Article for Age Concern Hauraki Coromandel

Headline: Your will is a powerful tool

When Stephanie\* picked up her beloved new kitten from an animal rescue charity, it became one of her happiest memories.

Fast forward several years when she was writing her will, and this particular charity was top of mind for Stephanie. She was thinking about ways she could give back in her will, by including a charitable gift.

“This animal rescue charity does such amazing work and helps rehome hundreds of animals every year,” Stephanie explained.

“I wanted to be able to give back to them after I’m gone, as a way to say thank you for my special pet and to enable them to keep doing their important work in the community.”

Stephanie encourages others to leave a gift in their will to a charity that’s important to them. “My gift isn’t large, but every dollar can help make a difference”.

Your will can be a powerful tool like Stephanie’s. This Wills Week (15 to 21 July), Public Trust has partnered with Philanthropy NZ and is encouraging Kiwi to create – or update – their will, and letting people know about the option to include charitable gifts, or bequests, in their will.

A will is a legal document that outlines your wishes for what you’d like to happen to your assets when you die. Your will can not only help whānau and friends, but also a charity or cause you care about. This might be something like a sports club or community group you’ve been involved in for years, or a medical related charity that has supported you or your family during a health diagnosis.

A lot of people think you need to leave a large amount of money to make a gift in your will. In fact, any amount will make a difference to a cause close to your heart.

Public Trust Principal Trustee Stewart Harvey, based in Hamilton but whose team makes regular trips to Thames, says making a bequest is a way people can create a lasting legacy.

“Your will is not only important for planning for the future. Leaving a gift in your will can be a wonderful and meaningful way to give back to the community causes that matter most to you.”

“A will isn’t just set and forget either. It’s good to review your will every five years to ask yourself if you need to update it or make any changes.”

Some important life events can trigger a potential required update to your will – these can include:

‒ the death of a family member or person included in your will.

‒ A relationship change – like a separation or entering a new relationship.

‒ New additions to the family like the birth of a grandchild.

‒ Significant changes to your assets or liabilities – like a new business or changes to property.

If a charity has touched your life, like Stephanie’s has, or the life of someone close, leaving a gift in your will, after taking care of family and friends, could be the perfect way to say thank you. Create or update your will this Wills Week and help the things that matter go to the people that matter.

Book an appointment with our Public Trust Waikato team by phoning 0800 371 471. The team makes regular visits to the Thames region for customer appointments. The location is 106 Sealey Street, Thames 3500. You can also create your will online at publictrust.co.nz

Video: [Public Trust | How can I leave a gift to my favourite cause in my Will? on Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/960705891?share=copy)

**Webinar:**

This Wills Week, join Public Trust and Philanthropy New Zealand for a free webinar about the power of your will. Learn the importance of having an up-to-date will, hear stories about the positive impact that legacy giving can make and learn about the various options for including a gift to a charity or not-for-profit in your will.

Join the webinar on Thursday 18th July at 11am.

Register today at: [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/c25fdb7d-630e-4c9c-96a0-376e2a07eb09%400609200a-99e5-464e-b4af-b9dfe83f7896) or <https://www.publictrust.co.nz/willsweek2024/>