



Abbeyfield New Zealand Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABBEEFIELD NZ APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Chairman and Board of Abbeyfield NZ are pleased to announce the appointment of Susan Jenkins to the position of Executive Officer, replacing the General Secretary Mr Chris Armstrong who will retire on 31 March. Commenting on the appointment Mr Smale says:

“As an experienced professional with a comprehensive background in value-led organisations, Susan offers Abbeyfield a strong set of competencies, a clear values orientation and commitment to making a difference.”

Abbeyfield New Zealand is an NGO providing affordable social housing for older people, offering companionship, security and independence. Twelve Abbeyfield houses supporting 130 residents are operated by volunteers in 15 Abbeyfield Societies affiliated to the national body.

“I am delighted to have this opportunity to contribute to the continued development of Abbeyfield’s valuable mission for older New Zealanders,” says Ms Jenkins.

“With elder loneliness in the spotlight and the number of people over 65 set to more than double in the next 25 years, there is considerable scope for Abbeyfield’s unique approach to respond to the needs of many more communities in New Zealand.”

Chairman Peter Smale paid tribute to long serving General Secretary Chris Armstrong:

“We are extremely grateful to Chris for his highly skilled and committed service to Abbeyfield over the past 12 years. He leaves a legacy of a healthy organisation well-positioned to meet the needs of the growing numbers of older New Zealanders seeking companionable and independent accommodation. We wish Chris all the very best for his retirement.”

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Notes:

1. The Abbeyfield social housing model provides affordable rental housing and board for independent older people. Typically 10 – 14 residents live in an Abbeyfield house, each living in a studio-style room and ensuite, and sharing living areas. A housekeeper provides two meals a day and general housekeeping support. This proven model offers companionship, support, and security for residents, and is made possible through the work of volunteer management committees, in the form of local societies.
The Abbeyfield model brings together local volunteer effort with a range of funding, often sourced locally through trusts, gifts in kind, and in the past, government funds.
2. Houses have been established in Nelson (1994), Masterton (1996), Whangarei (2001), Motueka (2002), Hamilton (2005), Auckland and Golden Bay (2006), Dunedin and Wakatipu (2007) Palmerston North (2008), a second house in Nelson (2010), and Christchurch (2015). Further projects are in development in Ellesmere, Wanganui, Greymouth, Kapiti, and a second house in Wakatipu.
3. Abbeyfield is a voluntary effort by people of goodwill to assist older people to achieve a fulfilling way of life. Abbeyfield New Zealand joined Abbeyfield International in 1992 and remains committed to the core ideals first articulated by founder, Richard Carr-Gomm:
 - a. That many older people suffer from loneliness and insecurity;
 - b. The older people have an important role to play in the lives of their families, friends and communities
 - c. Within each community, individuals can work together to help older people have a secure and comfortable life with the companionship of a small household.

For more information please contact:

- Peter Smale 027 243 5873 or 03 52 89049 or
- Susan Jenkins, office@abbeyfield.org.nz 021 079 5097 or 03 546 6459