

30 November 2022



TO:

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Police

Hon Stuart Nash
Minister for Small Business

CC:

Christopher Luxon
Leader of the Opposition

Sarah Pallett
Member of Parliament for
Ilam

Duncan Webb
Member of Parliament for
Christchurch Central

David Seymour
Leader of the ACT Party

Stuart Smith
Member of Parliament for
Kaikōura

Hon Poto Williams
Member of Parliament for
Christchurch East

Matt Doocey
Member of Parliament for
Waimakariri

Rino Tirikatene
Member of Parliament for
Te Tai Tonga

Hon Megan Woods
Member of Parliament for
Wigram

Nicola Grigg
Member of Parliament for
Selwyn

Open letter on crime and anti-social behaviour in Canterbury

Dear Prime Minister, and Ministers,

The Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, the largest business organisation in the South Island representing 2,700 employers, with over 60,000 employees, alongside the undersigned businesses from throughout the region, are writing to express significant concern regarding the increased prevalence of crime and antisocial behaviour in the Canterbury region and to ask, what actions, you expect to undertake, and when, to address a serious and uncontrolled issue in our community.

Throughout the past month, we have witnessed a significant surge in violent and opportunistic crime and antisocial behaviour throughout the region, predominantly within the central city. Businesses, their employees, our residents, and visitors continue to be harmed by a continual stream of smash and grabs, and ram raids, that are leaving business owners out of pocket, and employees fearful for their safety. The only obvious form of support that has been provided is a police-controlled fund that as of October 2022, was publicly reported to have helped seven businesses is simply no longer enough to address this urgent issue.

We note the announcement made on 28 November. While this may provide some support, we remain concerned that it does not address the core issue of a lack of concern for noncriminal but antisocial and intimidating behaviour that may ultimately lead to criminal activity down the track.

Residents, visitors, and employees are reporting to businesses throughout the region that they feel unsafe and intimidated walking through the city in fear of being harassed by vagrants, groups of youth loitering on the street, and others engaging in anti-social behaviour, or as in the case of recent publicly reported incidents, serious physical assaults. These are real examples and real lives are being put at risk, and unfortunately, two deaths have occurred in recent weeks due to this unacceptable behaviour. Businesses are consistently raising concerns their reports of anti-social and intimidating behaviours that often lead to crime are not being dealt with in a timely, or appropriate manner, with sufficient consequences to deter further acts.

No one wants this to continue. The Chamber, and the undersigned businesses, would like to see immediate action from the Government. You have the tools, resources, and mechanisms at your disposal to make a difference, yet the actions of a few have been left uncontrolled to the point where they are having a long-lasting impact on the safety of our businesses, our residents, our visitors and the reputation of our city, our region and indeed the country.

We recognise that there are a number of complex factors that contribute to the causes of criminal and antisocial activity, and that ongoing challenges such as the truancy crisis, increased cost of living and the lingering effects of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 lockdowns are facilitating an environment where these actions are occurring at an increased rate, and that there are a number of long-term contributing social factors.

But there must be consequences for these actions, in the short term, and there must be further support for businesses. We request the following, in the first instance:

- An immediate reply explaining what actions have been undertaken, specifically in the Canterbury region, to address these issues.
- A commitment to further actions given the severity of the situation, and an indication of timing for those actions. We would like to see a commitment to increase authority and resource for those in roles such as the Police to expedite and sufficiently deal with the issues at hand.
- We would also like to see a review of the thresholds being applied to what is considered non-criminal activity that at this point, carries little if any consequences but does have a significant impact on the safety and security of both the business community, residents and visitors to our region.
- A regular update, provided to The Chamber monthly, outlining the actions that the Government is continuing to take to support businesses in the Canterbury region.

Yours sincerely,



Leeann Watson
Chief Executive
Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce

Giles Beal
General Manager
Russley Golf Club & Function Centre

Sam Lu
Managing Director
Taizi

Sid McAuley
Managing Director
Coolpak Coolstores Ltd

Caroline Harvie-Teare
Chief Executive
Venues Ōtautahi

Ian Lothian
Company Director
Meeting Point Limited

Calvin Smith
Director
Pet Nutrition NZ Limited Partnership

Garry Whall
Managing Director
Turbo Care NZ Ltd

Joanne Smith
Director
Pet Nutrition NZ Limited Partnership

Leanne Chapman
Finance & Operations Manager
Quasar Systems

Leanne Newsome
GM People and Culture
Christchurch Casino

Philip Wynands
Business Partner
Windsor Gallery

Tracey Wynands
Business Partner
Windsor Gallery

Delphine Ducaruge
General Manager
Sagen

Toni Wilson
Canterbury Farm Services

Brett Anderson
CEO
Christchurch Casino

Reinier Eulink
General Manager
Crowne Plaza Christchurch

Maryanne Toomer
Canterbury Recruitment Ltd

Sally Ching
Owner
306 Motel Apartments

Anna de Vries
People & Culture Manager
Mackersy Property Limited

Jeremy Harford
Director
Adapted Yoga and Pilates Ltd

Kate Singleton
Practice Manager
Structex

Maree Sinkovich
HR & HS Manager
Blacks Fasteners Ltd

Caley van Sande
Accounts Manager
Total Height Safety

Vanessa Croft
HR Manager
Daiken New Zealand Ltd - Rangiora

Tony Saunders
Director
R. Redpath Ltd

Vanessa O'Brien
CEO
OrbViz Ltd

Brigit Blair
Executive Chairman
Linden Leaves

Tim Capper
Director
IPC Computer Solutions

Jude Mackwell
Director
Zestpeople

Phyllis Thin
Motel Owner/Manager

Nathan Busch
Owner
Busch Joinery Ltd

Andrew Barclay
Managing Director
Wyma

Adrian Raine
Ray White Commercial Christchurch

Ian Little
Managing Director
Ian R Little Ltd

Kerrie Bloomfield
CHC Properties

Tony Garing
General Manager
John Rhind Funeral Directors

Shaun Stockman
Owner
Stockman Group Limited

Tom Thomson
Managing Director
EPL Group

Tim Mills
Chief Executive Canterbury Jockey Club

Peter Hay
Works Manager
Ravensdown Ltd

Murray McPherson
Director
Lifestyle Motorhomes Ltd

Kane Matthews
Xtend-Life Natural Products (Intl) Limited

Damien Fahey
Owner
Tabak Business Sales - South Island

Mary King
King Pharmacy Group

Mark Sherry
Managing Partner
Harmans Lawyers

Jason Dick
Manager
Powerboat Centre

Deborah Smith
Office Manager
Wilson Bulk Transport Limited

Sarah Priddle
Investment Adviser
Forsyth Barr

John Dick
Company Director
Powerboat Centre Ltd

Chris Lynch
Journalist / Broadcaster
Chris Lynch Media Limited

Kelly Morison
Centre Manager
The Crossing

Antony Gough
Managing Director
The Terrace Christchurch Ltd

Annabel Turley
Chairperson/Director
Central City Business Association/The
Dispensaries Ltd

Pete Glasson
Managing Partner
Antony and Mates

Peter Morrison MNZM
President
Hospitality NZ Canterbury

Bradley Conder
General Manager
ACCOR HOTELS

Jessica Marshall
Harmans

Geoffrey Olds
Managing Director
Pro-Con NZ Ltd

Lynda Vining
Company Director
Lindoc Enterprises Ltd

Lynne Robinson
Pegasus Fishing Ltd

Peri Drysdale
Untouched World Ltd

Gerry Austin
Director
Alpine Ice Sports Ltd

Paul O'Connell
Property Manager
J. Ballantyne & Co. Ltd , trading as
"Ballantynes"

Andrew Davies
Managing Director
Treology Ltd

Louise Neville
Chartered Accountant & Business Mentor
Accounting Solutions Ltd

Heather Brown
Supermarket Inner City

Paul Brown
General Manager
George Henry & Co Ltd

Neville Brown
Supermarket Inner City

Paul Taggart
CEO
Taggart Earthmoving Ltd

Mark Elliott
CFO
OSSIS Limited

Michael Bensemann
Director
Hepburn Joinery

Chris Hughes
Chief Executive
Switched On

Grant Walker
CEO
2B Connected

Luke Brown
Corporate Sales Manager
Farm Source

Bruce Garrett
Brook Serene & Co. Ltd.

Steve Bush
Manager
Trees for Canterbury

Nicki Carter
General Counsel
Carter Group

Dave Haines
Head of Food Services
Kilmarnock Enterprises

Jeremy Phillips
Director
Novo Group Ltd

Glenn Hansen
Vortex Engineering Group