



General Press Release

**SIGNIFICANT RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AND  
EXPANSION IN HAMILTON EAST**

**Key Messages:**

- Hamilton East retail business success story
- Local community working together
- Significant art gallery opening in Hamilton East
- Children in distress to benefit

Achieving Change for Children Charitable Trust (ACCCT) was established in 2015 in order to relieve child distress and hardship and to promote the welfare of children in the Waikato region. The *Welcome Swallow Gift Shop and Gallery* opened in March 2016 and has been instrumental in raising funds for children in need through gift shop profits and fundraising endeavours .

Trust Chair Dr. Dorothy Gilson says that “it has been a fantastic experience growing our retail business in Hamilton East for the benefit of children who are experiencing hardship and distress.”

Dr. Gilson explained that “The official opening of our new gallery space will occur on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 (the gallery was formerly the New Lives Animal Rescue, Op Shop) and is an extension to our existing retail gift shop premises. This will give us over 200 square meters of retail and art gallery space enabling us to exhibit more art and hold more exhibitions alongside the gifts that our customers love to purchase. We are very excited to be able to provide a community-based retail and art experience that adds significantly to both the business and culture of Hamilton East.”

There will be 14 artists exhibiting their work and more than 80 art pieces. There are two installations, one commemorating ANZAC Day entitled “Tears of Remembrance” and two sculptural pieces. The majority of the art work is for sale but also according to Dr. Gilson “we want the art to be enjoyed and experienced. We have a great many talented artists in the Waikato and many of them will be on hand at the opening to share their art and experiences as artists.”

Dr. Gilson also wanted to point out that the entire operation including herself and the Trust Board is staffed solely by a group of dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to support children. “All our funds go to the children”, she said. “They are our inspiration”.

Every year since 2016, the *Welcome Swallow Gift Shop and Gallery* has experienced significant revenue growth. Holding art exhibitions has added to revenues considerably to the point where the need for a proper gallery space has been apparent.

The grand opening of the newly named *Welcome Swallow Gallery & Gifts* will be on Wednesday 1 May from 1pm to 5.30pm. Refreshments will be served to our customers. From 5.30pm to 7.30pm there will be an official launch with drinks and canapes to celebrate. The opening day is sponsored by launch partners **Ebbett Audi** and will see many of the previous exhibitors at the Welcome Swallow Gallery sharing their art in a collective celebration of this successful enterprise that has benefited children who have been helped and supported by Te Whakaruruhau Hamilton Women’s Refuge, Parent to Parent and True Colours.

Dr. Gilson also says that “Without the support of several local tradespeople who have been extremely generous in donating their time and materials the expansion into the gallery would not have been possible. Overall it has been a tremendous community effort in Hamilton East.”

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