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SUMMER 2025

PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT SOUTHLAND MAGAZINE

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Summer update

As we approach the end of another year, I am reminded of the remarkable resilience and dedication that defines our Presbyterian Support Southland community.

Recent weather events tested our preparedness, but thanks to the swift actions of the teams at our facilities, we managed temporary power outages and minor issues with minimal disruption. These experiences have highlighted areas which require improvement, and we are already planning enhancements to further strengthen our operations. I want to acknowledge the professionalism of our staff and the support of emergency services, whose efforts ensured the safety and comfort of our residents.

Our annual supporters event recently provided an opportunity to celebrate our achievements and shine the spotlight on some of the wonderful outcomes from the past 12 months, including our dementia unit extension, the pneumatic pump therapy trial, the 95% satisfaction rate associated with our Family Works services and many other outcomes and innovations that highlight our commitment to providing first class aged care and social services support to the Southland

community. The support of our funders and many contributors remain vital to our organisation, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership.

Earlier in the year we took the opportunity to pause and reflect during National Volunteer Week, where we celebrated the incredible contributions of our volunteers across Enliven Southland and Family Works. From care home companions and Big Buddies to foster parents, drivers, entertainers, and countless others working behind the scenes. Their dedication and compassion make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve, and we were proud to honour and thank them for all they do.

I also want to highlight the creativity and community spirit on display at the Enliven Wearable Arts Show. Events like these remind us of the vibrant, inclusive culture we are building together.

On the funding front, we have received confirmation from Oranga Tamariki regarding future allocations for the valuable Family Works services we provide. While no additional funding will be provided for the current year, we are assured of continued support for key contracts, including extensions for Family Start and Strengthening Families through to March 2027. This stability is a significant relief and allows us to plan confidently for the future.

After more than 30 years of dedicated service at Family Works, Judith McInerney is preparing to embark on a well-

deserved retirement. Judith's career has been nothing short of extraordinary, marked by compassion, commitment, and an unwavering focus on supporting families and strengthening communities. Her leadership and care have touched countless lives, leaving a legacy that will be felt for years to come. As Judith turns the page to her next chapter, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for her remarkable contributions and wish her every happiness in the adventures ahead.

Finally, I want to thank our staff, residents, families, and supporters. I hope you are able to enjoy some sunshine, recharge the batteries for the year ahead and I wish you all an enjoyable festive season surrounded by family and friends.

- Matt Russell, PSS chief executive



“Their dedication and compassion make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.”



Farewelling Judith

Growth and restructure, introduction and removal of services, chief executives come and gone, Family Works Southland director Judith McInerney has experienced a lot of change in her three decades in the job.

It was the changing nature of the work and her belief in the values of Presbyterian Support Southland (PSS) and the work it was doing in the community that had kept her in the job, she said.

After 31 years working for Family Works, with nearly 20 of those years as the driving force behind the community services agency, Judith is retiring in November.

In the beginning

It was February of 1994 when Judith was offered a parental leave position in foster care with PSS's

Child and Family Support Services. Soon after, she was offered a permanent position. At that time, she was one of three staff, working alongside director Diana Halsted and social worker Irene Te Koeti.

"We had a lot of laughs together, supported each other through hard times and worked closely together," Judith said.

"We were very hands-on and involved in everything in those days."

She soon moved up through the ranks, becoming a team leader before being appointed to the

role of director following Diana's retirement in 2006, the same year the service was rebranded Family Works Southland.

"As a social worker and team leader I could help this many lives, but as the director I have been able to help more people and influence more lives."

Changing times

Family Works had grown from three staff in 1994 to more than 50 prior to a restructure two years ago. At present there are 38.

Staffing and services offered had grown over the years in response to the community need, Judith said.

"We have never chased contracts just for the sake of getting the funding in and then looked for clients. We identify the needs of the community and then look at how we get the funding and find contracts to support that work."

Taking over the contract for the Family Start programme in June 2007 was one of the most significant changes to the agency's services during Judith's time in the role.

It was a long and involved process.

It took nine months for CE Peter Wards, Robin McCall who was the service development manager at the time, board member Gwen Neave and Judith to secure the contract with Ministry of Social Development (MSD), establish the service within Family Works and the community and merge the cultures of the Family Works and Family Start teams.

Over the 31 years, Judith had worked under five chief executives – Allan Smith (1970-1995) Peter Wards (1995-2018), John Prendergast (2018-2020), Michael Parker (2020-2023) and Matt Russell (2023 to present day).

"We had three CE changes in a fairly short space of time. It was quite challenging adapting to the CEs' different styles, different focuses, different systems and their different expectations of what they wanted from me. But we had one thing in common and that was the best interests of our organisation, our people and the community we serve.

"I have been privileged to work with CEs who have a real heart for what we do and who have supported me in my role."

Another notable change was the growing complexity of the issues families were facing.

At one time, families came to Family Works with issues like how to navigate the teenage years, whereas today they had a wide range of complex issues. Issues like the impact of social media on children, drug use, gang-related issues and family violence. Families were also struggling with poverty, accessing health care, the high cost of housing and isolation due to the lack of strong family connections.

One thing she would have liked to have been able to implement was an earlier intervention service to help prevent families' issues from escalating or becoming ingrained.

Much to be proud of

Judith said there had been many highlights, both personally and professionally, supporting staff to grow and develop among them.

One example of this was the support provided to a group of female staff to complete their Diploma in Child Protection.

"Together with them we did really well getting them to a place where they obtained a qualification and became even stronger women who could do a great job doing really difficult work, which also benefited their own lives."

"I have been privileged to work with CEs who have a real heart for what we do and who have supported me in my role."



PSS board chairman Craig Smith congratulates Judith on receiving her 30-year long service award last year.

Several former clients, with the support they received from staff, had ended up working at Family Works, she said.

“That to me is the epitome of an outcome.”

Family Works’ strong connection to its community and the social services sector was also something to be proud of.

Whenever Family Works implemented a project or introduced a new service, the team investigated to see if the broader community could also benefit. Examples include the Transition to Independence booklet, which had been made available to other agencies, and the Overcoming Barriers project which led to the establishment of the multi-agency Southland Migrant Settlement Network.

“We are collaborative, not competitive.”

The staff, the work they were doing and how they pulled together to support each other in tough times, was also a source of pride for Judith.

“They are great people doing a wonderful job in often very trying circumstances, and they are making such a difference in the lives of our families, including our wonderful Big Buddies and foster parents.”

It has not always been easy

Alongside the many highlights, the job had also come with its challenges.

In August last year, Oranga Tamariki (OT) reduced funding for the Family Start programme and disestablished the Young Parents Service (YPS) nationwide impacting Family Works which was contracted by OT to run the Family Start and YPS programmes in Southland.

To address the reduction in funding, most staff had their hours cut and four staff were made redundant.

“That was really hard because we knew we needed to do more to support the community not less.”

It was not the first time Family Works had had to reduce services, but the past two years had been particularly brutal because it was the first time staff had been laid off, she said, rather than staff reduction at times of staff leaving to take up other opportunities.

“Laying off staff was very contrary to what PSS was about. These things do not align with the values of the place or what the place actually wants to do with its people and the services it delivers.”

The impact of the restructure on staff and the service had been very stressful.

“If I hadn’t had this level of stress, I probably would have stayed on for another couple of years. But, on a positive note, it has made me think about what I want for myself too, so that is a good thing.”

The next chapter

Judith had mixed feelings about her impending retirement.

“There is a sense of happiness looking forward to all the things I will have more time for, but I am also feeling sad about going. I have been at Family Works 31 of my 65 years. I feel I’m a part of the place and it’s a part of me. It’s hard to think of not being here regularly.”

Retirement would be full of simple pleasures, like walking the dog, reading, gardening, spending time with family, enjoying the family holiday home in Waikaia and tripping around New Zealand in her caravan.

She would also take some time to consider what else she might want to do personally.

Although Judith is retiring, we are thrilled this is not a final goodbye. She has accepted a casual contract with Presbyterian Support Southland to assist if needed, so we are sure to see her around the office from time to time.



Judith with other members of the Southland Migrant Settlement Network in 2023.



Building safe, strong and connected communities

Our impact in 2024-25.



95%

of adults would recommend the service to others

3,426

people supported by Family Works in 2024/25



95%

of children were satisfied with their relationship with their worker

6486

hours were donated by Big Buddy volunteers



1220

nights of foster care provided



Peacehaven's bright future

There has been much activity on site since the first sod was turned for the Peacehaven redevelopment project in June.

Presbyterian Support Southland chief executive Matt Russell said the project was progressing steadily and was tracking well against the project timeline.

“One of the most visible milestones will be the completion of our show home prior to Christmas.

“This space will offer a glimpse into the modern, comfortable living environments we’re creating for our residents, designed with

care, community, and longevity in mind.”

So far, 22 units have been demolished, the infrastructure works (for water, electricity and sewerage) have been completed along with the earthworks, ready to start preparing the floor slabs for the villas in Stage One A.

Stage One A involves the construction of 12 villas and the show home.

A total of 38 new Occupation Right Agreement (ORA) villas in total, along with a new residents’ lodge are to be built as part of the entire project.

The new two-bedroom architecturally-designed villas comprise of three separate options (Premium Plus, Premium and Standard). They prioritise modern, open-plan layouts and flexible living options, with contemporary finishes and colour schemes. All units are available to purchase under an ORA.

Artist's impression of the Premium Villa interior which includes a flexi room.

“One of the most visible milestones will be the completion of our show home prior to Christmas.”

Project manager Nick Hamlin of Maxis Projects Ltd said the timber framing for the first three duplexes were going up now.

“All going to plan, six villas would be constructed, complete with their roofs, by Christmas.”

The bad weather of late had impacted the project.

The weather had delayed the project in some areas, but the team had adjusted their workflow to ensure the programme remained on track, Nick said.

Other than the weather, there had been no significant issues with the build so far.

The show home build was on track to be completed and ready for the fit out in mid-December.

Enliven Southland supported living and community services manager Juliana Baxter said the team was excited the show home was nearing completion.

“The show home will give potential new residents and their families the opportunity to experience for themselves what the new units in the redevelopment will look and feel like.”

It is anticipated staff would be able to take tours through the show home in the new year.

If you are interested, get in touch with the village team on 03 211 8200.

Show home villa floorplan. It combines aspects from all three villa designs including a ‘flexi room’.

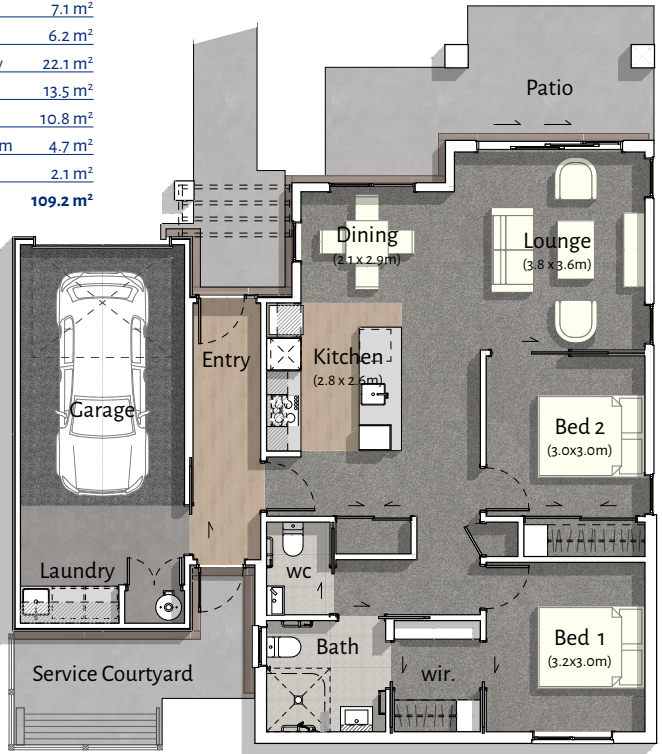
Peacehaven Villas site plan shows the 38 new ORA villas and residents’ lodge.



two bedroom villa

shared ensuite & bathroom, plus wc

Areas	
Lounge	13.5 m ²
Dining	6.1 m ²
Kitchen	7.1 m ²
Entry	6.2 m ²
Garage / Laundry	22.1 m ²
Bedroom 1	13.5 m ²
Bedroom 2	10.8 m ²
Ensuite/Bathroom	4.7 m ²
WC	2.1 m ²
Total Area	109.2 m²





Recycled fashion rocks the runway

Innovation, imagination and community spirit were centre stage when Enliven Southland hosted its avant-garde Wearable Arts Show Enliven Style event at Vickery Court in October.

Held for the first time after a hiatus of several years, residents and staff transformed everyday materials into extraordinary fashion statements to parade on the catwalk.

“This was a wonderful opportunity to work with our residents, our villages and staff across our organisation to host a fun event which encourages self-expression, laughter and creativity,” Enliven Southland director Carol Riddle said.

“Events like this bring us all together to celebrate our people and it makes our facilities not just a place of care but a place of community, creativity and joy.”

Enliven Southland lifestyle team leader Rachel Cade said there was so much joy and excitement on the faces of the residents during the packed-out event.

“Emcee Kane Johnson did a fantastic job in creating a great atmosphere for the event, which created excitement and anticipation for everyone.”

The event attracted 15 entries across all corners of Enliven, from residents in all four care homes and Peacehaven retirement village to care home and central office staff, making it a truly inclusive event, she said.

Members of the winning Enliven PPE Princess entry - Jenny Donnelly (left) and Dulari Jayasinghe.

Entries were judged across five categories: Wearability, Construction, Creativity, Use of Recycled Materials, and the Supreme Winner.

The judging panel, made up of Invercargill City councillor Steve Broad and ILT board member Angela Newell, faced the difficult task of selecting the winners from the wide variety of standout designs.

“Some very clever people created some amazing entries,” Rachel said, “I take my hat off to them.”

“I did not envy the judges in making the difficult decisions around who received awards.”

Entrants Gaylyn McIntyre and Joan Moore of Peacehaven Retirement Village had enjoyed the experience.

Gaylyn was involved in creating the ‘Bloom where you are planted’ outfit, inspired by her experience of moving from her own home into the retirement village.

She said one of the most rewarding parts of participating in the show was seeing the smiles on the faces of the audience.

“You could see the residents really enjoyed it. Their eyes lit up.”

Another highlight for Gaylyn was

how the event brought together residents and staff from across the organisation.

“It gave you that family feeling... that we are one big family.”

Joan was a member of the team which created the ‘Back to the Future’, an entry which had taken them many hours to create.

“I really enjoyed the companionship in making the costume. I enjoyed that part of it very much.”

Rachel said with such strong support shown, the wearable arts show was set to become an annual fixture and a highlight on the Enliven Southland calendar.

Emcee Kane Johnson (left), judges Steve Broad (bottom left) and Angela Newell (back right) with the winning entrants.



“Some very clever people created some amazing entries, I take my hat off to them.”



(from left) Vickery Court cook Moana Thompson, resident Heather Rance and Resthaven care home residents Trish Dynes and Carole Perwick.



Peacehaven care home lifestyle coordinator Tazeeba Ali.

Results:

Supreme winner - Enliven PPE Princess (Central Office team: Jenny Donnelly, Dulari Jayasinghe, Juliana Baxter, Courtenay Spearin and Michelle Ryland)

Highly commended (wearability) - Lolly Sack (Raine (Anna) Villanueva)

Highly commended (construction) - Back to the Future (Peacehaven Village cottage and townhouse residents and SupportLink team)

Highly commended (creative) - The Cat's Whiskers (Iona D3 and D6 residents)

Highly commended (creative) - UFOs: our UnFinished Objects (Peacehaven cottage and townhouse residents)

Highly commended (use of recycled materials) - The Penny Milkmaid (Relda Watson)



Peacehaven cook Lynne McNelly places a dish to cool in the recently-acquired blast chiller.

Meal service supports Southland kaumatua

Hearty, affordable take-home meals for vulnerable members of the community are on the menu again courtesy of Enliven Southland.

Enliven Southland resumed its frozen meal service in September under the fresh, new name, Everyday Eats, following a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Enliven Southland supported living and community services manager Juliana Baxter said, as a charitable trust Enliven Southland was actively looking for ways to provide support services and enhance the quality of life for others in the community.

"In particular, we are working towards being able to provide an holistic model of support around the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of our kaumatua.

"We see providing affordable, nutritious meals is a key part of supporting the physical well-being of our kaumatua and our wider community as a whole."

Enliven Southland food services manager Rochelle Copeland said there was demand in the

"Enliven Southland has always had a really good reputation for good quality, home-cooked meals, so I'm very confident people will really enjoy them."

community for affordable, nutritious and delicious meals, not just for kaumatua, but for people from all walks of life.

"Enliven Southland has always had a really good reputation for good quality, home-cooked meals, so I'm very confident people will really enjoy them."

Reestablishing the frozen meal service had been made possible thanks to a Stewart Family Charitable Trust grant towards the purchase of a blast chiller. The chiller, which can hold 50-60 meals

at a time, cools product down faster than a normal fridge and freezes food without the risk of contamination.

"It is a real asset, and we wouldn't have it without our funders," Rochelle said.

"The people we are hoping to help within the community are vulnerable so we need to ensure our food is as safe as possible, and using this piece of equipment gives me the confidence we can provide not only delicious and nutritious meals, but also safe meals."

The general public can purchase the meals from Peacehaven Village's Elms Café.

The range of hearty, home-cooked favourites include roasts, casseroles, stews and soups. Depending on demand and feedback, this would be tailored in the future and the offering extended.

If there was sufficient demand, Enliven Southland would consider making the meals available for purchase at its other facilities in the future.

EVERYDAY EATS

enliven
— Southland —

Delicious, nutritious meals – just like home

Everyday Eats' hearty and affordable take-home frozen meals are perfect for a quick, easy lunch or a comforting and satisfying dinner.

The range of home-cooked favourites include roasts, casseroles, stews and soups.

Why choose Everyday Eats meals?

- Made with fresh, quality ingredients
- Nutritious and satisfying
- Affordable and convenient
- Perfect for busy days or easy dinners

Available at Peacehaven's Elms Café,
498 Tweed Street, Invercargill

Try them today
and enjoy a taste of home.

Celebrating a century of connection

Invercargill's beloved stately home Anderson House celebrated its' 100th birthday this year.

Anderson House was built by Sir Robert and his wife Lady Elizabeth Anderson in 1925 and is now listed as an Historic Place category 1 building.

Presbyterian Support Southland (PSS) has a proud association with the Anderson family dating back more than 100 years.

Sir Robert was one of the original trust board members for Presbyterian Social Service Association, Southland (now known as PSS) when it was established in 1919. He served on the board from 1919-1922.

Sir Robert's son Hugh gifted shares

worth £6000 towards the building of a social hall and occupational therapy centre at Peacehaven Village. Built in 1962, the social hub was named Anderson Hall in recognition of Hugh's generous support, and it still retains the name today.

Currently residing in Peacehaven are two residents who can also claim a connection to the Anderson family and Anderson Park - care home resident Stanley Fox and retirement village resident Margaret Rule (nee Jenkins).

On leaving school, Stanley got a job as an apprentice gardener for

the Invercargill City Council. As part of his job, he was responsible for pruning the climbing roses on the main path leading from the car park to Anderson House. He worked as a gardener there from 1940 to 1945.

"I loved it there. It was a great noble home."

Margaret's parents Mavis and Jack Jenkins lived in a cottage on the grounds of Anderson House and worked for the Anderson family. Her father was a farmer on the Anderson's farm and her mother nursed Sir Robert.



Historic photo of the Anderson Park grounds.



Peacehaven care home resident Stanley Fox reminisces about his time working at Anderson House.

Margaret lived in the cottage with her parents from her birth in 1938 until her father was called up to serve in the Second World War and Margaret and her mother moved to town.

Although Margaret was a young child when she lived there, she still has fond memories of the home, its rooms and its inhabitants. Decades later, she still possesses some of the presents given to her by the Anderson family, including a wooden trinket box and a children's picture book. She also has a photo of herself around four years of age on her two-wheeler bicycle in front

of the home.

The Anderson family gifted Anderson House to the city in 1951. It was used as a public art gallery before it was closed in 2014 after being deemed an earthquake risk.

After it was closed for eight years while work was done to earthquake strengthen it and a decision was made about its future, the historic home was reopened to the public as a function facility.

SupportLink Invercargill coffee

club members and members of the community were fortunate to have a private tour of the home in September.

It is great to see the public's connection to Anderson House is continuing, and will create fond memories for many more generations to come.

SupportLink Invercargill member Lilly Capil surveys the grounds from an upstairs window in Anderson House.



SupportLink Invercargill members learning about this history of Anderson House as part of a tour of the home.

Together we can make a difference

Our staff work with more than 3300 vulnerable children, whānau/families and older people in Southland and the Whakatipu Basin every year. Every contribution, large or small, helps us help others.

How to donate



Website: pss.org.nz/get-involved



Internet banking: Our bank account number is 02 0924 0545924 00 (BNZ)



Cash/Eftpos: Please visit our Central Office, 183 Spey Street, Invercargill, or any of our Enliven care homes

For more ways to see how you can help through donations or volunteering your time, please visit our website.

Unemployment, poverty, family disputes, mental illness, loneliness, social isolation and social inequity are just some of the issues we see people struggling with every day.

Thank you to all those who have donated towards the work we do. Your donation will help enable us to walk alongside them, letting them know they are not alone and can get the support they need.

Thank you to our major community funders



Presbyterian Support
Southland

Our Services



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