

PRESS RELEASE DATED 31ST OCTOBER 2008

ILT AGE CONCERN CENTRE

INVERCARGILL'S elderly using the Age Concern Southland centre in Forth Street in increasing numbers will soon be able to enjoy a swept-up, modern facility.

That's thanks to the Invercargill Licensing Trust and the ILT Foundation, who are committing \$92,000 in funding towards the facility's first upgrade since it was opened in 1968.

The ILT Foundation has confirmed a grant of \$67,000, with the ILT contributing \$25,000 to a project that Age Concern Southland manager, Pat Jacques, said would make a huge difference.

"We often look after people before they go into rest homes or elderly who are out in the community and who need a bit of help," Mrs Jacques said. "We're certainly well overdue for an upgrade because we've got some photos taken in 1975 which shows we've still got the same furniture now. There are also accessibility and safety regulations that we have to meet."

The total cost of the project would be about \$230,000 and it would see a whole host of improvements.

There would be a complete interior upgrade, two more toilet blocks, doors widened and more handrails added and a lock-up garage built at what would be a more inviting front entrance.

Trust president, Alan Dennis, said providing a more comfortable and equipped elderly drop-in centre was important. "For safety reasons, the upgrade is a must and it is just as important to have a modern facility to help provide an even better quality of life, and to offer wide-ranging services, for our community's elderly."

Mrs Jacques said the ILT and ILT Foundation's understanding of the importance of the centre to Invercargill had to be applauded. The facility, more commonly known as the Invercargill Senior Citizens Centre, filled numerous roles. It provided various support services for the elderly, advocacy advice, social activities and in-home food services like Meals on Wheels. "People often get referred to us after being in hospital or having been through some rehabilitation. So we look at all their needs," Mrs Jacques said. "It's not just coming in to get a meal. We take the opportunity to see if there's any other help we can provide and set up for them. "So I just think it's a great asset to our city to have a centre like this where people can come in and have the companionship, the meals and access to the services we provide."

ENDS