

Winter 2026
ISSUE 6

www.ageconcernsc.org.nz



AGE CONCERN

SOUTH CANTERBURY

Our Services

Elder Abuse Response Service - Improving the quality of life for older people in abusive situations and working to prevent abuse by providing case management, free and confidential advice, and collaborating with a range of health professionals to deliver wrap-around support services.

Phone: 03 687 7372

Friday Club - A weekly social gathering that includes morning tea (**cost: \$5 for morning tea only, \$3 if having the two-course lunch as well**) optional strength and balance exercises, guest speakers, entertainment, or music, followed by a **two-course lunch (\$12)**. Plenty of time to socialise and meet new friends. Held each Friday from 9.30 am to approximately 1.00 pm at Wilson St Church Hall, 17 Wilson St, Timaru.

No booking required.

Total Mobility Scheme - We assess and provide Total Mobility Cards to eligible individuals, enabling them to receive subsidised taxi fares if they can no longer use public transport. Assessment and card: **\$20** per annum.

Phone: 03 687 7581

Silvertech – Smartphone Training Course and Digital Literacy & Skills Programme -

Training for older people to help build confidence with digital devices, along with opportunities to connect socially and learn more about their technology. We offer both formal and informal sessions covering topics such as digital safety, scams, email, and online banking. **Cost: \$20 per person, or \$20 per device if shared.**

Phone: 03 687 7581

Safer Driving Refresher Courses -

Helping older drivers stay confident on the road. These sessions cover the latest traffic rules, safer driving practices, road hazards, and alternative transport options to help people stay mobile for as long as possible. Free to attend, though donations are welcome to assist with catering. Courses are held regularly throughout towns in South Canterbury.

Phone: 03 687 7581

Visiting Service -

Providing companionship and support for older people living independently in the community by matching them with a regular volunteer visitor.

Phone: 03 687 7587

Welfare and Wellbeing Checks -

We offer in-home and phone-based welfare checks and home visits for vulnerable older people. This service includes a 30-minute visit from one of our Community Support staff to check on physical and mental wellbeing.

Phone: 03 687 7581

Steady As You Go – Strength & Balance Classes -

Improve your wellbeing and stability today! Join our weekly strength and balance classes. Falls are a major cause of injury among older people, impacting mobility and quality of life. Our classes help boost health, fitness, confidence, and social connections. Each class is followed by a cuppa.

St Joseph's Hall, Temuka – Every Friday at 1:30 pm

Town & Country Club, Waimate – Every Tuesday 10:30 am & Wednesday at 2:00 pm

Have questions or need more info? Contact us at **03 687 7581** or **info@ageconcernsc.org.nz**

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Volunteer Visitors Needed

Could you spare an hour each week? We're looking for caring volunteers in Geraldine and Temuka.

2

Retirement Income in the Spotlight

KiwiSaver, NZ Super, and the retirement age are back in the headlines. Here's what the latest proposals could mean for New Zealanders.

3

Keeping People Connected

The Total Mobility Scheme helps people stay independent and connected. Learn about upcoming changes and what they mean for users.

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Compulsory KiwiSaver: The Debate Continues

Would compulsory KiwiSaver help New Zealanders save for retirement, or add pressure to already stretched household budgets?

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Scam Alert!

Scammers are getting smarter, but so can you.

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Looking After Your Health

Prevention is often the best medicine. Find out which health checks can help you stay active and independent.





Volunteer Visitors Needed in Geraldine and Temuka

Could you spare an hour each week to brighten someone's day?

Age Concern South Canterbury is seeking caring and friendly volunteers to join our Visiting Service in the Geraldine and Temuka communities.

As we age, social connections become increasingly important. Unfortunately, many older people experience loneliness and isolation due to reduced mobility, health challenges, or changes in family circumstances. A regular visit from a friendly volunteer can make a remarkable difference to their wellbeing and quality of life.

Our Volunteer Visitors provide companionship, conversation, and connection. Visits are relaxed and informal – sharing a cup of tea, chatting about life, taking a short walk, playing a game, or simply spending time together. Often, the gift of your presence is all that is needed.

Volunteering as a visitor is a rewarding experience. Many volunteers tell us they gain as much from the friendship as the person they visit. It is an opportunity to meet wonderful people, hear fascinating life stories, and make a meaningful contribution to your local community.

We are particularly looking for volunteers in Geraldine and Temuka, where demand for visitors continues to grow.

No special qualifications are required – just a caring nature, good listening skills, reliability, and a willingness to commit to regular visits. Training, support, and ongoing guidance are provided by Age Concern South Canterbury.

If you would like to help reduce loneliness and make a positive difference in the life of an older person, we would love to hear from you.

To find out more about becoming a Volunteer Visitor, please contact Age Concern South Canterbury on **(03) 687 7587** or email **volunteers@ageconcernsc.org.nz**

A small amount of your time could mean the world to someone else.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**



Retirement income back in the political spotlight

NZ Superannuation and KiwiSaver are again becoming major political issues as parties begin setting out their retirement income policies ahead of the election.

National has announced it would make KiwiSaver compulsory for workers from 2028, automatically enrol babies with a \$1,500 “Baby Boost”, lift contribution rates over time, and require employers to keep contributing for workers over 65. National has also signalled its long-standing policy to eventually lift the NZ Super age to 67, though not until 2044.

New Zealand First takes a very different position, promising to keep NZ Super at 65, maintain its link to wages, and protect the SuperGold Card. ACT has previously argued for lifting the retirement age and linking future increases to life expectancy. Labour has not yet released a full retirement policy package, but has historically supported a stronger KiwiSaver system and is likely to face pressure to clarify its position. The Greens have backed higher employer contributions, but criticised the Government for not fully funding the cost across the public sector.

Age Concern New Zealand says retirement policy needs stability, fairness and cross-party agreement. Its 2026 position statement calls for NZ Super to remain universal from age 65, for employer KiwiSaver contributions to be mandatory for workers over 65, for total remuneration contracts to be abolished, and for more targeted Government KiwiSaver support for low-income earners.

Age Concern New Zealand chief executive Karen Billings-Jensen says KiwiSaver and NZ Super together form “the backbone of retirement income policy”, but warns higher contributions may create hardship for low and middle-income families.

Chris Thomas, Manager of Age Concern South Canterbury, says the debate needs to stay focused on people, not just numbers.

“Older people and future retirees need certainty. We should encourage better saving and fairer KiwiSaver settings, but not in a way that pushes struggling households further behind.”

Chris Thomas

Manager, AC South Canterbury



Keeping People Connected



For many older people and those living with a disability, the Total Mobility Scheme is much more than a transport subsidy – it's a lifeline.

Whether it's getting to a medical appointment, visiting friends, attending community activities or doing the weekly grocery shopping, the discount scheme helps people be independent, active and connected to their communities. It means the difference between staying at home or continuing to enjoy life beyond their front door.

"Transport is about much more than getting from A to B," says Chris Thomas, Manager of Age Concern South Canterbury. "It's about maintaining independence, reducing loneliness and ensuring people can continue to participate in everyday life – going to church, or enliven or meeting up with friends for coffee. We see first-hand the positive difference the discount scheme makes for hundreds of people across South Canterbury."

From 1 July 2026, some changes will take effect as part of a nationwide Government decision to help ensure the long-term sustainability of the scheme.

The transport subsidy will reduce from 75% to 65% of eligible fares, and the maximum fare cap in Canterbury will reduce to \$63. This means the maximum subsidy available for any one trip will be \$40.95. Customers will pay a bit more towards the cost of each journey, with the increase being more noticeable on longer trips.

For example, a \$20 journey will now cost the customer \$7.00, while a \$50 trip will cost \$17.50. On journeys costing more than \$63, customers will pay all costs above the subsidy limit.

Importantly, many aspects of the scheme remain unchanged. Customers will continue using their existing Total Mobility cards, transport providers and booking arrangements remain the same, and the scheme will continue to support eligible people to access essential transport.

If you have any questions about the changes or think you may be eligible for the Total Mobility Scheme, contact Age Concern South Canterbury. Our team is happy to explain the changes, assess eligibility and help people access the support available.



Who provides the **TOTAL MOBILITY** transport service in our area?



Timaru Taxis



03 688 9968



Driving Miss Daisy Timaru



03 683 1073 or 021 503 398



Freedom Drivers Timaru



03 686 2044



**Geraldine Community
Minibus Trust**



03 693 1007



Waimate Vehicle Trust



03 689 6226



Hato Hone St John ***Health Shuttle***

A St John Health Shuttle service is available to the South Canterbury Community, to provide Transport to those who have health related appointments in Christchurch. We cover Timaru, Pleasant Point, Temuka and Geraldine. In most cases we will pick you up from your home. The shuttle operates Monday to Friday, and bookings need to be made by 3:00pm the day prior to your appointment.

This service is run by a team of very Experienced drivers who are volunteers of St John. A Donation/Koha is appreciated for the shuttle transport to help cover the cost as we do not charge a fee.

For further information or to make
a booking

Please phone: **0800 103 046**

www.stjohn.org.nz



Foot Clinic

Service Continues!

Age Concern South Canterbury have stepped away (pun not intended) from the weekly Tuesday Foot Clinics previously held at Community House.

The good news is that the service will continue without interruption. Community Trust has taken over the operation and will be offering the exact same service, in the same location.

Clinics will still be held at Community House, and bookings remain essential as there are no walk-in appointments available.

The cost is \$25 per session, which includes a relaxing foot soak, a full foot inspection, nail trimming, and a soothing foot massage.

**To make a booking, please contact
Community House on 03 687 7360**



Community
TRUST
Mid & South Canterbury

Compulsory KiwiSaver: A Good Idea or Another Cost to Manage?



The debate over compulsory KiwiSaver has returned to the spotlight, with questions being raised about whether all New Zealanders can afford to contribute more towards their retirement savings.

KiwiSaver was introduced in 2007 to help people build financial security for retirement. While participation is currently voluntary, some experts and policymakers believe making the scheme compulsory could help ensure future generations retire with greater financial independence.

Supporters argue that regular savings, even small amounts, can make a significant difference over time. They believe compulsory contributions would encourage better long-term financial planning and help people build a stronger nest egg for retirement.

However, others are concerned about the impact on household budgets. With many New Zealanders already facing higher costs for groceries, housing, power, insurance, and healthcare, some worry that compulsory deductions from wages could place additional pressure on families and individuals who are already struggling to make ends meet.

For older workers who may be approaching retirement, the benefits of compulsory contributions may also be less clear. Some may feel they have limited time left in the workforce to build substantial savings, while others may prefer to use their income to pay off debt, support family members, or meet everyday living costs.

Recent changes to KiwiSaver contribution rates have already sparked discussion. Default employee and employer contribution rates increased from 3% to 3.5% in April 2026, with a further increase to 4% planned for 2028. While these changes are intended to boost retirement savings, they also mean slightly less take-home pay for workers.

The discussion highlights an important challenge facing New Zealand: how do we encourage people to save for the future while recognising the financial pressures many are experiencing today?

There are no easy answers. What is clear is that retirement planning remains important at every stage of life. Whether through KiwiSaver, personal savings, investments, or other means, taking steps to prepare for the future can help provide greater financial security and peace of mind in later years.

What do you think? Should KiwiSaver become compulsory for all workers, or should New Zealanders continue to have the choice? We'd love to hear your thoughts.



FROM THE OLD GIRL!



So technically Moses is the first man to download files from the cloud using a tablet.



The adult version of "head, shoulders, knees and toes" is "wallet, glasses, keys and phone"



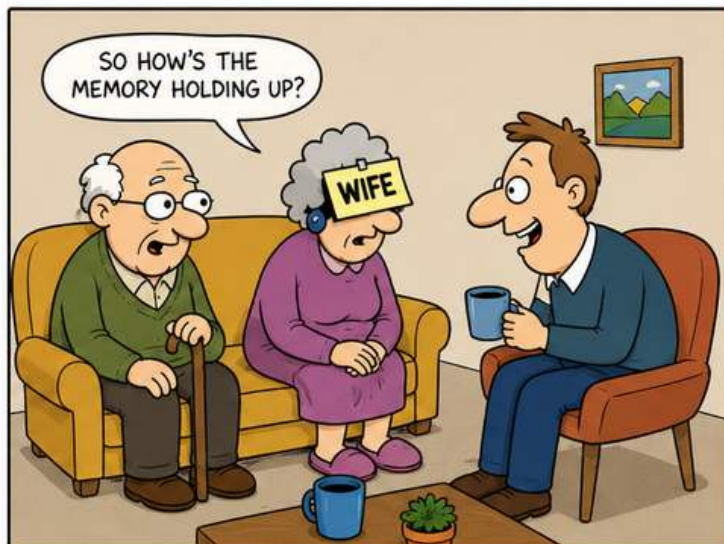
OK, LET'S SEE YOU WALK A STRAIGHT LINE

UH OH



IT'S JUST IN CASE THEY WON'T LET THE HORSE IN.

PIZZA
PIZZA



SO HOW'S THE MEMORY HOLDING UP?

WIFE

Got a good joke up your sleeve? We would love to share it in a future issue. Email it in or drop it off at our office.

ethan@ageconcernsc.org.nz

**I'VE REACHED THE AGE
WHERE MY TRAIN OF
THOUGHT OFTEN LEAVES
THE STATION WITHOUT ME.**

BIRD HIKES



We're not going to get lost. I've been leaving a trail of breadcrumbs.

Coming Soon: Changes to New Zealand's Road Rules

Some practical changes to New Zealand's transport rules are on the way, making it easier and safer for families to get around by bike and improving safety for everyone on our roads.

Children can ride on the footpath

One of the biggest changes is that children aged 12 and under will soon be allowed to legally ride their bicycles on footpaths.

Following public feedback, the Government has also decided that an adult or older rider, such as a parent, grandparent, caregiver, teacher or older sibling, will be allowed to ride alongside them on the footpath. This is designed to help children learn to ride safely without being separated from the adult supervising them.

A safer passing distance

Drivers will also need to leave at least 1.5 metres of space when overtaking cyclists, horse riders and other vulnerable road users.

Originally, different passing distances were proposed depending on the speed limit, but the final rule adopts one simple standard to make it easier for everyone to understand and follow.

Other changes

The new rules also include:

- Allowing e-scooters to use cycle lanes.
- Requiring drivers to give way to buses pulling out from bus stops on roads with speed limits of 60 km/h or less.
- Minor updates to road signs and traffic control rules.

When will the changes happen?

The Government has confirmed the changes, with the new rules expected to come into effect later this year once the final legal process has been completed.

Friendly Coffee Catch-Up at The Station Café!



**Every Tuesday & Sunday
from 11:30am onwards**

Looking to meet new people and enjoy some good company?

Join a relaxed coffee group at **The Station Café, 22 Station Street, Timaru.**

Come along for a cuppa, a chat, or even a meal – everyone's welcome!

No bookings or fees – just show up and make some friends.

Please note: This is a casual community meet-up and is not run by Age Concern South Canterbury.

SilverTech – Tech Made Simple for Older People

Learn at your own pace, stay safe online,
and feel confident using technology.

What We Cover:

- ✓ Getting started with your smartphone or tablet
- ✓ Sending messages and emails
- ✓ Using apps and making video calls
- ✓ Staying safe online and avoiding scams
- ✓ Online banking and digital safety tips
- ✓ Practical help with your own device

We offer:

- ✓ Easy-to-follow group classes
- ✓ Relaxed, informal drop-in sessions
- ✓ Patient, friendly instructors
- ✓ Opportunities to meet others and learn together

Cost: \$20 per person,
or \$20 per device if shared.

No technical knowledge needed — just bring
your curiosity and your device!

Let's make technology work for you.

To book or find out more, contact Age Concern
South Canterbury

P: 03 687 7581

E: silvertech@ageconcernsc.org.nz

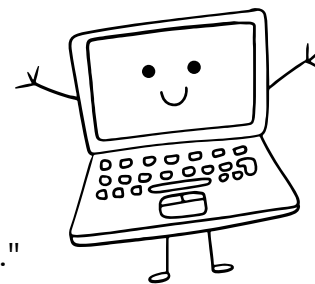
The good news is that a few simple precautions can help keep you safe.

The Golden Rule

Computer Support Scams

A pop-up appears on your computer saying:

"Your device has been infected. Call this number immediately."



Scammers then convince people to allow remote access to their computer and may steal information or money.

Remember: Legitimate companies do not display emergency pop-ups demanding payment or phone calls.

Romance Scams

Scammers build trust through social media or dating websites and eventually ask for money.

Warning signs:

- They avoid meeting in person.
- They quickly profess strong feelings.
- They always have a reason they need financial help.

Never send money to someone you have only met online.

Red Flags to Watch For

- 🚩 Being asked to act urgently
- 🚩 Requests for gift cards or cryptocurrency
- 🚩 Unexpected requests for passwords
- 🚩 Pressure to keep the matter secret
- 🚩 Poor spelling or unusual wording
- 🚩 Requests to install software on your computer
- 🚩 Someone asking for remote access to your device



Five Ways to Stay Safe

1. Take Your Time

Scammers want you to panic. Slow down and think.

2. Talk to Someone

Before sending money or sharing information, speak with a trusted family member or friend.

3. Keep Passwords Private

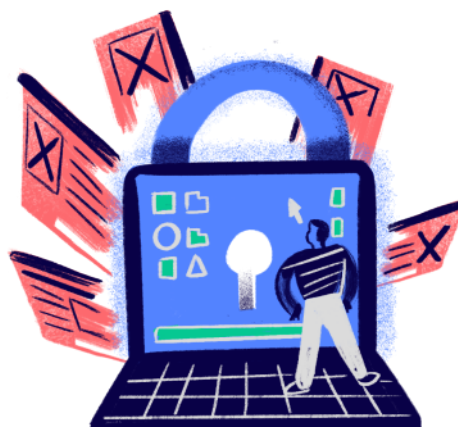
Never share passwords or PIN numbers.

4. Update Your Devices

Keep phones, tablets, and computers updated.

5. Trust Your Instincts

If something feels wrong, it probably is.



What To Do If You Think You've Been Scammed

1. Contact your bank immediately.
2. Change passwords for affected accounts.
3. Report the scam to Netsafe.
4. Talk with family or a trusted friend.
5. Seek help as soon as possible.



The quicker you act, the better the chance of limiting any damage.

Did You Know?

According to Netsafe, New Zealanders report losing millions of dollars to scams every year. Many scams go unreported, meaning the true cost is likely much higher.

Remember: Anyone can be scammed. Scammers are professionals who rely on deception and pressure. Staying informed is one of the best ways to protect yourself.

CUT OUT & KEEP HANDY

We've created this Quick Safety Checklist as a handy reminder to help protect you from scams and fraud.

Simply cut it out and place it somewhere you'll see it regularly, whether that's on the fridge, near your computer, beside the telephone, or tucked in with your important papers.

Taking a moment to stop and check before responding to an unexpected call, email, text message, or request for money could save you a great deal of stress and expense.

Share this checklist with family, friends, and neighbours too. Together, we can help make our community safer from scams.

Quick Safety Checklist

- ☐ I never share passwords.
- ☐ I don't click links in unexpected texts.
- ☐ I verify callers before giving information.
- ☐ I discuss large financial decisions with someone I trust.
- ☐ I know it's okay to hang up, delete the message, or walk away.



When in doubt, stop, check, and ask someone you trust.



**AGE
CONCERN**
SOUTH CANTERBURY

Christmas on the Bay

≡ SATURDAY ≡

12 DECEMBER 2026

≡ 5PM – 7PM ≡



LIVE
MUSIC



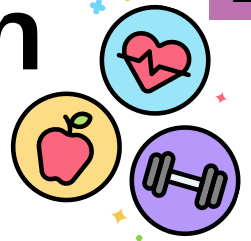
FOOD &
STALLS



SANTA & FUN
FOR ALL AGES!

≡ *Community. Connection. Christmas Cheer!* ♡

Are You Up to Date With Your Health Checks?



As we get older, regular health screenings become one of the most important tools for maintaining our wellbeing. Many serious health conditions can develop quietly, without obvious symptoms, making routine check-ups and screenings essential for early detection and treatment.

Health screenings are designed to identify potential problems before they become serious. Finding issues early often means treatment can be more effective, less invasive, and can lead to better long-term outcomes.

Some of the most common health checks for older New Zealanders include blood pressure monitoring, cholesterol testing, diabetes screening, hearing and vision checks, skin cancer checks, and bowel cancer screening. Women may also be eligible for breast screening, while regular discussions with your GP can help determine which tests are most appropriate for your individual circumstances.

The National Bowel Screening Programme offers free bowel cancer screening for eligible New Zealanders aged 60 to 74. Early detection through screening can significantly improve treatment success rates, making participation an important step in protecting your health.

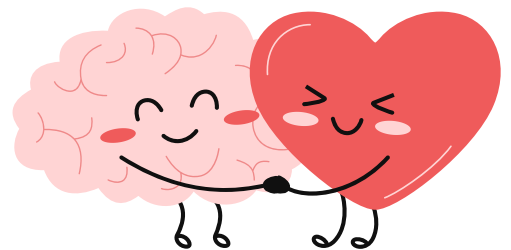
Vision and hearing checks are equally important. Changes in eyesight or hearing can affect confidence, independence, and safety. Regular testing can help identify issues early and ensure you have access to the support and treatments available. Your GP remains one of your best resources for understanding which screenings are right for you. They can review your personal and family health history, discuss any concerns, and help create a plan to keep you as healthy as possible.

While it can be easy to put off appointments when you're feeling well, prevention is often the best medicine. Taking a proactive approach to your health today can help you stay active, independent, and enjoying life for years to come.

Health Check Reminder

Ask yourself:

- ✓ Have I had my blood pressure checked recently?
- ✓ Am I up to date with bowel cancer screening?
- ✓ When was my last eye examination?
- ✓ Have I had my hearing tested in the past few years?
- ✓ Do I know my cholesterol and blood sugar levels?
- ✓ Have I spoken to my GP about any new health concerns?



If you answered "no" to any of these questions, it may be time to book a check-up.

A Little Kindness Goes a Long Way



SCAN ME 

Every day, Age Concern South Canterbury sees the difference that kindness and community support can make. Whether it's a friendly visit, practical advice, social activities, or helping someone stay independent, our services make a real difference in the lives of older people across South Canterbury.

We're excited to share that we now have a Givealittle page, providing another easy way for our community to support the work we do. Every donation, big or small, stays right here in South Canterbury and helps us continue supporting older people to stay connected, informed, and independent.

If Age Concern South Canterbury has helped you, a family member, a friend, or you simply believe every older person deserves to feel valued and supported, we'd love your support.

You can visit our Givealittle page by scanning the QR code on this page or by following the link on our Facebook. Every contribution helps us continue making a positive difference in the lives of older people in our community.

KITCHEN KINGS COOKING CLASS



Our front cover features some of the men who took part in our recent Kitchen Kings cooking programme.

What started as a simple cooking course quickly became so much more. Over eight weeks, participants built confidence in the kitchen, learnt practical cooking skills, shared plenty of laughs and formed lasting friendships.

Held at the Timaru Technology Centre, the programme gave the men the opportunity to prepare simple, nutritious meals while enjoying the company and support of others. It was inspiring to see confidence grow each week, not only in cooking but also in connecting with others.

A huge thank you to our fantastic tutor, Derek Tutton, whose patience, knowledge and sense of humour made every session enjoyable. We also extend our thanks to the Timaru Technology Centre for providing the excellent facilities, and to every one of our Kitchen Kings for embracing the programme with such enthusiasm and making it a great success.

Congratulations to everyone involved. We look forward to bringing Kitchen Kings back again in the future!



**AGE
CONCERN**
SOUTH CANTERBURY

He Manaakitanga
Kaumātua Aotearoa

Advertise **With Us!**

Promote your business locally
while supporting our community



Full Colour Ads



Distributed Locally



Affordable Rates



**Reaches over
600 readers**

AD SIZES & RATES

Quarter Page

\$80

Half Page

\$140

Full Page

\$250

Full Page Premium Placement

\$320

CONTACT US TODAY TO BOOK YOUR SPACE!

✉ info@ageconcernsc.org.nz

☎ **03 687 7581**

Prices shown apply to one issue only. Placing the same ad in multiple issues may cost more, but multi-issue discounts are available.

All prices include GST

AGE CONCERN SOUTH CANTERBURY IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



**Aoraki
Foundation**



**Pub
Charity**
Limited

perpetual guardian



COGS
Community Organisation
Grants Scheme



Rotary
Club of Timaru



Lottery Grants Board
Te Puna Tahua
LOTTO FUNDS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

**Community
TRUST**
Mid & South Canterbury



**South Canterbury
Toyota**



**THE LION
FOUNDATION**

YES! I would like to support the work of Age Concern South Canterbury

- ☐ Join Age Concern South Canterbury – \$25 individual / \$45 couple
- ☐ Make a Donation: Online Banking - Account Name: Timaru Senior Citizens Association
Bank Account Number: 03 0887 0246182 00 or cash at our office
- ☐ Learn more about becoming a Volunteer
- ☐ Request Information About Making a Regular Donation

Your Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Age Concern South Canterbury is the trading name for Timaru Senior Citizens, a registered charity (CC35518). All donations over \$5 are eligible for a donation tax credit – you can claim back 33.33 cents for every dollar you donate. To receive your receipt, please be sure to provide your contact details.

