



**A VIBRANT AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY THAT TAKES THE
LEAD IN ITS OWN FUTURE.**

Who are we and where have we come from?

- South Alive (South Invercargill Urban Rejuvenation Charitable Trust) is a volunteer-led urban rejuvenation and community development organisation based in South Invercargill, an increasingly diverse community of approximately 18,000 people.
- South Invercargill had been negatively impacted by school closures, lost population and skills, redundancies, a perceived lack of Council investment in amenities and infrastructure, absentee landlords, and some badly maintained housing. By late 2011 South Invercargill residents were proud but hurting and feeling unsupported.
- The establishment of South Alive was facilitated by the Invercargill City Council (ICC) through its focus on Urban Rejuvenation, one of its key strategies in the 2012-2022 Long Term Plan. A representative community steering group meeting in February 2012 discussed hopes and dreams for South Invercargill. An initial public meeting prioritised these dreams, which became South Alive's first objectives; volunteer Action Teams were formed to drive these.
- In December 2012, the steering group became an Incorporated Trust; in October 2013 the Trust gained charitable status. The Board currently has twelve trustees, five are inaugural trustees, four began as volunteers and one as an employee.
- South Alive's strong, widespread local support ensures community voice is heard, thus having a very positive impact on the level of pride residents now have in South Invercargill.

Why do we exist?

Our strategic plan reflects the priorities of the community.

Our vision is *to build a vibrant, diverse community that takes the lead in its own future*. Our mission is that *empowered by our strengths as a community, we will build a place to live and work that engenders pride and inspires us. We will do this while embracing the values of service, self-determination, inclusion, innovation and resilience*.

We have five current core objectives:

Upgrade – make South Invercargill look better and work better by improving function and beauty

Community – develop community identification, pride, participation and connection

Build community capability, resourcefulness and confidence

Continue to develop the governance capability of the Board and South Alive as an effective organisation

Sustainability – establish a community hub that includes meeting spaces, offices and a successful social enterprise business

Where does our funding come from?

- South Alive is supported by Invercargill City Council, Invercargill Licensing Trust, the Community Trust of Southland, Lottery Grants Board, and other local, regional and national funders for our administration and large-scale project costs. In December 2018 we were fortunate to gain one of 16 Community Led Development Partnerships with DIA (Department of Internal Affairs). This provides up to \$250,000 per annum for five years as well as valuable networking and mentoring support.
- South Alive recognised that we could not (and should not) rely on these funders for our long-term survival, so from early 2016 investigated social enterprise for financial sustainability.
- Our volunteer action teams are almost entirely self-funded through various activities; they're building solid relationships with businesses for in-kind sponsorship.

What do we do?

South Alive's focus has moved from infrastructure projects to engagement and event-based projects to develop community identification, pride, participation and connection.

Our Action Teams are:

- *Arts Team* – establishing and managing a community art gallery for producing and hosting exhibitions, art and other classes; for community meetings and managing the production and sale of our signature 'Whale Tale' tee-shirts.
- *Beautification Team* – establishing and managing community gardens, a community plant bank, hanging flower baskets, pop-up flower gardens and plantings, and various gardening workshops and festivals. Its very successful Zero Rubbish initiative encourages residents to adopt streets in South Invercargill and keep them rubbish-free.
- *Housing Team* – improving the health and safety of houses in South Invercargill, initiating Council action on overgrown sections, organising regular events e.g. electric blanket testing.
- *Fruit and Nut Team* – planting and maintaining more than 70 fruit and nut trees in public places; running community workshops e.g. grafting trees.

What do we do (cont.)?

- *Dog Park Team* – established the city's first Dog Park in conjunction with Council; continuing with improvements such as night-lighting, agility courses and more seating.
- *Stronger Neighbourhoods Team* – managing a Neighbourhood Project Fund to which anyone can apply for support with projects which enhance the neighbourhood or sense of community.
- *Events and Communications Team* – signature annual events include the Trolley Derby & Children's Day, South City Street Party, Spring Flower Show, Kids Spring Poetry Festival, Summer Night Food Markets, Youth Basketball Competition and annual public meeting.

One-off Projects – projects such as the sewing and distribution of Boomerang Bags (returnable shopping bags) and establishing 'Little Free Libraries' at three locations have been initiated by individuals, fostering new friendships and connections.

Community groups – Seniors, Women, Rag-rug Making, Ukelele, Craft, Writers, Friendship and other groups use our meeting spaces but self-manage, only asking for logistical or funding support.

Large-scale projects undertaken by our volunteers

- *Community Park* – transforming a section with a burnt-out house and 34 tonnes of rubbish into a park with vegetable gardens, basketball court, stage and outdoor gym for community use.
- *Artwork Installation* – Installing a significant public sculpture in South City thanks to a private donor's generosity of \$123,000. The international design competition was won by artist David Trubridge and the sculpture was built and installed locally.
- *Social Enterprise* – Our social enterprise business, The Pantry, opened in May 2017. It is a retail shop, café and community commercial kitchen.owned by the South Alive Trust. The Pantry also leases a separate commercial kitchen to another organisation, 'Koha Kai'.
- *South City Upgrade* – transforming the South City shopping area, working with Council to mitigate nineteen years of deferred maintenance on the local mall, improving the streetscape through new street furniture, 'greening' the main road through South City, and installing the flagship 'Aurora Lights' along this road.

How are volunteers involved?

- South Alive has approximately 300 volunteers who join an Action Team, or become a casual or project-based volunteer, supported by 1.5 paid staff. All ideas, events, and projects come from the community volunteers and are initiated, funded, and run by them. Over 15,000 volunteer hours, worth over \$250,000, have been recorded (estimated as less than 50% of the total volunteer time).
- The Pantry has made connections with WINZ (Work and Income New Zealand) and Idea Services (a support agency for people with special needs) who encourage clients to volunteer, working alongside community volunteers. Anecdotal evidence shows that volunteering at The Pantry provides a sense of belonging in the community which, in turn, contributes to increased wellbeing.

How has the community benefitted?

Our annual research shows that:

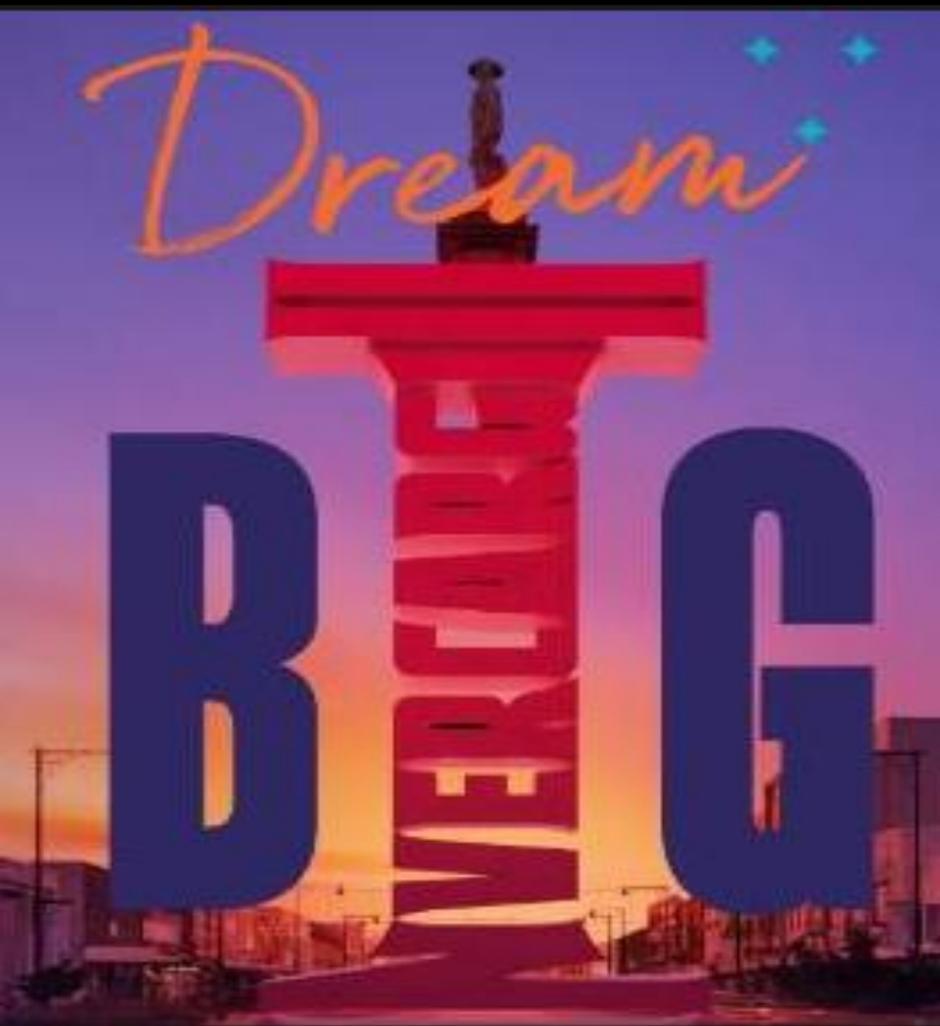
- From 2013 to 2015 levels of external pride from living in South Invercargill rose from 35% to 82.5%!
- In 2016 - 2018, we measured levels of internal pride, happiness, and wellbeing and saw significant growth due to the focus on engagement, participation and connection. 91.3% of our community believe that volunteers at South Alive have made a positive difference in the community.
- The latest property valuations show a 25.3% increase in dwelling value in South Invercargill since 2014.
- Funding and grants of more than \$1,300,000 (excluding City Council support) have been received.
- Businesses and individuals have given more than \$350,000 of in-kind contributions.
- Anecdotal evidence shows a renewed energy and greater community spirit in South Invercargill.
- Bookings in South Alive's meeting spaces have continually increased and now need to be made well in advance.

Summary

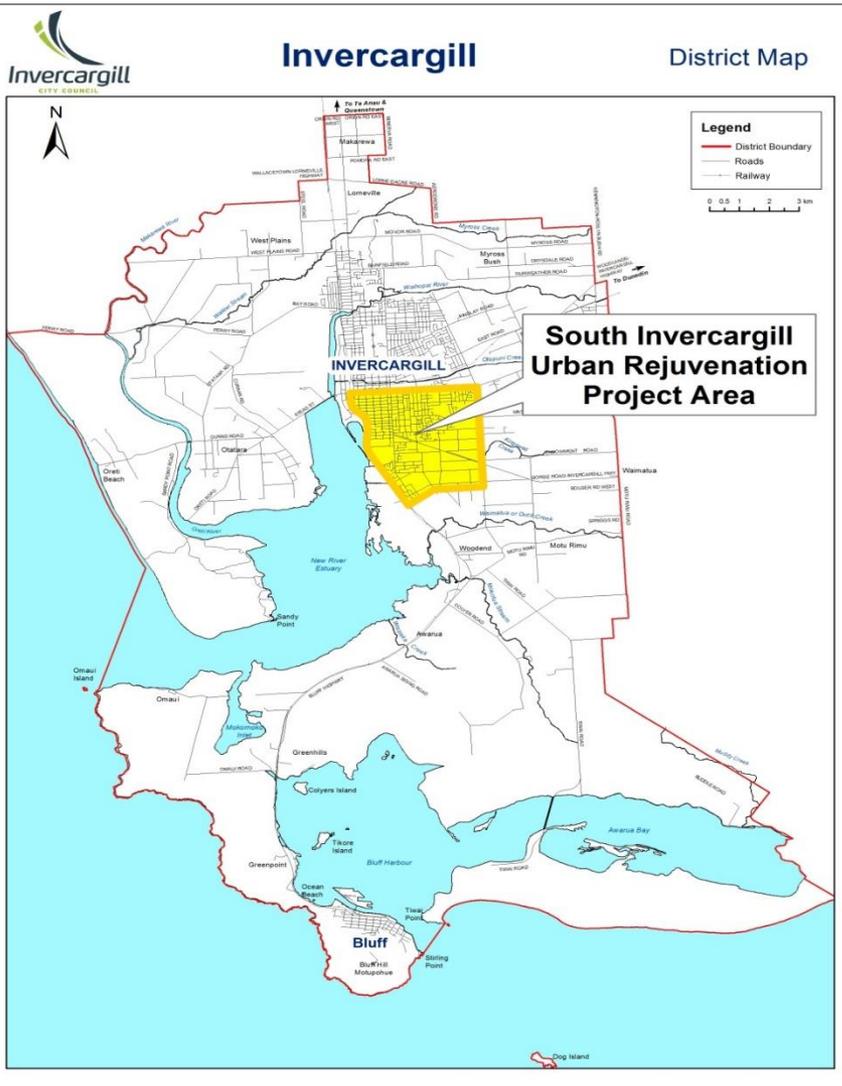
In the last six years, South Alive has made an enormous impact in the South Invercargill area, thanks to the passion, commitment and grit of our volunteers.

I will now share a more pictorial display with you so that you can visualise South Alive's work in its geographical, historical and socio-economic context.

Where is Invercargill?



Where is South Invercargill?



Population
18,150

A (very) brief history of how we got here

2012 - South Alive launched, Community Gardens begun, first fruit trees planted, Zero Rubbish launched, South Alive is incorporated as a Trust

2013 - Basketball court completed, 100 streets adopted under Zero Rubbish scheme, South Alive granted charitable status, Dog Park officially opened

2014 - First concert in Community Park, Art Gallery established and first exhibition opened

2015 - Whale Tale sculpture designed and installed, street upgrade and Aurora lights officially celebrated **2016** - First South Alive Trolley Derby, feasibility study undertaken for Social Enterprise and community centre, first Spring Flower Show, Night Food Markets launched, Bin Inn building purchased

2017 - The Pantry opens for business, work begins on Stage 2 of The Pod, Koha Kai kitchen opens in the Pantry

2018 - Temporary meeting rooms in The Pod open, work begins on Stage 3 of The Pod, first Youth Open Mic night

2019 - The Pod is completed, South Alive moves into new office in The Pod, The Pod is officially opened

How it used to be



How it used to be



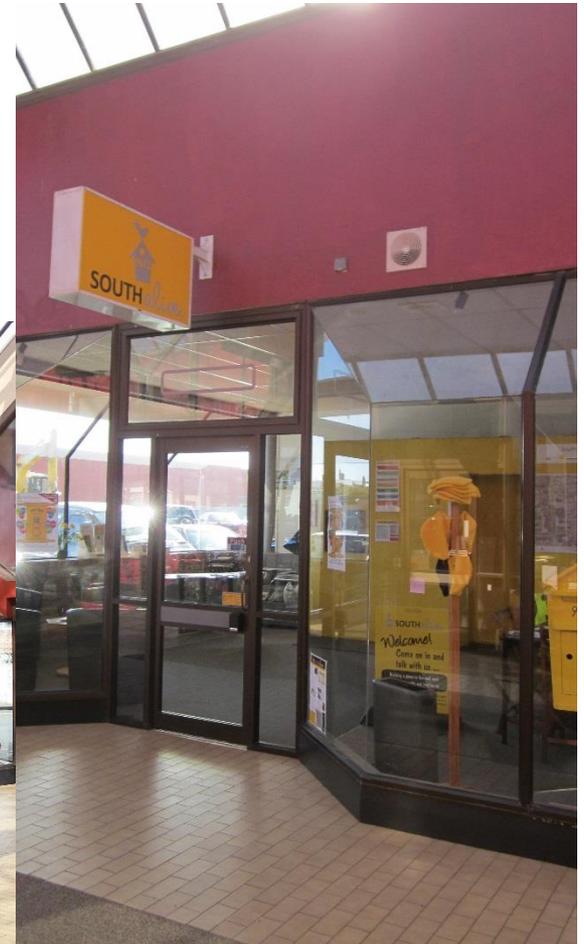
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How it used to be



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The 'old' South Alive office, gallery & meeting space



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The South Alive Board



(Back row L-R): Peggy Peek, Marie Crowe, Andrew Ralph, Paul Searancke, Geoff Thompson, Travis Hubber, Margaret Cook (Deputy Chair), Gayle Hammond
(Front row L-R): Beryl Wilcox, Robyn Hickman – (Chair), Trudy Saunders (Treasurer), Jess Chalmers

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May 2017

Public
Consultation
Meeting



Beautification Team

The group started off initially focusing only on Operation Zero Rubbish. It then evolved to include projects around planting that will beautify the South Invercargill area to increase a sense of pride and identification.



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Arts Team

Encouraging local emerging and established artists by providing a venue to exhibit, perform and display their work



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Fruit and Nut Team

Planting fruit trees and berry bushes in public places in South Invercargill that will provide fresh home-grown fruit free for the picking. Teaching South Invercargill residents how to grow and care for fruit trees.



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Housing Team

Encouraging residents to invest time and energy into their homes to create a culture of pride and community



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Events Team

Developing or assisting with events and projects which promote community identification and local pride



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Dog Park Team

Developed concept and worked with Invercargill City Council to build Invercargill's first dog park. This team disestablished once the project was completed, but is now coming together again to construct an agility course in the park



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Youth Team

A newly established team as a result of a strong community request for this. This team is currently engaging with youth in South Invercargill to determine what they want from their community. Events have included a youth open mic night and partnering with ICC's Park Division for their Park Week



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The Pantry

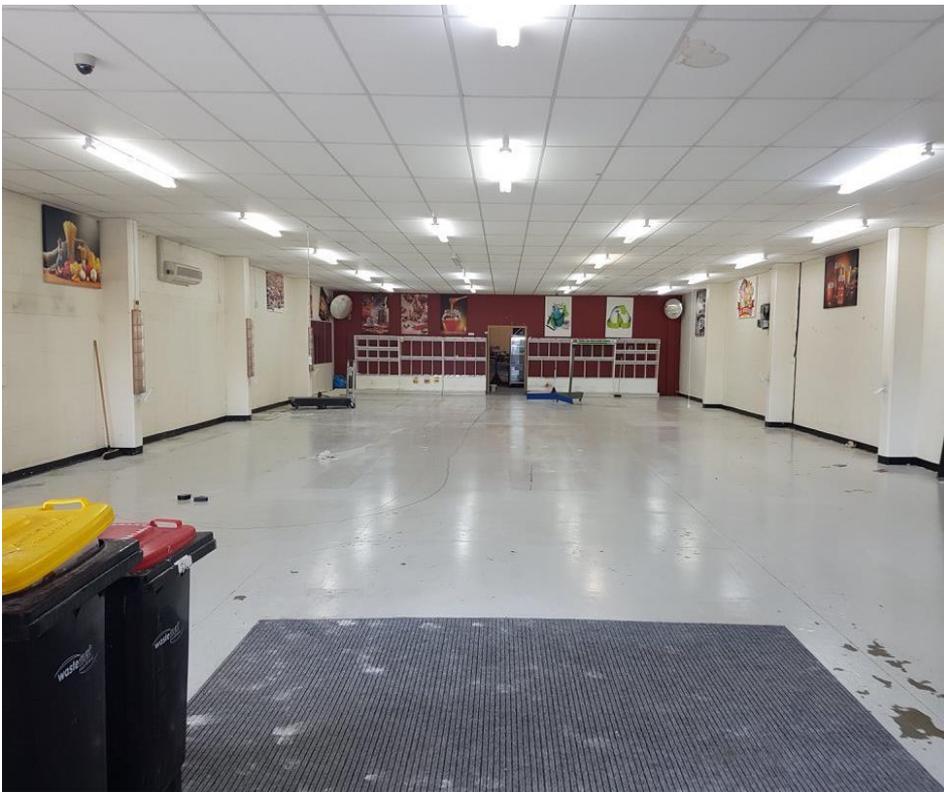


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Stage 1

Stage 1 was the refit and renovation of the old Bin Inn building into a beautiful new space for South Alive's social enterprise – The Pantry. This was opened in May 2017; we have recently celebrated our two-year anniversary!



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Stage 1's Journey



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Stage 2

Stage 2 was the refit and renovation of the old storage area of the Bin Inn building into two community meeting spaces until Stage 3 was completed.



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Stage 2's Journey



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Stage 3 – the final(?) stage

Stage 3 was the completion of two purpose built community rooms to the south of the building, and reverting the Stage 2 rooms to their original purpose – an office for South Alive and a volunteer lounge



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Stage 3's Journey



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Why did we start it and why do we continue to do it?

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy when you volunteer you get to vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

“The purpose of human life is to serve and show compassion and the will to help others.”

Albert Schweitzer

The best kind of fun is hard fun!

Volunteering is giving us the tools we need to be happier, healthier, and more well-rounded individuals and is keeping us young.

We are developing CQ: the key 21st century skills of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and contribution.