

A snapshot of what Neighbourhood Support has achieved to date. With dedicated funding, Neighbourhood Support Eastern Southland was empowered to significantly expand its reach and deepen its engagement. Our membership base grew as we connected directly with residents—door knocking, flyer dropping, hosting events, and strengthening ties with stakeholder agencies.

A cornerstone of our work was implementing and maintaining a new CRM platform—part of a nationwide trial—allowing us to deliver timely, targeted messages based on weekly police intelligence reports. This meant we could alert specific areas to recent crimes, share safety tips, distribute emergency updates, and better support our most vulnerable neighbours.

But numbers alone don't tell the full story. The real impact is seen in the lives touched.

Supporting Vulnerable Residents in Matura

When two elderly residents in Matura were repeatedly targeted by youth crime—rock throwing, disturbances under their porches, and persistent harassment—they felt unsafe in their own homes. They were too afraid to report incidents, fearing retaliation or believing they were “wasting police time.”

The Local Area Coordinator (LAC) stepped in. Working alongside the Matura Community Board and local police, we secured funding for CCTV cameras for both households and installed Neighbourhood Support signage to act as a deterrent. The residents were linked directly to local police, who were briefed and committed to providing ongoing support. Today, those residents feel safer, more connected, and empowered to speak up.

Scam Awareness – Education That Saves

In partnership with ANZ Bank Gore, IR Southland, Heartland Services, Ready for Living, Police, and FENZ, we hosted multiple **Scam Awareness Seminars**, each drawing more than 50 participants. We shared real stories, insights from the *Little Black Book of Scams*, and expert advice on how to stay safe online.

The feedback was overwhelming. Many attendees had either been scammed or knew someone who had. Since the sessions, we've received follow-up calls from residents seeking advice about suspicious emails—calls that may have prevented devastating financial loss. These seminars didn't just educate—they built trust and established Neighbourhood Support as a go-to source for protection and guidance.

Fire Safety Outreach

Following a series of house fires in the region, our LAC worked with FENZ to distribute essential safety information to neighbours—how to create an escape plan, and how to access free fire safety visits. The response was strong, with many households signing up for assessments and taking proactive steps to protect their families and homes.

Building Safety Through Hui

When concerns arose in Matura about low-level crime, vandalism, and emergency preparedness, Neighbourhood Support helped convene a community hui. In partnership with Police, the Matura Community Board, and Council, we brought residents together to raise their voices, ask questions, and be heard. It was a moment of true connection—building shared understanding and a sense of collective responsibility.

A Trusted Emergency Response Partner

During the September 2023 flooding event, our formalised partnership with Gore District Council (GDC) was activated. We stood ready to support their emergency response, using our CRM to distribute real-time communications, conduct welfare checks, and identify vulnerable households. This partnership has since strengthened, with GDC's General Manager of Critical Services, Jason Domigan, affirming our ongoing role:

"Your efforts in building resilient, connected communities are vital... Your ability to mobilize community networks, supported by your in-depth local knowledge, complements the Council's own resources and capabilities... This collaboration ensures we are collectively better equipped to protect our most vulnerable residents."

This is what Neighbourhood Support is about. Our work is not just about crime prevention—it's about resilience, connection, and ensuring no one in our rohe is left behind. The support from this grant helped us make a tangible difference, and with continued funding, we can expand on this vital mahi for the wellbeing of our communities.