



SafeGrowth®



SafeGrowth for Christchurch



SafeGrowth®

Inspire neighbourhood futures

“Most crime and community issues are best tackled within the neighbourhood by coherent groups working with engaged and trained change agents.”

Gregory Saville

SafeGrowth's vision

SafeGrowth's vision is to create cities where every neighbourhood is safe, inclusive, vibrant, resilient and connected.

People live in connected, cohesive neighbourhoods where they enjoy reduced crime, greater feelings of safety and improved wellbeing. Neighbours know each other and provide practical care for each other in times of need. Children play safely in the streets. Social connections are strong and social isolation reduced. Diversity is supported and celebrated. People are empowered to join in local decision making and community building processes, and have pride in the improvements that they have contributed to. A majority of residents feel a sense of belonging and ownership of their neighbourhood.

Residents engage with each other and provide mutual support. People act together to achieve their own neighbourhood goals and to resolve neighbourhood issues and challenges. Those who are unable or unwilling to engage with others in the neighbourhood are known and respected, confident that there are options for engagement and support available to them when they need or choose these.

Every neighbourhood has its own democratically elected SafeGrowth Panel made up of residents who respond to other residents' aspirations and needs. Panels engage with residents, stakeholders, subject matter experts, other Panels and the wider community. The Panel has the skills to create meaningful, positive and ongoing change in the neighbourhood, and is supported by city stakeholders and experts.

The Panel creates a Neighbourhood Plan and renews it every year to ensure that aspirations and issues are a current and accurate reflection of residents' priorities. The Panel also seeks funding for larger initiatives.

Every neighbourhood is connected to a city-wide network of SafeGrowth Panels. The Panels meet with each other regularly to share learnings, best practice and data.

An annual celebration takes place, where outstanding work is awarded and the community learns how to build safer neighbourhoods in the future through seeing examples of best practice highlighted and acknowledged.

What is SafeGrowth?

SafeGrowth is a structured and adaptable programme for building community capacity at the neighbourhood level, a concept referred to in the academic literature as *collective efficacy*. It does this by creating and sustaining community action, community decision making and community cohesion. Importantly, SafeGrowth delivers positive change BY and WITH residents, not 'to' or 'for' them.

SafeGrowth is based on human-scale urban development and neighbourhood planning consistent with the Smart Growth planning approach for vibrant, healthy and resilient cities.

SafeGrowth is conceived within a city planning framework, represented in the chart below:



Community development, safety and health programmes are often carried out by skilled practitioners and agencies, and are delivered *to* or *for* a community. The SafeGrowth method differs by embedding community development, wellbeing and safety skills within the community. It does this by working directly with residents, neighbourhood associations, groups, and local change agents. This approach ensures higher levels of neighbourhood social cohesion and community empowerment, which in turn sustain community building and safety strategies in the long term.

SafeGrowth recognises the critical relationship between the development of the social and physical environments. CPTED is utilised to create complementary improvements in both realms, as it is the only discipline that considers and unites both areas, and provides practical, evidence-based and results-focussed tools for communities to create and sustain thriving, liveable neighbourhoods.

The form of CPTED used in SafeGrowth encompasses and addresses not only safety and perceptions of safety, but also injury reduction, universal access, youth engagement, community building, placemaking, and principles of inclusiveness and equity.

The methods of SafeGrowth include training programs and establishing local, democratic, non-profits. SafeGrowth also builds or enhances existing networks between city services such as councils and police, and neighbourhood groups, using social and electronic networking tools. SafeGrowth targets specific neighbourhoods and grows organically outwards, rather than using methods that rely on broad mandates for economic or social programmes.

SafeGrowth commences as a community safety/community development initiative. Communities that suffer from crime, fear of crime and blight, inevitably need and want to focus on these concerns, before moving on to address wider issues. In reality, safety from crime, fear of crime and injury, overlap with many other community concerns.

For example, youth anti-social behaviour can be identified as a crime issue. But it may occur as the result of socio-economic deprivation, family violence, poor parenting skills, drug and alcohol addiction, poor engagement with learning or training, lack of recreation and activity opportunities, or other drivers. SafeGrowth provides residents with the skills to analyse the root causes and to provide targeted solutions to the problems that are happening in *their* neighbourhood.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs places Safety and Security as the second most fundamental human need. In this model, safety and security needs must be met before individuals can move on to fulfilling higher order needs. The same can be argued for communities, which need to be, and feel, safe and secure before further development and achievement is possible.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

The range of possible SafeGrowth interventions and projects is unlimited and is determined by the residents themselves. The skill sets required for each are transferred to the residents through ongoing SafeGrowth training and practice, and by experts invited by the SafeGrowth Facilitator, who then supports the community to move forward and enact their solutions.

SafeGrowth provides a sustainable, coherent and democratic platform for community decision making, community action and community cohesion. In this aspect, it is possibly unique in that it can bind and empower otherwise isolated community initiatives into a format that is sustainable and robust.

How does SafeGrowth work?

Each neighbourhood establishes SafeGrowth Panels (see diagram below) who begin the process by learning how to diagnose and respond to problems. They also learn how to create annual SafeGrowth neighbourhood plans with vision statements, measurable outcomes, and action plans for moving forward.



SafeGrowth® Panel Structure

The composition of each SafeGrowth Panel comprises three different layers represented by a core group of up to 8 participants (core Panel members), a Support Team of up to 20 professionals such as Council and Police, and a Resource Team from the wider community and beyond such as government officials (see diagram below).



At the neighbourhood level, SafeGrowth starts by transferring SafeGrowth, CPTED, team work and community leadership skills to volunteer local residents and stakeholders at initial SafeGrowth Training Workshops. These take the form of two, two-day, highly interactive Problem Based Learning¹ workshops, usually held two months apart. Teams are formed and between workshops, work on planning small "starter" projects, to practise their new skills. These projects are developed following the training.

Panels are supported by a SafeGrowth Facilitator, who embeds and extends the Panel members' knowledge and understanding of SafeGrowth's concepts and practices, and of the other core skills learnt during initial training. Risk assessment, safety audits, asset mapping, CPTED, planning, report writing, team work skills and presentation skills are all included. Panels can adopt a charter that establishes how the Panel will work with each other and what their goals and responsibilities are.

The SafeGrowth Facilitator supports the group through the process of forming a robust and credible Neighbourhood Plan, with a vision statement, measurable outcomes and a detailed action plan. The Plan is presented back to the neighbourhood for residents to provide feedback, before it is adopted. The Plan guides the Panel's work over the coming year and can be presented to local authorities (who may choose to adopt the Plan) and funders to assist with funding larger projects. The plan is reviewed and refreshed annually.

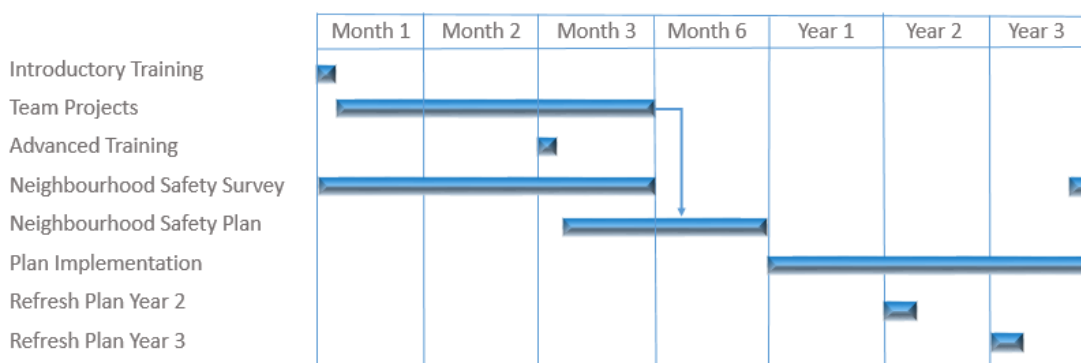
The Facilitator links Neighbourhood Panels to other neighbourhoods, and to subject matter experts who will transfer other skills to residents, to help them effectively tackle any issues they identify.

The Facilitator works closely with the Panel during Year 1, to ensure that members gain mastery of the programme. As the Panel's capacity increases, support is gradually reduced during Years 2 and 3. By the end of Year 3, SafeGrowth is fully embedded and connected, and able to operate into the future with low levels of support.

¹ Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a pedagogy particularly suited to adult learners, where learning happens through the experience of creating and solving *real* problems. It is sometimes called *active learning*.

The diagram below shows how the programme is implemented in a neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood Implementation Timeline



The Neighbourhood Safety Survey is one of several core information gathering techniques and provides a way for SafeGrowth Panels to gather information from other residents to inform the Plan. At the diagram above shows the survey is repeated every three years to measure the impact of SafeGrowth on neighbourhood outcomes.

A Residents' Academy (sometimes called a Liveability Academy) can be established to provide free evening or weekend classes available to everyone in the city. Topics can include skills training in SafeGrowth, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), restorative justice, civics and democracy, leadership, consensus decision making, conflict resolution, situational crime prevention, emergency preparedness, asset mapping, report writing, public speaking and presentation skills, accessing community funding, community budgeting skills, placemaking, tactical urbanism, event management, and any other topic that will build capacity and increase the participation, engagement and resilience of residents. Speakers are challenged to use Problem Based Learning to transfer knowledge and skills, rather than just inform. Participants are eligible to join neighbourhood SafeGrowth Panels when they have completed core topics.

The learning of participants in the Panels and the Academy is formally acknowledged, to enable them to build portfolios of volunteer achievement. One purpose of the achievement record is to acknowledge each person's contribution of time and energy to improving their community. Another is to support participants' applications for paid employment, for those wanting to enter or re-enter the paid workforce.

Who is involved?

SafeGrowth was developed by Gregory Saville in 2007, based on decades of criminological research and consulting work in CPTED, urban safety, city planning and policing. He was the founding chair of the International CPTED Association 1996 and is the co-founder of Second Generation CPTED. He established SafeGrowth to re-engage neighbourhood capacity-building, a concept now known as collective efficacy. SafeGrowth empowers residents to reclaim their neighbourhoods from crime and disorder, and is a sustainable alternative to “top down” safety programs. He leads a group of dedicated SafeGrowth practitioners based in Canada and the United States, and now in Christchurch and Melbourne.



Greg Saville



Sue Ramsay

Sue Ramsay delivers the SafeGrowth Programme in Christchurch. Currently the Crime Prevention Team Leader at Christchurch City Council, Sue is an internationally recognised CPTED practitioner who has led many safety focussed community development projects and initiatives. She previously owned successful service industry businesses.

Case studies

San Romanoway

SafeGrowth was born in the impoverished and crime ridden social housing complex of San Romanoway. In the northwest Toronto district of Jane-Finch, the towers and grounds of San Romanoway were blighted by serious crime and drugs, as were many similar social housing developments throughout North America. The shared areas of the towers and the expansive grounds were neglected and dangerous for residents, who had become cynical about the prospects for change. San Romanoway was notable for having rates of serious crimes that were among the highest in Canada.

The cross-disciplinary group brought in to create change in 1999 was headed up by Greg Saville with a colleague in Toronto. Over a period of years, Greg worked with the residents and other professionals to create dramatic improvement to the lives of the residents and from this, the original concepts of SafeGrowth emerged.



San Romanoway Housing Complex

San Romanoway has now been scientifically evaluated by Professor George Rigakos at Carleton University in Ottawa. As well, the project is published in the academic urban planning literature in the Built Environment Journal from Cambridge University. Findings point to profound change since those early days. Residents have reclaimed San Romanoway from crime and neglect. They have formed non-profit organisations, such as the San Romanoway Revitalisation Association (<http://srra.ca/about-us/history-of-the-organization/>) which provides "cultural/social, recreational, educational and enrichment programs for children, youth and families" and "employment training, life skills coaching and other opportunities for marginalized at risk youth". Their work is "founded on the premise of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPTSD)".



Venus Williams at San Romanoway

When asking residents about what activities they would like in the grounds of the complex, Greg and his team were surprised to learn that the girls and young women idolised the tennis playing Williams sisters and wanted tennis courts. San Romanoway now boasts a competition standard tennis complex that host tennis summer schools. Venus Williams recently attended the opening of San Romanoway's own movie theatre and donated computers for the children during her visit.



Official opening of the new San Romanoway cinema – the first commercial cinema within an apartment building in Canada

Crime has dropped dramatically and residents' perceptions of safety and community have risen. By 2010, violent crime had plummeted by between 35 and 49%. Fear was reduced by between 20 and 30% and participation with neighbours was up by 17 to 32%. These are dramatic shifts in a complex that was previously considered to be irredeemable.

Hollygrove

Of the many examples of SafeGrowth's success in North American communities, Hollygrove stands out.

The residents of this small New Orleans neighbourhood of less than 5,000, mostly African-American and Hispanic people, experienced extremely high crime and high deprivation. On top of this, Hurricane Katrina wrought havoc here as it did elsewhere in New Orleans. When the residents returned and started rebuilding their properties they also decided it was time to rebuild their community.

The community invited Greg Saville to introduce the SafeGrowth Programme in 2007. Without city or government support, the residents adopted the programme and set about changing their neighbourhood for the better.

At an early stage, a popular walking group grew out of the CPTED component of the training, walking the neighbourhood to understand assets and issues. This group, led by two remarkable elders, also provided a direct crime prevention effect of its own, as walkers remonstrated with street drug dealers and effectively cleared them from the streets.

Another early project also came directly from the SafeGrowth training. The group identified that their main bus stop, a significant point of entry to their neighbourhood, was unsafe and unattractive. They worked with local architecture students and businesses and, using recycled wood from Katrina, built an amazing bus stop that clearly expressed their identity and their pride in their community.



Hollygrove's main bus stop,
Pre-SafeGrowth



The new bus shelter created by residents with local
design students and using recycled and donated
materials



Hollygrove's community meeting place

Many other projects have followed as residents learnt through the Programme how to gain funding, without government support, including a new neighbourhood meeting place; reclaiming a park from drug dealers by installing a children's playground; and "Night Out Against Crime" barbeques and social evenings.



The new playground in Hollygrove



An early Night Out Against Crime in Hollygrove

Not only have the people of Hollygrove rebuilt their sense of pride, ownership, belonging and connection, crime has been dramatically reduced. Prior to SafeGrowth being introduced, Hollygrove experienced between 15 and 24 murders each year. In 2013, only four murders occurred and other violent and serious crime has also significantly declined. In the same time, violent crime has fallen by 78%.

Christchurch

The first two neighbourhoods in New Zealand to experience the SafeGrowth Programme are Phillipstown and Riccarton West. Both were high crime, low decile areas and both have effective Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPT's) in place. We have worked in close partnership with the NPT's and Police at a national level are interested in SafeGrowth being adopted as a companion strategy for NPT's throughout New Zealand as SafeGrowth can build residents' capacity to manage local safety issues that may re-emerge when NPT's transition away from their target locality. NPT's are expected to remain in a neighbourhood for three to five years before transitioning to other, high crime areas.

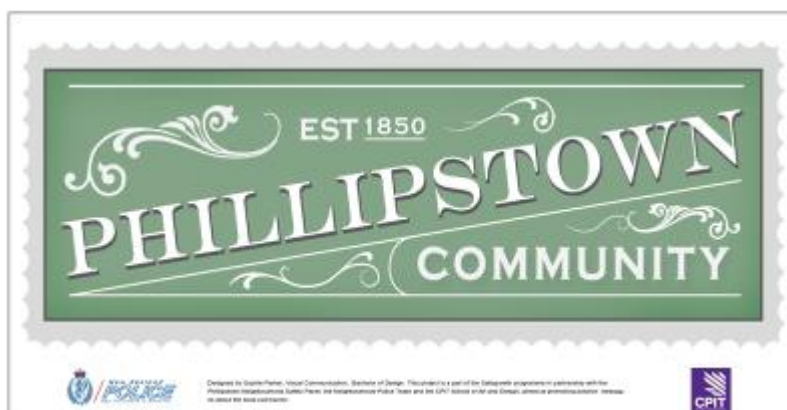
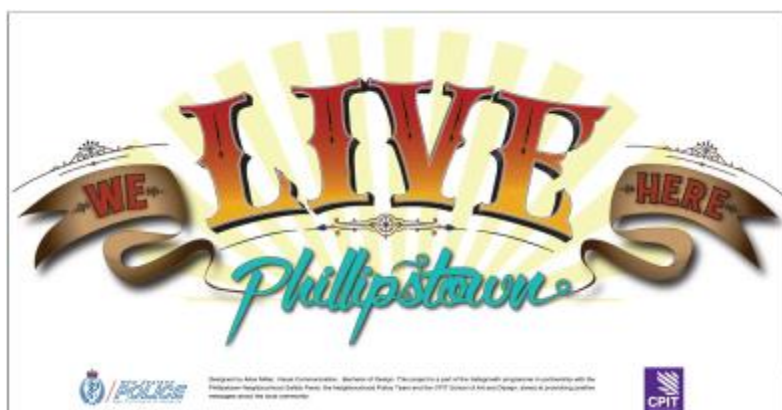
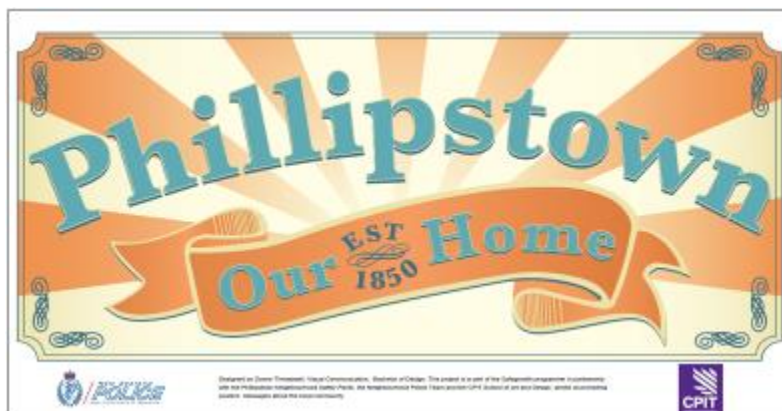
The Programme in Christchurch benefits from strong partnerships between Christchurch City Council, New Zealand Police, Neighbourhood Support, and New Zealand Fire Service. Other stakeholders include Housing New Zealand, local landlords, Community Patrols of New Zealand, church groups, student representatives and sports bodies.

The Programme is in its infancy in New Zealand and has yet to create a measurable influence on crime and safety in these areas. It is expected to take up to three years in each neighbourhood before quantifiable impacts can be achieved and measured. However, some early projects are encouraging and two are reported on below.

Positive Perceptions of Phillipstown

One of the Phillipstown SafeGrowth groups decided that creating positive perceptions of their suburb was their priority. Phillipstown had experienced some serious crime in past years and publicity about gang houses was widespread. The group decided on a range of strategies, one of which is to promote a positive image through branding. They have entered into a partnership with

the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) design students, who have designed logos that reflect the unique identify of Phillipstown. Some of these are represented below -



The SafeGrowth logo is still to be added to the designs. However, the Programme's connection to the project is acknowledged on each logo as follows:

Designed by Donne Threadwell, Visual Communication, Bachelor of Design. This project is a part of the Safegrowth programme in partnership with the Phillipstown Neighbourhood Safety Panel, the Neighbourhood Police Team and the CPIT School of Art and Design, aimed at promoting positive messages about the local community.

Several of the logos will be printed on signboards and placed at strategic locations around the neighbourhood. It is intended that residents will select one that they feel best represents Phillipstown and will adopt that logo.

Riccarton West activation of Paeroa Reserve

One SafeGrowth group in Riccarton West decided to focus on activating Paeroa Reserve, an underused park in their neighbourhood. They have two projects underway presently, and have others planned.

The group identified that families and students lived nearby, but made little use of the reserve. They have applied for funding to provide alternative seating options, including oversized couches, which are a humorous reference to the couches left on streets when student flats break up. They have also applied for funding for a solar table, which charges different types of electronic devices.

Another project has welcomed students to the neighbourhood at the beginning of the student year, by creating an event named "Connect 15". (Riccarton West has a high proportion of Canterbury University students living there during term time). The group felt that this was a positive way to integrate students into the community and to allow them to understand that their neighbours are real people who welcome them and who also have expectations of neighbourly behaviour.

The group organised an afternoon event on 8 March 2015 and also applied for funding. They estimated that three to four hundred people attended. Live music was provided throughout the afternoon and interactive stands provided opportunities to experience produce and preserves from the community garden, test out fitness and strength, negotiate an obstacle course while wearing "drunk goggles" and experience food from different cultures.



Bouncy castle, barbeque and fitness station. A SafeGrowth team member completes a Neighbourhood Safety Survey with student residents.



Enjoying the free café under the trees



Members of the local language academy perform traditional songs



The SafeGrowth Team who organised Connect 15 and the SafeGrowth Facilitator

The group was buoyed by the success of the event in drawing in residents from diverse groups and most especially students, and plans to make it an annual event.

SafeGrowth Teams in Phillipstown and Riccarton West are presently working on their Neighbourhood Safety Plans. The Phillipstown Team is preparing to take their draft plan back to the community at an upcoming community fun day. They will set out the aims of the plan and describe the projects that will achieve the aims and ask for feedback and endorsement from residents. Once community input has been incorporated, the Team will take the plan to the local community board and to other funders and will set about turning the plan into reality. We intend to conduct a neighbourhood safety survey in 2016, to assess the impact of SafeGrowth on safety issues, perceptions of safety, community cohesion and connectivity.

Useful links

More information on SafeGrowth can be found at:

www.safegrowth.org

Greg Saville's blog is at:

www.safe-growth.blogspot.com

Information on CPTED can be found at:

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/cityleisure/communityservices/doc/index.aspx>

How does SafeGrowth support community governance?

Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.

- Jane Jacobs²

SafeGrowth is designed to support community governance at the neighbourhood level. It provides a framework to foster capacity building, community connections, community action and participation in decision making. Neighbourhood planning is a signature component of SafeGrowth.

SafeGrowth is possibly unique in two ways that are relevant:

- SafeGrowth may be the only programme that is specifically designed as a *practical implementation framework* to deliver decision making into the hands of communities. SafeGrowth provides the *practical strategies, structures, tools and measurement* that allow community governance concepts and goals to be translated from ideas into action.
- SafeGrowth may be the only programme that acknowledges the crucial and intimate links between people and place; the relationships in the development of the social and physical environments; gives equal weight to each; and also provides practical pathways towards improving and celebrating both.

How SafeGrowth achieves community governance goals

SafeGrowth was founded on community governance principles. Its primary focus is to give practical expression to these principles.

SafeGrowth provides a whole-of-city framework to implement community governance, through a network of linked SafeGrowth Panels who share learnings, best practice and data. The citywide framework also includes a Resident or Liveability Academy, where core SafeGrowth skills and any other topic that will increase participation and capacity can be included.

An essential component of SafeGrowth is the focus on *neighbourhood* as the effective base unit of community governance. SafeGrowth provides a structured platform that is focussed on action and measurement. It creates Neighbourhood Panels formed of local residents and guides the panels in creating robust and credible Neighbourhood Plans that include a vision, environmental scan, asset mapping, and specific, time bound, measurable outcomes. A Neighbourhood Survey can be conducted at intervals to measure impact.

Essential to the integrity of the SafeGrowth Programme is that it is delivered *by* and *with* the community. It may be attractive for agencies to see the Programme as a mechanism for delivering their particular message or solutions into communities across the city. The SafeGrowth model provides for other programmes to be invited by residents to promote their offering, but these can only be adopted if residents identify the need in *their* neighbourhood. SafeGrowth is not a mechanism for mass education or uptake of broad based programmes.

SafeGrowth can combine otherwise effective but isolated programmes, projects and initiatives into a cohesive and unified whole-of-city system of shared goals and practice. There is no limit to what neighbourhoods may wish to implement - only the provision that it is the residents' choice.

² *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* Jane Jacobs Vintage Books 1992 edition

Neighbourhood Panels are encouraged to adopt a charter, with the purpose of defining the Panel's aims, responsibilities and ways of working together.

SafeGrowth encompasses many other methods of social capital building and placemaking. The first collaboration between SafeGrowth and Neighborpower (Jim Diers) took place in Christchurch in 2014. The Portland Oregon City Repair Project, led by Mark Lakeman, has invited Greg Saville to speak at their Village Building Convergence event (<http://www.villagebuildingconvergence.com/#about>) at the end of May 2015. City Repair want to enter into discussion with Greg on how SafeGrowth can be a part of their neighbourhood building and planning process in Portland.

It is this flexibility and compatibility with other programmes that is a strength of SafeGrowth. SafeGrowth provides the structured platform that is not present in other programmes, and SafeGrowth can utilise other programmes to support great neighbourhood outcomes.

SafeGrowth is strongly based in evidence and best practice. A seminal paper is *SafeGrowth: Moving Forward in Neighbourhood Development*. The article describes the foundation study that SafeGrowth developed from, and the principles and processes of SafeGrowth. Another publication that describes SafeGrowth in action is *CSI Metlife - SafeGrowth* is attached as Appendix 4.

The form of CPTED used in SafeGrowth is expansive and inclusive of other disciplines. The reference to "crime prevention" in CPTED may be misleading in its narrowness and consideration could be given to another name that better represents its encompassing scope.

CPTED is a foundation skill of SafeGrowth. The effectiveness of the SafeGrowth Programme depends to a degree on the availability of CPTED training for residents and expert advice on projects. This is only possible where there is an active CPTED programme in the city.

SafeGrowth is specifically designed to support principles of community governance through the implementation of community/neighbourhood plans. It provides a tested and proven, practical framework that is scalable and has demonstrated early promise in the Christchurch environment.

"The lack of resources is no longer an excuse not to act. The idea that action should only be taken after all the answers and the resources have been found is a sure recipe for paralysis. The planning of a city is a process that allows for corrections; it is supremely arrogant to believe that planning can be done only after every possible variable has been controlled."

- Jamie Lerner

Architect, Urbanist, former Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil

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