



Mayor Alistair Sowman opens the seminar, with Kay Saville-Smith looking on.

# Housing tool launched

*By Cathie Bell*

A new tool has been developed to help older people make the best choice about housing for them, and it was presented in Marlborough last week.

The Centre for Research, Evaluation, and Social Assessment has coordinated research on housing changes in older people as part of a wide-ranging look at housing in New Zealand. Some of the research was carried out in Marlborough.

Marlborough-based research director Kay Saville-Smith says downsizing is not always the best option for people and it does not always free up as much equity as people anticipate.

There are other options than home ownership for people, such as a licence to occupy or renting, and these should be considered too, she says.

The tool sets out the options in great detail and helps people work through what works best for them. It is available online and in hard copy, from the centre.

Kay says it doesn't provide the solution for people, but it helps them clarify what they want and options to help them achieve that.

The tool was launched at the seminar on Friday afternoon, along with presentations on the research gathered by the centre and its partners.

Marlborough mayor Alistair Sowman opened the seminar, saying housing presented lots of challenges.

Downsizing is easy to recommend to people, but smaller houses are hard to find, and people aren't building many of them, he says.

"It's key to make sure housing is fit for purpose."