



**Volunteers:** Beca staff working on Habitat for Humanity's Cannons Creek house: from left, Debbie Lai, Rosie Hixon, Shona Cvetkovic, Sabrina Wakeman, Sham Kalsi, Royden Tsui. Front, Doyle D'Mello.

# Habitat house project a perfect fit for Beca staff

**B**ECA has a lot of engineers, while Habitat for Humanity builds simple, decent homes for people at an affordable price. So it made a lot of sense to match both sides up in a house building project.

The regional manager of Beca in Wellington, Mike Kerr, says the Wellington office had been looking to ramp up its community engagement and do something practical.

"Mainzeal suggested we talk to Judy Kerr of Volunteer Wellington as they lined up organisations that wanted to contribute time and energy with groups who needed it."

Mr Kerr says because Beca has about 250 staff in Wellington, Volunteer Wellington helped find a range of projects a number of teams could work on.

"We picked a few events and staff took an afternoon to do a variety of things ranging from community gardening, reading

to the blind, a youth biking facility for a trust in Porirua and Riding for the Disabled.

"The one that really seemed to attract the enthusiasm of a bunch of our engineers was Habitat for Humanity. We did work with them two or three times during the year and we've talked about working more often with them this year."

He says Beca's staff particularly enjoy the building because they got to apply their skills in a practical way.

"We've got surveyors and engineers so it's right up their alley."

He also says being part of a company that is active in the community is also good for staff, as they enjoy working for a socially responsible organisation.

Gillian Burns, the resource development manager for Habitat for Humanity in the lower North Island, says Beca's

involvement has been great for the group.

While having extra hands to work on the piles and the cladding on Habitat's Cannons Creek property was useful, she says strong links have been forged that will see Beca provide professional services.

"Beca will be doing engineer and surveying work for us, which is extremely useful. They want to be partners on an ongoing basis to give their staff the chance to both volunteer and to provide services, which we would normally have to pay a lot of money for. So it is hugely beneficial and gratefully received by us!"

She says having Beca's staff doing building work is particularly apt, given their day jobs and what her group does.

"Habitat is a good place for team building – you really get to build, while you're building your team."