

## **Memorandum marks a new relationship between Sister City Botanic Gardens, June 2007**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and the Christchurch Botanic Gardens was officially established at a small signing ceremony on Friday 8 June.

Dr David Mabberley, Director of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens in Seattle, joined Council Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager Michael Aitken to sign the MOU at the Townsend House in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

The idea of a MOU between the two Botanic Gardens was pursued a few years ago during a Mayoral visit to Seattle - one of Christchurch's seven sister cities. It was suggested there would be real value in formalising the relationship between the sister cities' botanic gardens in order to facilitate academic and scientific exchange as well as establish partnership projects.

Witnesses of the MOU signing included Botanical Services Operations Team Manager Jeremy Hawker and Brian Palliser, chair of the Christchurch-Seattle Sister City committee.

Mr Hawker says that after more than three years in the making, the signing of the MOU establishes a formal network for the two institutions to build on in developing future partnerships.

"The sharing of information, plant materials, research and staff exchanges will be invaluable as the Botanic Garden participates with global partners in protecting, conserving and educating the public about the world's biodiversity," Mr Hawker says.

For more information on the MOU contact International Relations Coordinator Dave Adamson on 941 8775.