



## **Media Release**

**17 December 2010**

# **NEW TOURISM COLLABORATION FOR HAWKE'S BAY**

Hawke's Bay Regional Council has agreed to a new collaborative effort between the tourism activities of Venture Hawke's Bay and the Wine Country Tourism Association (HBWCTA).

Operating in the interim period as "Hawke's Bay Tourism", the collaboration will be the official Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) and will fulfill those roles and responsibilities.

This collaborative arrangement will be jointly funded by the Regional Council and private sector investors within the local tourism industry through HBWCTA.

Andrew Newman CEO of the Regional Council welcomed the move. "This is a positive step for regional tourism. Depending on progress the Council will make a subsequent decision about an increased level of formality in this collaboration through its annual plan process."

An establishment group has been appointed to oversee the initial six month management and transition period. The group comprises of Paul Drury, Group Manager Corporate Services for Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Sam Orton, Chair of HBWCTA and George Hickton, ex-CEO of Tourism New Zealand.

"This is a very exciting time for Hawke's Bay's tourism and a great opportunity to bring together all tourism interests to promote the wider region. HBWCTA members are enthusiastically looking forward to this new approach," said Sam Orton, Chair of HBWCTA.

George Hickton has been a long standing visitor to Hawke's Bay and is extremely passionate about the region. "We are very fortunate to have one of the world's most respected tourism leaders involved with the future of Hawke's Bay tourism," said Mr Orton.

### **For more information please contact:**

Sam Orton  
Chairman  
HBWCTA  
Phone 06 877 3426, Mobile 0274 809 548

Susan Wylie  
Senior Comms Co-Ordinator  
Hawke's Bay Regional Council  
06 835 9208, Mobile 027 256 8549

### **Supplementary Information:**

George Hickton Bio  
Annie Dundas Bio

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