



CONFERENCE 2025

Havelock North
18th - 19th September

\$605_{pp} (ex GST)
12 Non Verified CPD Points



“Enabling member
firms to provide
superior service and
to grow in a vibrant
supportive network.”

Mission Statement

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Message from the Chair



On behalf of the Board, a big thank you to our host firm, Williams' Harvey, for bringing together what's shaping up to be another

quality ValGroup Conference, this year in Havelock North, the heart of Hawke's Bay.

This event is a highlight on the calendar—not just for CPD (important as that is), but for the chance to reconnect with peers from across the country. Whether you're from a large city firm or a regional practice, this is where we come together to share insights, challenges, and camaraderie.

This year's theme centres on navigating change—something we've all become familiar with. As the market evolves and pressures mount, staying sharp through CPD is more vital than ever to serve our clients and communities well.

We have a strong speaker line-up—mixing the familiar with fresh perspectives—covering everything

from regulation and market trends to emerging technologies. There's something here for everyone.

But just as important as the sessions are the conversations inbetween. ValGroup is built on relationships and shared values, and events like this remind us we're not doing it alone. Some of the best ideas come from a casual yarn over a cuppa or a beer.

Once again we will be opening up the conference and welcoming non ValGroup members. We hope you get a real sense of what makes this group unique: collaboration over competition.

So lean in, ask questions, enjoy the social time, and make the most of the event. Thanks for making the effort to attend - let's make it great one.

Guy Hoban

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Guy Hoban', with a stylized flourish at the end.

BOARD CHAIR

Conference Location

This year's ValGroup Conference will be based in Havelock North, Hawke's Bay.

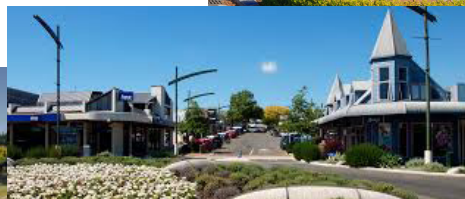
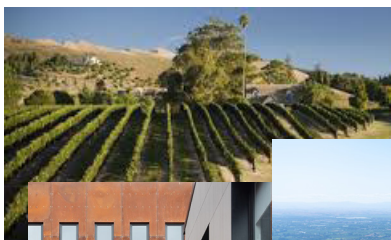
Known to locals as 'The Village', Havelock North is a 'must visit' destination for anyone travelling to the province we call Wine Country. Founded in 1860 by a handful of hardy pioneers, Havelock North has flourished to become one of New Zealand's most desirable places to live.

Gracious, historic homes and tree lined streets wind their way through the foothills of Te Mata Peak, while orchards and vineyards frame the beautiful surrounds of the Village Centre.

There is no doubt it has a special charm. The Village is small enough to maintain its unique atmosphere but has the pizzazz to ensure that time spent in Havelock North is never dull.

It's a discerning shopper's paradise. Boutique shops, specialist fashion stores and quality providores form an eclectic retail hub, as well as a great café and bar culture that is the envy of other Hawkes Bay destinations.

Havelock North is the gateway to all of Hawkes Bay's many attractions with world class wineries, Te Mata Peak, Cape Kidnappers, the Tuki Tuki River and a number of golden beaches on its doorstep.



Travel to & around Hawke's Bay

Driving from the Airport

In case you have never been to our beautiful region, Hawke's Bay is located on the east coast of the North Island and is easily accessible by air and road so getting here is nice and easy.

Hawke's Bay Airport is approximately 27 kilometres from Havelock North and takes approximately 25 minutes depending on traffic.

Village SHUTTLE (0800 777 796)
Airport Transfers
Email: mark@villageshuttle.co.nz

Taxi Companies

Half Price Cabs 06 974 4444

Baywide Taxis
06 843 4524 or freephone 0800 88 55 33

Hastings Taxis
06 878 5055 or freephone 0800 875 055

Hawke's Bay Combined Taxis
06 835 7777 or freephone 0800 627 437

Rental Car Hire

The following major rental car operators have counters in the Terminal and vehicles available close by, for bookings contact the company of your choice

Avis 06 835 1828 0800 655 111
www.avis.co.nz

Budget 06 835 516 0800 283 438
www.budget.co.nz

Hertz 06 835 6169 0800 654 32
www.hertz.co.nz

Thrifty 06 835 2233 0800 73 70 70
www.thrifty.co.nz

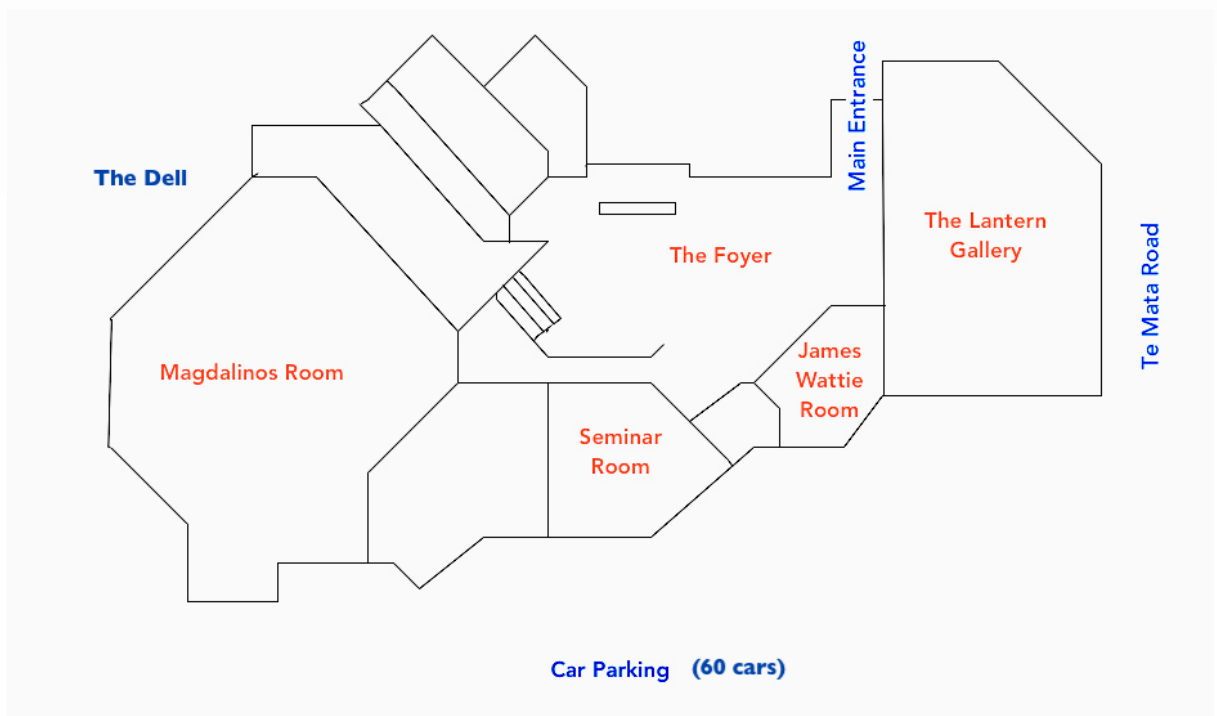
Europcar 06 835 8818 0800 800 115
www.europcar.co.nz

Apex Car Rentals 06 835 5410
www.apexrentals.co.nz/

Conference Venue

HN Function Centre

▶ 30 Te Mata Road, Havelock North 4130





Accommodation

There is a very comprehensive list of accommodation in and around the village on the Havelock North Village website: www.havelocknorthnz.com/places/category/stay which lists everything from Boutique Accommodation, B&B's, Homestays as well as the local motels.

Listed below are the motels within walking distance of the main venue:

Harvest Lodge

▶ 23 Havelock Road
Havelock North

Phone: 06 877 9500
Freephone: 0800 119 030

Email
info@harvestlodge.co.nz

Website
www.harvestlodge.co.nz

Village Motel

▶ Cnr Te Aute Road &
Porter Drive
Havelock North

Phone: 06 877-5401
Freephone: 0508 125 225

Email:
villagemotel@xtra.co.nz

Website
www.villagemotel.co.nz

Te Mata Lodge Motel

▶ 21 Porter Drive
Havelock North

Phone: 06 877 4880
or 0508 50 40 30

Email
stay@tematalodgemotel.co.nz

Website
www.tematalodgemotel.co.nz

Havelock North Motor lodge

▶ 7 Havelock Road,
Havelock North

Phone: 06 877 8627
Freephone: 0508 405 405

Email
office@havelocknorthmotorlodge.co.nz

Website
havelocknorthmotorlodge.co.nz

Porters Boutique Hotel

▶ 4 Te Aute Road,
Havelock North

Phone: 06 877 1234

Email
reservations@portershotel.co.nz

Website
[www. https://www.portershotel.co.nz](https://www.portershotel.co.nz)

Conference Schedule

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE



**For full
attendance at
conference**

18

Thursday

7.45am - 8.00am

Conference Registration
HN Function Centre Foyer

8.00am - 8.15am

Opening of Conference & House Keeping
Peter Chatteris - MC

8.15am - 8.30am

Sandra Hazelhurst - Hastings Mayor
Welcome

8.30am - 9.30am

Matthew Crowther - CentaurAI Founder
'Using AI in the Workplace'

9.35am - 10.30am

James Allen - CEO Ag First
'Overview of the Primary Sector'

10.30am - 10.55am

MORNING TEA

11.00am - 11.55am

Colleen Trolove
'Improve that Report Writing'

12 Noon - 1.00pm

Steve Dixon - ANZ ESG Specialist
'The Importance of ESG'

1.00pm - 1.55pm

LUNCH

2.00pm - 3.00pm

James Dymock, Lawyer - Wooten Kearney
'Defending a VRB complaint'

3.05pm - 4.00pm

Tobias Taylor - Director, Jarden
'Financial Markets Overview'

4.00pm - 4.30pm

AFTERNOON TEA

4.30pm - 5.30pm

Cam Taylor, Taylor Corporation
'Surviving Cyclone Gabrielle'

19

Friday

8.30am

BUFFET BREAKFAST
Magdalinos Room

9.00am- 10.00am

Kevin Biggar
'Learning from Adventure'



10.15am

Please meet in HNFC carpark
Bus leaves at 10.30am

10.40am - 12.40pm

FIELD TRIP

John Roil, Hawkes Bay Homes
'Prefabricated Home Solutions'

CONFERENCE ENDS



Conference Speakers

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



Matt Crowther

**CentaurAI
Founder**

Matt Crowther is on a mission to help smaller businesses harness the power of AI to operate more efficiently and compete globally. With a strong background in project and operations management, he has held key roles at Firstlight Foods and Sirtrack—a New Zealand telemetry firm later acquired by global leader Lotek.

Matt is studying for a Master's in Technological Futures at AcademyEX, specialising in Emerging and Disruptive Technologies, including Generative AI. His 12-month applied research project explores real-world AI use cases tailored to New Zealand businesses. With a passion for practical innovation and deep operational insight, Matt is becoming a leading voice in the local AI landscape—helping New Zealand businesses navigate the future with clarity and confidence.



Jame Allen

**Ag First NZ
CEO**

James is the CEO of AgFirst, New Zealand's largest provider of primary sector consultancy services, and a Director of AgFirst Waikato. His consultancy work focuses on business planning, farm systems design, environmental management, and agribusiness project work—both nationally and internationally. He has worked in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, Chile, and Ireland.

James is a past President of the New Zealand Fieldays Society, a 2023 Nuffield Scholar, a past President of the New Zealand Institute of Primary Industry Management, and a former National President of New Zealand Young Farmers. He was a Grand Finalist in the Young Farmer of the Year Contest in both 1999 and 2002.



Colleen Trolove

**Plain Language
Training**

Valuers spend their days writing reports and Colleen has been a trainer, coach, writer, and editor in plain language for the last 16 years. With Miraka Davies, she co-owns the online School of unProfessional Writing. She has read well over 10,000 pieces of writing from workshop participants over the years. This bird's eye view of New Zealanders' work-related writing confirms that simple, clear communication is by far the best way to go.

She's judged the USA ClearMark Awards, the USA Federal Report Card, the New Zealand Science Communicator Awards, and she's helped jazz up the New Zealand Plain Language Awards by singing at four of the awards ceremonies!



Steve Dixon

**ANZ New Zealand
ESG Specialist**

Steve joined ANZ as an ESG Specialist in 2021, and, in this role, he supports businesses to help them prepare for a more sustainable future as New Zealand's transition to a net-zero carbon economy takes shape.

Steve has over 20 years' experience in the area of environmental sustainability and holds a Masters in Environmental Assessment and Evaluation from London School of Economics (LSE). He has worked with governments and businesses to reduce their carbon and environmental impacts, most recently as General Manager for Strategy & Partnerships at Toitū Envirocare. He has held governance roles and has run large environmental projects in the Middle East for Maven Consulting. Steve will be discussing ESG and how it relates to banks and business and the importance of understanding its relevance in our future working landscape.



James Dymock

Wooten Kearney
Partner

James is an experienced commercial litigator and arbitration counsel, specialising in the defence of professionals in civil and disciplinary proceedings. With over 18 years' experience as an advocate, he represents service professionals such as accountants, auditors, lawyers, financial advisers, and valuers. He also acts for land development and construction professionals, including surveyors, architects, and engineers.

James is uniquely positioned to defend his clients, having advised across a broad range of industries and insurance products, including numerous reinsurance and alternative risk solutions. He regularly handles claims before dispute resolution schemes such as FSCL, IFSO, and FDRS, and represents clients in investigations and enforcement actions brought by the Financial Markets Authority.

James takes us through the process should you have to defend a complaint.



Tobias Taylor

Jarden Wealth Management
Director

Tobias Taylor provides wealth management advice and portfolio management services. He has over 20 years' experience in banking and financial services, having held directorships, executive positions, and leadership roles. Prior to his career in financial services, Tobias served as an officer in the New Zealand Army. He has also held positions on various industry-related boards and committees, as well as on school boards within Hawke's Bay.

He is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and holds a Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) from Massey University, as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Financial Planning (PGDipFinPlan) from the University of Waikato. Tobias is also a member of Financial Advice New Zealand (FANZ) and the New Zealand Institute of Directors (IoD).



Cam Taylor

Taylor Corporation
Export Manager

Cam Taylor is the fourth generation of the Taylor Corporation Ltd, a family owned and operated Apple Growing, Packing and Exporting company. Located in Hawke's Bay the company was launched in 1995 by his parents, Kelvin and wife Lynette Taylor, from its parent company Golden Del Orchards Ltd. Taylor Corporation is now spread over 300 hectares in Hastings and the Taylor-owned apple orchards feed its packing and exporting business.

As the Export Manager, Cam Taylor is a key figure at Taylor Corporation and he is involved in the day-to-day operations of the business, including managing the packhouse. Cam shares his story of the devastation Cyclone Gabrielle wreaked on the family business and how they navigated their way through the recovery process to where they are today.



Kevin Biggar

Adventurer, Writer &
Strategy Consultant

Kevin Biggar's professional career included working in problem-solving, consulting and strategy roles at the Treasury and with large multinationals like The Boston Consulting Group, as well as small businesses. He then decided to take part in the world's toughest endurance event, the Trans-Atlantic Rowing Race, with fellow adventurer Jamie Fitzgerald. The incredible story of Kevin's transformation from couch potato to world record-holder is told in The Oarsome Adventures of a Fat Boy Rower was awarded the Sunday Star Times Sports Book of the Year 2008. However, this was only the start of many more adventures to come.

He's now an Auckland-based motivational speaker as well and more recently, the CEO of a software start-up company. With his varied background, combined with the universal appeal of his adventure stories, Kevin speaks about how to take on large challenges, improve teamwork and get the most out of yourself and your team.

John Roil Founder and Owner



Hawke's Bay Homes began as a small family-owned venture originally known as Cottages NZ Ltd. Founded in 2001 by John and Rose Roil, the company was an early pioneer in prefabricated housing and small-scale commercial buildings, including police stations.



Their efforts were recognised with several accolades, including the 2006 Westpac Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year award and a finalist spot the previous year.

Now operating under the respected Hawke's Bay Homes brand, the company designs, builds, and delivers a modern range of transportable homes and commercial buildings. With hundreds of completed projects—including homes, holiday houses, classrooms, RSE accommodation, and

offices—their work spans rural, coastal, and urban sites across both the North and South Islands, often navigating some of the country's most challenging delivery routes. After returning from overseas, their son Mark, a qualified builder, joined the business and led its rebrand to Hawke's Bay Homes. He now oversees a skilled team of builders and trusted subcontractors based at their Irongate facility in Hastings.



Peter Chatteris MC

Introducing Peter Chatteris, this year's ValGroup Conference MC.

Peter is a man of many talents, including being a multi-award-winning speaker, author, poet, songwriter, trainer, and coach. He is the founder of the NZ Speech Academy and a proud member of the Professional Speakers Association of New Zealand.

Peter will be keeping our conference running to time, bringing his warm wit and expert timekeeping skills to ensure a smooth, engaging, and well-paced programme.

Contact Details

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▶ Host Member - Williams' Harvey Registered Valuers

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Conference Convenor: Jo Harvey

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