



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Residents' Groups of Christchurch to Federate

Over 80 residents' and neighbourhood associations from Christchurch will be given the opportunity this week to join the Christchurch Federation of Residents' Groups – a concept that grew out of a regional forum held last year in the city.

A working party of residents' groups from Christchurch voted to form the Federation after the forum – which attracted 70 delegates from associations across the City and surrounds – gave a mandate to investigate options for an umbrella group to support local community governance organisations.

The idea for a federation was presented to the April 2012 forum by Jim Candiliotis, President of the Federation of Wellington Progressive and Residents' Associations. Over half of the active residents' groups in Christchurch were present and delegates voted unanimously to investigate the establishment of a federation. As a result of the forum a working party was formed by board members of groups from St Albans, Beckenham, Ferrymead, Sumner, Central Riccarton and the Central Business District. The working party has been supported by the Draco Foundation – a national trust that provides support to the community governance sector – and includes representatives of the wider NGO and disability sectors in the region.

Spokesperson for the group, Peter Tuffley, says the federation would not represent residents' groups, nor fight battles on their behalf, rather it would provide an opportunity to network, share information and resources, and assist members to grow their organisations.

There are already organisations supporting community via residents' associations in the city and the Federation would not replicate the work of these organisations, rather it would enhance and complement them through providing education and opportunities to community groups.

Mr Tuffley says the core business of the Federation should be to boost communication and networking amongst the residents' associations in Christchurch; support member groups with training, resources, advice and information; be an additional channel for information between the community governance sector (residents' groups) and central government, local government and commerce; undertake research and publish the results; provide informed commentary to media where prudent, and; promote the role of residents' groups to the wider public.



Revisiting the Forum

Delegates at the 2012 regional forum expressed enthusiasm for self-advancement and better organisation and support. Five themes important to residents' groups in the City were identified and discussed in detail by the delegates. They were:

- Respect for Local Voice
- Sense of Place
- Transparency, Accountability and Information
- Influence of Commerce
- Nurturing Residents' Groups

Delegates identified the need for an umbrella group that would:

- support and nurture the sector but not represent it nor deal with individual issues
- be free of partisan politics
- be free of external influence

Next Steps

Residents groups will be receiving information in the mail this week telling them how they can join the Federation and contribute to the network, and what support and resources they are able to access. Anyone interested in learning more about the Federation can visit their website: www.residents.org.nz/chch.html.

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