



Pokie Proceeds: Building Strong Communities





Hon. Peter Dunne

Minister of Internal Affairs

New Zealand has a strong and vibrant community culture built on people coming together to help others. Much of this support is provided by community groups across a variety of activities, including sport and recreation, the arts, health and education.

Critical to the success of every one of these organisations is funding. Electronic gaming machines, also called pokie machines, poker machines or one-armed bandits, provide a substantial amount of money which is returned to the community in the form of grant funds.

Pokies are sometimes seen only in a negative light because of their association with gambling harm but, provided they are regulated and operated properly by responsible societies and venues, pokies provide a valuable source of funding for community groups.

Around \$260 million of gaming funds annually goes to a range of community causes, much of it to the region where it was collected. Many community groups that benefit would find it difficult to operate without grants from gaming machine societies.

Some community groups, for various reasons, prefer not to source this money but for many others it's a lifeline. In this booklet you will read about some of the activities pokie money has funded. These are stories about how lives have been changed and communities enriched because of access to this funding.

I believe the sustainability of funding from the gambling sector in New Zealand plays a crucial role in building strong communities. As long as we continue efforts to reduce gambling harm, through regulation and social initiatives, we can also celebrate this fact.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Peter Dunne'.



Gareth Bostock

Director Gambling Compliance Group

One of the purposes of the New Zealand gambling legislation is to ensure that money from gambling benefits the community. It's a system unique to our country and one which provides grant funding for thousands of good causes.

Here at the Department of Internal Affairs we're used to tracking the numbers and trends associated with pokie gambling in pubs and hotels but, for the first time we're taking a look at the stories behind those numbers.

I hope, like me, you'll find these stories interesting and inspiring. These are only a small selection of organisations that benefit from pokie proceeds but they provide a real insight into how the money is used and how it enhances our communities.

There is a range of gaming machine societies which distribute grants to community groups. The largest three, in terms of the amount they give, are: the New Zealand Community Trust, Pub Charity and the Lion Foundation. In this booklet we've profiled just a handful of beneficiaries of this money but they provide a good representation of the mix of good causes funded by all 37 gaming societies.

Within each of the stories you will find advice from the organisation about what they think are important things to remember when applying for pokie grants.

We have also included a tip sheet that pulls together a lot of guidance from the sector to help those wanting to apply for pokie grants. Applying for grant money can take a huge amount of resource for organisations. We hope this booklet provides some useful tips for securing pokie funds that in turn provide real benefit to New Zealanders.

We know that pokies can lead to some people suffering gambling harm. However, the gambling system in New Zealand is set up to ensure some of those harms are mitigated by pokie proceeds returning to the community and being used for good causes.

The stories in this booklet show the extent of how the community benefits. We hope you enjoy reading them!



**Providing life
lessons to
Kiwi kids**



On any given day somewhere around New Zealand school children are learning about life – about healthy eating, about respect and about how their bodies work.

These lessons are delivered to more than 245,000 primary and intermediate pupils every year by Life Education. Classes take place in colourful mobile classrooms, emblazoned with the organisation's gangly mascot, Harold the Giraffe.

Life Education is about enhancing the lives of young Kiwis, says CEO John O'Connell.

"We believe if kids have good self esteem and a sense of identity they're less likely to make bad decisions," he says.

Life Education is a charitable trust, which relies entirely on sponsorship and grants for its work. John says money from gaming societies is a significant part of the mix.

"Our organisation is very dependent on gaming funds. They're a core part of our income stream and without them we just couldn't run our programmes nationwide."

The organisation delivers its programmes through 33 trusts which coordinate visits to schools in their area. Sessions are run by specialist health education teachers and followed up by classroom teachers.

"Being a child and growing up is not easy. We help children understand their own identity – that it is OK to be different – and we help build their resilience. Bullying, cyber-safety and obesity are all challenges for children today and mental health and wellbeing is so important to how a child responds to these challenges."

As a charity, Life Education's aim is to keep any cost to schools as low as possible to ensure its services are accessible to all. Fundraising activities, donations and grant funding from providers such as gaming societies, are vital to achieving that goal and removing barriers, particularly for disadvantaged communities.

Life Education applies for grants from Pub Charity, The Southern Trust and the Lion Foundation. It applies as a national organisation and the individual trusts make separate applications to support their work locally.

John O'Connell says the money Life Education gets as a national body is used to support the operating costs of the trusts.

"Last year \$230,000 from gaming was used to provide centralised services, such as online support, to track school feedback and provide accounting services. This achieves economies of scale and reduces administrative duplication."

Process is easy

John says the gaming trusts make the application process very easy and recipient-centred.

"They make it a very simple and straightforward process. All they really need is a simple and brief outline of why you need a grant; then, once it has been used, evidence that the funds were spent as intended. That's about as complicated as it gets.

"You can download an application form and at best it might take you half an hour to complete the form and print off the accompanying documents.

"There are certain requirements they need to meet as part of the regulations, and to make sure it is a genuine request, but they don't make it complicated."

John says the best thing about gaming funds is the quick turnaround time.

"In most cases you will know within three to four weeks if you have been successful and will receive the funds straight away."

John's tips for would-be applicants:

- Read what the various gaming societies fund and what they don't. Each trust determines what community projects they support and what types of expenditure they approve.
- If you are declined, reapply. You may have been declined because funds were allocated already and it was just the timing of when your grant was received.
- Read the checklist on their form. Applications are often declined because something simple wasn't included or signed.
- Say thanks! Trusts want to know their grants are getting the best outcomes in the community. It's in your interests to help them have that confidence.

For the dedicated staff of Life Education, reward comes from seeing a light go on in a child's eyes or to know they have triggered a change, however small. For John O'Connell it is believing his organisation is making a difference.

"We are seeing positive trends in youth health and wellbeing. The Youth 2000 series, New Zealand's largest survey of youth health and wellbeing, reports positive trends in reducing smoking, binge drinking and those trying marijuana for the first time. Being able to support children in schools by ensuring cost does not prohibit participation is critical; through charity gaming support we can achieve that."





World class in Riverton

‘Do not drive past this museum. It is awesome and has fantastic displays’

‘An unexpected gem...Incredibly well set out and narrated from beginning to end’

‘This museum is extremely well presented and gives insights into the history and heritage of the area and forebears.’

Glowing comments like these recently won Te Hikoi museum in Riverton a TripAdvisor excellence award. The small museum and visitor centre, 25 minutes from Invercargill, is a jewel on the Southern Scenic Route, a popular destination for school trips and a steady source of tourist dollars for the local economy.

The development of the popular heritage attraction would not have been possible without the support of the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust which has poured \$70,000 into the venture over the past four years. The Mosgiel-based trust is one of New Zealand’s smallest gaming societies, with only three employees. “We’re a couple of ex-academics and business consultants operating from home and just trying to make a difference where we can,” trustee Mearl Caskey says.

Te Hikoi Southern Journey was opened by then Prime Minister Helen Clark in 2007. The museum and visitor information centre, overlooking the Jacobs River estuary, tells the story of the history and development of the Riverton-Aparima area. With colourful, interactive displays and life-sized characters, it depicts the early life of Māori and the arrival of settlers, some of whom forged a life as sealers and whalers in a sometimes inhospitable environment. It also documents what are believed to be some of the first recorded interactions between Māori and Pakeha. The influence of Chinese gold miners is also woven into the colourful history of the area.



“We constantly strive to create new exhibitions for the community, visitors, tourists and school education,” manager, Carole Power said.

The support of the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust has been critical, she adds.



“They understand what we are trying to achieve and because of their support we have been able to create a world-class experience.”

If comments on TripAdvisor are anything to go by, Te Hikoi has become a ‘must-see’ for visitors to Southland. In 2015 the museum hosted almost 23,000 visits, including schools from all over Southland and Fiordland. Local shops, cafes and accommodation providers naturally benefit as coaches deliver thousands of tourists into the little township.

The first grant of \$15,000 from the trust, in 2012, funded an audio-visual display in a unique sailing ship theatre. The 30-minute presentation provides an introductory overview of the characteristics and history of the area. In 2014, \$5000 was granted for the development of a science hub. The area features a microscope linked into a TV screen where rocks and minerals can be examined. There is also an aquarium with adult whitebait (supplied by DOC) and a rare native frog. School education programmes are held in the space and science-related talks given by various local experts.

A second grant of almost \$16,000 in 2014 funded some operational costs and a whitebaiting exhibition, explaining the history and attraction of this popular activity carried out on rivers and estuaries throughout the area.

Grants provide lifeline

Because the museum receives no government funding and limited money from local councils, Carole says access to gaming proceeds, mostly via the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust, is essential to its survival.

“We have only one paid staff member so have to rely heavily on volunteers, most of whom are now in their mid-seventies. We have found it hard to attract younger volunteers but funding from the trust has

enabled us to employ a local tourism student over the summer period, which has helped a lot in the busy tourist season,” Carole says.

Carole says dealing with the trust has been a ‘first-class’ experience. The application process was easy and trustee Mearl Caskey went out of his way to help and answer any questions she had.

“It’s been fantastic to be able to apply for small amounts as we’ve needed the funds and to get the money so quickly. I can’t speak highly enough of the value of the Trust to Te Hikoi and therefore our community.

“Gaming funds are of paramount importance to small operations like ours. Without them we wouldn’t be able to create new stories and exhibitions and would probably have to shorten our opening hours. We are the only place on the Southern Scenic route telling important stories about Māori history so we play an important role for schools, tourists, and the Southland community. Also, being open all year enables the local community to have access to revenue from tourists.”

Carole’s tips for would-be applicants:

- Be up-front about what you want to achieve with the funds. Provide enough detail but not too much
- Explain clearly how the money will benefit the community
- Look carefully at the checklist of information required to support your application and make sure you provide everything needed
- Tick each item on the checklist to show what you have included. Funders will always then remember that your applications are easy to work through
- Be sure to thank the trust as soon as they notify you of your successful application
- Ensure your bookwork is sent in on time when it comes to reporting back on how the money was spent.



**Making tracks
with pokie
proceeds**



Careering down hillsides, heart pumping and mud flying, isn't everybody's cup of tea, but mountain biking is a popular and growing sport in New Zealand.

Around 800 devotees belong to the Manawatu Mountain Bike Club (MMBC), one of the largest clubs in the country – and a very active one. Founded in 1988 the club has a full events calendar, plenty of projects on the go and many active volunteers.

With the help of gaming funds MMBC is coordinating the building of two new trails at Arapuke Forest Park just outside Palmerston North. The park, also called the Arapuke Mountain Bike Park (for obvious reasons), already boasts 15 kilometres of bike trails for competent riders. The two new ones, one uphill and one down, will be a little gentler and cater for families and less-experienced riders.

Secretary and Funding Officer, Rachel Beaver, says the club believes the new trails will increase participation and use of the park by riders of all skill levels.

"We hope they will bring more cyclists to this great public space and we intend to run events here that we hope will attract more people from outside our region," Rachel adds.

The new trails are being professionally built by Southstar Trails, which has carved out mountain bike trails in seemingly impossible places all over the country. Trails cost between \$3 and \$20 per metre to build, depending on the terrain and features. Some of the funding will come from the Palmerston North City Council, which owns the park and supports MMBC to manage it, the rest from the club's fundraising efforts.

Pokie funds part of fundraising mix

Rachel says the club has applied successfully to gaming societies for some of the money.

"The Lion Foundation has given us \$28,000 and the Infinity Foundation, Pub Charity, New Zealand Community Trust, Trail Fund and Mainland Foundation between one and five thousand a piece. We are very grateful for their support."

As funding officer, Rachel has become pretty adept at applying for funds and understands the process.

"You really need to do your homework and find out the sort of activities each organisation funds so you don't waste your time and theirs. The Lion Foundation for instance, favours projects that are for the 'public good' and that encourage public participation."

"I find the process pretty straightforward, but it is important to have all the documentation you need before sitting down to complete an application."

She says she doesn't think twice about picking up the phone and asking questions, if necessary.

"I have found gaming societies very willing to answer any questions you have and to talk you through making an application. I have in the past asked for an extension of time for various reasons and they have been very open to that."

Rachel's tips for would-be applicants:

- Do your homework. Go to the right society for the right project
- Know the criteria and make sure you meet it
- If you have a question, have a look at the FAQs first. Chances are someone has asked the same question before
- If you still need clarification, pick up the phone.

One thing that irks Rachael in these technological times is that many societies still require applicants to print out and post forms and documentation rather than doing it electronically – "Just a small thing," she says, "but I'd like to see that change."

The two new trails being built at Arapuke Mountain Bike Park are a small part of the club's plans to create a truly great community facility. Volunteers are working on creating even more trails and by 2020 MMBC plans to have 30 kilometres of trails running through the park to suit all levels of skill, including a national-level downhill trail and skills area.

"This park will be a truly great community facility and the funds we've received have certainly been applied for the 'public good'," Rachel says. "The development is very exciting and we hope our funders will be proud of what we've achieved with their generous contributions."





Transforming young lives in South Auckland





A partnership between a national gaming society and an innovative health charity is transforming the lives of children in South Auckland.

The Dunedin-based Southern Trust, through the Middlemore Foundation, is supporting a new and ambitious pilot programme to improve the lives of children in Papakura, one of New Zealand's poorest communities.

Mana-ā-riki aims to support children by improving their health at school and at home so they are better able to learn, and to provide digital tools to enhance that learning.



Pam Tregonning, Executive Director of the Middlemore Foundation, says goals include reducing truancy, improving results at school, lowering rates of hospital admissions for preventable illnesses and improving health and wellbeing through warm, dry, violence-free homes.

"These kids are some of the most disadvantaged in our country," Pam says. "Many suffer from third-world diseases, live in damp and overcrowded homes and don't have access to technology that other Kiwi kids take for granted. We'll be tackling all these obstacles that prevent them reaching their potential."

The Papakura pilot - Kootuitui ki Papakura - is currently focused on 1700 children across six schools with the intention to extend it to 10. The Southern Trust is supporting one of those schools, Park Estate School, with a grant of \$116,000 a year for three years. The money is paying for nurses to staff a school-based health clinic and on providing students with electronic tablets. Southern Trust Chief Executive Officer Karen Shea says the

gaming society is delighted to be backing such a worthwhile initiative, which has the potential to achieve real change.

"This is a new approach that's taking a holistic, wrap-around approach to problems of poverty, under-achievement and poor health," Karen says. "It couldn't be a better fit for our criteria of achieving real community benefits through the distribution of gaming proceeds."

It's not the first time the Middlemore Foundation and Southern Trust have teamed up on health projects that have had wide-reaching benefits for the communities of South Auckland. The partnership spans 15 years and began in 2000 when the gaming society provided funding for the Kidz First Children's Hospital that was being built on the Middlemore site.

"It wasn't so much bricks and mortar," says Karen Shea, "but nice-to-haves that eased the experience of being in hospital for both children and their families."

Since then the Trust has funded hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of sophisticated health equipment for hospitals and health facilities in Counties Manukau.

"Sometimes the health budget just can't meet all the needs of a growing and complex population, particularly keeping on top of diseases like diabetes with all the complications that can arise such as kidney disease, foot problems and blindness," says Karen.

The Trust recently paid \$242,000 for an Ophthalmology camera and \$400,000 to fit out the eye clinic at the SuperClinic, the specialist outpatient centre in Manukau.

"We feel our funding through the Middlemore Foundation benefits the community in a real way and that gives us a lot of satisfaction," says Karen. "We have a very good relationship with Pam and the board, as well as the clinicians."

Karen regularly travels from Dunedin to Auckland to see for herself what the Trust's funding is providing and the difference it's making.

Pam Tregonning says she can't speak highly enough of their benefactor.

"Without the Southern Trust we wouldn't be able to do half the things we do and they are wonderful to deal with," Pam says. "We know if we put a proposition to them that's new and innovative they will give us good, honest feedback. Because of our long association, they understand our purpose and commitment and what we are trying to achieve."



While many other applicants have a fairly remote relationship with the gaming societies that fund them, the Middlemore Foundation prefers initially to talk face-to-face about projects before submitting the paperwork. Given the complexity and size of the amounts at stake, Pam says that works best for them.

As a result of this special partnership, children in South Auckland are getting their health needs met at school-based health clinics and enjoying using new electronic tablets. Most parents have taken up the offer of paying these off at a low \$3.50 a week over three years.

If the Papakura pilot is successful, Pam Tregonning says the programme will be extended to other communities where children are caught in a cycle of poor health, challenging home environments and below-average educational outcomes.

"This is a national issue not just an Auckland one," Pam says. "Investment in this programme is already showing that gaming money can be put to good use to make a significant difference to kids."



**Pub Charity
gets Stella back
on her feet**

Aucklander Bevan McClay owes his life to his dog Stella.

The Epilepsy Assist Dog's quick action in getting help when Bevan had a seizure won her a bravery award and the eternal gratitude of Bevan and his family.

Bevan was at home cooking on the BBQ at the time and fell across the grill. Stella rushed inside and alerted Bevan's teenage daughter.

"Stella was apparently really agitated and clearly indicating in classic 'Lassie style' that she needed my daughter to follow her," Bevan says.

Bevan suffered severe burns to face and hands, which required skin grafts and six months off work. However, if it hadn't been for Stella it could have been much worse.

"I joke that she saved my bacon. She literally stopped me from cooking," Bevan says.

Stella is one of 18 dogs specially trained by the NZ Epilepsy Assist Dog Trust to keep their owners safe. The dogs are taught to stay with the person when they have a seizure and can do everything from getting help to fetching a phone or medication and even taking off the person's glasses. Stella also brings a towel.

"When I have a seizure alone at home I usually bang my head and there's blood. It is helpful to have a towel to mop up as I'm coming round," Bevan says.

Then the tables turned

One day last summer Stella herself needed urgent help and it was a gaming society that came to the rescue.

While enjoying a morning walk in an Auckland Park the nine-year-old Golden Retriever injured her leg.

"She was having a bit of a run and she stepped in a hole," Bevan recalled. "I heard a yelp and she couldn't walk."

A vet confirmed Stella had ruptured a cruciate ligament and would need urgent surgery. The cost of the operation was more than Bevan could afford so he called Andrea Hawkless, director and founder of the NZ Epilepsy Assist Dogs Trust.

"I immediately thought of Pub Charity because they've helped us in the past," Andrea said. "They were absolutely amazing. They understood the urgency and approved our application very quickly. They couldn't have been more helpful."

The Trust asked for \$2000 to cover Stella's operation and another \$500 to purchase new coats for the other dogs. Epilepsy Assist Dogs wear distinctive purple coats to tell them apart from guide dogs and other companion animals. Like guide dogs, they can legally travel on trains, buses, planes and taxis.



Thanks to the grant from Pub Charity, Stella had the surgery and, after six weeks of recuperation, was back on her feet. She was also back on duty as Bevan's constant companion, enabling him to work in an Auckland camera shop and live an independent life.

"Stella has changed my life and provides reassurance for me and my family. I can have a seizure anytime, anywhere. I usually don't know where I am and can be incoherent. Having an Epilepsy Assist Dog immediately identifies that you have a medical condition and are not some drunk who has fallen over in the park."

Bevan says he is very grateful to Pub Charity for funding Stella's surgery.

"The Epilepsy Assist Dog Trust is not a well-known charity so it is not heaving with money. Yet when things happen to animals and they need veterinary treatment it can be hugely expensive. Pub Charity had no hesitation in helping out and I will always be extremely grateful," Bevan says.

The sentiment is echoed by Andrea Hawkless who says without the help of gaming societies, such as Pub Charity and the Lion Foundation, her trust couldn't operate. She has also applied for pokie funds once or twice a year to cover training and travel costs.

"Our clients and trainers are spread throughout New Zealand. Our head trainer occasionally holds a training day in Auckland to bring everybody together. We simply couldn't do this without grants from gaming funds."

Some tips for would-be applicants

Andrea Hawkless says she finds the process of applying for grants quite simple and the societies are very helpful.

"Some require more paperwork than others but they're always approachable if something needs explaining. I think it is important to have legitimate requests and report honestly on how the money has been used.

"I'd also advise people not to be tempted to ask too often so that other charities get to benefit as well."

Stella received a special bravery award for her quick action in saving Bevan's life but she is his hero every minute of every day.

"She's given me my independence and that is everything," he says.



**Grants ensure all
kids can enjoy
outdoor learning**

Students from, Te Kura o Hirangi, a Māori immersion school in Turangi, recently left the comfort of their classroom to try caving, rock climbing, abseiling, bush walks and kayaking.

Fears were faced, boundaries pushed, and leaders emerged. Over the five-day course, the 44 students from year seven to 13 also learned the importance of trust and teamwork.

Their visit to Hillary Outdoors, adjacent to the Tongariro National Park, was made possible with the help of grants from gaming societies such as Pub Charity and the NZ Community Trust (NZCT). Hillary Outdoors (formerly The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre) applies to about 20 gaming societies each year to enable youngsters from low-decile schools to participate in its programmes. CEO Graham Seatter says about 1500 students a year benefit.

“Our mission is to support the growth and development of young New Zealanders for the benefit of our communities and our country. The areas of greatest need are usually the areas of least affordability so it’s vital that we work with kids from all socio-economic backgrounds, and that can only happen with donations and grants.”

Hillary Outdoors, a charitable trust, provides outdoor education primarily to young people. The organisation, founded by Graeme Dingle with Sir Edmund Hillary as patron, opened its first centre in 1972 beside the Tongariro National Park. In 2006 a second centre, with a marine focus, opened on Great Barrier Island.

Dingle believed that for young people to thrive and achieve, they needed to be introduced to new experiences and skills in a way that would encourage them to want to take part again. For this reason, he believed in an instructional style that offered support and caring at an individual level. He also believed that the best learning experiences are fun!



Heemi Ferris-Bretherton, a teacher who accompanied the students from Te Kura o Hirangi, says the students certainly had a lot of fun but the experience provided much more.

“The students were challenged and given a unique blend of experiences. The week gave them many opportunities to lead from within their own group,” Hemi said.

“It was a really treasured learning environment for us all ‘he taonga tuku iho’ that we must preserve and through future teachings begin to foster the principles of ‘kaitiakitanga’ and ‘whakawhanauatanga’.”

Making it possible

If it weren’t for gaming society grants the students from Te Kura o Hirangi would never have had the experience. Grant and sponsorship money was used to subsidise the \$590 per-student cost of the five-day course, meaning the school had to meet only a third of the total \$30,000 cost.

“We are very grateful to the gaming societies for their support of Hillary Outdoors. This funding really helps us to make a difference in the education of young New Zealanders,” Graham Seatter said.

He likes dealing with gaming societies because they have funds they must distribute regularly and responses are usually quite quick.

“They typically have criteria that you must satisfy and some of them will be quite pro-active in looking for the best ways of supporting your business.”

Mr Seatter says the biggest challenge is learning the types of activities different societies may or may not support. But once that is sorted the application process is very straightforward.

He advises any group considering applying for gaming machine funding to try to build a relationship with the societies rather than just applying ‘cold’.

At the end of their five-day experience the weary students from Te Kura o Hirangi headed home, some feeling proud to have simply survived, others having discovered skills and inner strength they didn’t know they possessed. It’s all part of the experience Graham says.

“Our goal is for participants to learn more about themselves and the infinite possibilities that exist within. We understand that not everyone will necessarily excel or even enjoy every outdoor experience. However we do know that working as a member of a team in a variety of settings will produce many meaningful learning moments that are transferable to other areas.”

That’s why, says Graham Seatter, it’s important for all young people to have the opportunity to participate in the sort of programmes Hillary Outdoors offers.

“Without the contribution of gaming societies, for these particular students and others like them, that experience wouldn’t have been possible and the potential for personal development and insights never realised.”





Gaming
funds keep
historic pool open

It is 6.30 on a winter's morning as a group of pink-cheeked, regulars arrive at the Dunedin Physio Pool. Friendly banter and laughter fill the humid air and then deep 'oohs' and 'aahs' as bodies are lowered into what feels like a big warm bath. At a constant 35 degrees Celsius this is not a pool that is difficult to get into.

The historic pool, in the grounds of Dunedin Hospital, was designed originally for hospital and physio patients but is now open to the community, attracting about 40,000 visits a year. Users include people with disabilities, patients recovering from injuries or surgery and locals who simply enjoy relaxing in one of New Zealand's largest warm-water pools.

But, despite its popularity and therapeutic benefits, the purpose-built hydrotherapy pool is facing an uncertain future. The only reason it is still open is because of the strong advocacy of a community trust and substantial funding from a gaming society.

The Bendigo Valley Sports and Charity Foundation recently gave two grants, totalling \$100,000, to the Otago Therapeutic Pool Trust which is battling to keep the pool open. The Trust was formed in response to the first threatened closure in 1983.

Back then, to keep the pool open, the Trust effectively partnered with the Southern District Health Board (SDHB) by sharing operating costs and opening the facility to the public to generate revenue. All was going relatively smoothly until mid-2014 when the SDHB announced it intended to stop funding the pool altogether and close it at the end of the year. The Trust immediately revived efforts to save the facility. Secretary-Treasurer Neville Martin says they managed to get a stay of execution but there was a catch.

"The SDHB agreed to postpone closure for six months to give us time to carry out a feasibility study but we were told the trust would have to pay the full running costs over those six months," he says.

It was calculated that those operating costs, until June 2015, would amount to roughly \$50,000 so the trust applied to the Bendigo Valley Sports and Charity Foundation for the funding. Neville says the Foundation made the process very easy.

"There was a short and simple application form and it was extremely helpful to be able to discuss why we needed the grant at an early stage of the application process.

"Bendigo Valley grasped exactly what the problem was and I had verbal confirmation within a week that our grant application was successful. The money meant we could keep the pool open while we carried out the feasibility study and further fundraising. This was excellent news for the pool users and wider community."

The feasibility study identified that approximately \$1M would be needed for deferred maintenance and improvements. A community fundraising campaign was launched and grants sought from charitable donors. A number of gaming societies were also approached, including Bendigo Valley, which approved a second grant of \$50,000.

"We were very grateful to get this second substantial grant from Bendigo Valley and for their support on behalf of the community," Neville said. As an experienced fundraiser Neville finds gaming societies easy to deal with.

"I think one advantage is that they are more connected to the public than some other providers such as private charitable trusts, which have strict rules about who should benefit," he says.

"I think that gaming societies fulfil an important role in assisting community groups to fund projects which benefit the community. It is not easy asking for public money. There are very few individuals who can afford to donate much more than a bit of their spending money to a community project so organisations like ours rely very heavily on gaming societies to help."

The Trust's plans to secure a long-term lease of the pool from the SDHB, before it commences the upgrade, are still up in the air while proposals for the redevelopment of Dunedin Hospital are decided. In the meantime, thanks to the work of the Trust, and funds from Bendigo Valley, the Dunedin Physio Pool continues to serve the needs of the local community.

Neville's advice for other applicants:

- Check which gaming societies are likely to help
- Phone a contact person within the society to discuss whether your project is suitable for the society to consider
- Be prepared to spend a lot of time and energy on completing the application properly
- Answer every question on the form no matter how difficult or irrelevant it may seem.



Hamilton
New Zealand Riding for the Disabled

Indoor Arena

Funding new
facilities

On a crisp Waikato morning a group of riders arrive by van at Hamilton Riding for the Disabled for their weekly session. The smiles say it all. Volunteer Lisa White has seen this group grow from being socially-withdrawn and uncertain around the horses to forming friendships and becoming confident with the animals as well as with one another.

"It's just great to see the transformation," Lisa says. "There's lots of enjoyment and camaraderie and so much love and respect for the horses. Coming here has become a social highlight for this group as well as being therapeutic. It's just neat to have been part of making that happen."

Around 100 riders a week, from toddlers to seniors, take part in therapeutic programmes offered by Hamilton Riding for the Disabled. The service is in such demand that there is a waiting list, but the organisation has recently been able to extend its programmes by building an indoor arena and stable block.

Several philanthropic trusts contributed to the project. The latest support, a \$5000 grant from The Southern Trust, enabled the group to complete the project. The money was used for electrical work, including providing power sockets, lighting in each stable, floodlights and to power automatically-filling water troughs for the horses.

Lisa applied for the grant on behalf of the organisation. She says the electrical work was the last but vital stage of the project.

"The lighting is an essential safety feature to improve the working environment for our staff and volunteers," Lisa says. "The electric facilities also enable staff and specialists such as our horse dentist and vets to operate essential electrical equipment and tools."

Hamilton Riding for the Disabled is one of 55 groups nationwide that provide interaction with horses to develop increased ability, independence and self-esteem for children and adults with physical, intellectual, emotional and social challenges.

"Our services are essential to a rider's overall therapy plans, helping them to develop and improve their abilities," Lisa says.

As well as extending the service, the new stable block and indoor arena has enabled the organisation to better care for its horses.

"The stable block allows us to provide an area to rest our horses. This means our volunteers and staff can tend to them in a sheltered, purpose-built and safer environment. The horses can rest separately in their own space. This improves their health, stamina and temperament," Lisa says.

The organisation's facilities upgrade could not have happened without access to gaming funds, including a grant from the Lion Foundation. Lisa says they turned to The Southern Trust to fund the electrical fit-out because they believed the project met the society's criteria and purpose.



"We are grateful to the Southern Trust for their kind generosity in awarding us this grant," Lisa says. "Their website was excellent and provided good tips and clear instructions. The quick turnaround – just six weeks – allowed us to get things moving really quickly."

Hurdles along the way

Lisa found the most difficult part of applying for a targeted grant on behalf of her organisation was getting the necessary quotes to support the application.

"Contractors are very busy and in high demand from their other customers. With major projects it is also difficult to get quotes within the last three months, especially if you are waiting on one and the others expire."

Now that power has been connected to its new purpose-built facilities the future for Hamilton Riding for the Disabled is looking brighter, in more ways than one.

Lisa says they can now extend programmes until later in the day, and in all weather, and provide a better environment for the horses.

"Our horses are our highest-valued assets," Lisa adds. "This grant has allowed us to continue to invest in their care and wellbeing so they can have longer working careers with us, in turn increasing our capacity."

This was all made possible by access to gaming funds, something the organisation is extremely grateful for.

"Without gaming society funding we would often not be able to meet our operating expenses and certainly not be able to undertake additional projects to ensure the sustainability and improvement of our programme," Lisa said. "We don't get any government funding so gaming societies play an essential role in funding and supporting community groups and charities such as ours."

Lisa's tips for would-be applicants:

- Firstly, check the society's funding criteria and funding policy to make sure your project is a good fit
- Putting a bid together involves considerable time and requires a team effort
- Use all the tools available especially the relevant websites
- Keep your application simple and avoid including unnecessary information
- Pitch your case for the money in a straightforward and clear way. Keep it simple
- Putting together a successful bid and proving that you meet the funding criteria takes practice. Don't take it personally if your first application is unsuccessful.



**Keeping
lonely elderly
connected**



In a cosy lounge in a converted Mosgiel house a group of older citizens share a cuppa, a chat and some freshly-baked scones. For most, the gathering is the highlight of their week. For some, their only social contact.

Mosgiel Elderly Care has been providing the day programme for people in the Mosgiel/Taieri area since 1982. The service was started by a group of volunteers to address isolation and loneliness in the community but has since become a registered charity with a governing board of 10 volunteer trustees, three full-time staff and a number of volunteers.

The programme is part-funded by the Southern District Health Board but relies on gaming funds to help pay staff, run a van and provide clients with a daily hot meal.

The Chair of the Mosgiel Elderly Care Trust, Ken Whitcombe, says that of the up to 60 clients who attend one day a week, some have early-stage dementia, but are still relatively aware, mobile and not yet ready for residential care.

“By engaging in activities and enjoying the company of others, clients tend to stay in their homes longer, avoiding a premature move into residential care,” Ken says. “As well as enhancing their lives, the programme also gives their families and carers a break.”

The programme is delivered in a large house in Mosgiel, leased from Presbyterian Support Otago.

“One of our staff or a volunteer pick up people from their homes and take them to the house for the day between 10am and 3pm. The day always starts with tea and freshly-baked scones. There may be a bit of a chat about what’s going on in the world, then some activities, a hot lunch, some more recreation and then they’ll be delivered home, possibly via the ice-cream shop,” Ken says.

The Southern District Health Board provides funding for about 75 per cent of the operating costs of the programme. Ken says the balance comes from lottery and gaming funds.

“In the year ended 31 December 2015 this included \$23,000 from the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust, \$10,000 from the Lottery Grants Board and \$2000 from the Bendigo Valley Sports and Charity Foundation.

“The largest grant, from the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust, was spent on staff wages and training. Investing in our staff to make sure they have the relevant qualifications and paying allowances to recognise those qualifications is critical to the quality of the services we deliver,” Ken says.

An operational audit conducted in 2015 for the Southern District Health Board concluded that Mosgiel Elderly Care provides a well-managed day care service to their community, that the services are delivered by qualified and dedicated activities coordinators and that activities are received with enthusiastic appreciation. Ken says clients really do seem to enjoy attending the programme and really welcome the social contact. The biggest challenge, he laughs, can be getting them to leave at the end of the day.

“We make sure people enjoy their day. They have lots of fun with indoor activities. They can potter about in our garden, weather permitting, and occasionally go on outings. Our activity coordinators try to include activities that incorporate current events such as the birth of Prince George or celebrating the Melbourne Cup where everyone donned their finery and our resident mannequin was dressed as a jockey.”

Ken’s tips for would-be applicants:

Ken says the Trust is grateful to the organisations that support them, particularly the Southern Victorian Charitable Trust, with which they have had a long association.

He says applying for gaming funds is easy and the societies provide good guidance but he does have some recommendations for would-be applicants:

- Read the information online. Everything you need is there as well as the application form and a checklist on what must be included
- Be conscientious in providing the required information and supporting material, such as quotes, financial statements, resolutions and evidence of non-profit/charitable status
- If you are seeking funding from more than one society for different purposes, make sure the process is coordinated within your organisation and filtered through one person or a finance sub-committee
- Provide a well-prepared and thought-out application and supporting material. This gives the gaming society, considering the application, confidence that the applicant organisation is well run and has a clear and worthy purpose for the grant sought.





**Lion Foundation
ensures the
show goes on**

“Please sir, I want some more...” So pleads young Oliver in the popular Dickens novel.

Those immortal words had added meaning for Variety Theatre Ashburton (VTA) when it recently staged *Oliver* the musical.

Like the ragamuffin star of the show, the theatre company itself was forced to ask for more – from charities – when Canterbury’s infamous earthquakes wrecked its buildings.

The Lion Foundation, a long-time supporter of the theatre group, stumped up \$80,000 towards rebuilding the group’s rehearsal rooms and costume hire shop. The refurbished building opened in April 2016, just as the final rehearsals for *Oliver* were being held.

The amateur theatre group, formed in 1960, has entertained locals for more than 50 years with quality shows, including most recently, *Chicago*, *Miss Saigon* and the ever-popular *Grease*.



But it was a real-life drama that struck the Canterbury region in the form of two devastating earthquakes, one in the early hours of Saturday morning 4 September 2010, and another on 22 February 2011.

The theatre company’s two neighbouring brick buildings, one housing rehearsal rooms and the other a costume hire shop, did not fare well, says President Leen Braam.

“The buildings were very old and made of brick. Like most such structures in the region they didn’t stand up well,” Leen says. “Although they didn’t appear too badly damaged, we later learned the mortar between the bricks had crumbled so they were pretty unsafe.”

The theatre company continued to use the buildings until the end of 2012 when engineering reports eventually determined the true extent of the damage and they were put off-limits.

“They weren’t red-stickered but we decided we couldn’t morally let the public or our volunteers in there,” Leen says.

Eventually both buildings were demolished and the theatre group had to find somewhere else to rehearse.



“We held our rehearsals in an old building belonging to Electricity Ashburton until that too was demolished. Then we used a local school hall but this meant we weren’t able to leave our props up or the stage marked out. We also had to find places to hold auditions and our committee meetings. It was a pretty tough time.”

But in keeping with the old adage, ‘the show must go on’, VTA still managed to put on quality shows, providing a traumatised population with entertainment and a welcome distraction from the aftermath of the earthquakes.

Behind the scenes, efforts were underway to find a new home for the group. Luckily, shortly before the quakes, the insurance cover on the old buildings had been renewed and reassessed at market value. This was very fortunate says Leen, but even so there was no way the payout was going to cover a replacement building.

“We had estimates that a rebuild, using two of the walls of the old building, would cost around \$1 million. We had \$100,000 in our building fund and the insurance payout but the total was still well short of the cost of a replacement structure.”

The Lion’s share

The group began fundraising and applying for grants from the usual providers such as Lotto, which turned them down.

“We decided to try the Lion Foundation. The gaming society had always been very good to us by contributing to the staging of our shows. We were delighted to get the \$80,000 we asked for, which enabled us to finish our building without needing to get a bank loan.

“As an arts group we very much appreciate the support the Lion Foundation has shown us over the years and feel very privileged to be the recipients of a number of grants from the foundation.”

As for the application process, Leen says that having applied for funds before, the group was familiar with the process.

“I think the first time you apply is the hardest but after you’ve done it once it really is very easy. The key thing is to have all the documents needed. A good administrator who keeps good records would not find it difficult.

“I’d encourage any group considering applying for gaming funds to go ahead and do it and we’d be very happy to help them, if necessary.”

In April 2016, three and a half years after it was forced to abandon its earthquake-damaged buildings, Variety Theatre Ashburton moved into new purpose-built premises in Willis Street – just in time for final rehearsals for *Oliver*.

Leen Braam says it’s wonderful to be finally in the new building, built with the generous help of the Lion Foundation.

“It’s so great to be here and to know this place is 100 per cent of building code for earthquake strength. Hopefully the only thing that will bring the house down in future will be the quality of our shows!”



Applying for pokie funds - all you need to know

Do your homework

- Go to the right society for the right project. Check out the gaming societies and see what they fund – and what they don't. A full list of websites can be found [here](#)
- Check that your project is within the geographical area covered by the society and that it meets their funding criteria
- Be clear about the timing of your project and how it fits in with the grant cycle. Societies can't fund retrospective costs (i.e. invoices you've already paid)
- If you have a question, look at the FAQs on the society website first. Chances are someone has asked the same question before
- If in doubt, contact the society. Building a relationship with a grant manager can be useful in navigating your way through the application process.

Applying

- Application forms can be downloaded from society websites. They list everything you need
- State the purpose of your application simply. Societies have hundreds of applications to go through and will appreciate it
- Gathering together documents and quotes can take time. Make sure you start the process well before the application deadline
- Make sure the application process is coordinated within your organisation and filtered through one person or a finance committee, especially when applying to more than one society for different projects
- Read the checklist and make sure you have included everything. Applications are often declined because something simple was missed or not signed
- Make sure you keep a complete copy of your application and supporting documents
- Ensure you provide out-of-hours contact details in case the society has any follow-up questions.

When the wait is over

- If you're successful, be sure to thank the donor society. (You may want to consider using their logo on any promotional material but check with the society first, as some prefer to remain low key.)
- If you're not successful, ask for feedback. Knowing why your application was declined can only improve your skills and future prospects
- Don't be discouraged from applying in future to societies that have declined an application.

Reporting back

- Send the donor society updates and photos during the course of your project. Gaming societies like to know about progress and milestones
- Once you've spent the funds, send in your report and accountability paperwork as soon as you can.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS



Te Tari Taiwhenua

New Zealand Government