The Labour Leader visited businesses, community groups, Dunedin Hospital and the University of Otago on his recent visit.

Student culture and our tired hospital were persistent topics during Labour Leader Andrew Little’s day of visits in Dunedin on the 11th of May, just one day after the screening of a controversial documentary on the Sunday programme. These topics were raised over breakfast with the Mayor, Dave Cull and in a meeting with Vice Chancellor Harlene Hayne. Andrew Little was told that Otago University has programmes in place to help support and protect students, such as alcohol support and 24-hour-7-days-a-week campus surveillance. Other topics discussed included the funding of universities in New Zealand and the »

Top: Clare Curran and David Clark listen to Andrew Little addressing the media outside Dunedin Hospital
Top right: Andrew has a radio interview with Owen Rooney
Bottom right: Clare Curran, Mayor Dave Cull, Andrew Little and David Clark after early morning breakfast
student demographic. Did you know that the main group of international students to study at the University of Otago is Americans?

A tour of Dunedin Hospital’s buildings was next on the cards. The tour included a mix of old and new buildings, including the new children’s and neo-natal ward. From the very comprehensive tour, Andrew was able to see first-hand how the clinical services building is in dire need of repair, as well as the hospital’s very outdated ICU.

The newly refurbished children’s ward was a contrast and an example of how good modern hospital facilities can be. It included rooms for mothers of premature babies and facilities to help transition from the hospital to home environment, as well as a sensory room with lights and sounds to help child patients with learning difficulties such as autism.

At lunchtime Andrew addressed a large crowd of staff, students and members of the public at the University.

The afternoon saw visits to two local businesses: AbacusBio, an international leading company in agribusiness consulting; and Escea, a local manufacturer of gas fireplaces as well as a discussion about social housing with Presbyterian Support.

Full credit to Andrew for taking on the 10 hour visit schedule, on top of the travel, very much in his stride.
RIP Dame Dorothy

Dame Dorothy Fraser, one of Dunedin’s most distinguished citizens, died on Sunday 24th May at the age of 89. Dame Dorothy was the youngest ever member of the Labour Party when she joined as a 14 year old.

Dame Dorothy was a well-known community figure who gave so much back to her Dunedin community. She spent 29 years on the Otago Hospital Board, including as its first woman chair from 1974-86, was a Dunedin City Councillor, an Otago University councillor, Otago High School board of governors member, and chairwoman of Montecillo Trust Board.

Dame Dorothy was awarded the Queen’s Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977, a QSO for public services in 1978 and was made a Dame Commander in the New Year Honours announced on December 31, 1986.

David greatly valued her friendship and support.

Interview with Barrister Anne Stevens

What is your involvement with the Dunedin courthouse?

I have been practising law in Dunedin since 1988. As my area of practice is criminal law I appear daily in the Dunedin court as counsel. I take great pride in Dunedin’s courthouse, a standout feature of the city since 1901. The architecture compliments the nearby railway station and conveys a sense of stature and solemnity compatible with its function as the city’s seat of justice. In 2001 I was one of the two law society representatives on the committee that oversaw the refurbishment of the courthouse.

Tell us about the 2001 refurbishment.

For a year, all court users moved to the BNZ building in Princes Street while the Stuart Street court was brought into the 21st century in terms of functionality. Original features that had been lost were re-instated and the building earthquake strengthened. The work cost in the order of $11m. It was entirely worth it, the result was extremely workable and stunningly beautiful.

What changes have happened as a result of earthquake risk strengthening?

On 22 December 2011 half the building was closed down on the basis the tower constituted an earthquake risk to that portion of the building. Some $6m has now been spent since 2011, gradually relocating the courts such that now Stuart Street stands empty with no plan in place to resume its occupation. It is quite heart breaking given Dunedin’s low earthquake risk and the proven resilience of the building.

Are you concerned about when the courthouse will reopen?

Yes. I am actively pursuing its re-opening but would value local support to generate the level of energy that persuades decision makers the courthouse should be re-opened.
**OUT & ABOUT in Dunedin**

David Clark with Director, Nicola Young and Jim Hawker, Chairperson at the opening of new Anglican Family Care facility in Hanover Street

David Clark with doorknockers Marian Hobbs and Ryan Jones

With Otago Access Radio Community Liaison and morning show host, Jeff Harford, Jenny Roxburgh and Richard Tozer from the North East Valley Community Garden

North East Valley Project Community dinner with Matt, Iko, Sophie, David and Jackie

**Regional visits**

Labour MPs have been visiting the regions on a structured programme of visits.

Labour MPs in Gisborne at Universal Engineering. From left: Phil Matthews, David Clark MP, Grant Robertson MP, Graham MacKey, David Parker MP

Labour MPs in Paraparaumu enjoying a brew at Tuatara Brewery

**Home visits**

David has been doing home visits in Brockville and Wakari lately. He is making his way through Dunedin North suburbs over the rest of the year. You can look forward to receiving a fridge magnet and offer to visit in the mail. Popular topics so far include: housing issues, euthanasia, Health and Safety, Dunedin Hospital and Invermay.