



Venture Timaru

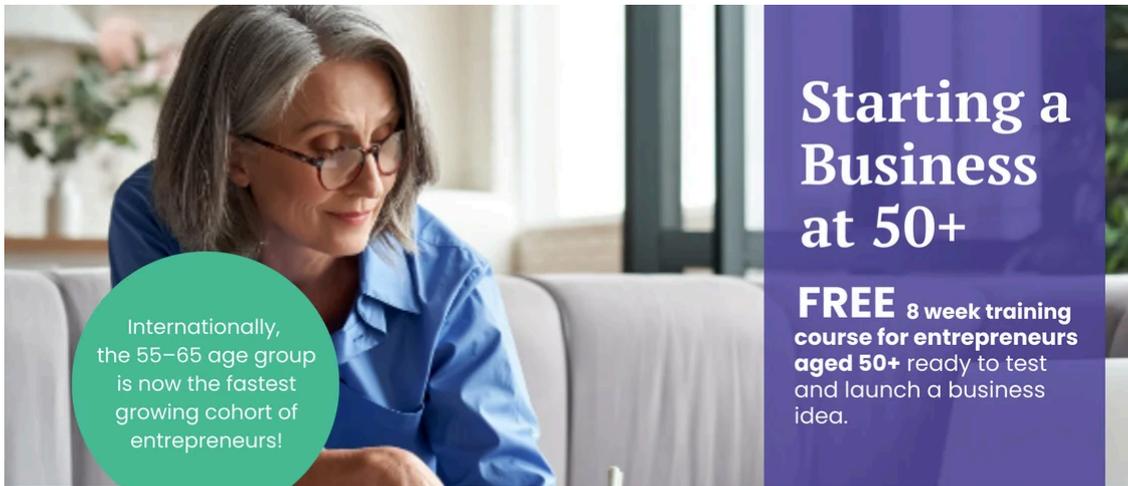
DISTRICT - ECONOMIC & TOURISM AGENCY

Kia ora

Welcome to our February news update.



- **Empowering 50+ locals to start smart in business**
- **SCOFF Harvest showcases the best of our region**
- **Cruise information services at Heritage Place**
- **Councillors get taste of cruise ship experience**
- **Masters Games secures Government Boost Funding**
- **Sold-Out crowd welcomes Crusaders to Timaru**
- **Important time to support our CBD businesses**



Starting a Business at 50+

FREE 8 week training course for entrepreneurs aged 50+ ready to test and launch a business idea.

Internationally, the 55–65 age group is now the fastest growing cohort of entrepreneurs!

Test your business idea and its potential 

Create a simple, one-page business plan 

Build confidence in your next steps 

Empowering 50+ locals to start smart in business

Starting a Business at 50+ is an 8-week programme we are offering for people aged 50+ who are serious about starting their own business or redefining the direction of an existing one.

Run by Venture Timaru and facilitated by our Business Development Manager Tania Stoddart, alongside experienced business coach Chris Kirk, the programme is delivered online through practical modules with one-to-one coaching throughout, including two group sessions to connect with peers.

The programme supports participants to actively test their ideas, develop a clear and workable business plan, and make informed decisions about their next steps.

Our first course begins on 19 March 2026, and places are limited. - early registration is encouraged.

Download the flyer to share with your networks, and email tania@venturetimaru.nz to register your interest and find out more.

[Download flyer](#)



EVENTS CALENDAR

5-15 MARCH 2026

06 FRI
MARCH

HOLI COLOUR FESTIVAL
Street Food Kitchen

07 SAT
MARCH

FARM TO PLATE
Makikihi country hotel

07 SAT
MARCH

**VERDE GERALDINE X
ECHT SOURDOUGH TIMARU**
Verde

11 WED
MARCH

TASTE OF THE SOUTH
Pier 64

14 SAT
MARCH

SHIP HOP BEER PARTY
The Oxford

15 SUN
MARCH

PADDOCK TO PUB TO PLATE
Silverstream Hotel

SCOFF Harvest showcases the best of our region

Celebrate the season of abundance with SCOFF Harvest, a brand-new mini food festival running from 5–15 March 2026.

SCOFF Harvest shines a spotlight on our remarkable local producers, celebrating the harvest season and sharing the stories behind their bountiful produce. This mini event is designed as an addition to the SCOFF festival which is held in September each year.

We are collaborating with a handful of South Canterbury eateries to bring you a collection of exciting events.

Find out more details on our social media channels and website.

[Get tickets](#)



An eye-catching spectacle on Caroline Bay last week, when a horse polo event and showjumping competition took place for the first time on the coastal shores. The event launched this year's annual Seaside Festival in Timaru, and hopes are high that it will become an annual feature. Find out more about the Seaside Festival

[Find out more about the Seaside Festival](#)



Pictured: the cruise information services ready to answer passengers' queries.

Cruise information services at Heritage Place

With 14 cruise ships calling to Timaru this season, we've got a bigger team in place to help with the information services at Heritage Place on the days that the cruise ships visit.

Each cruise ship has shuttles transporting passengers to Heritage Place, where the Information Centre and cruise market are held. On the bigger ship days, a pop-up gazebo with information services is in place to help cope with the deluge of visitors arriving.

This year our team has donned blue **We Love Timaru** t-shirts so they're easily identified.

We encourage you to head down to Heritage Place on a cruise day to see the action underway, as passengers spill into the town.

The two bigger ships next calling are Noordam (Tues 24 Feb) and Zaandam (Thurs 12 March).



Pictured: The council group aboard the Noordam last week.

Councillors get taste of cruise ship experience

Venture Timaru and PrimePort were pleased to have the opportunity to host three councillors and a senior leadership team manager on board Noordam last week, so they could learn more about the cruise sector, and take a peek on board a visiting ship.

Councillors Michelle Pye, Owen Jackson, Peter Burt and senior leadership team member Andrew Dixon joined VT destination manager Di Hay and PrimePort marine team member Emma O'Connell on the visit.

All of the council team came away impressed with the offering that Timaru provides for our cruise visitors, both from the port and visitor experience perspectives, and having gained insights into the work that goes into a visit of a larger ship with 1900+ passengers and the subsequent economic benefit to Timaru and the wider region. [Find out more about our cruise offering here.](#)

And exciting news for Timaru to become the “home port” for one of our cruise ship visitors. Scenic Eclipse 2 is now using Timaru to change over passengers and get supplies, as it visits overnight. [Read the Timaru Herald story here.](#)

Masters Games secures Government Boost Funding

The 25th anniversary of the South Island Masters Games in Timaru this year has been announced as one of the recipients of the Government's Events Boost package.

The funding aims to help push international visitation and for the Timaru event, this will mean targeting East Coast Australia and creating a games “village” for the event.

To be eligible for the funding, the games was supported by Venture Timaru, as the Regional Tourism Organisation.

The South Island Masters Games runs from 2-11 October in Timaru. [Check out the Timaru Herald story.](#)



Sold-out crowd welcomes Crusaders to Timaru

Fraser Park was buzzing with energy as the Crusaders kicked off their first 2026 pre-season match in front of a sold-out crowd on 30 January.

The day started with a dedicated supporters train bringing 120 fans from Christchurch on The Mainlander, with match tickets and on-board hospitality included as part of the return journey.

The Crusaders delivered an exciting match, beating the Highlanders 33-10, the score was 28-5 at half-time.

The match marks the biggest event at Fraser Park since it was reopened in 2024 after a major upgrade of the facility.

Venture Timaru supported the event through the Major Events Support Fund, which we administer for the Timaru District Council.

Important time to support our CBD businesses

Finally, there's been some sad news in the last couple of weeks with news of business closures in Stafford Street, which reinforces how important it is for all of us to actively support our local businesses.

Imagine the difference we could make if everyone committed to going into the Timaru CBD at least once or twice a week with the specific aim of making a purchase – whether it's coffee, lunch, a book, a piece of clothing or a household item.

The reality is that we need to actively support our CBD businesses to keep them here, so we encourage you to challenge yourself, your workmates, friends and family to make the commitment each week, and simply spend some time and money in our town centre! For inspiration take a look at [The Exchange](#) - the website that has been set up by the Timaru CBD Group to promote and support the area.

Collectively, we can make a difference.

Ngā mihi nui,

Nigel Davenport
Kaiwhakahaere Matua / Chief Executive



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