

PETERSGATE COUNSELLING CENTRE

Happy New Year. We're hoping for a more settled and peaceful year than 2011.

Last year was certainly an extraordinary one. We have all had to cope with earthquakes and aftershocks as they have affected us, our families and friends. It has been most encouraging to witness people helping people; whether it's been providing accommodation, food and support, or shovelling liquefaction. Neighbours have been helping neighbours and closer community bonds have resulted in many cases.

At Petersgate we were impacted by the events of 2011 just like everyone else. Our counsellors continued to provide an excellent service despite having to deal with their own issues of personal injury and/or the loss of, or damage to homes. The client statistics below give some indication of the effects of the natural disasters at least in numerical terms. As well as the earthquakes costing us counselling days, we lost two days counselling because of major snowfalls in August.

Client statistics 2011. Comparative figures for 2010 are shown in brackets.

Number of counselling interviews conducted in 2011: **6,786 (7,983)**

Number of **new** requests for counselling in 2011: **1,299 (1,461)**

The number of clients seeking assistance in coping with the earthquakes was significant and we responded to the need throughout the year.

Towards the end of the year we thought we were going to suffer further consequences of the earthquakes, an inability to obtain insurance cover for our building redevelopment work. However, at the eleventh hour we received the most welcome news that insurance had in fact been arranged. Special thanks to our landlords, Church Property Trustees.

The men from Whyte Construction moved 'on site' on Monday 9 January and work began. At the end of the first week a good deal of site clearance had happened, the piles for the new group room were in place and the two temporary rooms had been moved to the side of 31 Yaldhurst Road so that the development of the car park could proceed. What a difference a week makes!

We are planning on continuing to provide counselling during the redevelopment work, which is expected to take about 16 weeks. However, we are mindful of the need for a suitable environment for counselling and will be flexible in our approach as we try to minimise the impact on our clients, counsellors and volunteers.

Best wishes for 2012.

Denis Warren
Manager