

Media release

16 August 2016

**Vehicle service to medical appointments available for Picton and
Marlborough Sounds residents**

Residents from Picton and the Marlborough Sounds, who have medical appointments in Nelson, now have the option of taking a community vehicle.

The Marlborough Sounds Community Vehicle Trust will operate an 'on demand' service for passengers from Picton, and anywhere along Queen Charlotte Drive and State Highway 6, to any medical appointment in Nelson.

Trust spokesperson, Bryan Strong says there's been a lot of discussion around getting a viable service running in the area and he is optimistic they have a good model in place.

"There are community vehicle services operating successfully in other areas, such as Golden Bay and South Canterbury, so we have used these as our model," he says. "In addition we had excellent support and advice on setting up the trust from ECAN (Environment Canterbury) as well as tremendous goodwill from a number of supporters."

Bryan believes the service will particularly help older people and anyone living in the outer Sounds or other remote areas.

"As people age they often feel they need to be closer to medical services, however, if we can make it easier for them to attend appointments it may enable them to stay in their homes longer and avoid unnecessary upheaval."

Bryan says community vehicle use is not restricted to appointments at Nelson Hospital it is for any medical appointment.

The Marlborough Sounds Community Vehicle Trust has the backing of Nelson Marlborough Health, Blenheim Primary Health Organisation, Marlborough District Council and support from many local businesses.

"Omega rental cars has given us free use of a car for a six month pilot period and Fresh Choice supermarket has made a contribution to our funds," Bryan says. "We have the car, the volunteer drivers and a fuel card - now we just need passengers."

Passengers wishing to use the community vehicle will need to pay \$15 per year to become a member of the Trust, and the cost of a return trip is \$40.

The Marlborough Sounds Community Vehicle Trust can be contacted on (03) 574 1311 or by emailing soundsvehicle@gmail.com

Ends

Photo attached:

Cap: Bryan Strong (right) from the Marlborough Sounds Community Vehicle Trust receiving the keys to the vehicle from Kelvin Smith, manager of Omega Rental Cars in Picton.

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