

CITIZEN'S ADVICE BUREAU WILL PUT NEW COMPUTERS TO GOOD USE

Bringing the Citizens Advice Bureau online next year meant the Invercargill and Districts branch needed to update its technology. And the Invercargill Licensing Trust has answered the financial SOS by granting the bureau \$7000 for new computers and a security system.

CAB provides people with a free, confidential and impartial information and referral service.

CAB Invercargill and Districts branch co-ordinator Lyn Devery said the service was expected to go live in March.

All branches had been busy updating information and delivering it to its head office so it could be included on the internet next year.

"It's been a huge job because it's meant all the local database has had to be spring cleaned."

Usually each branch has to fundraise for its own equipment but with the added workload (because of the project) it would have been a tough ask.

"We are so thankful for the contribution the Invercargill Licensing Trust has made. I don't know where we would be without it," she said.

Invercargill Licensing Trust chairman Alan Dennis said it was great that such a valuable service would now be more readily available to more people.

"We know that the Citizens Advice Bureau Invercargill and Districts branch answers about 8000 calls a year. This just goes to show what a vital role this organisation plays in our community. The Invercargill Licensing Trust believes the service which has been running locally for 30 years will be used by more people within the city once it goes live."

Mrs Devery said it had been a big evolution from the card system the Citizens Advice Bureau originally used. All of the volunteers would receive training in the new system.

Despite the organisation going on-line, there would still be someone to answer queries at the end of the telephone. "That's our bread and butter," she said.

The Justice of the Peace service which operates on Saturday morning and free legal service available on Thursday nights would still continue.

The organisation was also developing an intranet system that would only be accessible to the many volunteers who helped run the service.



Caption: Citizens Advice Bureau volunteers Marian Doherty (right) and Tom Taylor with co-ordinator Lyn Devery (left) in front of one of the new computers bought with a grant from the Invercargill Licensing Trust.