



Christchurch Youth Council

2016

Annual Report



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## **Co-Chairs' Report**

*By Co-Chairs Alice Ridley and Kaitlyn White*

What a year 2016 has been! Through exponential growth as an organisation, new initiatives and also a new employee, 2016 has been a year like no other. We're proud to be ending the year on such a high, reflecting on what we have achieved and where the future may take this organisation.

2016 marked the fulfilment of a general members' platform in Christchurch Youth Council, a dream from 2014. With a small intake in January, we then expanded further and now have a diverse group of 40 young people that are a part of our organisation, including the 16 traditional executive member spots. This dual membership has completely changed the way we work, and also helped us to realise our true potential as an organisation. With such a large group of passionate, committed young people, we can finally pull off large scale events, channel our work into focus groups and make new initiatives happen based off feedback from the public and our members as a whole.

Innovation has allowed us to change up the way we run our events, and also introduce new initiatives. WeSpeak on the Road was adapted and ran successfully, thanks to Sophie Mills and her team, taking on our classic flagship event and making it something new. This type of event now has a firm place in our calendar, and will be run early in 2017. Slice of Youth has become a 'bread and butter' CYC initiative, responding to the needs of members and youth of Christchurch who said they had no chance to network, find out about different opportunities and hear from inspiring people. Working with Ministry of Awesome to make this a reality has been an absolute joy, and it's exciting to see this initiative grow and adapt to the needs

of youth. South Island Youth Connect became a reality, from merely a small meeting of two or three youth councils to a South Island wide event. We're excited to see Youth Voice Canterbury take the lead on this project in 2017, and have been very glad to be a part of its creation. Youth Focus: Local Election Q+A was distant dream at the beginning of this year, but was pulled off by collaborating with some of our good friends at Pacific Youth Leadership and Transformation (PYLAT) and Youth Voice Canterbury (YVC).

Professional development is also at the forefront of our minds, with a generous grant from the Christchurch City Council's 'Strengthening Communities' fund allowing us to provide development opportunities for our executive and members. This will continue to be something offered to our volunteers in 2017, as we wish to reward them for their hard work with opportunities to grow. Submissions have also been a success, particularly when looking towards the Halswell Skate Park submission and Housing Policy submission. We started this year with very few people understanding what the word 'submission' even meant, to now successfully submitting on various topics.

Lastly, employment has changed! It was a sad affair to bid farewell to our coordinator, Laura, who had spent almost two years with us. Her work in her role helped us to achieve so much, and reach new heights as an organisation. We're sad to have seen her go but are very excited for her next journey and wish her all the best! In August, we welcomed Kate on board, who has brought her fresh attitude to the role. Being thrown into the deep end almost immediately to help organise a 'Youth Audit Team Leader' training and assist with our 'Youth Focus' events, she

has taken the challenges in her stride and consistently impressed us with her work. For us as co-chairs, we'd like to reiterate how thankful we are to have the opportunity to be employers. We have now both been employers since the age of 18, and whilst a challenging experience for someone so young, it is an experience that we will constantly look back on for the skills it has taught us. This is what makes CYC so unique, we can have our young people truly lead the organisation in this way. We are heavily indebted to our advisory group of Hannah Dunlop, Stacey Holborough and Penny Prescott for their amazing advice, patience, belief in our running of the organisation. The advisory group gives us the support to remain youth-led in all aspects. So where to next? CYC has the world at its fingers, and we are happy to see it in such great shape. More relationships have been built with decision makers, and we are happy to see such a youth friendly Christchurch City Council that believes in the work we do. We hope to see our Memorandum of Understanding move beyond being merely a document, but a true embodiment of our working relationship. Whether that be through mentoring, more joint projects or a respective spot at each other's tables, it can be achieved. We have also seen



our projects praised for their work towards increasing youth engagement, and are grateful to the Ministry of Youth Development for giving us our full amount in our Youth Fund application to achieve our work plan for the first half of 2017. It is testament to our various funders that they believe in the work we do, and we are incredibly grateful to all of those that generously support us, our work, and especially our employee role. There is also a fantastic new executive coming on board, and general member recruitment will open early next year, and we're excited to see what new ideas this group comes up with.

This marks the end of both of our terms on Christchurch Youth Council, spending four and three years respectively as part of this organisation. It is a bittersweet moment to be leaving an organisation that has helped us become the young women we are today, but we look forward to our new challenges in life and now have a network of friends, colleagues and mentors that we can turn to at any moment.

This saying we have heard quite a lot this year has really resonated with us, and describes why we have continued to work so hard in the face of adversity, we leave it with you as our final goodbye:



He aha te mea nui o te ao –  
What is the most important  
thing in the world?  
He tāngata, he tāngata, he  
tāngata – It is people, it is  
people, it is people.

## **Treasuring Report**

*By Sofie Hampton*

It has been an honour and a privilege to be this year's appointed treasurer. In this role I have been really fortunate to be able to learn new skills, help our organisation grow financially and to be a mentor to other CYC members. I've learnt a lot about myself and feel I have grown and experienced events, trainings and hui's that I wouldn't have been through if it wasn't for this role in CYC.

2016 has been an exciting and productive year for the Christchurch Youth Council financially. Many generous supporters have helped us to develop and reach further out to young people in Otautahi. We have also had a few new supporters this year which we are hugely grateful for, without funders we would not be able to achieve any of our amazing projects nor run a successful youth led organisation.

We rely on grants from a number of different organisations to support us in our work, and to help us grow. We have grown even more this year, with support from our new employee and our grant tracking system which helps us to keep track of all the different funds we have. I would like to give a huge thanks to these organisations in particular who have helped us hugely this past year.

The Rata Foundation	\$10,000 supporting us to pay for our own office space, catering costs for our generous volunteers' fortnightly meetings and stationary.
Canterbury Youth Services	\$750 to support our officers by paying for supervision.
The Todd Foundation	\$22,500 providing us with almost half of our employee to do the day to day running, administrative duties and to support and mentor our young people.
Christchurch City Council	\$25,000 have provided the further funding for the employee's wages.
Christchurch Sunrise Rotary Club	\$450 funding us to buy our own iPad to use with our young community at events such as our face2faces.
Ministry of Youth Development Youth Fund	\$6,000 awarded originally for our WeSpeak event and TedEx Youth (which we were unable to do this year), but was generously allowed to use the \$3000 left over for our Youth Focus Local Election Q+A sessions and Slice of Youth events.
Christchurch City Council	\$5,000 for Youth Council Development training and extra upskilling.

We also had remaining funds carried on from last year by:

The Ministry of Youth Development	\$11,600 for any extra costs such as koha, venues, kai and event costs.
Thankyou Charitable Trust	\$1,000 for passion project costs.

We are incredibly excited and honoured to have had your support and cannot wait to work with you in the future. We are delighted to see that many of these relationships are continuing to stay strong, we have recently been granted further CCC Youth Development funding for our new 2017 team, as well receiving full funding for our proposed projects to MYD's Youth Fund 2017 – Youth Takeover Otautahi.

I will be handing over the reins of treasurer, this is both to give myself time to focus on my real passion wellbeing and maintaining mental health for young people, but also to give another young person the chance to develop some of the valuable skills I have gained through this role.

## General Membership Initiative

*By Kaitlyn White*

Establishing a general membership platform has been a dream for CYC after we became an independent society. It became clear that the people are the reason this organisation can achieve so much, and the more young people involved the more we can achieve. With an executive of 16 young people and substantial commitment required of such members, the idea of general members began to be floated around at the end of 2014. Throughout 2015, this was worked away at, we planned what the role would entail and how this would look for CYC. As part of my passion project in 2015, the first intake of members, approximately 10, were officially recruited at the end of 2015, now meaning the general membership platform has turned one! At the end of 2016, we have a grand total of 25 members, a phenomenal growth for our organisation.

We've stuck to our original person specification for member's applications, and it sums up quite nicely the broad range of people we are looking for:

"Members will be a group of passionate young people who would like to learn more about CYC, be more involved in their local communities and take part in decision making. CYC has created three person specifications for members, as the membership base caters for a variety of young people who have different focus areas and time to commit:

**1. All-round involvement** - For young people who have the time, dedication and commitment to volunteer and be involved in all aspects of CYC.

**2. Focus group based** - For young people who are primarily interested and want to be involved in one or more sectors/initiatives

**3. Social entrepreneurs** - For young people who have projects of their own that will benefit youth, and want to create a mutually beneficial relationship with CYC."

We have seen a great deal of benefits from creating this general membership platform. We have become more transparent as an organisation, no longer allowing only 16 members to experience everything that we do and learn the broad range of skills, but rather opening everything up to all those who wish to be involved, not just those with at least 10 hours per month to commit. We love having members take up opportunities on offer, and also present us with opportunities CYC can support with. We've gained people who fit our three different person

## General Members Perspective:

*-Sasindu Anjula-*

I have been working with the CYC since September as a new member. I am grateful for the opportunities I have been given to take part and get involved with CYC. Before I became a member, I attended a Slice of Youth event organised by CYC and through that I got to know about the organisation.

When I first joined, I was welcomed by everyone and no one hesitated to tell me how the organisation works. With the help of members, it took a short amount of time to get to know what CYC stands for and how it is being run.

CYC consists of unique, driven, and passionate young people from different backgrounds and I am really glad to be part of such organisation. Being part of the CYC has opened great opportunities for myself and the other members. Since becoming a member, I have been given the opportunity to take part in many events organised by CYC such as;

- Local Election Q & A session held at the University of Canterbury
- Local Election Q & A and Mayoral debate held at St John of God Waipuna
- Slice of Youth # 3

In addition to the events stated above, I have attended couple of executive meetings to learn more about the CYC. I also got the opportunity to represent CYC at 'Christchurch Story' workshop.

In addition to being a part of these events, CYC has given me many opportunities to connect with young people and has created a platform got young people to have their say in Christchurch. I am looking forward to the next year to do great things with the CYC

specifications, thus we have an amazing range of young people who are interested in different things, we've become more diverse as an organisation, in all senses of the word, and lastly, it has given so many young people an insight into what the executive looks like, and given them a platform to develop and find their passions before taking a leadership role on the executive.

If it wasn't for our members, various initiatives wouldn't have happened. Take Slice of Youth for example; this idea came from a members meeting, where we asked what was missing for youth in Christchurch. Amongst other ideas, a key theme was that there is no place to find out what is happening in Christchurch, to network and to get involved in projects or organisations. From this, we set up a committee that chatted to Ministry of Awesome (big shout out to Erica Austin for the support!) about running a 'Coffee + Jam' for youth, leading to the creation of Slice of Youth.

Challenges do include the number of members. As we've gained a lot of interest and continue to be asked about the platform, we are aware of the issue of the organisation becoming too large. For this reason, we placed a time commitment on the role, of 2-3 hours per month and members must belong to a focus group. Originally, we advertised that members need not commit to anything, but this seemed much more like a mailing list than a group of volunteers looking to develop and create positive change in Christchurch. We also introduced focus groups towards the end of this year, 'Civics', 'Wellbeing' and 'Environment', as a way for members to be more involved and have projects they can take ownership of. Whilst this is a new initiative, I am confident this is a good move for CYC and will allow us to continue to engage members in their areas of interest. Lastly, attracting a broader range of members is a continuing goal, but we are happy with our progress in attracting people that come from all walks of life and will strive to make this a key priority in the future.

Where to next for members? As I leave the organisation, I am happy to hand the reins of the general member platform to the next person, likely one of the new officers. I believe this is really just the beginning for CYC. Over the past three years, our organisation has rapidly changed but we've taken it in our stride and adapted how we work to suit our needs. The general membership platform continues to be in demand, with more people applying each round. Making small changes such as a proper orientation and focus groups have helped our members to be more involved, but next year's cohort may think of a new, exciting way to make this even better. Ideas such as a members' passion project, or events are a great idea, and I look forward to seeing where this programme goes in 2017.

## General Members Perspective:

*-Shane McInroe-*

I decided to join the Christchurch Youth Council because I am passionate about making our city truly inclusive for all its citizens whatever their ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, social status and beliefs. Before joining CYC I saw an opportunity to support them in promoting diversity, and becoming more diverse specifically expanding to be more inclusive of young people with disabilities.

Since I have joined CYC I have supported the team to form some positive relationships with 'The Cube' and 'Catapult Employment Services'. I also see scope for CYC to form an even closer relationship between People First.

The CYC Facebook page has proved really valuable to me; it is very easy for members and the wider community to know what is going on in the CYC. I am going to suggest People First Christchurch (where I also sit on the board) develops something similar as we have problems with some people accessing minutes and future events.

I appreciate being invited to CYC executive meetings as it is good to see how everything works behind the scenes. I especially like being in the Christchurch City Council headquarters after hours. Although I can't commit to being on the Executive because of my other obligations I will try and find someone else with Learning Disability with the time to participate.

## **Hiring a New Employee**

*By Kaitlyn White*

After almost two years of hard work, our employee Laura Hatwell made the decision to move on from the Christchurch Youth Council. We will miss her and have fond memories of working with her, but wish her all the best and hope she attains all the success she deserves.

This meant that we had a vacancy in the Christchurch Youth Council. This gave many of us our first taste of being on the other side of the hiring process. We formed a focus group and then with the help of our experienced advisory group;

we went through the process of tweaking job specs, advertising, short listing, creating interview questions and interviewing. This process taught us skills which will help us gain confidence and understanding in our own future work, academic and extracurricular applications.

We are happy to introduce our new employee Kate Burgess who started at the Christchurch Youth Council on the 8th August 2016. We are very excited to see her support us in our future endeavours!





## Upskilling Our Team

*By Alice Ridley*

As always, a large part of what CYC does is upskilling our team in order for them to gain professional development and skills they can use in their future careers. Thanks to the Christchurch City Council's 'Strengthening Communities' fund, we've been able to invest in our young people and offer a diverse range of development opportunities, as most activities listed below were funded through this grant. As mentioned in the treasurer's report we also owe our thanks to a multitude of our other funders for their generous support.

- Retreat held in February allowed the youth council to bond, reflect on past events, and be equipped with new skills through utilising Strengths Finder training, understanding our wellbeing and also the role of fitness in looking after ourselves.
- Supporting the running of a Youth Audit Team Leader training, equipping our young people with the skills to be team leaders when auditing spaces and places.
- Hosting a Youth Law training, finding out about our rights in certain circumstances and the law in various areas that affect our work.
- Running a strategic planning session to understand our organisation, set goals for the year, and understand how we would accomplish them.
- Running our first three Slice of Youth events, providing a development opportunity not only to our members but the wider public to network, find out about opportunities and learn new skills and ideas.
- Through attending Youth Voice Canterbury events, we've gained skills such as social media and traditional media, due to the fantastic workshops run.
- Being able to mentor our younger or newer members, provide support within committees and see people grow and take hold of an initiative.
- Gaining the skills of interviewing and professionalism within the scope of employment, where a large number of our members were involved in hiring our new employee.
- Providing assistance to development projects of our members, such as April McLennan's Limitless pilot and Beth Walter's Youth MP project.
- Providing individual opportunities to upskill to our executive members and also some members, such as first aid courses, strengths finder funding, improving driving skills, other specific training courses, Singularity U tickets, and other opportunities that would be out of reach to our volunteers



This barely scratches the surface as to the development we've undergone this year. In 2017, we are ecstatic to have had our funding renewed for development, and hope to offer more opportunities. It is our goal that this funding and the trainings we are able to hold are not only for CYC members, but can potentially be opened up to the wider public. Trainings such as Mental Health training, Treaty training (that we completed late 2015) and many others are on the cards for early 2017.

## Projects

### Youth Focus

*By Kendra Burgess-Naude*

A concern in the Western world is the rate of voter turnout in democratic election; both on local and national scale. This problem is magnified in youth voter turnout which has steadily decreased over time. Many young people do not understand or feel engaged with the system nor do they feel their vote can make a difference. This culture needs to change and we feel that the youth sector in Christchurch has an obligation to promote young people to address their concerns and offer their own solutions. The Christchurch Youth Council with support from other members of the youth sector want to offer such opportunity to develop youth view around voting and engaging with the political system.

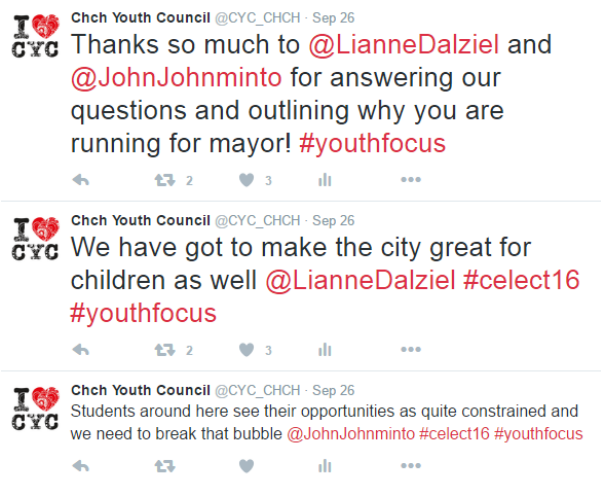
On the 26th and 27th of September, the Christchurch Youth Council with support from Youth Voice Canterbury and PYLAT hosted Youth Focus: Local Election Q&A 2016. The purpose of Youth Focus was to explain, engage and excite youth in the process of voting for the next local government and help young people on their vote by allowing their own questions and concerns to be discussed by the councillor and community board candidates. Prior to the event we conducted a survey for young people to complete this both identified top issues for youth in Christchurch as well as asking young people for specific questions for the candidates.

We were very lucky to have such strong support from different community groups for example the USCA by hosting at the Undercroft at the University of



Canterbury, and St John of God Waipuna. Many candidates running for a position Christchurch City councillor and community board members were very supportive in their attendance and promotion.

We wanted Youth Focus to be an environment that young people felt invited to speak and/ or listen to what plans for the future of Christchurch. The formality of other events for the entire community can often put young people off and we felt it was important to create a friendly event that would support youth engagement. Candidates offered very innovative ideas for youth engagement in their community that we look forward to seeing develop. A really positive aspect of



the Youth Focus was our online presence,

we wanted to reach out to as many young people as possible. To do this, we live streamed both events, as well as live tweeting throughout the events and having media presence at both events. This was hugely successful, with our live streams reaching over 500 views. This set a great precedent for future events, we will be endeavouring to provide this at our future events to reach out more young people.

There were some key themes that came out of the Youth Focus events that we will be keen to ensure are upheld by both us and the new Christchurch City Council representatives:

- Increasing the communication between local government and youth over issues such as the planning or redevelopment process in Christchurch.

- The inclusion of young people in community discussion in some form of representation where not yet established.
- Active participation by the Christchurch City Council on agreements in youth engagement already formed including upholding the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding shared with the Christchurch Youth Council.

The atmosphere of Youth Focus was one of discussion and collaboration that we hope continues in the coming years with the elected members of the council and community boards. There was excitement over youth engagement that could flourish into future events and discussion that will enhance the participation of young people in Christchurch.



## **Youth Powwow**

*By Liam Stretch*

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, the Christchurch City Council and a diverse range of young people from many youth sector groups around the city met. The aim of the meeting was to share the perspective of the young people of Christchurch with the Councillors, including the Mayor Lianne Dalziel. Meeting in the Mayoral lounge at the Hereford Street Chambers the young people undertook

discussion and interactive idea building activities. This one on one interaction between young people of Christchurch and the council resulted in clearer communication between the two parties and amendments to the annual plan were taken on board more effectively.

At this meeting the young people got to know the city councillors, most of whom were there. We discussed the annual plan and particular elements that impacted young people. We then voted on the most important issues. These were; fixing the east, providing positive spaces such as - pools etc., and making people feel safe and included in the city. We set about finding solutions for these. The third topic mentioned was my focus groups. We discussed the need for civics education, interactive spaces and spaces for expressing talent.

Outcomes:

- The council is prepared to provide resources and funding to develop a youth space
- We were listened to - because of the setting we were able to have positive interaction with the decision makers of Christchurch
- It paved the way for future interactions and events throughout 2016.

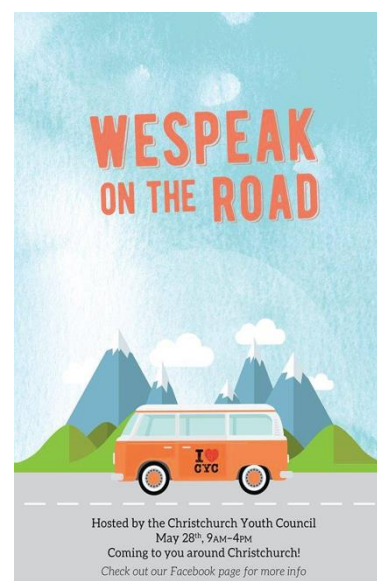
## **WeSpeak on the Road 2016**

*By Sophie Mills*

Christchurch Youth Council was awarded funding by the Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) to run its flagship event 'WeSpeak' in a different format for 2016. In a stark contrast to previous years, where a large scale conference-style event saw students bussed in from across the city to hear from inspirational speakers and take part in workshops, CYC's members settled upon the idea of a road trip where we got to meet the community on their own turf.

We wanted to capture youth voices in a way we'd never tried before, and thus, 'WeSpeak on the Road' was born...

The basic premise of the event was that a core team of six CYC volunteers and one staff member would travel around the city in a minibus for the day, stopping at locations across town to deliver a survey that captured youth opinion, playing games, giving out prizes, creating a 'snapshot' of young people's thoughts on what they knew about the city (Awareness), and what they thought the priorities ought to be (Issues). The 80 participants in our Snapshot Survey came from all across Christchurch, which gave us a broad swathe of opinion from which to gain insights in the first section of the survey



Our planned and impromptu stops for the day:

1. New Brighton Seaside Market and Library
2. Rawhiti Domain Rugby Pitches
3. Hagley Netball Courts
4. Linwood Library
5. Fuse Youth Centre, Sumner



6. Soyo, Riccarton

7. CYC Slice of Youth event at the Epic Building, Central City (filmed by CTV)

Here is a snapshot of the results we collated from our survey participants after WeSpeak. This is the “Issues” sections of the survey. For this section of the survey, the main foci were: what matters to you as a young person and how much does it matter? The question was phrased as: “How important are they to you?” What follows is a breakdown of the priority issues, and a short scan and analysis which aims to offer some ideas and solutions.

Rank	Issue	Popularity by highest % of votes indicating area of most agreement
1	Quality, affordable housing	67.5%
2	More events for young people	63.75%
2	More spaces for young people to hang out	63.75%
3	Free wi-fi	60%
4	Clean up the Heathcote and Avon Rivers	58.75%
5	Make cycling safer	51.25%
6	More performing arts venues	48.75%
7	Better public transport	46.25%

The full analysis of the survey results and how the day went can be found in our report on the Christchurch Youth Council website.

<http://www.chchyouthcouncil.org.nz/uploads/3/8/4/2/38429223/cyc-wespeaksnapshotreport2016.pdf>

Events bring communities together and young people benefit greatly from the ability to socialise, share ideas, stories, take selfies and connect. We would like to extend our warmest thank you to everyone that attended 2016 WeSpeak on the Road and to everyone that helped make our event possible.



## **Slice of Youth**

*By Alice Bevin*

Slice of Youth (SOY) was a new initiative run this year by both executive and general members of CYC. The official SOY committee was; Kaitlyn White, Alice Ridley, Liam Stretch, Aiyana Manson-King, Charmaine Cameron, Alice Bevin, Katie McMahon, and Martina Moroney.

SOY was inspired by the Ministry of Awesome weekly event, Coffee and Jam. Coffee and Jam is a fantastic and very popular initiative but as it is run during school hours, youth who were still at school were not able to attend. With the support of the Ministry of Awesome and the amazing Erica from the Ministry of Awesome (who was extremely helpful), we decided to run Slice of Youth as a bi-monthly event aimed at 12-24 year olds.

We ran SOY with a very similar structure to Coffee and Jam. Each of our three events has included a small networking session with food at the beginning, two or three speakers, and a shout-out session

(this is when people get 20 seconds to stand up and offer their services/let people know if there is something to get involved in). So far, all our events have been held on the EPIC Innovation campus.

For our first event, Slice of Youth 1.0, we ran the event with the theme of Education. We had two fantastic speakers; April McLennan from Limitless and Renea Mackie from Developster. Slice of Youth 2.0 was run with the theme of Sustainability and we had Louis Go from Cultivate Waste and Cashmere High School Sustainability as our speakers. Slice of Youth 3.0 was slightly different from our first two events as we joined with the Hurunui Youth Council to create Slice of Youth 3.0: The Youth Connect Edition. The event kicked off Mental Health Awareness week and we had three speakers- Slam Poetry champion Courtney, Sela from No Limits, and Beth and Isabela from Bounce. In all three of our events we have had a number of Shout-Outs, with people from various organisations across Christchurch coming to promote their projects and share their ideas.

Slice of Youth this year has been a very positive experience! Each of our three events has gone very well, with 40 to 50 people attending each one. Our biggest SOY event was Slice of Youth 3.0 where we had approximately 60 people in attendance. We have had some great feedback on SOY and many people have been keen to attend other Slice of Youth events. For a new event, SOY has been successful in reaching out to the youth of Christchurch on a wide range of topics. The organisation of each Slice of Youth event has also been relatively stress-free. Jobs such as catering, venue organisation, and creating the run sheet have been delegated to various members of the organising committee. We have had some great catering, with pizza, sushi, cupcakes and fresh fruit being main features!

Slice of Youth has been a great event for CYC to have run this year and with the help of MYD's project funding support we are looking forward to continuing to run this event next year!



## **Face 2 Faces**

*By Aiyana Mason-King*

These sessions have been one of our staples at CYC for a while now. It is really important for our CYC members to get out into the community and talk to young people. It validates our representation of young people and ensures we know what is going on for young people everywhere in Christchurch, not just our own backyard.

This year we wanted to make Face 2 Faces relevant to current happenings around the city. We think we have achieved our goal, for example we asked for feedback from young people which fed into our draft housing policy submission and the Halswell Skate Park submission.

Next year we are aiming to target events that a more diverse range of young people will attend, for example the Buskers Festival and LYFE festival.



## **Christchurch Youth Council Retreat**

*By Katie McMahon and Isla Evison*

At the beginning of the year was our yearly retreat, in which the executive members of the Christchurch Youth Council came together to kick off a new year within CYC

Both returning members and new executive's members were encouraged to come along for the day and enjoy a number of teambuilding and planning sessions. The goal in doing this was to bring the new team together whilst we were able to enjoy a number of outdoor recreational activities.

The event took place at the Halswell quarry on a beautiful hot day. There was plenty of food supplied to give all members energy to get through the day's activities. One of the first things the team did was a group yoga session, taken by 'Yoga by Kotte'. Everyone particularly enjoyed this session, and for many it was their first yoga experience.

A key part of the retreat was our focus towards Strengths Finder. Strengths Finder allows us to identify what each of our strongest characteristics are and how we can use them to be an asset to us. After completing the Strengths Finder quiz online and individually in our own time, Rochelle Faimalo from the Hurunui District Council, who is also a Strengths Coach, joined us on our retreat to help us gain a deeper understanding of our strengths and how we could use them being young people in Christchurch. We began with a few activities that resurfaced our memories of Christchurch pre-earthquakes and the subsequent result of the event. This activity was great helped us bond together and share our experiences. This was then followed by a discussion specifically based around our individual strengths. As each member shared what they're top five strengths were as a result of the quiz we took prior, we were able to acknowledge what strengths we had in common with others and also how diverse our council is. Furthermore, it allowed us to see how each strength could make us more productive and focused in life and our work with CYC. We finished off the session with some topics and real life scenarios we may face and options of how we could deal with them. It was a great way to understand how others think and prefer to do things within the council based on where they were on the continuum. We were able to go away from the whole session not only knowing others better but also ourselves and how we can use our strengths in both a personal and professional environment.

The final activity of the day involved a 1-hour session with a personal trainer. The workout was targeted at both fitness and team building. This was a tough, yet enjoyable, end to the retreat with everybody taking part. Unfortunately, the heat had not yet subsided, however the team managed to battle through until the end of the day, with the energy from a pizza lunch.

The retreat was an extremely valuable event for the Christchurch Youth Council as it allowed a time for new and returning members to connect and plan for the year ahead. It was a great and innovative way to start the year for the council and prepare us for a busy 12 months ahead





## **Submissions**

*By Vinura Abeysekera*

The Christchurch Youth Council acquires the information necessary for submissions depending on the context of their requirements. Submissions are often approached by conducting surveys or any other apt mode of data collation in order to create an appropriate document to submit regarding a particular event, scenario, topic or issue that the youth of Christchurch have primary concerns and opinions about. After the data has been retrieved the information gathered is processed into a written document depending on the responses received by participants of surveys or other forms of queries. The documents eventually provision out recommendations depending on the core crux of the information gathered in order to portray a broad and holistic array of opinions that permeate the youth community of Christchurch on varying topics and issues.

Given below are summarisations of the submissions conducted and provided by the Christchurch Youth Council for 2016.

- **Submission to Youth Voice Canterbury – Moving Forward 2016:**  
A poll was conducted on how best the Youth Voice Canterbury could move forward with adopting a working model for the future functionality of their organization. Of the three models provided as options the majority opted for the first which was a Board Model, pertaining to the characteristics of an organization run for young people by young people and allowing for greater openness and flexibility in communicating with the youth populous.
- **Submission on Halswell Skate and Recreation Park – Site Selection**  
The survey conducted on how participants viewed what would be the most suitable site for the Skate and Recreation Park resulted in a majority favouring the Halswell Domain, due to greater accessibility to communal facilities as well as negating the requirement for further demolishment of infrastructure to make way for such a venue. Therein it was concluded that Halswell would be the perfect venue for such an outpost due to the advantages posed by its location and thereby ease of access to the majority of the youth towards whom the survey was constructed towards.
- **Submission on the Christchurch City Council Annual Plan 2016/17**  
The main focus of the information gathered from a survey conducted on how youth perceived the essence of City Councils annual plan revealed that the youth held an important take on regarding what kind of reciprocity existed between phases of the Rebuild in the city; access to basic necessities such as transport, water and how resilient communities could be developed in the face of adversity and harsh circumstance were also of pivotal concern for the youth populous. Concerns over procedures adopted on environmental standards were also addressed and integrated into the data retrieval process of this submission.
- **Submission on Christchurch City Council Draft Housing Policy**  
The information acquired via a survey revealed primary concerns of the youth populous to centre on the accessibility and affordability of housing for different socioeconomic groups of people within the citywide community. Issues such as youth homelessness in conjunction with the functionality of community housing was addressed in the series of responses that were acquired. The need to factor in location and its relation to affordability when considering the capacities of different social groups was a primary concern which received much coverage in the responses and information gathered.

The above submissions were carefully encapsulated within the format of written documents which clearly outlined the procedure and mechanisms of retrieving information on the opinions and voices of the youth sector of Christchurch. It can be seen that surveys were our most effectively used source of information gathering as it allowed for participants to provide personalised answers to pre-planned enquiries on the topic at hand.

## Stakeholders Relationships

### Youth Voice Canterbury

*By Kaitlyn White, Tei Driver and Liam Stretch*

Christchurch Youth Council has been a part of Youth Voice Canterbury since its inception, and we've benefitted so much through this relationship. We recognise that there is power in numbers, and it is often through collaboration that we can reach more people and make a more significant impact. Up until 2016, we've learned so much from Youth Connects with local youth participation groups. Organising the last Youth Connect in December 2015 gave us the opportunity to look at 'Life after Youth Council' and how to transfer our skills into the workplace, as well as see the sites of the Arts Centre restoration and hear from CERA about its developments.

However, 2016 has been a huge year for Youth Voice Canterbury, and we've been there for the ride! Here's a quick snapshot of what we've been doing together.

- Youth Friendly Spaces and Places Training

A new tool we've been looking to equip our people with is youth audit team leader skills. As an in demand practice, various spaces around the city are seeking to be audited by young people to see if they are suitable for youth in late August, we were stoked to partner with Youth Voice Canterbury to bring the first ever 'Youth Spaces Audit Team Leader training'.

Through our funding, we were able to make this training free for its participants, who got the chance to learn the various skills involved with the role. This was later followed by a presentation to key stakeholders at the Christchurch City Council about the use of such tools in their businesses, receiving a great reception.

We hope to continue to be a part of such trainings, and hope for further smaller youth audit trainings to be offered for youth to tick off various tasks to meet the requirements to be a team leader.

- Youth Powwow

While we've covered this earlier in the report, we had to mention it here! Youth Powwow was a great chance to do what CYC do best; connect our voice to the voices of decision makers. Though rather impromptu, this meeting in the comfortable setting of the Mayor's Lounge at Council was an amazing opportunity for CYC and all young people involved. The event full of fun chats, pizza, laughter, and of course very intense discussions about what the youth from all parts of the city need to make our city great. The hui was hosted by Tayla Reece and Josiah Tualamali'i, their perspective and reach from a Youth Voice Canterbury and PYLAT standpoint really brought us all together; young and old, east and west, to think of our options.

The discussion was mostly centred around the Christchurch City Council Annual Plan youth. This day allowed us to discuss, evaluate and weigh up what was truly imperative for the future of Christchurch. The top of which included culture, wellbeing, transport, parks and recreation and other things, actually were a starting point when and what we thought were the most important issues for we were creating our Youth Focus survey for around local election time.

It was great in helping getting the ball rolling for CYC especially in what we did later in the year, strengthening our relationship with the Christchurch City Council and validating the importance of our voice for future initiatives.

- Youth Focus Local Election Q+A

When CYC first came up with the idea of a local election event, we never thought we would have had capacity to make it a reality. This event hit at a time where many people are busy with school/university and other things in life. However, we managed to make a small, dedicated team of people to make this event a reality. Through working closely with Youth Voice Canterbury and PYLAT, we were able to bring more young people together for the Q+A session, reach out to more communities, ask the difficult questions and have an amazing group of MCs for both evenings!

Gaining expertise from YVC and PYLAT for this event has now equipped CYC members with the skills to run such events on their own, and never feel daunted by a large task at hand. We truly came together for this event to make it a reality, and we're so happy with the result.



- Canterbury Youth Awards

Woah! What a night! Youth Voice Canterbury ran this amazing celebration in June that celebrated the success of youth in Canterbury. As this was a night dedicated to young people, only our previous employee, Laura, was a part of the organising team, but we are incredibly thankful for the work of Youth Voice Canterbury and their team in organising this event. Volunteers are too often forgotten, and their contribution goes unrecognised. It is important to have opportunities such as this to celebrate the work we have done, and feel energised to set out into the community and do more good.

We were incredibly proud of our own Aiyana Manson-King, who at only age 15 was a runner-up for the Community Action Award! Her blurb reads the following: "Aiyana volunteers at Chomondeley, giving back to children in need and being a positive role model in their lives. Aiyana is also an exec member of the Christchurch Youth Council identifying needs in the community and striving to represent those communities. "

It was also the debut of Beth Walters one of our general members as well as Youth MP for Christchurch East, project on "East Side Youth". This was an incredibly moving experience, and we were happy to help support Beth in a small way with her project. To see the faces of key decision makers truly listening to young people who feel forgotten signified a change in Christchurch, and Beth has led the way for this change. We can't wait to see what she achieves next, and we're in awe of her work.



- YVC's Future: Submission Process

We're really glad to have been a part of the talks with YVC for a while about their change in structure, and we're happy to hear they are going for Option 1: Creating a youth management team or board.

CYC is looking forward to this change being implemented, as it is amazing to see what YVC has achieved with very little man-power dedicated to the organisation alone. Through having this dedicated team of young people volunteering and leading YVC, the organisation will reach new heights and be able to support youth councils and participation groups in more ways than before. Events such as South Island Youth Connect and Canterbury Youth Awards will continue to happen, and we're excited to be a member of the work stream.

Perhaps one day, we think YVC can become independent, but after our own experiences, we appreciate the need for small steps to be taken and more structure before making a drastic change.

- Slice of Youth: Youth Connect edition

Although Slice of Youth is a CYC initiative, we teamed up with Hurunui Youth Council and Youth Voice Canterbury to bring a special edition event for Mental Health Awareness Week.

With a focus on wellbeing and caring for yourself, we heard from a variety of speakers that highlighted ways in which to care for yourself, and also shared their experiences. As such a taboo subject, it was important to hold this event together and spread the word that it is okay to talk about mental illness, and it's okay to ask for help.



## **Department of Conservation**

*By Bethany Baker*

This year the Christchurch Youth Council has developed a blossoming relationship with the Department of Conservation (DOC). This was formed through the Growing Voices forum held early this year, which I had the pleasure of being in organising. Proceeding this event, I was additionally involved in organising Growing Voices: Let's Talk Aoraki. This was a workshop series centred on the upcoming ten-year review for the Aoraki/Mount Cook Management Plan. If successful, the template has the possibility of being adopted nationwide for future national park reviews.

Working alongside the Department of Conservation a team of young people and I ensured that the workshop series were appropriately designed to be youth friendly and provide authentic support for the youth voice. The three-part workshop series consisted of approximately 40 individuals. This consisted of the first one-day event to establish and provide fundamental information on the plan. Knowledge and advice gained from this workshop was then utilised to orchestrate the second workshop which was an overnight stay held at Koukourarata Marae. Fundamentally, this workshop provided presentations from experts from a wide range of requested fields. The last workshop was appropriately held at Aoraki/Mount Cook and this was focussed entirely on creating a youth vision statement and a submission on the management plan.

An overwhelming amount of positive feedback was received and this submission will be presented to the Aoraki Conservation Board to get the youth voice heard. The next steps consist of enhancing CYC's relationship with DOC in the coming year and having members of DOC attend some of our executive meetings to examine what a future relationship could involve.

## **Environment Canterbury**

*By Bethany Baker*

The Christchurch Youth Council has worked extensively with Environment Canterbury throughout the duration of this year. I have had the opportunity to work with the youth engagement team and we have been facilitating and helping to organise a range of events. One of the

first events that CYC was involved in included a Growing Voices forum held early in the year. The aim of this forum was to help grow the youth voice and form connections with individuals that are interested in sustainability. This was a partnership forum run by the Department of Conservation and Environment Canterbury. This successful event held at Rapaki Marae and consisted of a wide range of speakers and workshops.

Another example of an event included speaking at a water zone committee to provide information of how to increase youth engagement. The Christchurch Youth Council was also invited to the Environment Canterbury building launch earlier this year. Multiple Christchurch Youth Council executive members are additionally part of the Youth Reference Group for Sustainable Transport (YRGST). This initiative was formed by Hannah Dunlop from Environment Canterbury and co-chaired by her and myself. This group was formed after Youth Voice Canterbury vitally recognised a need for a support system for youth wanting to get their voices heard on issues surrounding transport. This initially began informally which consists of approximately 20 youth from a diverse range of backgrounds. This group then presented a formal submission to the Joint Committee for Public Transport to effectively apply to hold seats on the Public Transport Advisory Group. This application has been successful and as a result YRGST is now a recognised member of this group and is continuing development with regular meetings as necessary. YRGST recently



had our work so far highlighted on a Metro News segment. Future steps involve the continuation of this group and increasing the sphere of influence in order to help support the youth voice in transport issues.

Next year there are plans for continuing to work alongside in cohesion with Environment Canterbury including but not limited to the organising of Turning the Tables, a Youth Summit and extending the reach of YRGST.

### **Christchurch City Council**

*By Kaitlyn White*

We have mentioned throughout this document our many opportunities to work closely with the Christchurch City Council. Unlike many youth councils throughout the country we are unique in the fact that we are independent from the Christchurch City Council. This is a real benefit for us as we have the ability to take on a lot more leadership and autonomy as well as being able to challenge the City Council via submission, but it also means that we have to work even more to ensure that we have a strong relationship with council members and that our voice is heard by decision makers.

Throughout the year we have worked hard to strengthen this relationship, looking back to our MOU frequently. We have been really fortunate in the relationships that we have made, and opportunities we have been given by the Christchurch City Council staff, councillors, community board members, and Mayor.

A few highlights of our year were the Youth Powwow, Youth Focus Q+A and the setting up of the Youth Community Board for the Spreydon-Heathcote ward (which many of our members had the chance to sit on). All of these examples have empowered us and given us the feeling that our voices are wanted and that

decision makers will endeavour to take us seriously.

We look forward to continue this relationship, with scope to better it with turning the tables, further youth community boards and many other exciting plans for 2017. We are really excited to see that the Christchurch City Council is taking on board the youth sectors recommendations of engagement in the upcoming Youth Voice's event and hope that this way of thinking is more and more prevalent in Otautahi.



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*



## **Looking to 2017**

We have been energised by the huge achievements of 2016, and are looking forward to 2017 with great anticipation. With two thirds of the executive changing hands we will face a challenge to ensure that we are not losing vital knowledge and skills. Many of the 2016 executive have said that they do not wish to leave the organisation completely, and are happy to keep supporting new CYC members.

With fresh faces bring fresh ideas, initiatives and diversity, we are excited to see how our new members will work together and what new initiatives will be thought up.

2017 is already looking to be a promising year MYD has funded us for a large three-part project for the first half of 2017. This will focus on engagement, participation and furthering our networking, public speaking, event management and leadership skills. As well as this the Christchurch City Council has funded us to further our personal development and training. We will be focusing on challenging ourselves to pass on any knowledge that we acquire in these training sessions by learning how to hold workshops and train other young people.

We are very excited to further strengthen our general membership level. As we move out of the infancy stage of this project, we are hoping to give members more opportunity to be involved in shaping the organisation and the decision making process. As a part of the general membership level, we will be working further to develop

our three focus groups; Environment, Wellbeing and Civics. We are hoping that this allows more members to get involved in the things that they are really passionate about and hopefully to take on greater leadership within these focus groups.

Next year we are looking to have another push on political engagement, with the general election steadily marching toward us, it is our dream to get more and more young people passionate about being politically informed and engaged. We have identified a need for further understanding of the political system and political debate, and we hope to be able to support people with this.

We feel that we have made huge progress with the strong relationships we have made, we see Youth Voice Canterbury as a great catalyst for this and wish to thank everyone involved in YVC. We hope that our relationships with ECAN, DOC and CCC can grow even more and are excited to work collaboratively next year.

Finally, we would like to recognise those members of the Christchurch Youth Council who are moving on in 2017, we are indebted to you all. We know that we are set up for a fantastic year next year because of the incredibly hard work you have put in to make CYC the organisation it is today, thank you for all you have done. Bring on 2017!

