



Experienced helping hands for charities

A Hawke's Bay rugby club is one of the first organisations in the region to benefit from a community mentoring programme helping the region's charities to better help those in need.

Tamatea Rugby Club, formed in 1903, has been training and coaching rugby skills to children and their families for more than 100 years.

To ensure the club lasts 100 more, the organisation has been working with Community Mentors New Zealand.

The Hawke's Bay Community Mentors programme provides specialist mentoring to community organisations, not-for-profits, social enterprises, NGOs and both registered and unregistered charities.

Tamatea Rugby Club currently has more than 500 members and has taught rugby skills to thousands more, but after forming a new leadership committee they realised that they didn't have the required skill to ensure the success of the committee.

Club Treasurer, Bonnie Parkes, turned to Hawke's Bay Community Mentors for help and was matched with volunteer mentor, John Worden.

"The implementation of our leadership committee came at a pivotal moment in the history of the club. Although we knew we needed the committee to ensure

the club's longevity, we didn't know what it should look like or what the varying roles should entail," says Ms Parkes.

"When I heard about the Community Mentor programme through work I thought that they could put us on the right track."

Community mentors are experienced, successful New Zealand business people who have skills particularly in the not-for-profit sector, including governance, management and

commercial business experience that they're keen to give back to their local community.

John's roles with the RNZAF, Legal Services Agency and the Ministry of Justice meant he could provide the Tamatea Rugby Club with the knowledge and skills they needed to govern and run the club now and into the future.

"Being a Maori rugby club we were initially nervous about getting outside support for

cultural reasons, but John has been amazing. From our first meeting, he won over not only our minds, but our hearts as well," says Ms Parkes.

Working with both the individual members and the committee as a whole, John has helped the club to create core policies and procedures and apply governance to the organisation, as well as helping them to think creatively and strategically about the club's future.

"So many groups would benefit from a community mentor," says Ms Parkes, "You don't know what you don't know, and mentors fill those gaps for us."

"It's an amazing experience for everyone involved, and one you'll never have anywhere else." Thanks to further funding, Community Mentors is now looking for more organisations they can match with volunteers.

Those in the region keen to access the Community Mentors programme pay a \$225 plus gst registration fee.

This gives them access to 12 months' confidential support, volunteered by an experienced community mentor.

■ Those interested in volunteering or keen to access Hawke's Bay Community Mentors' support should call Leonie Wallwork on 06 650 7315 or 0800 207 207 and visit www.communitymentors.org.nz

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BOONIE PARKES, CLUB
TREASURER



IN GOOD HANDS: Amokura Hutana; Netball Chairperson (left); Katie Kuru (Tamatea Club Secretary), John Worden (Mentor) Renata Tomoana (Tamatea Club President) Raumoa Timu (Tamatea Club Chairman) Bonnie Parkes (Tamatea Club Treasurer) Matau Tomoana (Senior Rugby Chairman). Children: Akimano Tomoana, Kirban-Crete Roberts, Kingston-Jack Roberts and Jaada Timu.

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