

The Roy Stokes Hall Story

www.yat.org.nz/roystokes

In the 1970's, locals in the New Brighton community fundraised for a hall to be built on the site of the Central New Brighton School, to be used by community groups and the school. The building was finished and opened in 1977, and named after the chief supporter and fundraiser, Roy Stokes.



After the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes, Central New Brighton School merged with two other local schools, and left the school site derelict in 2015. The site was bought by DCL (Development Christchurch Ltd) and then sold to [housing developers](#). There was a large outcry from the community through petitions, meetings and media to not sell the Roy Stokes Hall, so DCL, which became ChristchurchNZ, agreed to save the hall and not sell it. [This 3 minute video](#) explains the situation as well as this [Newspaper Article](#).



In 2024, Christchurch NZ ran an open tender, looking for an organisation who would hold the Roy Stokes Hall in custody on behalf of the community. This involved looking after all the current groups who use it, recruiting new groups to use the hall for community benefit and maintaining the hall in the long term interest of the community. Youth Alive Trust, being one of the largest and oldest organisations in New Brighton, applied and were unanimously chosen by the independent panel. The building was sold to Youth Alive Trust in October 2024 for \$1 under the condition that it would be

managed and used for community groups. If Youth Alive Trust could no longer manage it, that it would be sold back to Christchurch NZ for \$1 plus any upgraded costs. Here's one media announcement:

www.odt.co.nz/star-news/star-christchurch/trust-chosen-run-chch-hall-hub-community

The hall is used every day and evening, by a wide variety of groups, including the Christchurch Circus Trust, Dance Groups, Arts programmes and other one-off community events. We aren't currently taking private one-off bookings such as parties, weddings or funerals, because of previous damage and our focus is on providing affordable regular spaces for community groups.



Youth Alive Trust aims to financially break-even through running of the hall, but insurance and heating bills are making this very difficult. The hall is in great condition for a 1970's school hall, but is in need some major upgrades in the next few years as it is energy and space inefficient. We have already fundraised towards some much needed initial upgrades including a new key system, wi-fi, and the toilets and entry have been repainted by trainee tertiary painting and decorating students. The next stage is a comprehensive feasibility study to help us make informed decisions, saving us time, money and resources in the future, and doing it once and right! We need to hear from the community, stakeholders, and understand what the gaps are in the community and what risks we may carry. We need a roadmap and evidence for the development of this community facility, that can be used and cherished by this community for another 50 years!

