington, and began work at accountancy firm Ernst & Young. She worked for IHC for nine years, five of those as its Chief Executive. Following that Jan was appointed Chair of the Mental Health Commission.

"Jan is now back at IHC as a consultant and has turned her hand to plenty of 'the hard stuff'. From a governance perspective the fact that we have a Member Council and a more robust appointment system for the Board is thanks to her work on constitutional changes last year," Barbara said.

"Jan loves this organisation, its history and its values, and she has tremendous affection and respect for the people in it. We in turn love her – she is truly our taonga. And she is now a New Zealand Life Member. She's ours forever."



Robert Coley (the pirate captain) and David Ledingham (centre) sail the Sounds with their Outward Bound crew.

Outward Bound adventure to carry on

Robert Coley and David Ledingham spent a week miles from home, sometimes scared and often tired – and having so much fun they never wanted the experience to end.

Neither man was a typical ‘outdoors’ type when they signed up for the Outward Bound Horizons course in October, specially designed for people with intellectual disabilities.

But they came home after a week of kayaking, sailing, tramping and climbing on ropes high in the forest at Anakiwa in the Marlborough Sounds hungry for more adventure.

“I wish I was still down there. I loved it that much I didn’t want to come home,” Robert says. He had been looking forward to sailing most of all. “That was my highlight of my trip. I had a go steering the boat. The first day it was calm. The second day it did get rough on the way back so we had to get a tow in.”

Wearing the team’s pirate hat and adding their names to the Jolly Roger flag just added to the raw thrill of adventure on the high seas. In fact, there was a lot of water – one day was spent making a raft out of mussel buoys and sailing it, then there was kayaking, followed by two days of yacht sailing. Some of the participants ended up toppling into the water, but not Robert or David.

On dry land the challenges carried on, with a 12.4-kilometre bush walk, and a treasure hunt where they had to find their lunch. The ultimate test, though, was the high ropes challenge.

David doesn’t say too much but he went up the high rope ladder into the trees without a second thought. His course highlight was planting a tree. Each group of participants gets to leave their mark at Anakiwa with a native tree.

Kathy Leach, IDEA Services Supported Living Manager in Paraparaumu, says the two men were the first from her area to

attend the course and it turned out to be life changing for them.

Robert, from Levin, was already a keen photographer and came back with fantastic images and the dream of becoming a professional photographer. He also wants to join a tramping club. David, from Paraparaumu Beach, might end up doing a lot more tree planting as a Department of Conservation volunteer. Kathy says IDEA Services will be exploring those options with the two men. “We just have to make sure that it carries on.”

Denise Newton, Outcomes Facilitator with IDEA Services in Paraparaumu, heard about the Outward Bound course and got the ball rolling. She says the course is fully funded by the Ministry of Social Development, including the ferry ride to Picton. “It shows the absolute value they place on it,” she says.

David and Robert were among 13 participants, supported by three Outward Bound instructors and two on-site support workers.



Active Activists (from left) Tess Francis, Adrian Buckland and Jasmin Waetford at the Abel Smith Street intersection.

Activists say it's time to stop ducking and diving

Every day, Wellington motorists and pedestrians are ducking and dodging around each other at one of the country's trickiest intersections.

The intersection of Abel Smith and Cuba streets is a busy one. But it is controlled by four stop signs and drivers haven't a clue about who should go first. Even the Road Code isn't clear on what should happen. Anyone on foot has to take their chances.

But a group of young activists – Active Activists – decided to take some action and petition Wellington City Council to make the intersection safer.

Oliver Gordon is one of the Active Activists, a group of young people with intellectual disabilities supported by IDEA Services. Like a number in his group he does art at Alpha Art Studio in Abel Smith Street and has to cross the intersection to go to the studio.

"I do find it dangerous because there are lots of things happening at one time."

In seven separate sessions, Oliver and his fellow Activists monitored the intersection throughout the day and recorded the traffic and pedestrian flows – and the near misses – and presented their findings to the Council. They didn't record any accidents but reported hazards, including few motorists actually stopping at the stop signs, drivers talking and texting on their phones as they drove through the intersection, skateboarders using the road, and parked cars blocking visibility.

"I think we saw most cars going through without stopping," says Active support worker Michael Heberton.

The Active Activists collected 1190 signatures on a petition calling for a safer intersection.

The group told Councillors that people with disabilities, who could otherwise make their way around other parts of town independently, were avoiding the studio because it was too hard to cross the road without help. They asked the Council to investigate putting in a pedestrian crossing, traffic lights, or a combination of two stop signs or give-way signs.

Some local retailers can't see the problem. Putting in a pedestrian crossing or lights would involve the loss of car parking and they fear an impact on their trade as a result.

While Councillors were generally supportive, they want to look at traffic controls across other central city intersections before making a decision.

"I really hope it happens," Oliver says. He says it would be tough "to do all that hard work and not to get a result".

Partners for the long haul

the Te Roopu Taurima Trust, and the partnership between IDEA Services in Whangarei, the Whangarei Men's Shed, Te Roopu Taurima Trust and Pehiaweri Marae to form the Northland Kapa Haka group (see page 15).

...continued from page 3

"And then there are Associations looking for opportunities to help in their communities – like the partnership between the IHC Lakeland Association and Taupo District Council to install a pool hoist and aquatic wheelchair at

the AC Baths in August."

While a lot has changed in the 67 years since IHC started, Barbara says what hasn't changed is the willingness of people to devote their time and their money to making lives better for people with intellectual disabilities.

Gisborne – a city full of good sorts

Anyone who needs a bit of a hand in Gisborne doesn't have to look far. Gisborne is a city full of 'good sorts'.

Local people with intellectual disabilities and the IHC Gisborne Association have had the backing of the town for 65 years. This year we celebrate the founding of the IHC Gisborne branch in 1951 and say thank you to everyone who has supported us over the years.

Where else would teenage boys devote a week of their May school holidays to running 1300 kilometres to raise funds for IHC? The Gisborne Boys' High School IHC Relay Team did that for many years, running up and down the North Island. The runs got longer and the amount raised got higher each year. In 1973 the boys ran from Gisborne to Whangarei and back – a round trip of 1300km – raising \$2500. Their 1974 run raised \$3400, and in 1975 they ran another 1300km to Rotorua, New Plymouth and Palmerston North and then back to Gisborne and raised a further \$3500.

John Burns, IHC administrator and member of the local harrier group, put on his running shoes too. In 1973 he became the first man to run solo from Gisborne, via Opotiki and the East Coast and back to Gisborne. His sponsored run of 500km raised \$1400 for IHC and took him a week. In 1974 John and Boys' High runner Tony Proudfoot ran around the coast in another fundraiser. But then John decided on a different kind of challenge. He challenged John Buchanan from the Gisborne Riding Club for the Disabled, riding his horse Alaric, to a 145km race from Tikitiki back down the coast to Gisborne. Their organisations shared the proceeds.

But Gisborne's sheep and dogs have done a fair amount of

running for IHC too. Every year money has been donated to IHC from the Gisborne Charity Dog Trials (see page 14). And those prepared to take the plunge have been joining in the annual mid-winter swim for more years than they probably care to remember.

The Gisborne branch was one of IHC's earliest. Branch records from 1949 to 1952 were

destroyed in a fire, but community support was evident from the very beginning. Bill Donnelly, branch President in 1953, let some parents use his garage on Gladstone Road as a vocational centre for children leaving school. The family of a local man with intellectual disabilities, Tony Singer, then donated a building, which was moved to council-leased land in Disraeli Street. Those using the garage shifted to this building, named Donnelly Training Centre and officially opened in 1964.

A preschool for disabled children was also set up in the building.

Community fundraising paid for a hostel to be built in Albert Street to provide accommodation for intellectually disabled children and young people from the wider East Coast area while they attended



IHC administrator John Burns sets off for his run.
- Gisborne Photo News

schools in Gisborne. The hostel opened in 1969.

In 1971, work started on a \$65,000 workshop on a site in Temple Street and this became the new location for the Donnelly Training Centre. The building was sold in the late 1990s.

IDEA Services now operates vocational centres at Cameron Road and the original building in Disraeli Street. The area office, based in Lowe Street for the past five years, recently moved to a more accessible building in Bright Street – and the Disraeli Street centre is to have a name change. The building will be renamed the Tony Singer Centre.

Like all of our IHC Associations, Gisborne's history is a tribute to community support – from individuals, to schools, farmers and service clubs.



Beau, watched by owner Fraser Willson, is ready for anything in the Poverty Bay J & T Hickey Charity Sheep Dog Trial.

Smart dogs, tricky sheep and generous people

For 50 years some of the smartest dogs in the country have been rounding up the trickiest sheep at the Gisborne dog trials. And every year, money donated from the event has been making lives better for people with intellectual disabilities in the Gisborne/Poverty Bay area.

The 50th annual Poverty Bay J & T Hickey Charity Sheep Dog Trial was held over four days in August, with competitors from across the North Island. This year \$1750 went to IHC.

The dog trials started in 1967 when local dog enthusiasts Harry Biggar and Eric Aylward came up with the idea. Eric, who had a grandchild with an intellectual disability, put in £50 for prize money and the pair decided that any money raised should go to IHC.

The IHC Gisborne Association receives between \$1500 and \$2000 a year and over 50 years

this has amounted to a grand total of \$78,000. The money has been used for all kinds of projects to assist local disabled people. IHC Gisborne Association Chair Christine Morrison says these have included health and exercise programmes, sport, bicycles, televisions, phones, musical instruments, arts and crafts, holiday programmes and other outdoor activities.

Eleisha McNeill, IHC National Fundraising Manager, says money raised by the event has provided huge support locally for a very long time. "This kind of ongoing commitment from the local community is fantastic. It says a lot about Gisborne and its care for people. Thank you so much."

Since 1967, more than \$230,000 overall has been donated to charity, says trials spokesman Trevor Brown. For the first 10 years, all the money went to IHC in Gisborne. In 1977, when the event got bigger, organisers decided to split the proceeds between Gisborne Riding for the

Disabled, IHC and the Crippled Children's Society (now CCS Disability Action). More recently the event has also distributed money to the Eastland Rescue Helicopter Trust.

For the past 20 years the charity dog trials have been sponsored by the J & T Hickey Charitable Trust. Colin Peach, one of the trustees, says Jim and Tom Hickey were brothers. Jim had a smallholding at Makauri on the outskirts of Gisborne where he ran cattle, and he drove trucks for a local dairy company. For 40 years Tom managed Puketoro, a 8423-hectare sheep station inland from Tokomaru Bay, and was known for his expertise with sheep, dogs and horses.

When Tom retired from Puketoro, he started regularly competing in the dog trials. He was still competing into his 80s. Money left by the brothers has been funding local charities and community groups, schools and sports clubs to the tune of \$80,000 to \$100,000 each year.



Kapa Haka Northland at the 2016 Matariki Whanau Festival at the Whangarei Town Basin in June.

'Electric' winner makes some cool connections

The bookings are coming in for the Northland kapa haka team since they won the Supreme Award in the IDEA Services Northern Region Staff Awards.

The team, described as "electric", by North Shore Area Manager Oana Hutchinson, also won the Community Connections Award.

"This performance of dance and music has brought together an electric group of people, building confidence, expanding IDEA Services into the community and it has also led to an increase in community presence and participation," Oana said in presenting the nomination of the five staff behind the group: Rachel Mellor, Irene Blyth, Fale Penivao, Didiz Leefe and Tyler Tipene.

It was former staff member Rachel Mellor who first recognised that there was enthusiasm for performing and a desire among local service users for a better understanding of their Māori heritage. She approached the Whangarei Men's Shed for a venue and, assisted by Māori service provider Te Roopu Taurima, the kapa haka group was formed. With the help of the local Pehiaweri Marae, they trained in performance, poi and local waiata.

"The group has become so successful that they are now asked to perform at community events like the mainstream Matariki celebrations in Whangarei, where they received rapturous applause."

Fale, who is from Tuvalu, began to learn te reo Māori to support the group and Irene took a leading role with the women in poi and waiata.

Northern Region General Manager Vonny Davis says Kapa Haka Northland was a fantastic and deserving winner. "Not only did this entry make great connections in the wider community, it has enhanced IDEA Services' reputation, given opportunities for service user and staff development and benefited the wider Northern regional teams."

Service Manager Karen Taylor says there is a huge interest in the group. Practices are about to increase as the group prepares for an IHC/IDEA kapa haka festival in March, organised by the Northern Māori Advisory Group.

Within a few weeks of winning the Supreme Award, the group had two new bookings – one to perform at a graduation and the other for a disability awareness event.

Karen says that when she took the trophies home, everybody wanted to hold them and celebrate.

Staff compete for excellence in eight categories in the annual awards, including IDEA values, safety in practice, health and wellbeing, community connections, service manager leadership, support worker leadership, innovation, and teamwork champion.

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