

SUMMER 2025/2026



SENIORITY

A Journey of Friendship | Driving Change
Finding Strength | 2025 Volunteer Award



www.acwellington.org.nz



04 499 6646



Contact Information



Phone: 04 499 6646
 Email: news@acwellington.org.nz
 Address: The Dominion Building
 Level 4/78 Victoria Street Wellington 6011
 Postal Address: PO Box 11108
 Wellington 6142
 Website: www.acwellington.org.nz
 Facebook:
 www.facebook.com/ageconcernwellington



Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Age Concern Wellington Region. The inclusion or exclusion of any product does not mean that Age Concern advocates or rejects its use.

Can You Help?

You can help us reach more lonely and isolated seniors. Do you have time to volunteer a few hours of your time? Or are you able to make a donation? Call 04 499 6646 for more information.

We are still in need of sponsors for our 50-year anniversary project, Century of Stories (more information on our website: www.acwellington.org.nz), as well as a reliable car for the Hutt Valley. Maybe you or someone you know can help?

From the CEO



Celebrating Our Volunteers.

In a world that often feels disconnected, our 280 volunteers shine brightly, dedicating over 17,000 hours to help isolated seniors feel seen, heard, and valued. Their impact is immeasurable, as one volunteer commented when asked what she felt was the most positive thing about volunteering for Age Concern: "Getting the opportunity to make someone feel part of the community and acknowledge their worth and their stories. To affirm that they matter and they are cared about."

This is exactly what our volunteers achieve every day, transforming lives through simple acts of kindness and connection. In this issue, we proudly highlight Margaret Dowd, the recipient of our 2025 Outstanding Volunteer Service Award, whose dedication exemplifies the spirit of service across our whole team. You'll also read about Alan, who has maintained a strong connection with his Wellington Phone Friend client, calling from all over the world until they finally met for the first time in person during his recent visit home.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our volunteers. Your commitment enriches our communities and reminds us that everyone deserves to feel valued. You are truly making a difference.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and all the best for 2026! Looking forward to seeing you in the new year.

Stephen Opie
 Age Concern Wellington Region CEO

Pictured on cover
 From left to right: Nick Tansley, Lee McKenzie, Ann Dalziel, and Rae Julian showing participants a few falls prevention exercises at Making Connections 2025

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MENU ONE

Delivery week starting
04-08 August
08-12 September
13-17 October
17-21 November

Pure NZ roast pork with caramelised apple, roast vegetables, peas and broccoli. \$15.20

Beef rissole with caramelised onion, potato roasties and mixed vegetables. \$14.90

Slow cooked beef and brandy potato au gratin, carrots and steamed green beans. \$14.90

Pan-fried NZ fish, lemon caper sauce, chunky roastie potatos and stir fried vegetables. \$14.90

Chicken hotpot. Chicken and vegetables in a white sauce with a scalloped potato top. \$14.90

Beef stroganoff with steamed rice. \$14.50

Honey baked chicken with potato gratin and steamed green beans. \$14.90

Sticky sausages with sauted vegetables. \$14.90

Thai vegetable curry with rice. \$13.50

MENU FIVE

Delivery week starting
01-05 September
06-10 October
10-14 November
15-19 December

Roast leg of lamb, with pea and mint pesto, roast vegetables and creamed spinach. \$15.50

Pork steak with a gorgeous peppercorn cream sauce with baby beans, rosemary roast, pumpkin & potatoes. \$14.90

NZ beef steak with béarnaise sauce, sauté potatoes, pumpkin & baby beans. \$14.90

Steamed fish with parsley sauce, creamy mash, peas and carrots. \$14.90

Classic mild chicken curry with steamed rice. \$14.50

Irish beef stew with potato colcannon \$14.90

Creamy boneless dijon chicken with pommes boulangere and broccoli florets. \$14.90

Traditional cottage pie (premium NZ beef) with creamy mash top. \$14.90

Macaroni cheese. \$13.50

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Every week we make a fresh batch of handmade meals using only good ingredients and great cooking! They will come fresh, not frozen, so you can have something very fresh and ready to just heat and eat for up to 10 days. This means you can only order from the menu list related to the delivery week.

Deliveries
Wellington (Tuesday set day) \$16.00
Hutt Valley (Wednesday set day) \$16.00
Kapiti - Pukerua Bay - Waikanae (Tuesday set day) \$16.00
North Island next day \$18.00

Manawatu - Otaki - Palmerston (Tuesday set day) \$18.00
South Island next day \$35.00
Wairarapa (Tuesday set day) \$18.00
Sorry - No rural delivery!

• Menu only available until stock sold out
• Standard meal NOT less than 400gm
• Up size to 500gms+ for \$1.50

Payment info: Payment by debit card, credit card, or bank transfer. Bank Details: Fresh is Best 2006 Limited. 030502 0575744 00

DAILY DEALS!

Fresh Meal Deals
(applies only to eat fresh standard meals)

6+6 Deal - \$120

6 different meals and a choice of 6 from the soup and dessert menu

5+5 Deal - \$100

5 different meals and a choice of 5 from the soup and dessert menu

7 meals for the price of 6 Deal
Buy 6 different meals and we will give you a vegetarian meal for FREE!

Fresh From the Freezer

Pot Luck Boxes
(excellent variety no more than two of anything)

12 meals \$150

8 meals \$100

Swiss steak, medley of sautéed vegetables. \$14.90

Cheesy fish mornay with creamy mash, peas and carrots. \$14.90

Asian Inspired gingered beef and Broccoli with Rice. \$14.50

Famous meatloaf with relish, roast potato, pumpkin, and buttered cabbage. \$14.90

Tuscan chicken with vegetable gratin and green beans. \$14.90

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Spinach and three cheese pie. \$13.50

Pasta pomodorro. \$13.50

TIDDLY eats

TIDDLY MEALS FOR TIDDLY EATERS

This is the dinner Goldilocks was looking for when she ventured into the kitchen of the three bears. Not too big, not too small but just right. Our frozen variety box of deliciousness has 16 x 260gm meals. These are made up of eight different meals packaged as 'twin packs' so you get two of every delicious dish.

The meals are 'Potluck' and have no relation to the current week's fresh menu.

For the best and tastiest results thaw meals first, before heating.

Images of actual meals, thawed, heated and plated

Ak: 09 972 9316
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www.eat.co.nz

Finding Strength Through Change and Loss

Age Concern Wellington, in partnership with Catholic Social Services, recently hosted a heartfelt seminar at the Upper Hutt Cosmopolitan Club. The session, "Understanding Change, Loss and Grief," was part of the Seasons for Growth resources, which support people in exploring life's changes and learning strategies to cope with grief.

resources and information on their website: catholicsocialservices.org.nz

We intend to run another similar workshop in February 2026. Visit acwellington.org.nz or call 04 499 6646 for more information.

Ilana Kapp

Design and Communications Volunteer

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info@courtenayhearing.co.nz
[www.courtenayhearing.co.nz](http://courtenayhearing.co.nz)

The seminar was warmly received, with many attendees leaving feeling reassured, encouraged, and equipped with new strategies to face life's changes.

For those seeking further support, Catholic Social Services provides additional

After Miles of Conversation, the Phone Friend Finally Meets His Pal

In the four years that Age Concern volunteer Alan and Arnold have been chatting to one another they had never met each other physically – until last month. We reported on this excellent Phone Friend match-up in our Seniority magazine two years ago, explaining how Alan regularly phones Arnold from far-flung parts of the world, and how the friendship blossomed.

After a tentative start, they discovered mutual interests but may not have recognised one other until Arnold acquired a new phone that enabled him to use WhatsApp – then they could at least see the colour of each other's eyes.

Alan (originally from Scotland) has now retired from his peripatetic international marketing job with ANZCO Foods and come back in New Zealand for a while. This meant he was finally able to meet Arnold "face to face." This was a huge deal and extremely exciting for them both. It sounds as though this first meeting in person was a bit of a blast – more like a reunion of old friends.

Each of them had migrated to New Zealand (Arnold is from the Netherlands) and had no other close family members living here, so they could be classified as bothers-in-arms.

"I met Arnold today, and it was absolutely outstanding," Alan says. "It was so easy to



just slip into the same sort of conversations, with the major difference that I was sitting on his deck, instead of being several thousand kilometres and several time-zones apart. And it really was that easy. It just felt like we did this kind of thing every week."

WhatsApp had allowed him to see pictures of Arnold's surroundings, with the addition of a new deck, his view over the sports fields, his refurbished kitchen and so on, but it all looked so much better in person.

"[Arnold] is obviously very proud of the work he has done (and of the fact he is still capable of doing work like that), and so he should be. It all looks amazing," said Alan.

Arnold's reaction to finally meeting Alan face to face was equally enthusiastic. "It really made my day," was his initial comment. "Alan is such a good communicator." They get on very well together as they have a lot

in common, as well as obvious differences between a Scotsman and a Dutchman. They always have a lot to talk about.

After the show and tell session in Arnold's garden they went out to lunch together along with Arnold's friend and supporter, Sasha, at a local café in Whitby. The occasion was such a success that they planned to meet again a couple of days later, including Alan's wife Jacq who "wants to join the fray".

Arnold trained in the army and then as a carpenter in the Netherlands before migrating to New Zealand 61 years ago. He notes, "I had Asthma and was told I should move to a better climate. I saw an advertisement in the paper for construction work in New Zealand and decided that it was where I would go." He went to night school to get the necessary building and construction certificates for migration to New Zealand, qualified and made the move. He worked on construction projects around the country with several different companies working his way up to foreman and then Site Manager, mainly constructing supermarkets and large retail complexes before moving to Wellington. "[Arnold] has had his hand in 'building half of Wellington'" claims his friend Sasha. "He is an extremely skilled carpenter, and his experience and skill are worth their weight in GOLD. You can't find this level of skill these days."

Arnold was referred to Age Concern's Phone Friend Service a few years ago and Age Concern's Social Connection Coordinator Kirsten Blyde teamed him up with Alan. Arnold considers they are a very good match. "We get on very well together, and as we are both from Europe originally, we seem to have a lot in common to talk about. Alan is a good talker, and I am a good listener."

Arnold continues building work on a smaller scale as a home handyman in his retirement. As Alan commented, "If I was impressed by



the work Arnold has done in his garden, I was blown away by what he has done in Sasha's garden. He is obviously very fit and very talented."

Both men were very complimentary about Kirsten's first-rate skills in matching them as phone friends; they considered they were an ideal match.

Alan summed up the relationship and their meeting: "It has been such a pleasure to get to know Arnold over the past four years. I feel like I have known him my whole life, and I always enjoy talking to him. He is so interesting and has done quite an amazing range of things in his 61 years in New Zealand."

If you would like to volunteer to be a Phone Friend or Visitor volunteer, please visit our website: www.acwellington.org.nz or call **04 499 6646** for more information.

Mick Calder
Office Support Volunteer

Driving Change for Age Concern Wellington

When Lorraine chose to give Age Concern Wellington her small red Suzuki, she was offering more than just a set of keys. Her decision to donate the car is allowing us to reach more older people in the community, visit more clients, and save on transport costs so that more funds can go towards other vital services.

Lorraine first discovered Age Concern through our exercise classes a couple of years ago when she spotted a pamphlet at the library. She decided to give them a try and soon found herself looking forward to each session. She takes the bus to class and enjoys a scenic walk home along the waterfront.

For Lorraine, the benefits go beyond the physical. The classes have a strong focus on falls prevention, but they also provide a lift for her mental wellbeing. "It's not just about the exercise," she says. "Getting out and meeting people makes a real difference."

Born in Wadestown back when milk was delivered by horse and cart in glass bottles, Lorraine has vivid memories of early Wellington. She recalls going up the road with her father to collect horse droppings for the garden and riding the city's many trams. By the time she was at college, buses were taking over.

"I remember taking the bus to school with my boyfriend," Lorraine says with a smile. "We lived on the same street and because the buses were always crowded, we would stand together holding hands surreptitiously."



These days, Lorraine's life is far from the pace of horse carts. She drove her small red Suzuki only once or twice a fortnight, preferring to walk or take the bus for most errands. When she read in our Seniority magazine that we were in need of a couple of vehicles, she decided to donate her car.

Her generosity has made a real difference. The car has now been branded and insured thanks to another kind donor, and will be much more cost effective to run than reimbursing staff for mileage.

Donating a vehicle can be a powerful way to support a cause, and right now such generosity matters more than ever. With many charities in New Zealand facing financial challenges, gifts-in-kind such as cars, office equipment, or supplies for events can be just as valuable as monetary donations in helping essential community services continue their work.

The Age Concern Wellington Team is deeply grateful for Lorraine's thoughtful gift. "Little Red", as the car has become known

around the office, takes our staff all around the Wellington Region, and even as far as Palmerston North, and saves us money in the process. Instead of staff using their own cars, they are able to take "Little Red" on their visits with clients, speaking engagements, and to our events. The car also acts as a mobile billboard spreading awareness of our brand and work. It's a practical contribution that will help keep our work moving, quite literally, for years to come!

Look out for "Little Red" and please let us know if you see the car! We are still in need of a reliable car for the Hutt Valley. Maybe you or someone you know can help?

Lorna Harvey

Team Leader
Communications & Events



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HAPPY CHRISTMAS

from the Age Concern Wellington Region Team

Our office will be closed from 20 December to 11 January

Age Concern Wellington and Te Papa: Sharing Pacific Knowledge Together

Age Concern Wellington is proud to collaborate with Te Papa in offering unique opportunities for our social connection group participants to connect with Pacific heritage. On two recent occasions, Te Papa welcomed groups made up of participants from some of Age Concern's regular programmes for a very special experience.

The visits began in a private room at Te Papa, where rare and significant objects from the Pacific collections were brought out and carefully laid before the seniors. While Curators and Collection Managers were present, they invited participants – many of whom have deep cultural knowledge – to share their own insights.

This created moments of profound learning and exchange. One senior, for example, vividly described how a chief's bird-snaring stool would have been used, including the chants that would traditionally be spoken beforehand. The Chief's bird-snaring stool is called Seu lupe (seu: snare or net and lupe: pigeon) in Samoan. The chief would sit quietly on the stool up in a camouflaged tree house and throw a net over the birds. The image is now used as a proverb in chiefly speeches as a metaphor for leadership, agility and wisdom.

Such first-hand knowledge added layers of understanding beyond what museum records alone can capture.

Lorna Harvey
Team Leader
Communications & Events



After this private session, participants were taken on a short guided tour of Te Papa's Pacific collections and treated to refreshments.

This collaboration illustrates the strength of mahi tahi, working in partnership: Te Papa provides curatorial support and access to its collections, while Age Concern brings participants whose lived experience and cultural knowledge enrich the museum's work. It is a testament to the great value both organisations place on recognising and honouring seniors' expertise.

Age Concern is grateful to Te Papa for making space for these important voices, and looks forward to continuing this collaboration.

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A SPECIAL AWARD FOR A SPECIAL VOLUNTEER

We're a small organisation achieving big things, thanks to our incredible team of over 280 volunteers. Every one of our volunteers plays a vital role in reducing isolation and building connection.

We'd love to give out 280 awards each year to honour them all. But instead, we select one volunteer whose servant-hearted spirit truly embodies the essence of Age Concern.

This year's **Outstanding Volunteer Service Award** was awarded to **Margaret Dowd**, a tireless and humble force in our community. From preparing meals and setting up our events, to delivering Meals on Wheels for nearly 30 years, Margaret consistently shows up with warmth, dedication, and quiet leadership.

Board Member Kim Lusby (right), Social Connection Coordinator for the Hutt Valley Tania Fleming (left) and I, presented Margaret with her award at a recent social connection event in Upper Hutt. She was very surprised and humbled, and shared with everyone how much she loves helping out.



Margaret, thank you for representing the spirit of service that defines our volunteer team. You truly make a difference.

Stephen Opie

Age Concern Wellington Region CEO

Century *of Stories*



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MAKING CONNECTIONS...



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Connection on Display – A Personal Reflection

The Making Connections event held on Tuesday 7 October 2025 at the St James in Wellington was the third I have been involved with, and the fourth event for Age Concern Wellington Region. The purpose of this event is as the title explains: Making Connections. The dictionary definition of connection says, 'a relationship in which a person or thing is linked or associated with something else' and the definition of social connection is 'the feeling of belonging and closeness to others, which includes the relationships one has with family, friends, and the community'. This social connection is what Age Concern works hard to create, promote and nourish for seniors in the Wellington community.

I am extremely proud of what we achieve every day as a small team of nine. Stephen Opie, CEO, eight part time staff and 250+ lovely volunteers, ensure our services reach as many seniors as possible from Upper Hutt through to Eastern Suburbs and out to Porirua. Making Connections was another example of what we can achieve with hard mahi and support. We had over 200 seniors and 28 different not-for-profit and businesses attending, as well as various special guests visit us throughout the day.

At one stage of the day, I stopped and observed. I noticed a lovely atmosphere that comes when people are comfortable, feel welcome and that they belong. This was thanks to the wonderful first connection at the registration table from the Age Concern team chatting and welcoming everyone, the belonging our fantastic MC Nick Tansley, embodied throughout the day, the beautiful venue and caterers, the guest speakers, who all spoke to the relevance and importance of staying socially connected for healthy mind and body, and our busy information table

holders. Everyone present contributed to this connection and feeling of belonging through networking and interactions made with seniors and other businesses.

Social connection is at the heart of what makes us human. Feeling connected to others is a vital part of our wellbeing here in Aotearoa. When we feel a sense of belonging—whether it's within our whānau, workplace, or community—we're more likely to thrive emotionally and socially. Belonging gives us a foundation of support, helps reduce feelings of isolation, and strengthens resilience. It's through these connections that we find meaning, share experiences, and build a more inclusive and compassionate society.

Age Concern's goal for the day was that seniors were treated to a wonderful day of connection and information gathering, and that the attending businesses and organisations would connect with Age Concern, each other and the attendees to enhance service provision and information available for seniors. We can happily report we reached our goal and hope if you were part of the day, you felt welcome and a sense of belonging too.

Steph Deegan
Making Connections Event Organiser



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Upcoming Events

Upper Hutt Hub for Seniors

26 Nov, 11 Feb, 11 Mar, 12pm

Wellington Central Coffee Group

New location - 203 Willis St. 27 Nov, 29 Jan, 26 Feb, 26 Mar, 10.30am

Linden Hub for Seniors

11 Nov, 9 Dec, 10 Feb, 1pm

Omai Fa'atasi Pasifika Seniors, Hutt Valley

13 Nov, 11 Dec, 12 Feb, 12 Mar, 10am

Omai Fa'atasi Pasifika Seniors, Porirua

18 Nov, 2 & 16 Dec, 3 Feb, 3 Mar, 7 Apr 10am

Staying Safe course for older drivers

18 Feb, Upper Hutt

Tea & Tech, and Scam Prevention

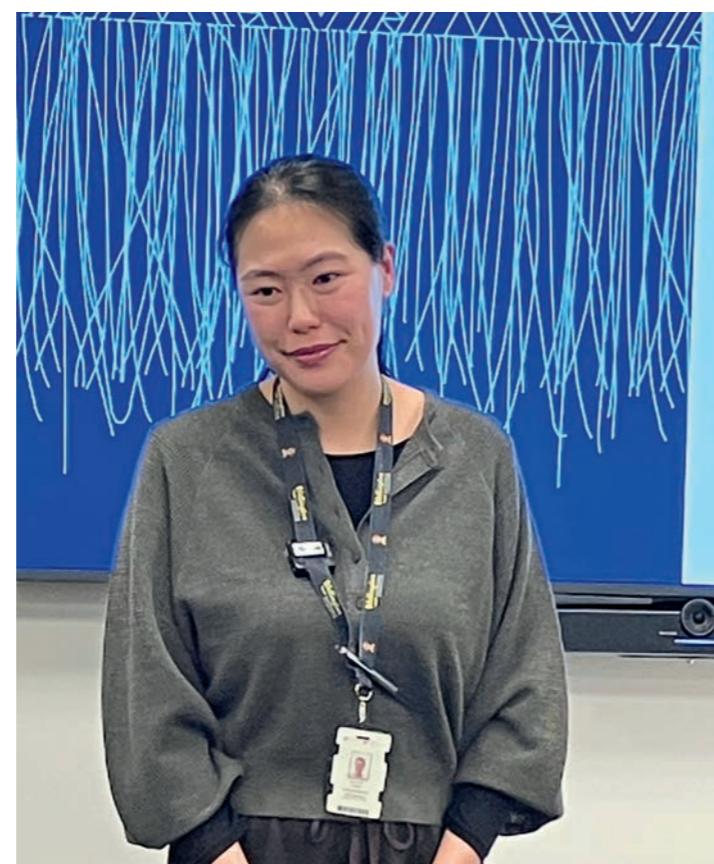
19 Nov, 9.30 - noon, Upper Hutt

Pukeahu Tours

25 Nov, 10am

Seatoun Christmas Event

3 Dec, 10.30am



Services

Visitor Service/Phone Friend Service

Community Support

Connect Programme

Walking Service

Falls Prevention exercise classes

Staying Safe courses for older drivers

Technology Support and Scam Prevention

Read more about the impact our services are having in articles throughout this magazine.

Visit www.acwellington.org.nz

or call 04 499 6646 for more information.

Steady As You Go Falls Prevention Exercise Classes

DAY	TIME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
Monday	11am	Quaker Meeting Rooms	7 Moncrieff St, Mt Victoria
Monday	1pm	St Barnabas, Plimmerton Presbyterian Church	106 Mana Esplanade, Paremata
Tuesday	11am	St Barnabas Church	35 Box Hill, Khandallah
Tuesday	11am	Koraunui Stokes Valley Hub	184 Stokes Valley Rd, Stokes Valley
Tuesday	11am	Wainuiomata Library	1 Queen Street, Wainuiomata
Tuesday	11am	Maidstone Park	11 Railway Ave, Upper Hutt
Tuesday	12pm	Newtown Community Centre	Corner of Rintoul and Colombo Streets, Newtown
Tuesday	12.45pm	Karoria Community Centre	7 Beauchamp St, Karori
Tuesday	1pm	Vogelmorn Hall	Mornington Rd, Brooklyn
Tuesday	1pm	Kilbirnie-Lyall Bay Community Centre	56-58 Bay Rd, Kilbirnie
Tuesday	1pm	Johnsonville Uniting Church	16 Dr Taylor Tce, Johnsonville
Tuesday	1.30pm	Walter Nash Centre	20/22 Taine St, Taita
Wednesday	9.30am	Live Online Class	Zoom
Wednesday	12pm	All Saints Church, Hataitai	90 Hamilton Rd, Hataitai
Wednesday	12pm	Eastbourne Community Hall	Tuatoru St, Eastbourne, Lower Hutt
Wednesday	12.30pm	Te Tūhunga Rau – Strathmore Community Centre	108 Strathmore Ave, Strathmore Park
Wednesday	1.30pm	Island Bay Community Centre	137 The Parade, Island Bay
Thursday	1pm	Koraunui Stokes Valley	184 Stokes Valley Rd, Stokes Valley
Thursday	1pm	Tawa Community Centre	5 Cambridge St, Tawa
Friday	1pm	Loaves & Fishes, Wellington Cathedral of St Paul	2 Hill St, Thorndon

Call 04 499 6646 for more information or check website for update events www.acwellington.org.nz



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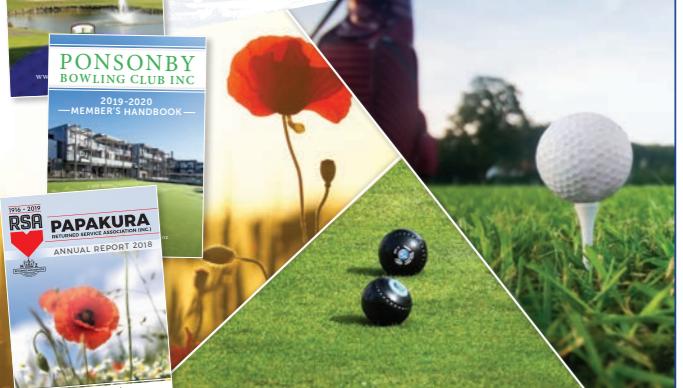
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