

was so valuable to him. He gives as an example the use that FMG make of net promoter scores (NPS). “While we use net promoter scores, FMG are much more sophisticated in the use of the feedback they get. They are looking at sentiment analysis among other things, and this is something I would like to look at in the future. It has gone on the list!” Peter says. He adds that it was also invaluable being able to sit in on the two day induction course for all new FMG employees.

What of the host company? Steve Beale, head of Sales Operations and Business Change at FMG, says that his organisation were interested to find out more from Peter about the high priority given by Cornish Mutual to on-site visits to rural policyholders. He talks of the two firms’ common goals and adds: “There is a strong willingness to help each other out – it’s what being a mutual is all about”.

Peter Beaumont was also able to visit another ICMIF member on his way to New Zealand. A stop-over in Singapore gave him the opportunity to meet Ken Ng, the CEO of NTUC Income, and his Chief Operating Officer Peter Tay. “Ken and Peter were very generous to give me their time and equally generous in sharing thoughts around the digital strategy they are pursuing,” Peter says.



**ABOVE** Nicki Mackay (Area Manager Mid and South Canterbury/North Otago), Steven Beale (Head of Sales operations and Business Change) , Scott Harvey (Manager Risk and Quality Assurance – all FMG) discuss business strategies over dinner with Peter Beaumont

The visit by Peter Beaumont was one of a number of similar informal member-to-member networking opportunities which ICMIF has been pleased to facilitate in recent months. “Cornish Mutual wanted Peter to visit other mutual companies and experience different cultures. The remit was to spend time with senior management and provide a ‘friendly audit’ back to the CEO of the company he visited. We gave them a shopping list of members and they were keen to visit FMG first because of the agricultural link,” says ICMIF’s Mike Ashurst.

It wasn’t long before Cornish Mutual could offer something back to another ICMIF member firm, as Mike Ashurst goes on to explain. “At the same time I had a long discussion with one of our Canadian members Trillium, mainly about leadership development. Tracy MacDonald, Vice President Corporate Services at Trillium, wanted to be put in touch with other ICMIF members and I introduced Tracy to FMG and Cornish. That led to **Mike Virley**, Trillium’s Vice President, Member Services, visiting Cornish as part of his time in Britain for the London ICMIF conference,” he says.

**BELOW** Peter Beaumont and Alan Giles with FMG dairy farming clients inspecting their newly replaced rotary milking platform which was replaced following the Kaikoura Earthquake



Just as Peter Beaumont returned from New Zealand with a very positive report for his colleagues, so **Mike Virley** is full of praise for his time spent with Cornish Mutual. “We are of a similar size in terms of revenues and number of employees and we both have a niche focus on agricultural insurance. It was refreshing to discuss mutual challenges and share our ideas and strategic responses to the threats and opportunities in a very safe and non-competitive environment. That common ground, that spirit of mutuality, allowed for an open, candid exchange,” Mike says.

Among the areas of discussion between Mike and his hosts was the importance of the retention of members through building long-term relationships. **Mike Virley** says that he was pleased to be able to spend a morning with one of Cornish Mutual's field force staff. “He was completely responsible for the member relationship, and had recently been granted underwriting authority. It was clear that the one point of contact for the member for all services reduced much of the usual friction in the relationship caused by having to deal with a number of different individuals,” Mike explains. Trillium is also well advanced in plans to introduce the role of what it calls its Agri-Business Development Advisors, with much the same strategy of building closer links with members, so that Mike says that the visit to Cornish Mutual was very timely.



**ABOVE** Peter Beaumont during a visit to Christchurch where he saw some of the earthquake damage

“It validated that our vision was on the right track, that we could successfully change our model to have individuals, in tandem with our broker partners, owning and assisting in the member relationship as a whole,” he says.

“We are hopeful that we have created a relationship that will be fostered long into the future and that is reciprocally and

mutually beneficial for Cornish Mutual and Trillium Mutual. I also want to thank ICMIF for making the connection possible and to Shaun Tarbuck's insightful recommendation to us that we may find more value in travelling the world and sharing ideas with other mutuals than in hiring consultants to recommend solutions,” **Mike Virley** concludes.

**BELOW** One of the rural farms in Cornwall visited by **Mike Virley**, Vice President of Member Services, Trillium Mutual Insurance Company during his visit to Cornish Mutual

