



Venture Timaru

DISTRICT - ECONOMIC & TOURISM AGENCY

Dear <<First Name>>

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Commitment to fight closure to Ara's Timaru courses

It was a big blow this week to read the news that consultation is underway to move the art and design department of Timaru's Ara campus to Christchurch, plus the Diploma in Primary Industries Business Management programme delivered here.

Venture Timaru did not know of proposed changes and we will be fighting the move, on behalf of our local community.

Not only does this further limit the tertiary options available to local people, but it also means some dedicated staff would lose their jobs and potentially it could result in them leaving the area, which would be another blow. The major concern is that once the courses get relocated to Christchurch, there is little chance to get them back. Previously high profile courses run here such as Outdoor Recreation and Journalism are prime examples of this.

The arts sit at the heart of our community, and while Venture Timaru has a strong focus on the economy, we also believe it is critical for a vibrant community to have an active, engaging arts scene. Taking away the arts courses which over the years have had so many successful and talented graduates of Ara, and formerly the Aoraki Polytechnic courses, would be such a loss to our community. We need to nurture the arts and show commitment to them. Moving the courses to Christchurch does not support our local community and the people within it.

We will be engaging directly with Ara about the proposed changes and raising our concerns.

Read the Timaru Herald story about changes [here](#).

TIMARU DISTRICT

TOWARDS
2050



Towards 2050 - From planning to action

The first draft of [Towards 2050](#) will be shared early next year, and we're excited about what's ahead.

The plan has been shaped by the ideas, goals and aspirations of our communities and local sectors.

Because of that, many of the priorities in **Towards 2050** are already reflected in the way people and businesses across our district are working today. That gives us confidence that the plan is relevant, realistic, and truly represents our shared future.

Next year marks an important shift as we move from planning to action. This is when **Towards 2050** will really start to come to life. We want everyone to be part of that journey, keeping the plan flexible and evolving as our community grows and changes.

As we move into this next phase, we're focusing not only on *what we aspire to achieve* - a thriving, inclusive, and future-ready district, but also on *how we get there*. One of our key alignment priorities is **Workforce & Education for the Future**, ensuring our people and industries are prepared for the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.

A great example of this alignment can be seen in the team at Bleeker & Weith. Check out their story at the link below.

Read the Bleeker & Weith story

Welcome to new businesses

- **Timaru Solar** – Jonno Baker jonno@timarusolar.co.nz – Part of the Think Solar Group which has recently expanded into Timaru. <https://thinksolar.co.nz/> Refer attached flyer for an upcoming event
- **GEMS Innovation** – Kenny Au kenny@gaishan.co.nz & Manu Messari manu@gemsassets.co.nz (see attached for more info) – They are developing innovative digital asset and infrastructure management solutions for utilities and other asset-intensive industries to manage complex business activities.

More about GEMS Innovation

Spotlight on Solar event





VT's new office - blend of heritage and new

You may have already seen that we've moved into our new premises. Our office is located on the bottom floor of the historic Union Bank Building at 119 Stafford Street.

Built in 1877, the building originally served as a bank for 74 years. The facade was remodelled, likely around the 1970's, with concrete plastered over the original bluestone. TDHL have done an excellent job of the building's restoration, we've aimed to reflect some of that heritage charm in our own interior design.

Look at the amazing transformation! Thanks to our in-house graphic and spatial designer's creative eye, we now have a space that not only makes our day-to-day easier, but is also beautifully designed. We hope it's an inspiration to others as to what can be achieved in a heritage building.

Pop in and say hello sometime, we'll be happy to show you around.

First cruise to kick off season 28 November



Get ready to welcome our first cruise ship of the season - Noordam (pictured above) is due to return to Timaru on Thursday 27 November.

The ship carries up to 1900 passengers, so the cruise season will kick off with a bang and we can expect there will be a real surge of visitors in our CBD. The ship arrives at 8am and is due to leave at 5pm so there will be plenty of time for the passengers to enjoy their visit.

The cruise sector is facing some challenges internationally and there has been a drop in the number of vessels coming to New Zealand this year, and a subsequent drop in port visits. Timaru, however is bucking the trend, and is the only port in NZ to have an increase in cruise visits this season compared to last year. It's an impressive achievement and the result is that the cruise lines and other ports around the country are sitting up and noticing us.

Venture Timaru and PrimePort have been working together to build the cruise offering to attract more ships here. We've been developing good relationships with the cruise lines and delivering great experiences for the passengers. We're told by the cruise lines and the agents that look after the ship tours, that we've got a reputation as the port that says "yes".

Following Noordam's visit we have a break, then in January we have three ships in four days, from 7-10 January. Of these three visits, it is Norwegian Spirit on Thursday 8 January that will have the biggest impact, as it carries up to 2300 passengers.

Each ship runs a number of tours for their passengers, taking them throughout our district and the wider region. These tours are predominantly run by local companies, but there are also some who come from further afield as well. In Timaru, we offer a range of independent tours for passengers and information services if they choose to self-guide on their time here.

Top attractions include Te Ana Māori Rock Art Centre

- Timaru Botanic Gardens
- Tours to the Mackenzie Country
- Visits to Geraldine – galleries and museums are popular
- Walking through our main street and comment about the beautiful heritage buildings
- Wandering around the Bay, coffee or wine on the Bay Hill
- St Mary's Anglican Church

And most of all they really, really love the friendly, welcoming locals who are always up for a chat or to help with directions!

Find out more about what tours are on offer for the passengers, plus things we promote as activities for the visitors [here](#).

See the full cruise schedule



Weekend events expected to fill Timaru & Geraldine

The district is set to welcome plenty of visitors this weekend, with events offering something for everyone to enjoy.

The Harcourts Geraldine Festival returns offering live entertainment, street market, food stalls, art and photography exhibitions and open gardens. The festival kicks off this evening with the art awards and wraps up on Sunday with the *Lazy Day in the Domain*. Visit their [website](#) for the full programme.

Meanwhile, car enthusiasts are descending into Timaru for the annual 4 and Rotary South Island Champs at Levels Raceway. This three-day event starts tomorrow with cruising, roll racing and drifting and finishes on Sunday with the popular *Show and Shine*. For more information visit the [4 and rotary website](#).

Stay up-to-date with everything that's happening in our district by following our socials, links below.



Ngā mihi nui

Nigel Davenport

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