

PETERSGATE COUNSELLING CENTRE

Friends Newsletter June 2009



Director's Message:

This next year will be a watershed year for us because we will rebuild 29 Yaldhurst Road, which has been our home for the last 13 years. We have thought about this for some time now. We have planned carefully and consulted widely. Now we are going to do it, in the strong belief that what Petersgate stands for is worth expanding and consolidating for future generations.

Some of you will remember that very hot day in April 1996 when Petersgate was opened and blessed by our various church leaders. Nobody then would have believed in their wildest dreams how successful Petersgate would become. We have managed to find a sore spot in society, and bring the balm of love and acceptance to heal it. And it works – just like Christ, and so many sages through the centuries have taught: the giving and receiving of love is the essence of our existence.

I am so grateful for the support of so many people who have made all of this happen. We have a team of counsellors who are second to none in New Zealand. Our volunteer and administrative staff, our Trustees, our Friends and our funding providers have given unselfishly of their time, skills and money to make this venture possible. Now we are approaching you again to extend your generosity to our new building project. I commend the project to you and thank you wholeheartedly for your generosity.



Struan Duthie

An Exciting Future . . .

It has been a year since we asked for your support and we have waited that long deliberately. This year's appeal is rather special. Petersgate has been so successful in the 13 years since we began providing counselling to the community that if we are to continue to meet the ever-increasing demand for our services, we must increase our capacity, both in terms of counselling hours and building space. To do that, we need your help.

Our plans to enlarge and improve our counselling rooms at 29 Yaldhurst Road have been approved by our landlord, St Peter's Parish, and been given resource consent by the City Council. We have approval to add a new group room to the rear of the existing house, and to reconfigure the existing group room to provide a new reception and administration area, a new Director's office and counselling room, a staff room and an improved waiting area for our clients. We will take the opportunity to upgrade the existing counselling rooms to a more comfortable and welcoming standard.

We are committed to the upgrade and will be asking community funding groups for capital grants and loan assistance. It would be brilliant if we could avoid the need to raise a loan.

In the early stages of planning these improvements, we created a Building Development Reserve to assist with funding and as at 31 December 2008, we had a balance of \$60,000 in that reserve thanks to a very generous legacy from a former client. We have been encouraged by the Canterbury Community Trust to seek their financial support and we will be exploring other funding options as well.

The Friends of Petersgate, who number nearly 200, support us amazingly well every year and we are truly thankful for your support. You are a hugely important group and we hope you will feel encouraged to support this rather *special appeal* for 2009.



Our existing group room

The advice we have received is that our planned improvements are likely to cost between \$250,000-\$300,000 which is rather a lot of money. As well as the legacy amount, we have some reserves that we could use as part-funding or to service a loan. Even with those resources, we are in need of many thousands of dollars.

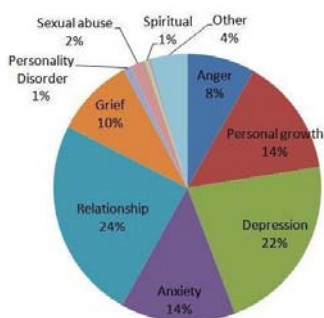
Our Services:

We are proud of our reputation for providing affordable, professional counselling and we continue to enjoy tremendous support from the medical profession which is still our biggest single source of referrals.

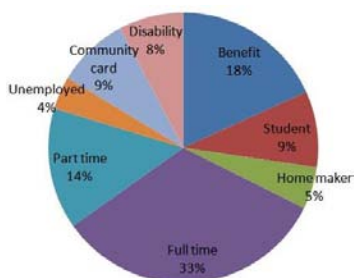
The beginning of 2009 has been the busiest time we have ever had and our team of dedicated counsellors and volunteers are responding very well to the increased demand. The effects of the economic downturn are impacting on more and more people, and anxiety and stress levels are rising. We will continue to meet the demands of our clients by responding as quickly and appropriately as we can.

We have managed to keep our fees at the same levels as last year which is the lowest level possible. Our goal is to ensure, as far as possible, that cost is not a barrier to receiving counselling, as half of our clients earn less than \$20,000 per year.

Statistical Information:



PRESENTING ISSUES 2008



EMPLOYMENT STATUS 2008



Our dedicated counselling team

Your Support:

The Friends of Petersgate contributed a generous \$6,495 in the nine months to 31 December last year and we are very grateful for this great level of support.

Your support for our appeal this year would be wonderful and if you felt motivated to become a regular monthly supporter, this would be hugely appreciated. This automatic payment option is much simpler for us to administer and is the most cost-effective way of supporting us. Our Manager, Denis Warren, will be happy to take your calls about becoming a regular donor. Please phone him on 343-3391 or 347-4700. You may not be aware that changes to the tax laws mean that you can claim a tax rebate on charitable donations up to the amount of your earnings now, rather than the much lower limit that applied previously.

Our supporting parishes also make a significant difference by their generous donations that amounted to \$21,640 to 31 December. The ongoing support we receive from the parishes is very much appreciated.

We are fortunate to receive financial support from a small number of organisations that make grants to Petersgate. Over the past year, we have received grants totalling \$43,500 from the Canterbury Community Trust, the NZ Lottery Grants Board and United Way. This is vitally important funding and we thank these organisations for their support.

To conclude ...

We sincerely hope that keeping you up-to-date with the happenings at Petersgate, and our continued passion for the work that we do, inspires you to contribute in some small way. Every little bit helps as we continue to build and strengthen all that Petersgate stands for, and to realise the vision we have for its future.



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