

Strengthening Community Through Dedicated Coordination

While we are working towards a long-term goal of a community-led model, we are not there yet. Ongoing coordination remains essential to reaching that milestone. A clear marker of progress was the formation of Neighbourhood Support Eastern Southland's first official street group—a grassroots initiative sparked by a proactive member and nurtured by our Local Area Coordinator (LAC).

What began as a single household joining our network quickly grew into something more. After receiving a standard welcome pack, the member requested additional materials to share with nearby households. With support from our LAC, they distributed flyers and organised a casual street BBQ in a local park. The event brought neighbours together in a relaxed and inclusive environment, fostering connection and shared purpose.

The outcome? A new street group emerged, with the original member naturally stepping into a leadership role as the street contact. Since forming, the group has already shown its value—mobilising to help locate a missing pet and creating a sense of immediate, neighbourly support.

This is the kind of momentum we aim to build across the region. But while it demonstrates the power of community-led action, the continued presence of our LAC is crucial. The coordinator not only provided the tools and encouragement to help this group take root but also supported the new street contact in attending a Seniors First Aid course—further strengthening local resilience and leadership capability.

A Growing Appetite for Engagement

We're seeing a notable increase in volunteerism among our members. More households are stepping forward to help with flyer drops, support local events, and take active roles in their neighbourhoods. These contributions signal a growing appetite for local engagement—but also reinforce the need for dedicated coordination to sustain and connect these efforts.

Our custom-built database plays a critical role in enabling this work. Each member household has an individual profile they can manage directly, helping us maintain up-to-date records and drive active engagement. This secure system also provides valuable data insights—allowing us to generate detailed reports, track key metrics, and make data-informed decisions in real time.

One of our primary performance indicators is membership growth. In the first half of 2025 alone, our LAC drove a **46% increase in household membership**—a clear reflection of the impact of local coordination and a rising sense of community connection.

Real Stories, Real Impact

Beyond the numbers, we continue to receive powerful anecdotal evidence of engagement. Members have gone out of their way to join our network—completing sign-up forms by hand, dropping them off at our Centre, or mailing them in. These small, intentional acts speak volumes about the trust and value they place in Neighbourhood Support.

We also integrate insights from the **weekly Police Headquarters Intelligence Report**, giving us real-time visibility into emerging crime trends across our hapori (community). These reports allow us to tailor safety messaging, provide correct reporting channels, and offer support to residents in affected areas—ensuring members feel informed, protected, and connected. When patterns arise, our LAC can respond quickly with targeted outreach to strengthen local preparedness.

A Proven, Integrated Approach

By blending quantitative data, personal stories, and frontline intelligence, we've developed a responsive and resilient model that reflects the needs and strengths of our communities. With sustained coordination, this model will continue to grow—laying the foundation for a future where more neighbourhoods are empowered to lead, support, and look out for one another.

This is the essence of Neighbourhood Support. And with continued investment, we can keep building safer, stronger communities across Eastern Southland.