

Hello - My name is Gill Holland and as Greg's Mother I have also had a long connection to Taieri Mouth.

We have been hearing about disability challenges from a wheelchair perspective, and I have come today to speak about the daily challenges that also face people like me, who are walking, but compromised in many physical ways too.

There are a great deal of similarities with the challenges we all face. For example, slippery or rough surfaces, frost, snow, sand and sea, all causing wheeling or walking difficulties which can also be quite dangerous, not to mention embarrassing at times !!

Sometimes you will arrive at a location and find that the access is completely hopeless, being too steep or having loads of stairs.

It really would help if the Earth was flat !!

I contracted Polio as a baby which resulted in a neurological disorder causing damage to my limbs, so I have experienced a great many of the physical problems that arise in day to day life from childhood, with increasing deterioration as time goes by.

The psychological, as well as physical, effect that a disability can have on a child or young adult - when deprived from participating in normal activities, can have an emotional effect on even the strongest individual.

Allowing safer access to a group activity such as boating, that has previously been out of reach for many, would open up a whole new world to the disabled person whatever the age.

Having had many frights in water, I have never learned to swim, so that has increased my fear of deep water.

Only about 2 years ago my two sons insisted on taking me for an outing in Greg's boat and they managed to help me on board for my first trip up the Taieri River. It was a glorious day and a wonderful experience, but when

we returned to the wharf, the tide had dropped away and although they managed to eventually haul me up onto the wharf, it took a lot of effort and was fraught with difficulties, so could have resulted in a bad ending.

We all agree that the hoist being available to lift someone onto a boat is a wonderful and safe asset, and a great way of getting the person onboard. But - I also want to point out how helpful, accommodation besides the wharf would be as well.

The application for enabling accommodation on the wharf, which supplies a toilet, kitchen and bedding on site would be invaluable especially for a disabled person as many compromised people have to be able to use facilities within easy proximity.

More often than not access to the cramped toilet and bunk facilities that are in many of the boats, is inaccessible to a person with physical restrictions, and a chance to stay onboard overnight is just not feasible.

However a chance to stay by the water with adjacent facilities would open up a whole new experience. Imagine if the rest of the group could tie up alongside giving a sense of inclusion !

I believe this would be a whole new experience for many people, bearing in mind that the statistics show just how many physically compromised people there are in society !

For these reasons I really do want to support this Application with an emphasis on the Accommodation, as I believe this unique concept can serve as a real asset to both Taieri Mouth and the Surrounding areas.

Thank you for your time
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