



Tourism Waitaki Limited - Harbour Street Project

Tourism Waitaki Limited, in conjunction with the Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust, are developing an experiential guided heritage tour for visitors passing through Oamaru's Victorian Precinct. Tours will include an IT-rich themed visitor centre complete with a live streetscape that includes demonstrations, a penny farthing experience, artisan and interactive Victorian-era activities, giving visitors a taste of Colonial Oamaru. The project is aligned to the Tourism Industry Association's Tourism 2025 framework, by enhancing the visitor experience.



The Challenge

Oamaru has had a long history of celebrating its Victorian Heritage within the Harbour Street area, with some of the best examples of Victorian architecture in New Zealand. There is currently an annual event that celebrates this heritage that is limited to one weekend per annum. The artisan community that thrives here experiences two specific challenges: it is a short stop destination, with most visitors only transiting through. The challenge is to get visitors already coming to Oamaru to extend the time they spend in the region. Secondly, the Victorian Precinct is a core visitor attraction that currently lacks the capacity to derive sustainable revenues from visitors. This project will address both challenges by providing more activities for visitors, while focusing on establishing a core attraction within the Precinct itself. Living history tours are not common in the Southern Hemisphere, and the opportunity presents itself to build the annual Victoriana event into a seven day a week experience that engages the hearts and minds of our visitors.

The Solution

Tourism Waitaki will develop a Heritage Centre that will utilise existing infrastructure, staff and local operators to provide interactive tours and information. The built heritage environment will be enhanced through the use of technology, and live displays to bring the past to life whilst recognising the importance and uniqueness that is Oamaru. Tourism Waitaki will use its existing trade and marketing relationships and established channels, to encourage the inclusion of the Harbour Street and Oamaru into new and established itineraries. This will be achieved by using online, direct, and trade distribution marketing channels, media features, and industry familiarisation tours to raise the profile of Oamaru's heritage tourism sector.

Key facts

Programme start: Proposed October 2016

Length of TGP Funding requirement: two years

TGP funding: \$290,000

Industry funding: \$290,000

Commercial partners: Tourism Waitaki Limited and The Oamaru Whitestone Civic Trust

Estimated potential economic benefits to NZ: \$1 million by year five, ongoing.