



Artists impression of the Cardboard Cathedral for Christchurch

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Top Jobs

If you fit any of the job roles below then contact us now! Our clients are desperate to speak with the following:

- REVIT Technicians
- Bridge Design Engineers
- Bridge Design Technicians
- Civil Geotechnical Engineers
- Seismic Structural Engineers
- Stormwater Engineers
- Water Resource Engineers

Shortcuts to Knowledge

There will be so many things to consider when you move to New Zealand. Luckily you can share our contacts for:-

- Buying a House
- Renting property on your arrival
- Banking
- Tax & Trusts laws (UK to NZ)
- Child care and schooling
- Moving money to NZ
- Moving Pets to NZ
- Relocating your belongings
- Buying and Driving a car in NZ
- Kiwisaver (NZ pension scheme)
- Tax advice on keeping a UK rental property

We do not receive any benefit from these referrals, only the knowledge that your move will be less stressful!

[Want more info? Email us!](#)

New Zealand market update

Welcome to the April edition of the Catalyst Newsletter and the arrival of autumn in New Zealand. The recent changing of the clocks and cooler nights mean that winter isn't too far away which can either get you down or make you think that the ski season is upon us! Knowing how good the slopes are in NZ I'm inclined to feel pretty positive about winter.

Christchurch has been abuzz with activity these past few weeks with the development of the Christchurch Central Development Unit and the cardboard cathedral both making headlines. You can read about them both in this newsletter but certainly these events are a clear indication that things are moving in Christchurch and before long the reconstruction will really start to kick in.

Little has changed in the demand from our clients (both civil & construction contractors and the engineering consultants) with both looking close to home for the few people they need at this stage. As we discussed in last months newsletter those candidates arriving in Christchurch continue to find work fairly quickly. Not all will secure their ideal role first time round but the majority have at least secured jobs with a major organisation in their sector and can see a career path ahead of them. We do appreciate that this isn't an option for everyone. Those of you who can't make the move now will still get your opportunity when the rebuild takes off; this is a \$30 billion construction project and as such there will be a massive need for people from overseas. If you are considering a move please do speak with us first; there will be some experience which isn't in demand at the moment and the last thing we want is people stuck without a job!

Another area that has the media in a fluster over the past few weeks has been the accommodation problem in Christchurch. Much has been made of the lack of rental properties and places for people to live with a voracious media looking for a headline wherever it can. We're not saying there isn't a problem in Christchurch; whenever there is a disaster of this size accommodation becomes an issue, but this is the conclusion we have come to from speaking with our clients and candidates. So far all of the people we have placed have been able to find a place to live within a week and these include single people wanting to share a house to families wanting a place for themselves.

We think the main reason for the lack of accommodation is due to the attitude of the Christchurch locals. Most haven't had to travel more than 15 minutes to work in their lives and as such the concept of living further away from work is a non starter. Subsequently the properties closest to the city centre are snapped up as soon as they go on the market. The opposite can be said of workers from overseas whose travel times to and from work often average an hour each way. To them the concept of living 30 minutes from work is a luxury and as such they have far more choice when it comes to securing accommodation. Not everyone gets their ideal home first time around but they are securing a place to live, contrary to what the newspapers would have you believe.

As always those of you looking to make the move or already planning a trip do let us know so we can talk with you about your plans in detail and help in any way possible. Keep up to date with the latest news on the Catalyst Blog and follow our discussions on our Linked-In forum.

The CCDU - What is it?

The recent creation of the Christchurch Central Development Unit, or CCDU, is being seen as a significant move towards the rebuild of Christchurch. Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee announced the arrival of the new unit and went onto explain its purpose and role.

The unit will be headed up by Warwick Isaacs who currently holds the role of GM Operations within CERA (effectively in charge of the demolition plan to date). Warwick's appointment has been roundly applauded with his current experience in CERA and previous council experience highlighting him as the right man for the job.

The creation of the CCDU has received a warm welcome from most of the major stakeholders in the rebuild including the Christchurch City Council, Canterbury Business Leaders Group, Insurance Council and the cities property developers. The unit will work in partnership with the council and Mayor Bob Parker is seeing this as a massive commitment from the government and a huge step forward for the city. By creating the CCDU as part of CERA it inherits the powers of the larger group such as compulsory acquisition of land which will enable large projects to go ahead without delay. Under the new governance building consents will be awarded within 14 days to maintain the momentum of the rebuild.

The main focus of CCDU is to come up with a blueprint for the city within 100 days. Specific items to be included alongside private construction will be a new convention centre, law courts, a central police station and further development to the hospital. The original council draft plan for the city was completed within 9 months and has been under review with government since December. The plan has been largely accepted and will be used as the cornerstone for the blueprint to be produced by CCDU. Changes to the council plan include the removal of the light rail but more significantly the government has not endorsed the way in which the council wanted to enforce its vision. Subsequently aspects such as building heights, car parking, vehicle access etc will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Chris Armstrong

Case study of moving to Christchurch, NZ from the UK

Current Employer: Coffey Geotechnics

Having felt that his career had become somewhat stagnant in the UK Chris approached Catalyst to assist him with finding a challenging position in New Zealand. Chris secured an offer from Coffey Geotechnics to join the Christchurch team in the capacity of Project Geotechnical Engineer in September. Chris and his partner Joanne arrived in Christchurch in November 2011.

Q. What inspired you to consider moving with your family to New Zealand?

A. *My career stagnating in the UK and the weather were the main reasons for our move. The economy in New Zealand & Australia seemed better than Europe. Salary is now considerably better and contracted to work fewer hours (although I probably now work more hours than in the UK due to the amount of work here). The chance for a fresh start that moving within the UK probably wouldn't have given us.*

Q. Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

A. *I think so. I would definitely recommend it to people. The south island, however, can be quiet. If you're the sort of people that like the latest gadget, fake tan and new fashion it might not be for you.*

Q. How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

A. *We are definitely doing more than we would have in the UK. We don't just plod along and then do the same thing each weekend like go to the pub and then to the shops on a Saturday. We do different things most weekends and during the summer we were going out most nights – walking, running, barbeques, biking, football etc. Now that the nights are drawing in there is less opportunity to do things during the week.*

Q. What one thing would you have done differently?

A. *We would have probably tried to save more money before we came. Between deciding to come and getting here wasn't that long which meant we probably didn't have a lot saved. Once you pay for flights, parties, seeing friends before you leave, buying things to take with you, visas, furniture on arrival, doing things on arrival - you can be quite short of cash until you get paid and your expenses come through.*

Q. What one thing do you wish you had known about before moving?

A. *Christchurch CBD is out of bounds or dead where open – we probably didn't appreciate this before we came.*

Q. What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

A. *Do it! Make sure it is the right move for you though. You will be leaving all your friends and family behind. Before we moved we already lived away from our family and majority of friends (although more like 3 hours than 30). Through Skype and Facebook we probably speak to each other more now than we previously did. If you currently have a strong family and friend's network that you will be leaving behind then the move might not be for you or a member of your family. It is also really important for your spouse to meet friends as well. I would also recommend trying to meet people who you don't actually work with. Don't depend too much on your work friends. I would also say that if you are coming to work here in the construction / engineering industry then don't expect to get the Kiwi 'work life balance' that is advertised. The reason you are moving and the reason NZ wants your skills is because there is a lot of work here and you will likely need to work as hard as you did in the UK. This can be quite a balancing act when you are trying to create a new social life and keep your family members happy, who may not yet be working at the time.*

Q. Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move?

A. *Yes, definitely.*

Useful Facts:

1 st Interview to Job Offer -	4 Days
Offer to arrival -	59 days
Time since arrival -	145 Days

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Cardboard Cathedral?!

Christchurch's Anglican Cathedral has been the heart of the city since the start of its construction in 1864. Throughout its life it was subject to numerous earthquakes and up to February 2011 had only suffered superficial damage.

Unfortunately the February earthquake caused the tower and the west wall to collapse and two more subsequent shakes later in the year finally took the cathedral beyond the point of saving. In the past few months after much deliberation it was decided to demolish the remaining building; a process is now fully underway.

As the citizens of Christchurch mourn the loss of another of its iconic buildings they are now appreciating the opportunity they have to create a new and dynamic city where the old one stood. Nowhere is this desire for something special more apparent than in the design for the new interim cathedral in Christchurch. World renowned designer Shigeru Ban and architect Yoshe Narimatsu have come up with the world's largest emergency structure; the cardboard cathedral.

At a cost of \$5.3 million the cathedral will be made primarily of cardboard tubes with additional beams made from steel and timber. Weatherproof and fire resistant the cathedral will be built in Latimer Square, close to the location of the original cathedral and is expected to last for 20 years. The structure will seat 700 people and as well as serving the parish of St John will also be used for concerts and host a variety of artists from the Christchurch Philharmonic Orchestra to Dave Dobbin.

This design is radical by anyone's standards but it has certainly got the international community talking. If this is a sign of things to come then Christchurch could be a very exciting place to be in the years to come.

Sources: NZ Herald / Wikipedia / Stuff.co.nz

Another iconic Christchurch landmark to be demolished

Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Park- the sporting complex that was specifically built for the 1974 Commonwealth games – is the latest Canterbury landmark to have received its demolition order by CERA; as per the media release from Christchurch City Council below.

The Park, which has since 1974 been utilised as the venue for primary and secondary regional inter-school sports events, sustained too much damage during the February 22nd earthquake and had been closed since that time.

The 1974 Christchurch Commonwealth Games - officially named "the friendly games" was the last time that the entire Royal Family (Queen Elizabeth II, her husband and children) visited New Zealand as a group. New Zealand won a total of 35 medals; ranking New Zealand as fourth overall, with much larger countries such as Australia, England and Canada finishing first, second and third respectively.

The event of note being the 1500metre where New Zealander John Walker came second to Filbert Bay from Tanzania; both breaking the existing world record on the day, coupled with others in the same race recording the fourth, fifth and seventh fastest performances ever (at that time).

QEII Park and Recreation Centre to be demolished

8th April 2012

Most of the QEII Park Recreation and Sport Centre is to be demolished because the earthquake-damaged complex is considered to be dangerous.

Christchurch City Council has received a Notice of Demolition under Section 38(4) of the CER Act from the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA). The Council has agreed to the proposed demolition. However, the timeline for the demolition is yet to be confirmed.

CERA has issued the notice for the main stadium building, the covered stand and the north and south open stands because it considers them to be dangerous buildings. The CERA notice does not include the 50-metre pool which is in a separate building on the same site. However, as engineering reports released by the Council last month indicate, it is also significantly damaged.

Council General Manager Community Services Michael Aitken says the Council was aware from engineering reports that the complex was severely earthquake-damaged.

We already knew that engineers believe that the facility cannot be repaired to the same level as a new facility and these were details we shared with the public when we released the QEII engineering reports last month. We are aware that there is high community interest in the complex and we are keen to ensure that there is some certainty for our residents around its future."

The Council is currently considering the future of QEII as part of its draft Annual Plan. The Council's preferred option for QEII and the Centennial Recreation and Sport Centre is to develop the first stage of a multi-sport hub in the Central City and to build a community leisure facility and athletic track on the QEII site or another site in the east. The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback about this preferred option as part of the Annual Plan consultation process, which begins on 20 April.

Article directly sourced:

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/thecouncil/newsmedia/mediareleases/2012/201204183.aspx>