

Mayoral Moments



Tim Shadbolt

Supporting the cause

LAST weekend I travelled to Dunedin to research the refugee issue and support Sir David Skeggs.

He is campaigning along with Mayor David Cull to retain our top-flight teaching hospital and specialist services in central Dunedin.

This is the third time I've joined forces with Dunedin over issues relating to our health services. The first protest was over the retention of neurological services, the second campaign was to oppose frozen food being shipped down from Auckland and this time it's all about location, location and location.

Having the Dunedin School of Medicine in close proximity to Dunedin Hospital is a critical factor when it comes to attracting clinical specialists to our region. Having well established

local infrastructure such as motels, supermarkets, cafes and restaurants is also important for those visiting loved ones who have been admitted to Dunedin Hospital.

I realise my regular critics will oppose me for leaving the city but I believe that vital issues impacting on the well-being of our citizens do not necessarily stop at our council boundary.

Central government officials often suggest local government should stick to roads, rubbish, sewerage and basic infrastructure, but it's interesting to note that when it comes to international issues such as the commemoration of World War 1 or tourism they expect councils to get involved.

That's why I feel guilt-free about supporting the development of a New Zealand War Memorial Museum at Le Quesnoy, in France. Australia, Canada and South Africa all have museums on the Western Front and the mayor of Le Quesnoy supports our proposal.

I don't believe we can put on blinkers and live an insular, introverted lifestyle. Local councils may only have a limited role in national and international affairs, but our involvement in the democratic process is often critical.

— *Tim Shadbolt is the Mayor of Invercargill*