

New Plymouth Site Visit

First New Zealand Safe Community site visit since 1999.

A two day site visit was held in New Plymouth District on 12 and 13 September, 2005. New Plymouth District is situated on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand and has a population of around 67,000 people.



Like many communities in New Zealand and around the world, New Plymouth District endeavours to promote safety and prevent injuries to all who live and work in, or visit the area. They have adopted the vision of 'a safe community without the burden of injury' and aim to achieve this through the collaborative efforts of agencies, organisations, community groups, employers and individuals.

Utilising a theme of collaborative leadership their comprehensive application resulted in a team of people engaging with local partners to review their application. It was evident that this community is working successfully to achieve the six indicators for Safe Community Designation.

Highlights of the site visit included a visit to Tui Ora Ltd to review Maori (indigenous people of NZ) initiatives.

Members of new Plymouth injury safe (NPis) team with site visit team members including Dr Carolyn Coggan, Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand and Mr Henk Harberts, Australian Safe Communities Foundation.



The local authority hosted the teams and partners reaffirmed their support to ensure that the efforts of NPIS (New Plymouth Injury Safe) coalition are sustainable and discussed future opportunities. The interface between work and community was highlighted by a visit to the Taranaki Health Safety and Environment Centre established by local industry stakeholders.

The first day concluded with a presentation at the Inglewood Rugby Football Club and emphasised youth alcohol initiatives.



The next day, the team participated in some of the Positive Ageing initiatives, including modified Tai Chi for falls prevention. We also reviewed a wide range of home and child safety initiatives. The chair of the NPiS coalition is Dr Alan Parsons, a strong advocate for improving child safety. It was therefore not surprising that many excellent child safety initiatives are being implemented throughout the region.

As in many communities around the world, in New Plymouth the Fire Service is a key partner. Their presentation on the Waitara initiative consisted of home safety checks, raising the need for safety promotion, and the correct installation of smoke alarms. This initiative was a winner in the inaugural New Zealand Community Safety Awards.

Members from New Plymouth accepting their awards at the NZ Inaugural Safety Awards



New Plymouth provides a unique example of collaborative efforts by a small but highly passionate group of people representing all the key organisations/agencies in the area. This team works respectively using the best available evidence to improve safety for all.