



MEDIA RELEASE

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Rātā Foundation wraps up the year with over \$571,000 in community grants to the Marlborough region

Rātā Foundation has wrapped up its funding for 2016 with over \$571,000 in grant approvals for Marlborough community groups, with \$190,000 earmarked for the Marlborough Community Centre building project.

Louise Edwards, Chief Executive of Rātā Foundation says the \$190,000 building project reflects the strong desire by Trustees to support projects which promote collaboration and provide benefit to a wide cross-section of the community. The remaining \$381,000 has been spread across the Foundation's small and large grants programmes.

"The Marlborough Community Centre provides an affordable base for multiple community-based organisations to operate their services and has a strong focus on providing facilities for community-centered activities and events."

Ms Edwards reports over the years Rātā Foundation has supported a number of organisations currently domiciled at the Community Centre site, including Age Concern, Birthright Marlborough, Blenheim Early Childhood Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau, Family Budget Service, Marlborough Playcentre Association, Marlborough Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation, Multiple Sclerosis Society and People First. There is also a number of other community organisations who are regular site users.

The project is to upgrade the building, including the replacement of fire evacuation and security systems to meet current regulations, internal wall configuration and removal of a redundant lift.

Ms Edwards says feedback from the building's tenants has highlighted the need for a facelift to improve both the safety elements, and the environment they are working in. The new design accommodates a change in meeting room space requirements and allows for two extra office spaces for rental. The reconfiguration will also improve access to meeting rooms on the ground floor, particularly around disabled access.

"This project fully meets our priority to promote collaboration, provide multi use spaces and have ongoing wide community use. It both enhances community participation and is of regional significance," she says.

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