



## Media Release - LIFEWISE

May 18, 2011

### Calling Auckland's business and community leaders to 'sleep rough' for one night on July 7, 2011

LIFEWISE is once again asking business and community leaders to take up the challenge to swap their creature comforts for cold concrete and 'sleep rough' for one night to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness in Auckland and raise much needed funds to help LIFEWISE's on-going work tackling homelessness and housing homeless people.

For the inaugural LIFEWISE Big Sleepout in 2010, we rallied more than 60 business and community leaders together, handed them a piece of cardboard and then introduced them to a concrete slab for the night; giving them a small taste of what it's like to be homeless.

General manager John McCarthy describes the inaugural event as a tremendous success. "Not only did it put homelessness in the spotlight, those taking part told us the experience and the opportunity to interact with those who live and work with the issue of homelessness increased their understanding of an often ignored issue. There's no doubt it made an impact on those 'rough sleepers'.

"This year, we're doing it again but with a difference. We are ramping up the intensity and making it even more realistic; we're asking people to sleep out in mid-winter and in the open-air."

"The Mayor spoke at the conclusion of last year's sleepout, acknowledging the efforts of those founding 'rough sleepers'. Over recent years the Council has been heavily involved in the collaborative efforts to develop and implement a strategic response to homelessness in this city and I'd like to thank Mayor Len Brown for launching the 2011 event today and encouraging business and community leaders from throughout this city to get involved in the sleepout".

AUT University is generously accommodating the event in Hikawai Plaza on its city campus, with Vice Chancellor Derek McCormack taking up the challenge to sleep rough. He will be joined by Director of AUT's Institute of Public Policy, David Wilson, who participated last year. McCormack says AUT is pleased to lend its support to such an important campaign.

"AUT has a long-standing connection with LIFEWISE, which began when we worked together to develop a response to homelessness - sparked by the issue of homeless people sleeping on our city campus in the past. As a university with a major CBD presence, it was very important that we collaborated to find solutions that worked for everybody involved, and we're delighted to help maintain awareness of this issue."

John McCarthy said AUT University had been supportive of LIFEWISE's work over many years.

"Hosting the 2011 Lifewise Big Sleepout on AUT's central city campus is yet another aspect to our close association, and a reminder that there are solutions to homelessness if people are willing to learn about the issue and work together in the way that AUT worked with us."

New participants Dick Hubbard and Councillor Cathy Casey attended today's launch together with Sarah Trotman who has been highly supportive of the Lifewise Big Sleepout since the beginning.

Dick Hubbard stresses the positive message of the event. "Homelessness is not solved by just talking about it but by specific actions such as taking part in the sleepout. Being proactive about helping the homeless sends a message about the type of society we want to live in. It is particularly important that young people also pick up this message of caring for the homeless. If we can get this message across to young people we are making an intergenerational move and benefit."

Any business and community leaders wanting to get involved in the LIFEWISE Big Sleepout are asked to contact LIFEWISE on (09) 302 5392 or email [bigsleepout@lifewise.org.nz](mailto:bigsleepout@lifewise.org.nz).

**END**

For interviews and media enquiries please contact Lesley Mynett-Johnson on 0275 405 755 or [LesleyM@lifewise.org.nz](mailto:LesleyM@lifewise.org.nz)

Photo Attached: from left to right

Dick Hubbard (participant)  
Corie Haddock (LIFEWISE Service Manager)  
Professor Rob Allen – Deputy Vice Chancellor, AUT University (representing the Vice Chancellor)  
Mayor Len Brown  
Councillor Cathy Casey (participant)  
Sarah Trotman (participant)  
John McCarthy (LIFEWISE GM)

### **Background - The 2011 LIFEWISE Big Sleepout**

**When:** Thursday July 7 to Friday July 8 (6.30pm to 7.30am)

**Where:** Hikawai Plaza on AUT University's city campus (an open-air plaza with some shelter)

**What happens:** Auckland business and community leaders raise sponsorship to spend one night 'sleeping rough' and experience what it's like to be homeless. The money raised will provide services for the homeless in Auckland.

**Website:** [www.bigsleepout.org.nz](http://www.bigsleepout.org.nz)

**Twitter:** @bigsleepout and our official tag is #lifewiseBSO

*The 2010 LIFEWISE Big Sleepout recently gained two awards from the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand – Online Campaign and Premier Fundraising award.*

### **Background – LIFEWISE**

LIFEWISE is an Auckland-based not-for-profit community agency that is initiating new ways to solve challenging social issues and provides services to vulnerable and at-risk people of all ages. Core work

includes supporting children and families, older people and those living with disabilities as well as homeless and marginalised people (through The LIFEWISE Hub).

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**Twitter:** @lifewiseNZ and our official tag is #lifewise