

ŌTAKI TODAY

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HŪRAE/JULY 2025

Ngā kōrero o Ōtaki

RIVER IN GOOD HEART

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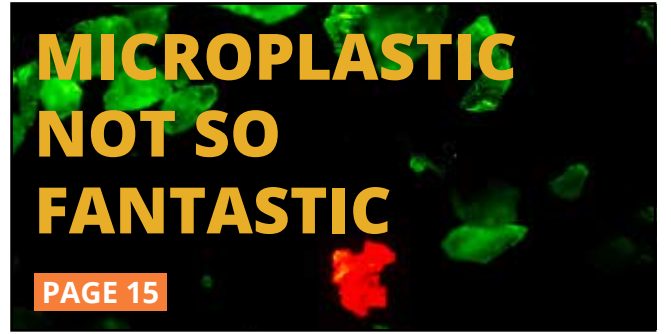
CLOSER TO THE EDGE?

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MICROPLASTIC NOT SO FANTASTIC

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Te Wānanga o Raukawa students Pania Elmsley, left, and Vanessa Green, were happy to stock up with fresh apples from Penray Gardens. *Photo Ōtaki Today*

Apple giveaway delights locals

It was the end of the season, and Brent Bertelsen had a bumper crop of apples that would have rotted on the ground.

So on a recent Sunday, Brent posted a couple of social media notices, saying he would open up Penray Gardens to locals – they could fill a bucket for free.

“By 11am the car park was nearly full,” he says. “It was fantastic to see so many people coming in and enjoying themselves.

“I think there were a lot of people who only ever bought from the shop, and never knew what it was like to pick apples from an orchard. The kids especially – but quite a few adults as well – seemed to be excited by it. It was a great day.”

He says about 650 kilograms of apples went out the door. They included varieties such as Lady in Red, Granny Smith and Braeburn.

For some people, the apples would go in the pot for apple pie or apple crumble; others were keen to stock up the fruit bowl or fill school lunch boxes.

Brent says it was a sunny and dry summer, but he managed to give his fruit trees plenty of water. That produced the bumper winter crop that’s now coming to an end.

The idea of a giveaway was inspired by a chance encounter in Ōtaki township the week before, when Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki was handing out free hamburgers.

“Someone just came up to me and asked if I wanted a burger. Everyone was so nice and friendly, and I thought ‘what a great idea’. I was just happy to see so many people enjoying it at Penrays, too.”

High Court decision ‘confirms’ iwi rights

By Ian Carson

A recent High Court decision granting Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga customary marine title (CMT) has confirmed that the iwi has mana whenua and mana moana on the coast.

The decision grants Ngāti Raukawa CMT under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 across the full coastal area claimed – from Kūkutaauaki (south of Te Horo) to the Rangitikei River. The application for CMT was made on behalf of Ngāti Raukawa by the chair of Raukawa ki te Tonga Trust, Rachael Selby.

Rachael says the iwi always knew it had title on the coast – now a crown court had confirmed it.

“It enables us to exercise that mana by having greater input into activities on the coast,” she says. “The crown management of coastal areas has been disastrous, – note pollution, for example, from streams and rivers, loss of shellfish beds due to contamination from inland.

“This decision enables the iwi to walk alongside neighbouring iwi and councils to improve the coastal environment, and to walk with communities to address concerns.”

Rachael says Ngāti Raukawa will be able to work with entities like DoC when for instance a whale strands, “so that we address how the stranding will be managed, rather than crown agencies wanting to take an ‘upper hand’.”

“The decision can only be positive on this coast because of our commitment to working together. We will want to influence local bodies so that the environment is improved, [and] biodiversity restored.

“There are now greater opportunities for collaboration . . . It’s all positive.”

continues page 4

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WHAT'S ON

80'S DISCO EXTRAVAGANZA NIGHT

Ōtaki RSA, 9 Raukawa Street, Ōtaki. Saturday July 19, 6–9pm. Enjoy a fabulous night with 80's music, and prizes for best dressed. Come dressed to impress.. Members, affiliated members and their guest are welcome.

BITCHIN' BINGO IN TE HORO Te Horo Community Hall. Saturday July 19, 6–9:30pm. Join your host Mistress Viv from Bitchin' Bingo and the talented team from Hataitai's Bambuchisan for a night of comedy bingo in Te Horo! You can expect bogan vibes, throw back tunes and PRIZES to be won. Contact Bambuchisan for booking details via: bookbambuchisan@gmail.com (04) 386 4615. **RESIDENT STORYTELLERS** August 1-10. See page 6 and iowo.org.nz

BOOKMARK KĀPITI August 9-10. A book festival with events at venues throughout the Coast. In Ōtaki there will be a rangatahi spoken word workshop and performance, te reo storytelling, an author talk at the library, T-shirt printing event with Hori, and a community event with the writers from In Other Words Ōtaki.

THE LITTLE HIGH TEA SOIREE at Anam Cara, Ōtaki, Sunday August 10, put on by members of the Kids Market. See page 6. \$22pp. e: otakimarket@outlook.com

TE HORO GARDEN TRAIL Te Horo gardens open on November 15 and 16. Also a garden-inspired market, café and information hub in Te Horo Hall. Tickets on sale in early September for \$35, online at tehoro.org.nz or at garden centres. See page 10.

KĀPITI HOROWHENUA HOMEOPATHY FOR CHILDREN Offering a holistic option in natural healthcare for families. Available for children under 12 years. Saturday clinics in Paraparaumu. Koha appreciated. Contact: kapitihomeopathyforchildren@gmail.com

WANT HELP DISCOVERING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY? Join Ōtaki Family History Inc. for monthly group meetings, 7.30pm on the 4th Tuesday of the month (Feb to Nov), at the Dr Gertrude Atmore Supper Room, Memorial Hall, Main St, Ōtaki.

ŌTAKI MUSEUM 49 Main St. 06 364-6886. *Mai i te Kāinga Tāone Iti – Wāhanga 1: 1843-1920 (From Kāinga to Village – Part 1: 1843-1920).* This is the third in a series of exhibitions focusing on the township of Ōtaki, and its development over the past 200 years. Visitors can also play the old theatre pianola while at the museum. The Anne Thorpe Reading Room is open at the same times as the museum. Museum open 10am-2pm Thursday to Saturday, except public holidays.

ŌTAKI BUZZ CLUB meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7pm. Venue: Waitohu School hall, Te Manuao Road, Ōtaki. Come along if you're interested in beekeeping.

ŌTAKI MARKET 58 Main Highway, Ōtaki. Open every fortnight in winter. 10am-2pm.

COMMUNITY BOARD The Ōtaki Community Board meets next on Tuesday July 22. The Waikanae Community Board meets next at 6.30pm (note new time) on Tuesday, July 22, at Waikanae Beach Hall, 24 Rauparaha St, Waikanae Beach. The public is welcome at meetings. Search "meetings and agendas" at kapiticoast.govt.nz from two days before the meeting for the agenda, which is also at council libraries and service centres. To speak at a meeting, register by calling 04 296 4700 or 0800 486 486, or email democracy.services@kapiticoast.govt.nz

TOI MATARAU GALLERY Māoriland Hub, Main St, Ōtaki. Open Monday to Saturday 11am-4pm. Toi Matarau is a summit for multidisciplinary arts where Māori and indigenous artists gather, collaborate, are inspired and supported. See toi.maorilandfilm.co.nz

TOTE MODERN Ōtaki Pottery Club's gallery and workshop at Ōtaki-Māori Racing Club, Te Roto Rd. Open 10am-3pm Friday to Sunday.

OLD COURTHOUSE GALLERY 239 Main Highway, Ōtaki. Open Thurs-Sunday: 10am-4pm. Closed Public Holidays. 027 435 0408.

TOI MAHARA Mahara Place, Waikanae. Until August 17, 10am-4pm, work by artist collective based in the Holtom's Buildings in Paekākāriki.

POETRY IN ŌTAKI Third Friday of each month, 10.30-11.30am, Library Supper Room, Aotaki St. All welcome. Call 021 050 1904 for details.

ŌTAKI GARAGE SALE: Third Saturday of the month, 9am-11.30am, Presbyterian Church, 249 Mill Rd. 06 364-6449. Rev Peter Jackson 021 207 9455, owpresb@xtra.co.nz

ŌTAKI STROKE SUPPORT GROUP & WELLNESS CENTRE: Meets for Sit and Be Fit classes, 10am Friday mornings at Senior Citizens' Hall, Rangitira Street. All welcome.

ŌTAKI LIBRARY – ALL SESSIONS FREE: JP service every Monday 10.30am-12.30pm; Age Concern every 2nd Thursday 10am-noon; Greypower 1st & 3rd Thursday 10.30am-1.30pm.

CHOIRS Let's Sing Ōtaki, Tuesdays 2-3pm, Hadfield Hall. Kāpiti Women's Choir, Mondays 1.30-3pm, Baptist Church, Te Moana Rd, Waikanae. New members welcome. Enquiries to Ann-Marie Stapp 021 492 127.

To list an event, contact debbi@idmedia.co.nz

Making NZ appeal to Yankiwis

Fodder for political consideration in this mid-term period of the coalition administration comes in the form of views expressed on living in New Zealand by ex-pat Americans and approaches taken by youthful Kiwis leaving to locate abroad.

Both groups appear to see the country as one in which a family will probably not have much chance of accumulating financial wealth, but will have easy access to the outdoors and a way of life in which the hustle of US cities is absent.

Work-life balance gets a big tick from the new "Yankiwis". Stats New Zealand figures show that 1388 Americans migrated here in the three months to the end of February compared with 261 in the same period a year ago. The election of Donald Trump to the White House, the introduction of a golden visa offering newcomers with money to invest a chance to settle and the "balance" factor were spurs for the higher intake.

Under the heading "Beautiful, isolated and expensive", a major US newspaper recently canvassed the views of American expats. The item's crossheading read: "Americans are showing renewed interest in moving to New Zealand. Those who have made the leap love its free healthcare and natural beauty, but warn fleeing is not a golden parachute."

In particular, individuals interviewed singled out difficulty in getting jobs and an excessive cost of living as significant aspects of life in "God's Own". And it's these latter points that keep driving out the Kiwi young and potentially productive income earners of the past two decades.

There is not much joy on employment in the latest figures. The labour market is soft.

Filled jobs were up just 0.1 percent in May. Anecdotal reports out of Auckland have mid-level professional executive job recruitment advertisements getting up to, and frequently more, than 200 applicants.

Little wonder that most applicants get dispirited when not having feedback or even acknowledgement that they have applied.

Cold comfort comes by way of comparators;

Filled jobs in the previous month was -0.3 percent and in May a year ago it was 1.9 percent. The biggest job losses are coming in the construction industry and in business services. Small rises are taking place in the public service, mainly in health and education, while positions available in financial services are creeping up.

A quote from an emigrant with a husband and family of one child: "Living costs just keep climbing. You are working hard, and you

cannot put any money away – it felt like we were treading water."

About 69,000 individuals emigrated from the country during the year up to February. And this followed record departures in 2023 and 2024. While many of those leaving spring from the traditional pre-30 age group bent on an "OE", the second highest departure group is that of the 30 to 39-year-old sector. Economists worry that the entrenched trend of more departures than arrivals threatens a serious loss of mid-career workers.

It could be said, it is a "work-on" for the government. Nicola Willis to England's *The Guardian*: "I want to see more New Zealanders wanting to stay here. I want people to see that this is a place of enormous economic future and enormous social future."

A significant part of Sir John Key's pitch to take National into government was prevention

of grandchildren going offshore to stay. For Labour, a reprise of this theme looks a strong possibility next year should the trend continue.

Chris Hipkins has made it clear Labour will have the cost of living firmly in its sight. Kiwis boarding aircraft for Australia and Europe by the thousands underscore the political validity of the issue he has chosen to exploit.

While the coalition's prospect of winning the battle for more Kiwi prosperity are at best clouded, a positive aspect for the finance minister may arise courtesy of the Infrastructure Commission. It is putting together a firm pipeline of work to give certainty to the construction industry of a demand that justifies ongoing investment, along with job creation.

Infrastructure work is currently running about \$13-\$14 billion annually and early prediction were growth to \$15b by 2029. However, establishment about new certainty of forward work may well inject a faster programme of expenditure on new plant, equipment, and construction if the forward programme is as strong as predictions emanating from inside government suggest.

The building industry as a whole has much more that can be contributed to growth should the overall economic outlook lift above its moribund 0-1 percent levels. In better economic times its total employment numbers exceeded 300,000. Right now, it's probably in a 200,000-240,000 range.

The message to the coalition from both new Yankiwis and those emigrating from New Zealand is clear: Get on with growth; and faster. As the construction industry normally provides about 10 percent of the nation's employment, any lift that comes from a positive contribution from the Infrastructure Commission would be a significant help.

■ Bruce has been an economics and business editor, and a foreign correspondent in Washington, London and Hong Kong.

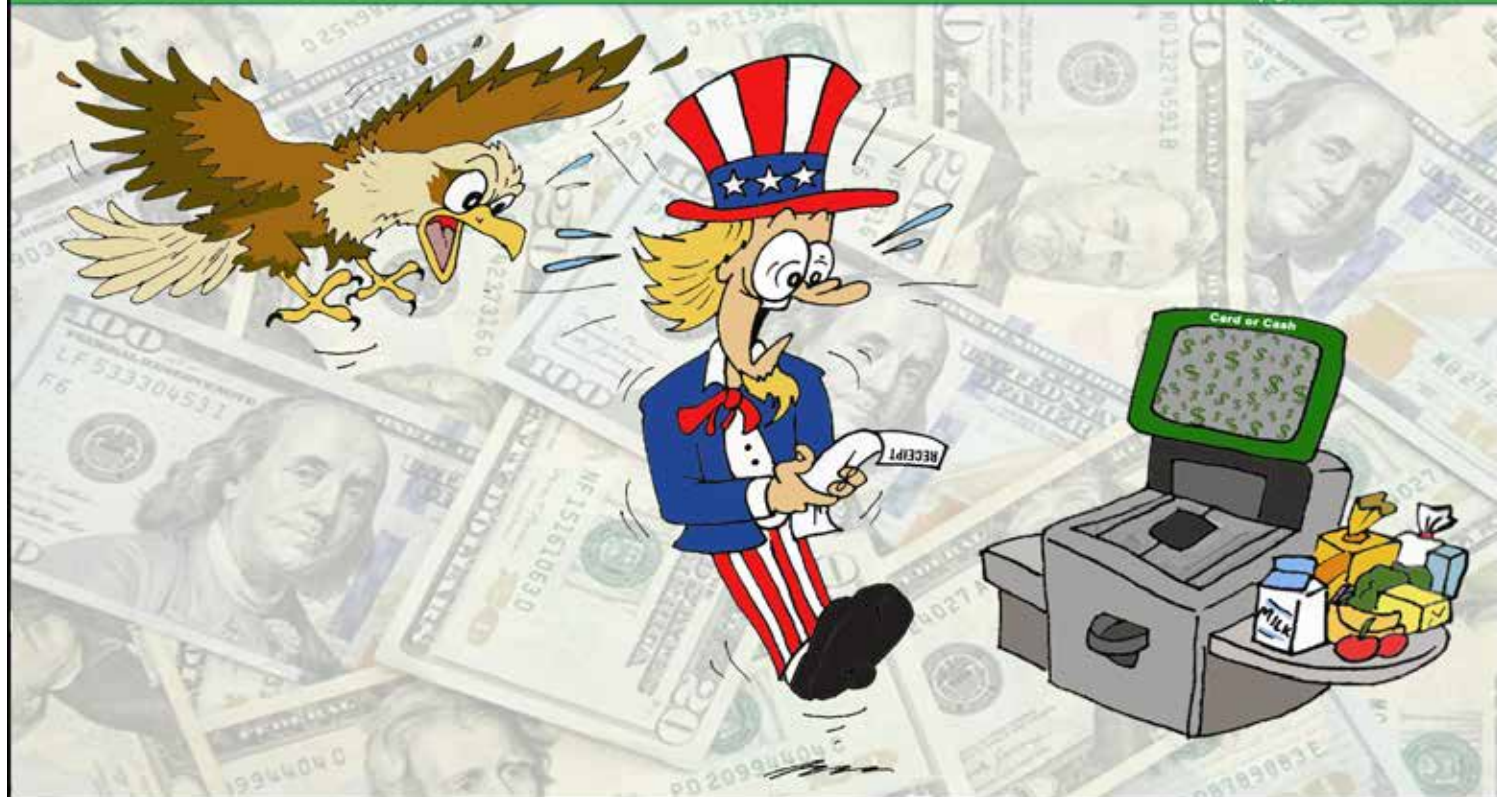
POLITICS



BRUCE KOHN

CARTOON OF THE MONTH

By Jared Carson

ŌTAKI TODAY *Ngā Kōrero o Ōtaki*

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EDITOR: Ian Carson.

For editorial enquiries or news tips, please contact Ian at 027 2411 090, or email ian@idmedia.co.nz

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For advertising enquiries, call Debbi on 027 285 4720, or email debbi@idmedia.co.nz

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CONTRIBUTORS:

SIMON BLACK (Ōtaki Community) • CAM BUTLER (Cam's Corner) • FRASER CARSON (Just a Thought) • CADE CARSON (Kids' puzzle) • TIM COSTLEY (The Electorate) • JOANNE HAKARAIA (Rongoā) • STEVE HUMPHRIES (Science) • KATH IRVINE (Edible Backyards) • BRUCE KOHN (Politics) • DAVID LEDSON / NICKY TREADWELL (Historical) • MICHAEL MOORE (Te Horo) • CHRIS WHELAN (Your Business).

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Four now vie for ward

By Ian Carson

The race is hotting up for the Ōtaki Ward seat as nominations open for the October 11 local body elections.

Heniti Buick is the latest to join the race, which also includes Ōtaki Community Board chair Cam Butler, district-wide councillor Rob Kofoed, and incumbent ward councillor Shelly Warwick. More might yet throw their hat in the ring – nominations close at 12 noon on August 1.

Another community board member, Jackie Elliott, who has previously served as a district-wide councillor, says she's undecided about whether she will vie for any role – as councillor or on the board. Previous chair of the community board, Chris Papps, says she's still considering whether she will stand for a board position again.

While there's a hot contest for the ward seat, the Ōtaki Community Board is, so far, less congested. Current board members are Cam Butler, deputy chair Simon Black, Chris Papps and Jackie Elliott. Shelly Warwick is a board member because she's the ward councillor. No new names have some forward at the time of going to press.

If there are no other nominations, and all current members put their name forward, they will automatically form the new board, along with whoever is the ward councillor.

KEY DATES:

- Friday, August 1** – nominations close, roll closes at 12 noon.
- Friday, September 9** – Voting documents posted out, voting opens.
- Saturday, October 11** – Voting closes at 12 noon. Preliminary results available.
- Thursday-Sunday, October 16-19** – Declaration of final results.



From left, Heniti Buick, Cam Butler, Rob Kofoed, Shelly Warwick. Photos supplied

Heniti ‘proud to call Ōtaki home’

Heniti Buick (Ngāti Raukawa) was raised in Ōtaki and educated through the full spectrum of local Māori and mainstream institutions — Te Kōhanga Reo o Raukawa, Ōtaki School (Te Korowai Whakamana), Ōtaki College, and the University of Otago.

“I’ve spent almost my whole life in Ōtaki. This town raised me, and I’m proud to call it home,” she says.

Heniti is well known in the community for her work in kaupapa Māori health, whānau wellbeing, education, and local development. As chief executive of Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki, she’s led multiple initiatives spanning health, housing support, youth mentoring, and food security. While a registered dietitian by training, her focus has broadened over the years to champion holistic wellbeing at the community level.

She is also a mother of four, a netball player for Rāhui, and a former NZ touch rugby representative, playing alongside her husband, Hamish.

Heniti’s decision to run in the general seat – rather than the Māori ward – is intentional. “The Māori ward may be short-lived, but the general ward provides stability, longevity, and succession planning,” she says. “Being Māori isn’t about the seat – it’s about who I am, and I carry that responsibility wherever I go.”

Her vision for the ward includes a strong focus on practical and sustainable outcomes across infrastructure, housing, climate and emergency readiness, youth development, and public transport.

“I understand the grassroots realities our people face. I’ve listened, understood, and advocated locally for years – now I want to scale that into council spaces,” she says.

Michael Moore goes for Waikanae seat

Waikanae Community Board chair Michael Moore is to contest the Waikanae Ward seat at the October local body elections.

He has also put his name in for the Waikanae Community Board.

Michael lives at Te Horo Beach and has been a strong advocate for Te Horo since he joined the community board in 2022. The Waikanae Ward covers the communities of Waikanae, Reikorangi and a large part of Te Horo. It takes in a chunk of Te Horo that was until 2022 part of the Ōtaki Ward.



“The Te Horo community has been forgotten for years and has lacked a loud voice around the council table,” he says. “I’ve gained funding for important projects for the beach residents’ association and the Te Horo Hall Society.

“Additionally, I’ve been helping bring a resolution to the land adjoining the hall that has been unresolved for 32 years.”

He says he’s standing because he believes Te Horo and Waikanae need more effective, inclusive representation at the council table – “representation that ensures every part of our ward has a voice and that resources are fairly allocated”, he says.

“I’ve seen areas where there has been poor expenditure decisions because locals have not been heard. The business ‘pop-up’ on the Main Road, for example, had meritorious goals, but it hasn’t worked and some key locals weren’t listened to.

“The investment has sadly lacked a return.”



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Graeme leaves river in good heart

By Ian Carson

Graeme Campbell has been managing flood risk on the Ōtaki River for 19 years – but he’s moving on.

His role with Greater Wellington Regional Council has seen him look after waterways from Wairarapa through the Hutt Valley and Wellington up to Ōtaki. He’s clearly enjoyed his job, which is now taking him into a new role with Te Uru Kahika, a new national body that represents the 16 regional and unitary councils throughout the country.

Although he’s been flood risk manager for 19 years, he’s been involved in work on the river since the early 1990s. He’s worked with the community on a plan for how the river should be managed.

“There was a lot of flooding in the early 90s, a lot of damage with erosion and so on,” he says. “So we sat down with the community to understand the problem, and then look at ways the flood risk could be managed.

“We developed a plan, signed it off in 1998 and started implementing it.”

Some of that work started even before 1998. “It’s not a five-minute job, or even a five-year job. The river’s here forever so it’s a long-term plan.”

Graeme is proud of what’s been achieved on Ōtaki River, crediting much of that to the relationship the regional council has had not only with local landowners and iwi, but also the Friends of the Ōtaki River, which was set up as the management plan was being drawn up.

“Establishing this group to enable the planting, and recognising the value of the ecology of the river has been fantastic,” he says. “You go up the river now and see the difference.



Graeme Campell at the Ōtaki River – “You can’t get rid of the flood risk. It’s always going to be there. You can only manage it.”
Photo Ōtaki Today

“In the 1990s there were car bodies, old bits of US Army machinery, concrete, all sorts of stuff. Now it’s magical. It’s all due to the hard work of the Friends and the community.”

One of the biggest projects has been to build the Chrystalls Bend stopbanks, plus erosion works up and down the river. Work on the “choke” in the river, which as 80 metres wide, has resulted in the channel now being 250 metres wide.

The latest work is to stabilise the Ōtaki Cliffs on the south side of the river where it flows from the gorge. In heavy rain, the cliffs are gouged away, not only creating erosion but also filling the river with silt.

Graeme says maintenance is critical to ensuring infrastructure works are viable.

“You can’t just build something and walk away,” he says. “It’s an every day job.”

He calls the work flood risk management.

“The core building blocks are the stuff you do in the river every day, the stopbanks and the rock lines, and then making sure the land use is matched with the flood risk. You can’t get rid of the flood risk. It’s always going to be there. You can only manage it.”

He says assessment have to be made about where Ōtaki is developing, what land use is occurring upstream of Chrystalls Bend, whether there’s intensive farming or housing.

Retaining or improving the ecology of the river has always been important for Graeme in his flood risk management.

“The work we do to manage the flood risk is strongly connected to the ecological value of the river. We have to make sure we are looking after it, leaving it in a better state than it was. People walk up there now and they love it.”

His new job will involve making the voice of the 16 regional and unitary council heard by central government.

“The government doesn’t want to talk to 16 different councils,” he says. “As a collective we can go to central government with a single voice.”

He says the government could utilise councils’ relationship with the community to get this work done.

“It’s almost like the government doesn’t want to get its hands dirty. But that councils can do that work needs to be recognised.”

He also says regional councils need to speak up more about what they do.

“I understand people’s concerns about the regulatory and consenting process, but it’s only a part of what a council does. There’s also public transport, bulk water supply, biodiversity, pest control and of course flood protection.

“The public doesn’t hear much about all that.”

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Elections offer opportunity to make a difference

Kāpiti Coast District Council is calling on those with the passion, dedication and energy to give back to the community and take the leap into local government.

The candidate nomination period is open now for one mayor, two districtwide councillors, one Māori ward councillor, seven general ward councillors and 20 community board members.

Completed nomination forms must be received by midday on August 1.

Chief executive Darren Edwards says being on the council or a community board is an exciting challenge and a genuine way of shaping the future of the district.

“The most important quality that someone can bring to the council table is that they care about this place and its people,” Darren says. “Council mahi covers a huge range of issues so there is a lot to get your head around, there are tough decisions to weigh up and make, important relationships to build and, yes, quite a bit of reading.

“It’s not an easy job, but hopefully a rewarding one.”

He says if you’ve got that foundation of care, you can make a real difference to the future of the district.

“We need people from all walks of life, and those people to be able to work together to make decisions in the best interests of the entire district. There’s a whole lot of training available for those who get elected. Our message is: Don’t be shy, care for Kāpiti and get involved.”



Darren says a good place to start for those thinking about standing is the council’s *Pre-election Report*, which provides a succinct overview of the council’s recent past and a look ahead. The report is available to read online.

“The *Pre-election Report* provides a summary of major projects and finances, and outlines the major challenges facing our district and the role of council in addressing these. It’s essential reading for those looking to stand and voters alike.”

Like everyone, the council is facing significant cost pressures, which must be balanced with the need to invest in building future resilience.

“We’re a growing community living in a coastal area – those two factors alone require us to think and plan carefully for the future,” Darren says. “There are a host of other challenges – and opportunities – to consider as well.

“If you care for Kāpiti, work well with others and would like the opportunity to shape the future of our district, please think seriously about standing in this year’s elections.”

Visit www.kapiticoast.govt.nz/vote2025 to find nomination forms and the *Pre-election Report*.

Nominations close at noon on August 1. Nominations can be done via the council’s online portal, by downloading nominations forms, or picking them up from council service centres or libraries. Completed forms need to be returned in person to the council’s main office at 175 Rimu Road, Paraparaumu.

The council electoral officer and council staff will also be available at candidate information sessions in July, held on the following dates:

Online webinar – 5.30pm Wednesday, July 9. Register at kapiticoast.govt.nz to access Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81234567890>. The webinar will be recorded and added to the website within 2-3 working days.

In person, Paraparaumu
10am Saturday, July 19 and 2pm Saturday July 19, Council Chambers, ground floor, 175 Rimu Road, Paraparaumu. There is no need to register.

BRIEFS

Storyteller residencies

In Other Words, Otaki (IOWŌ) has selected storytellers for the town’s new pilot residency programme, from August 1-10. The storytellers stay at Ōtaki baches while working on their projects. There will be small local events throughout the residency and a shared lunch for community groups on Sunday, August 10, at the Memorial Hall hosted by comedian Michele A’Court. The residents are: Ralph McCubbin Howell, half of the theatre company Trick of the Light; author, poet and maker of zines (small self-published works) Nadine Hura (Ngati Hine, Ngapuhi); writer and writing teacher Helen Lehnendorf; and GP, teacher, mentor and writer Lucy O’Hagan. Collaborative storytellers (working towards one project) are: author and illustrator Ruth Paul, director and actor Peter Hambleton, and illustrator, writer and costume designer Fifi Colston. See iowo.org.nz

Kids put on high tea

The Ōtaki Kids Market is to be part of Wellington On a Plate 2025. The market is organising The Little High Tea Soirée, on Sunday, August 10, at Anam Cara Gardens. It’s an opportunity for local young people to showcase what can do in the culinary world. The youth-led event will showcase the creativity and culinary talents of six young chefs. There will be live music by The Pretty Boys. Sessions are at 11am and 2.30pm. See visawoap.com/venue/anam-cara-gardens/6392 for tickets/info.



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- **Kura Reo Rua** - a place that is stimulated by te reo Māori me ōna tikanga, that is Mātauranga Māori driven and where our tamariki can inspire to become proficient orators in two languages.
- **Kura Taiao** - a place of learning and implementing sustainable practices that utilises our local rivers, streams, sea and their surroundings as a space for continuous self-led learning.
- **Kura Auaha** - a place where creativity is holistically nurtured, through a play-based programme and includes drama, dance, art, cooking, craft, and hard materials.

Te Kura o Hato Petera Kaniera equips tamariki for all life’s challenges, with learning that reaches beyond the mandated academic requirements.

The leaders of the future will need to understand the connectedness of all things, achieve academically, be culturally agile, comfortable with diversity, connected to Wairua and Whenua, and have compassion for the vulnerable.

There are spaces available for your tamaiti, tamariki or mokopuna at Hato Petera Kaniera.

You can organise a kōrero with the Tumauaki Urutakai Cooper by contacting the Kura Administrator Charlie McNaught on (06) 242-6017 or admin@spc.school.nz

Works keep rolling along

Infrastructure works are continuing throughout Ōtaki.

On Mill Road, the trench has been excavated up to near Millhaven Place. Road surfacing has been carried out, including patches caused by laying new laterals to houses. Potholing to locate existing laterals on the south side of the road has been done.

On Aotaki Street, trenching work has restarted and the pipe installation has reached the library. The road is being prepared for more surfacing to be done, and it has been patched where new laterals have been laid to houses on the west side of the road.

Bus stops near the library are being temporarily relocated as required.

Roading crews is preparing to install the wastewater pipe across the Mill Road/Aotaki Street roundabout. This section of work is expected to reach the roundabout in late-July and take about four weeks to complete.

It will include two main site layouts, and corresponding traffic management. The south arm of the roundabout will be closed for up to two weeks. After that, the east arm of the roundabout will need to be closed to enable the installation of a manhole.

During this time, detours will be in place, which will change as the work progresses. There will also be temporary changes to bus stop locations, in liaison with bus operator Metlink. The sculpture in the middle of the roundabout will not be affected by the works.

On Mill Road, trenching will continue. The crew there is starting to plan for laying the pipe across the Mill Road/Old State Highway 1 roundabout. At this stage, work is expected to reach the roundabout in late August.

NZTA is continuing to upgrade the old state



Work to lay new pipes along Mill Road is continuing. This photo shows work near Ōtaki College. Photo Ōtaki Today

highway before handing it over to the council to manage. The changes will make the road more suitable for community use, rather than prioritising through-traffic.

The contractor has poured new kerb and channel, and laid a footpath outside Mowbray's Collectables, and at the other end of the retail area near New World. They're engaging with nearby businesses as their work begins to affect them.

At the Riverbank Road intersection a new footpath has been laid on the southwest side and a new sump has been installed at the access to the gravel pit.

New kerb and channel and drainage works have been installed for the bus stop on the east side, with footpath work to follow in the next few weeks.

The kerb and channel in front of the former Amazon store will be replaced and then a new footpath laid as works continue south.

Crossings and the new footpath will be poured outside New World and gardens will be planted in the berms.

There will be below-ground work on the Riverbank Road intersection for the new traffic lights, with final kerb and channel works following soon after.

John Davey remembered

Energise Ōtaki's project Ōtaki Carbon Forests has lost an important member, but his work lives on.

John Davey of Greenlife Nursery (at right) joined the project's working group as its plans to help local landowners and kaitiaki plant native trees were just developing. He died on June 10 after a long battle with cancer.



"John used to say that the Ōtaki Carbon Forest project was keeping him alive and, in a way, I started to believe him," says project leader Di Buchan.

"But inevitably the magic wore off. We are deeply saddened by John's passing.

"He was a huge contributor, both in the time he gave to the project and his practical support. He provided space to store hundreds of plants at his nursery as well as potting mix, pots, and heaps of advice on how to pot plants, and what to plant and where."

Thirty-two landowners and kaitiaki are now members of the project with a growing number of volunteers all helping to reach the project's goal to plant at least 32ha of land around Ōtaki.

Meanwhile, seedlings will continue to be potted and stored at Greenlife Nursery as the project welcomes John's wife, Cynthia Davey.

Tim Costley MP for Ōtaki



Contact details for our offices in Levin and Paraparaumu are below.

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Opening Hours:

Mon: 10am - 3pm

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Paraparaumu Office Hours

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kapiti@parliament.govt.nz

Opening Hours:

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Te Haemata – a space for rangatahi

Tucked away at 84b Mill Road in Ōtaki (next to Sunlong), Te Haemata is fast becoming one of the most important spaces for rangatahi in the community.

It’s a vibrant, welcoming after-school space where being yourself is not only accepted, but celebrated.

Since opening in November 2023, Te Haemata (a component of Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki) has been supporting Ōtaki rangatahi aged 13-18 with a space they can call their own – and it’s a busy space. In its first year 1896 rangatahi drop-ins were recorded, which clearly demonstrated the need.

Rona, a youth worker at Te Haemata who is also a rangatahi herself, knows exactly how important the space is.

“Rangatahi have been seen out on the streets in unsafe situations after school in Ōtaki, so Te Haemata gives a safe place to make their own and be safe with friends after school hours,” she says.

With snacks, PlayStation, wifi, a basketball hoop, ping pong table, beauty station, music gear, boxing equipment, creative arts, and even free donated clothing, Te Haemata offers a warm, rangatahi-driven vibe. Whether you’re in for a game, to chill with mates, or to try something new, there’s always something happening.

Open 3-5pm Monday to Thursday, Te Haemata fills a crucial time of day – right after school when many rangatahi might be thinking they’re bored.

“It’s that after-kura time where a lot of us are just wandering or looking for something to do until Mum or Dad are home from work” Rona says. “Having a place like this, where you’re welcome, fed, feel looked after and happy is actually massive.”

The impact is being felt beyond the walls of Te Haemata.

Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki chief executive Heniti Buick says the idea for Te Haemata came about after a community survey – Tirohia – requesting spaces specifically for Ōtaki’s youth. There were also conversations with local police and community members.

“We were hearing more and more about rangatahi being in that grey zone, not quite in trouble, but heading there,” Heniti says. “The police described it as ‘staying on the fence’.

We wanted to create a space that helped rangatahi stay connected, and better yet, thrive.”

The partnership with Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) has been critical in establishing the space.

“It’s been very positive,” Heniti says. “While Te Haemata is currently funded as a pilot programme, we are actively advocating for council to ensure this becomes a sustainable venture for our diverse rangatahi groups.”

Beyond the gear and good vibes, the secret to Te Haemata’s success lies in its people. The staff, many of whom are rangatahi themselves, bring good vibes, relatability and belief in the potential of their peers, or teina.

“We use a strength-based approach,” Heniti says. “We’re not here to fix young people, we’re here to walk alongside them, remind them of their worth, and help them step into their full potential.

“When rangatahi feel seen, respected and safe, they show up differently. That’s the real power of this space.”

Te Haemata also runs pop-ups across Ōtaki



and in local schools, making sure the kaupapa reaches beyond four walls, strengthens trust and relationships and also endeavours to remain relevant to rangatahi.

Ashleigh Manga, the manager of youth services for Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki, plays a vital role in keeping all options open and leading her youth worker team.

As Ōtaki faces the complex challenges of a growing town, spaces like Te Haemata are becoming more than just nice-to-haves, they’re essential.

“It’s just good to have a place that’s for us,” Rona says.

And judging by the growing numbers and smiling faces, she’s not alone.

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EVENTS

WALK IN VACCINATION CLINIC UPDATE

POST-PONED FOR JULY

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TE PUNA ORANGA O ŌTAKI

ELOUAN QUARTET WITH BRIDGET DOUGLAS Mulled Wine Concert

■ **Sunday July 20, St Peter's Hall, Paekākāriki**

The Elouan Quartet will be appearing at Paekākāriki's iconic St Peter's Hall on Sunday, July 20, featuring an outstanding chamber music quartet of principal players from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, will be accompanied by the popular principal flautist, Bridget Douglas. The Elouan Quartet with Bridget Douglas will present a captivating programme of music for flute and string quartet. Highlights include works by Mozart, Beethoven, Ginastera, Amy Beach, Salina Fisher, and Gareth Farr. These works are paired together in such a way as to complement and contrast each other. Many of the works have a strong connection to the natural world, especially water. The quartet comprises Jessica Oddie (violin), Anna Van der Zee (violin), Alexander McFarlane (viola) and Ken Ichinose (cello), names that will be familiar to followers of the NZSO. Bridget Douglas (flute) is also a well-known principal member of the orchestra.

Tickets \$35 (Student under 16, \$15).
Online Sales: marygow@gmail.com See mulledwineconcerts.com

TE HORO GARDEN TRAIL

■ **Saturday-Sunday November 15-16**

Fifteen gardens in Te Horo will open their gates on November 15 and 16 in



Elouan Quartet with Bridget Douglas

a celebration of the area's unique sea-to-hills landscape and varied land uses. Alongside the trail will be a garden-inspired market, café and information hub in Te Horo's historic hall. All money raised will contribute to further work to upgrade and protect the heritage-listed hall. Hall committee chair Bryan Hall says it became clear during recent earthquake strengthening that the hall's weathertightness must be improved. "We are therefore going back to the community for another round of fundraising," he says. "The trail will be an opportunity to make a good start, as well as a celebration of our vibrant and beautiful district. We will have 15 stunning, seldom seen gardens on offer. They vary from colourful cottage and seaside gardens to stylish lifestyle blocks, abundant kitchen gardens, restoration projects and a working lavender farm." It's the first time in six years that most of the gardens will be open to the public. Tickets for the two-day self-drive (or cycle) trail go on sale in early September for \$35. Further information, including ticket sales at tehorohall.org.nz



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Kāpiti polyclinic – report’s lead author responds

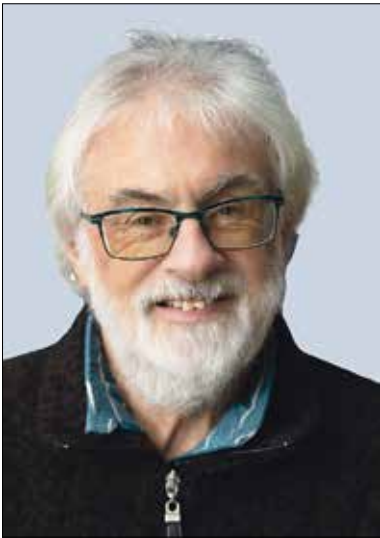
IAN POWELL, the lead author of ‘Compelling Case’, a report outlining the case for a Kāpiti polyclinic, responds to an Ōtaki Today (June) article.

In June Ōtaki Today published an article under the heading ‘No Ōtaki consultation’ on polyclinic. This was in response to Kāpiti Coast District Council (May 28) adopting two recommendations from its Kāpiti Health Advisory Group (KHAG). All KHAG members are unpaid volunteers. I am writing in a personal capacity only, although I am the lead author of the *Compelling Case* document that council based its decision on.

Ōtaki Ward Councillor Shelly Warwick is a regular attendee at KHAG meetings. She has played an important role by drawing upon her extensive local knowledge, including nursing experience, which has been benefited our Ōtaki understanding.

Our objective is to persuade Health NZ to incrementally provide a greater range and volume of non-acute health services, including outpatient clinics, 24/7 urgent care, and diagnostic support at the Kāpiti Health Centre (KHC).

Unfortunately, the article reads like a hatchet job. The comments from Heniti Buick are measured, thoughtful and insightful, but misunderstand the fundamental purpose of the polyclinic proposal. In contrast, those from Adrian Gregory fall within a continuum ranging from error-ridden to disingenuous. And



there is no need for Cr Rob Kofoed to put his body on the line; KHAG has already done that with its collective body.

The “no consultation” claim with Ōtaki is baseless.

First, the mandate for the polyclinic initiative came from the 2018 petition calling for expanding the health services provided at KHC. The petition was signed by more than 22,000 Kāpiti residents, about half of the adult population at that time. The *Compelling Case* picked up from where this impressive initiative left off. It inherited the mandate.

Second, there was a follow-up engagement process over the *Compelling Case* which was based around the geographic boundaries of KCDC’s five community boards.

Our objective is to persuade Health NZ to incrementally provide a greater range and volume of non-acute health services. . . .
– Ian Powell

Meetings were held with all five boards, including Ōtaki.

Public meetings were also held within each of the boundaries of the five above boards, including Ōtaki. Support for the polyclinic proposal from these 10 meetings was overwhelming. This engagement process was exactly the same for Ōtaki as it was for the four other community board areas, from Paekākāriki to Waikanae.

Third, an earlier but substantive version of the *Compelling Case* document was sent out to all the general practices within KCDC by the two relevant Primary Health Organisations that fund them. In the case of the two Ōtaki general practices, it was sent by Think Hauora.

Primarily the data and information we drew upon came from the general practices through their PHOs, the census and, under the Official Information Act, from Te Whatu Ora and the Ministry of Health.

The proposed polyclinic does not claim to be a “regional solution” (as

Heniti suggests) to healthcare access within KCDC’s population. It would be supplementary to both existing health services, including those in Ōtaki, along with new ones yet to be developed.

The intention is to provide, for example, more specialist outpatient clinics across the whole district for residents so they don’t have to travel to a base hospital or simply be denied access full stop. Again, as an example, the intention is to provide accessible non-cost-prohibitive 24/7 urgent care across the whole district. The intention is also to provide a transport hub primarily for patients to travel to Wellington Hospital. As service expansion develops, however, we have proposed that this hub can also transport Ōtaki patients to the polyclinic.

Adrian Gregory suggests that we say the polyclinic proposal would address health needs in Ōtaki. Wrong. We say that the polyclinic would contribute towards addressing these needs by supplementing existing services.

He criticises our Ōtaki data. The general practice data (including patient enrolments) came from Think Hauora as the PHO covering Ōtaki general practices, the census, Te Whatu Ora, and the Ministry of Health. However, there is a complication over PHO data covering the health conditions reported by the general practices. PHOs don’t always collect or record this data in the same way.

Further, at the time of data collection there was only one general practice in Ōtaki. For privacy reasons Think Hauora PHO could not provide us with its data. However, for the rest of the Coast general practices south of Ōtaki, Tu Ora Compass PHO provided us with aggregate data that was sufficient for our purpose. It was also able to provide aggregated comparative data from the Porirua, Wellington City and Wairarapa practices.

He accuses us of saying that Ōtaki’s population had declined. Again, he has got this wrong. The *Compelling Case* reported census data that showed that the population of KCDC’s Ōtaki ward had declined. But the ward’s population is not identical to Ōtaki’s population.

The ward decline is due to a boundary change that shifted Ōtaki’s southern boundary northwards. We actually stated our belief that Ōtaki’s actual population had likely increased.

He claims we have quoted a “lone paediatrician” from Palmerston North as the “voice of Ōtaki.” Rubbish. A senior paediatrician at Palmerston North familiar with Ōtaki’s health status advised that Ōtaki presentations to Palmerston North’s emergency department had declined, contrary to the national trend, and it may be because those families who were poor in 2019 were even poorer in 2023. This made healthcare access more unaffordable.

ADVERTORIAL

A week in the life of Cr Rob Kofoed

By Cr ROB KOFOED

TE WHAKAMINENGA PARTNERSHIP

On Friday, 27 June, about 200 of us came together at Raukawa Marae to celebrate 30 years of our partnership between Kapiti Coast District Council and Te Whakaminega O Kapiti, which represents the three local Iwi.

It was a special day to acknowledge the original Memorandum of Understanding, and to look ahead to the future. It was great to catch up with former mayors Jenny Rowan and K Gurunathan.

Personally, I want to thank our iwi partners for their commitment and input into Council workshops over the years I’ve been a councillor.

Their knowledge and advice have been hugely valuable – especially in areas like spatial planning, our village communities, and landscaping.

Together, we’ve set up an Urban Design Panel to help protect the unique character of the Kāpiti Coast, even as we deal with central government-mandated intensification and fast-track developments.

REMEMBERING KORO DON

On Tuesday 24 June, I attended a pōwhiri for Te Rakauoteora Te Maipai – Koro Don – who passed away on Saturday the 21st. Don spent over 20 years working with



Council and the community.

On a personal note, Don was there to bless and welcome many of the buildings I designed over the years, including youth support spaces in Paraparaumu and Ōtaki, the Kāpiti Aero Club, the Ōtaki College Marae, and more. His kindness, quiet strength and generosity will be deeply missed.

ŌTAKI FORKS PROGRESS

Angela and I biked into Ōtaki Forks on Sunday 29 June (above) and were blown away by the progress being made. The team at Goodmans has done an awesome job – not only clearing the massive Blue Bluff slip, but also tidying up the road, clearing vegetation, and stabilising the area with retaining walls.

They’ve even expanded the parking area and given the facilities a much-needed

upgrade, including new stainless steel benches. Full access should be restored soon. Huge thanks to KCDC, Goodmans, and Waka Kotahi. Ka pai team!

RENAMING OLD STATE HIGHWAY 1

At the Council meeting on Thursday 26 June, we finally tackled the long-overdue renaming of the old SH1 from Poplar Avenue to Peka Peka.

The Kapiti Expressway opened in 2017, and this road officially came under Council ownership in 2024. A decision on naming has been a ‘can kicked down the road’ for years – but we got it done.

We took on board community feedback and worked with Community Boards, despite advice from central government. Land Information NZ (LINZ) also had some naming rules, which we challenged where needed.



Rob is standing for the Ōtaki Ward at the October local body elections.

Here’s the gist of it:

- Poplar Ave to Kapiti Road will now be called Main Road South.
- Main Road North was agreed from the end of Rimutaka Street to the Waikanae River.
- Hadfield Road renamed Sir Walter Horobin Road after an early local farmer and pioneering family.

I’ve designed homes and commercial buildings in the area, and many have proudly carried a “Main Road” address. It’s more than a name, it’s part of our local identity.

We consulted with iwi on naming, and while there were some suggestions, the final decisions were left to the community. Council is also working to share the full Kāpiti story – rich with iwi input – through colourful descriptions and signage along our shared paths and walkways.

HUATAU/Opinion

PLAIN SPEAKING: IAN CARSON

Not much good news for readers as 15 newspapers get Stuffed

First it was NZME in December last year, now it's Stuff shutting down community newspapers.

NZME lined 14 newspapers up against the wall and shot them in December. Stuff has beaten that number, sending 15 down the gurgler by the end of July.

Locally, I guess we can't be too worried. The damage was done when NZME dispensed with *Kāpiti News*, so far with no rescue package in sight. Farther north, we (ID Media) stepped in to start the *Horowhenua Star* after it was announced NZME's *Horowhenua Chronicle* was also going.



The *Chronicle* was revived in a late move by one of its ad reps to compete with the *Star*, but it's a shell of its former self.

To the south, readers, advertisers, community groups and councils will be ruing the demise of papers like the *Kapi-Mana News* and *Hutt News*. It seems not so long ago that these papers were strong, supported by

solid advertising, loyal readership and corporate clout.

But NZME's move was just the writing on the wall, scribbled meanly but a sign that the other big newspaper player, Stuff, should follow suit. And follow they did.

The media desert that these closures bring might be a sign of the times, where digital news content rules, but it's also stifling some of the most important news that communities receive.

In the vacuum are the bloggers and wannabe journalists who set up their own "news service", the offerings often being unresearched, unproven, unverified dross designed to steer readers towards a particular viewpoint, with the goal of getting enough clicks to make some serious dosh. To hell whether it's true or not.

What we've done with *Ōtaki Today* and more recently the *Horowhenua Star*, is to go back to the basics. It's community news written by experienced journalists, complemented with contributions from competent writers, delivered to letterboxes. We've proven that there's still a huge appetite for news packaged and delivered in this way.

Reading online is just not the same. How many of you reading this prefer a paper in your hand than tapping a keyboard to access your news?

There's something tangible about a newspaper – the feel, the smell. It might for some be "old school", but I'm OK with that. There are still pieces of what are quickly becoming the past that are worth hanging on to. They seem more real, more valuable, more relatable, and more trusted.

Are these the values that we want to carry us through this century? I hope so, not just because newspapers are a business for Debbi and me, but because they are important.

Is the future going to be entirely digital? Perhaps, but not while I'm still able to keep producing and supporting local newspapers.

■ Ian is editor of *Ōtaki Today*

THE ELECTORATE: TIM COSTLEY, MP

Fantastic job of dispersing hoons

I'm sure it will be all over the front pages but I can't help but write about our road.

Quick history lesson: 2016 National announce they'll continue the Kāpiti expressway north and build the Ōtaki to North of Levin (Ō2NL) expressway once the Peka Peka to Ōtaki section is finished in 2020. The cost was \$820m. In 2018 Labour said it was cancelling it.

A whole string of people who have campaigned and fought ever since. I want to acknowledge everyone who has been part of this. This is a great team effort!

I ran my first petition in 2019 and ultimately the road slowly got brought back on the agenda in different forms. In 2020 two of the four lanes were only for public transport (which doesn't exist)! By 2023 Labour



was reluctantly pledging \$1.5b to build it eventually. While the number was never made public, we knew the cost was likely more than \$2b, but it wasn't fully funded. And most of the property needed to build the road wasn't purchased.

Since coming to government, we have worked hard to speed things up. Almost all the property is acquired, contracts are being signed, money is set aside. But at the same time it slowly came out: there was never enough money and it was known by those involved before the election. And this issue wasn't just for Ō2NL; it was hospitals, classrooms, rail, water and more. There were lots of promises but the reality fell far short.

NZTA did their homework and came up with a plan that would only go over budget by a little over \$100-200m (remember this was an \$800m road in 2018). That involved several changes, and three of those landed poorly with our community: Tararua Road, Taylors Road and Manakau Heights Drive. While others focused only on the other two, to me it was really important to fight for Taylors Road for the sake of Ōtaki township, as well as residents to the north.

We all accept the need for NZTA to stick to budget and to timelines, but these changes felt the wrong areas for change, and so I got stuck in fighting for our region.

NZTA weren't taking submissions so I did, collecting over 350. I also highlighted to NZTA that our government had changed the rules so new expressways like Ō2NL could access contingency funding through the National Land Transport Fund. I made the case that these three changes should be priority for that fund.

Ultimately, NZTA accepted that argument and reinstated the three areas of concern. Construction will start this year and will result in a safe, world-class expressway.

Thank you to everyone who fought hard for this, who supported me, and who trusted me to get this sorted.

■ Tim is the Ōtaki electorate MP

CAM'S CORNER: CAM BUTLER

Decision made – back to work, Cam

Tēnā koutou whanau o Ōtaki.

I have said I am standing for Ōtaki Ward councillor in the October elections, that is all. Time to get back to work and electioneering later.

Old SH1 revocation works

Yup, those revocation works are in your face now with work at both ends of the Old SH1 shopping area. The area will look so different when we are out the other side of the works. Waka Kotahi and KCDC are working on this with input from the Ōtaki Community Board and the Ōtaki Te Horo Business Association. In the meantime "enjoy" the 30kmh zone and watching the works progress.

Speaking of the end

You may have heard of the hand wringing about the renaming of old SH1 at council for the roads bypassed by the Mackays to Peka Peka expressway. Seven years, yes, seven



years(!) later the decision has been made and yet some road names are likely to be rejected by LINZ who control Aotearoa New Zealand road names. To avoid this problem and delays the Ōtaki Community Board is looking at partnering with Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki and the community to get agreed names sorted before the need for them once the revocation is completed.

Funding community activities

At our six-weekly meetings we hear applications from the community for funding of activities, trips, events etc that benefit

the Ōtaki community. While the normal maximum for an application is \$750, our June meeting was the end of the financial year and if you don't use the funding you lose it. So use we did, with slightly larger sums going to the likes of the Ōtaki Rotunda, Ōtaki RSA, Ōtaki Volunteer Fire Brigade, Nourish Trust and more. We are really proud to support the community in this way and we can see the benefits to the Ōtaki area.

Do you want to stand for your community?

With a couple of retirements from the board we will be looking for fresh blood to stand for election. If you are a team player and want to help the community then you should look at putting your hand up. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Keep being Sunny, Ōtaki.

- Like our *Ōtaki Community Board Facebook page*.

■ Cam is chair of the Ōtaki Community Board.

TE HORO OUTLOOK: MICHAEL MOORE

Building a better community starts with you

It's easy to look around our towns and neighbourhoods and wish things were better – cleaner parks, safer streets, more inclusive events, or better facilities for families, the young and elderly.

But the truth is, the power to improve our communities doesn't lie solely in the hands of councils or governments. It lies with all of us.

One of the most effective ways to contribute to your local area is to share your skills. Whether you're handy with tools, a keen gardener, an IT whizz, or a retired teacher, there's someone nearby who could benefit from your knowledge. Community centres, Ōtaki or Waikanae MenzShed, schools, and charities are always looking for volunteers to help run workshops, mentor others, or just be a friendly face to share a cuppa with. Don't underestimate the value of what you know.

Getting involved in local clubs or community groups is a great way to make a difference. Sports clubs, environmental groups, book clubs, arts collectives. There are residents associations in Reikorangi, Waikanae and Te Horo. Consider helping our local predator-free groups. These all bring people together and build a sense of belonging and it's what makes a community.



They all need volunteers and fresh ideas to keep going. By joining in, you don't just help the group, you also strengthen the fabric of what makes Kāpiti a great place to live.

Staying engaged with local council issues might not sound exciting, but it's one of the most direct ways to influence change. There are public consultations, community board meetings, and online feedback channels that give you a voice in shaping everything from playground upgrades, local amenities to speed limits. If you're passionate about making your town safer, cleaner, more inclusive or better connected, don't sit on the sidelines. Speak up! Organise and advocate.

You can help by informing and educating others. If you know how to navigate council services, write letters, contribute to online community forums, or put on a community workshop, share your experience. Many people want to be more active in their communities but don't know where to start. Your encouragement could be the spark they need.

The environment is another area where local effort makes a massive difference. Organise or join a beach clean-up or find areas that are neglected and advocate for better protection. Even help to remove invasive species. Te Horo residents have helped riparian planting along the Mangaone Stream. Support recycling initiatives. A greener community isn't just nicer to look at, it's healthier and more resilient, too.

Helping create a safer, more vibrant community starts with a simple idea. Care enough to get to know your neighbours. Care enough to pick up rubbish, attend a meeting, or help someone out. We all benefit when the people around us feel seen, heard, and supported. Every small action adds up. You don't have to do everything. But if each of us did something, imagine how much better our communities would be.

A strong community doesn't happen by accident, it happens when everyday people choose to get involved.

There are just two community board meetings before the elections: July 22 in Waikanae and September 2 at Te Horo Hall. Community grants close two weeks before our meetings – July 8 and August 19. See: tinyurl.com/WCBgrants. Note board meetings now start at 6.30pm.

■ Michael is Waikanae Community Board chair

Protect your investments with a 'pre-nup'

Buying a property with your partner is a big step in a relationship. It's an investment financially and in your future together.

However, that future can never be 100% certain. It's not particularly romantic to talk about what will happen with the property if you separate later, but it's the only way to start thinking about how to protect that investment.

The best way to do that is by entering a Contracting Out Agreement, colloquially known as a "pre-nup".

When people buy property together, their contributions can be quite different. For example, let's consider the hypothetical Karen and John. They have been together for two years and are buying their first home for \$500,000. They are using their Kiwisavers, personal savings, and getting a mortgage for the balance.

Karen has been contributing to her Kiwisaver longer and at a higher rate. Between her Kiwisaver and her savings, she contributes \$100,000. John has less – \$30,000 between his Kiwisaver and his savings.

Karen and John settle their purchase with a mortgage totaling \$370,000. They live happily ever after . . . until three years later when they have a terrible breakup. They need to sell the house to move on with their lives. But how will the sale proceeds be split?

Because Karen and John never entered a Contracting Out Agreement, and they have been together long enough to be considered de facto partners, the general rule is that the "family home" is divided equally, regardless of the contributions of each person.

This can be negotiated differently in a separation, and argued in court, but that can be at significant cost, financially and emotionally.

Karen and John could have sorted this out ahead

MATTERS OF LAW



BROOKE MCGOWAN

of time by entering a Contracting Out Agreement when they bought the property. The agreement is called that because the parties are "contracting out" of the Property (Relationships) Act 1976, which states how relationship property is divided in a separation, among other things.

A straightforward agreement for Karen and John could have protected their initial contributions and set out what happened to the property if they separated – for example, giving each party the option to buy the other out or selling it on the open market. The

agreement could also protect other property that might be considered relationship property later on.

If they had entered an agreement, and the property sold for \$550,000, the sale proceeds could have looked like this: \$300,000 repaying the mortgage, \$20,000 paying real estate fees, \$100,000 back to Karen, \$30,000 back to John, and the balance of \$100,000 split equally between Karen and John.

Without an agreement, Karen and John could end up with \$115,000.00 each – arguably not "fair" considering their initial contributions.

If they wanted to, they could spend months negotiating and litigating to a different outcome, but they might choose to agree to the equal split to get it over with. A Contracting Out Agreement makes situations like this clear, concise, and often more "fair".

Talk to a lawyer about one if you want to protect your investment and potentially save yourself a lot of stress and money in future.

■ Brooke works mostly in the Levin office of Wakefields Lawyers.

ŌTAKI COMMUNITY: SIMON BLACK

Elections loom – it's easy to put your name forward

The 2025 local government elections are nearly here.

Candidate nominations for council and community board opened on July 4 and close at midday on August 1. Voting papers will be delivered between September 9 and 22, and election day is October 11.

It's easy to get involved in your local council – all you need if you want to stand for election is a seconder. More information is at votelocal.co.nz.

During the past three years, the Ōtaki Community Board has been focused on supporting meaningful progress across our rohe. We've heard from many of you through Vision Ōtaki, and the next stage is to bring that vision to life in practical ways.

We've also begun exploring ideas for how we might reimagine our earthquake prone library and Memorial Hall – thinking about what a modern, shared space for learning, connection and community might look like.

Another important kaupapa is road naming, something with which the community board is directly involved. With the revocation of State Highway 1 under way, we have a unique opportunity to rename this significant stretch of road in a way that reflects Ōtaki's identity, culture, and history.

Let's get this right and start the conversation early. We're open to all suggestions for road names – whether you want to honour a local historical figure, reflect our whakapapa, or celebrate something uniquely Ōtaki.

Other towns have faced delays and difficulties. We'd love to get it right from the start, with your input.

Come to a public Ōtaki Community Board meeting or email any one of us.

You can find our contact details on the KCDC website. Your voice matters.

■ Simon is deputy chair of the Ōtaki Community Board



A programme to help age-friendly businesses

By Kevin Burrows

More than 26 percent of Kāpiti residents are over the age of 65, and 27.5 percent are over 60.

These percentages are expected to grow significantly in the coming years, as Kāpiti is a popular retirement destination. The aging population will have a big effect on businesses, especially in retail.

In response, the Office for Seniors has developed an age-friendly programme for businesses. It's free and based on self-assessment, making it easy to implement and cost-effective.

Kāpiti Coast District Council has also adopted an age-friendly approach to better support and recognise the needs, aspirations, and contributions of older residents.

International research shows that products and services designed with older people in mind often benefit people of all ages. Customers appreciate having choices, and they are more likely to shop where they receive excellent service and find products that meet their needs. Satisfied customers are more likely to return and recommend a business to others that they are happy with.

Any organisation that interacts with the public should aim to be age-friendly. The goal is to create a business environment that is accessible and to provide a customer service experience that is inclusive and respectful.

The programme focuses on continuous self-improvement in four key areas: environment, accessibility, communication, inclusion, and products and services. It encourages

making gradual changes over time to create an accessible environment, inclusive and respectful customer service experiences, and offerings that cater to the needs of all customers, regardless of their age, life stage, or ability.

Businesses don't have to implement everything at once; becoming age-friendly is a journey. Develop an action plan that suits your business.

To identify practical actions, consider what you will stop doing, what you will start doing, and what you will continue doing. An action plan should also describe what success will look like, helping you recognise and celebrate your achievements.

Once you have completed your self-assessment and created your action plan for the next 12 months, contact your local age-friendly

business coordinator at the Office for Seniors and send them a copy of your plan. They won't "approve" it, but will keep track of the areas people are addressing and the innovations taking place. From time to time, they will also send you updated information about what others are doing worldwide.

The age-friendly business coordinator will send you an "Aspiring to be AGE FRIENDLY" logo to display and might also discuss publicity opportunities with you.

• If you require more information about the age-friendly business programme, search age-friendly-business at officeforseniors.govt.nz. You can also contact Kāpiti District Council or the Older Persons Advisory Group.

■ Kevin Burrows is chair of the Kāpiti Council Older Persons Advisory Group – kevinburrows@gmail.com

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HAUORA-PŪTAIO /Health-science

Not so fantastic microplastic is everywhere

Microplastics – minute plastic fibres and particles smaller than 5mm – are everywhere; they have been found at the poles, in our deepest oceans, and on our highest mountains.

A global pollutant of growing concern, they are in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we consume. So where do microplastics come from?

Firstly, there are primary microplastics that are intentionally manufactured. One use is in personal care products, including cosmetics, shampoos, toothpastes, and sunscreens. They act as emulsifiers and bulking agents; they enhance texture, durability, and water resistance; they act as cleansing agents; and they promote smooth and even spread on skin and hair. After use, all these microplastics make their way back into the environment.

Then there are secondary microplastics, which are produced by the breakdown of larger pieces of plastic. For example, washing, or just wearing, synthetic clothing creates microplastic fibres. And every year millions of tonnes of plastic waste enter our oceans, which, through weathering, is ultimately broken down into microplastics. Researchers have estimated that if we continue our current business-as-usual trajectory, by 2050 plastics will outweigh fish in our oceans.

Nature cannot biodegrade synthetic plastics so when they are “broken down” they are simply broken into smaller pieces, and because these microplastic particles are resistant to biodegradation they can persist in the environment for hundreds of years. It’s sobering to think that all the plastic glitter that has ever been made (estimated at several hundred thousand tonnes) still exists out there somewhere in the environment. And we still keep making it!

Microplastics are absorbed by animals and humans and have been detected in the tissues of all major organs including heart, kidney, and liver, and can cross the blood-brain barrier into the brain.

Researchers have detected microplastics in human placentas, showing that these particles can travel from mother to fetus during pregnancy, underscoring just how pervasive this plastic pollution is.

As the research is relatively new, the health effects of microplastics accumulating in the

body are unclear and not fully understood – the term “microplastic” itself was only coined in 2004.

Avenues of research involve looking at how microplastics might lead to oxidative stress and chronic inflammation, disrupt gut microbiota, cause DNA damage (raising concerns about cancer risk), and have reproductive and developmental effects.

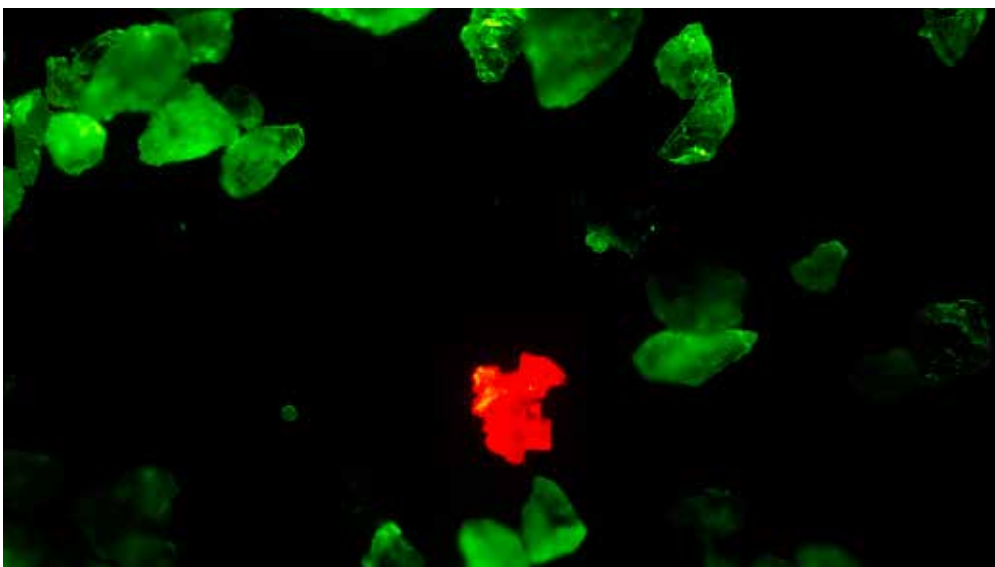
Meanwhile the environmental and human burden of microplastics continues to increase.

The potential toxicity of microplastics is further enhanced by their ability to absorb and concentrate heavy metals and toxic organic pollutants such as pesticides, endocrine disrupters, and carcinogenic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

To investigate microplastics, researchers have had to develop techniques to detect the microscopic particles that are mostly invisible to the eye.

One common practice is to use Nile Red, a dye that fluoresces when absorbed onto microplastics, which then can be detected with fluorescence microscopy (see photo).

Microplastics are typically found in surveys of New Zealand’s rivers and beaches. Coastal microplastics pose a threat to the health of marine life, and, because edible shellfish filter and accumulate microplastics, they provide a



Grains of Otaki beach sand illuminated with green light with a microplastic particle identified by its red fluorescence. Image courtesy of Steve Humphries

common pathway for microplastics to enter the human food chain.

A recent survey of Auckland air quality found relatively high levels of microplastic particles, with a large proportion of the particles attributed to Hauraki Gulf wave action transferring microplastics from the ocean into the air. Microplastics can get around in intriguing ways.

Last year global production of plastics was a record high of more than 400 million tonnes, and this is predicted to increase year on year to 2050 and beyond. We can’t seem to give up our

addiction to plastic. And, unfortunately, only a small fraction of plastic waste is effectively recycled.

The biggest shift we can make to reduce our environmental plastic footprint is to reduce our use of plastics to begin with. Single-use items account for the bulk of consumer plastic waste; what single-use plastics have you stopped using this year?

■ Health scientist Dr Steve Humphries is a director at Hebe Botanicals in Ōtaki. He was previously a lecturer at Massey University and director of the Health Science Programme.

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MAHI MĀRA/Gardening



Above: Fennel is a major drawcard to hoverflies and predatory wasps.

Left: Pears growing in a meadow-style ground cover.

All photos ediblebackyard.nz

July – time to give fruit trees some attention

July is a busy old month in the orchard calendar – we’re planting, pruning and most important of all, assessing new growth to decide whether or not to add compost.

PLANT

Seize the day to plant deciduous trees in their preferred moment, to plant shelter, and to overall beautify and diversify.

Deciduous fruit trees, berries and currants: order fruit and nut trees as bareroots, if you can, rather than buying potted ones. Find them at dedicated nurseries like Edible Garden. (Berries, grapes and currants will be in pots.)

Before planting day, double check positions and spacings by banging in labelled stakes where you think your trees are going. Suss the pozzies out by imagining the full grown width and height of the tree, and move the stakes about until trees are a good fit.

It’s Such a clarifying exercise, and it makes planting day easy when you don’t have to think about where trees are going.

PLANT COMPANIONS

Planting the ground beneath and around deciduous fruit trees creates exactly the kind of fertility that fruit trees need. Use your most used and beloved perennial flowers, herbs, and vegetables, in a mixture of taproots e.g. chicory, comfrey, fennel or horse radish, and spreading roots like yarrow, white clover, or lemonbalm. Kahikatea Farm has an inspiring collection.

CHECK NEW GROWTH

Assess the new growth of all your deciduous fruit trees to see how well they grew last year. This is an especially important check for young trees because they need to be growing strong limbs!

- If new wood is 30cm-ish long, and there’s a goodly amount of it evenly spread throughout the tree, all is well. Even so, give a young tree with healthy growth a spade of compost, toss it about, and maybe a scattering of woody mulch too. An established tree likely won’t need it – gardener’s choice.
- If the new wood is 10cm or less and/or there isn’t much of it, spread a layer of compost and mulch mainly around and a little further out from the dripline to encourage roots to spread.
- If the new wood is bonkers long, thick and strong, step away from compost and mulch, and from the loppers too, cos winter pruning inspires growth. Prune after harvest instead.



Woolly aphid on an apple.



Where new wood joins two year-old wood.

WINTER PRUNE

Prune berries, currants, grapes, feijoas and avocados for best health and better fruits next year. Prune young deciduous fruit trees to get a good shape going, and poorly deciduous fruit trees which need a boost of growth. Leave vigorous stonefruits and pipfruits until after harvest.

CHECK PEARS AND APPLES FOR WOOLLY APHIDS

Woolly aphids show up as white cottony patches on branches, galls on the trunk, or on the rootcrown. They are generally a sign of stress through the growing season – too dry, too wet or too hungry. Take note and plan to rectify it.

Meantime, order in Naturally Neem ready to start spraying at the end of winter. If aphids are also in the root crown, sprinkle Neem granules around the base as well.

■ Kath has been growing vegetables to feed her family for 21 years. Spray-free, natural, low-input food gardens are her thing. Kath offers organic gardening advice through her articles, books, workshops, and garden consultations.

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Poroporo (*solanum aviculare*) is one of my favourite plants. It has striking purple flowers with yellow centres, and its dark green to purple-green leaves resemble long, fleshy fingers.

It often appears on the fringes of gardens or in neglected spaces, almost as if its role is to bring beauty and healing to areas that need revitalisation. Perhaps this is where its rongoā lies.

A member of the nightshade family (*solanaceae*), poroporo is a fast-growing shrub that can reach up to four metres high. It plays a role in ecological succession by stabilising soil and providing shelter for other native plants. It thrives in disturbed areas, coastal regions, and regenerating forests.

Throughout Aotearoa, I've encountered different types of poroporo, each unique to its region and offering distinct rongoā. It's essential to know the names and characteristics of the rongoā in your area, ensuring accurate plant identification. Rongoā should never be ingested or used without certainty, as some plants can be harmful. Our tūpuna established tikanga to protect us, the plants, and the whenua, guiding us in safe and respectful use.

Māori traditionally cultivated poroporo near pā sites for its berries. They ate the yellow fruit, which the tree produces year-round, but unripe fruit is poisonous – only edible once the skin has split. When ripe, the berries are delicious, but when unripe, they are extremely toxic. I always advise caution with native plant berries – eat them only if guided by someone experienced. While foraging for kai has its place, foraging for rongoā is different; it's a practice carried out with karakia, intention, and deep purpose.

Poroporo has long been known as a remedy for “the itch”. The leaves have powerful anti-inflammatory, antipruritic (anti-itch), antibacterial, and antifungal properties, making them highly effective for inflamed and irritated skin. Poroporo itself acts as a natural steroid. Traditionally, a poultice of the leaves was applied to bruises and skin eruptions, while adding the leaves to a bath helped relieve rheumatic complaints.

Caution and considerations:


- all parts of the plant, especially the unripe berries and leaves, contain toxic alkaloids that can be harmful in large quantities
- prolonged use or high doses of poroporo extracts may cause gastrointestinal or neurological symptoms
- while the ripe berries are safe to eat, they should be consumed only once the skin has split. Avoid eating them in excess, as individual tolerance can vary.

As always, ensure you can confidently identify any plant before using or consuming it.

POROPORO

Nature's healer for itchy skin

RONGOĀ



JOANNE HAKARAIA

Joanne is kaitohu (director) of The Rongoā Mauri Studio and is ACC registered for Rongoā Māori Services. See rongoamauri.com

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PAKIHI/Business

Why testing and measuring matter

Imagine trying to run a marathon with no stopwatch. You're running hard, sweating buckets, but have no idea if you're on pace, falling behind, or sprinting too soon. You'd never do that, right?

Yet every day, business owners throughout Ōtaki and the wider Kapiti Coast are doing exactly that: running their business without the most basic tracking tools. No stopwatch. No metrics. No feedback.

They're flying blind – and hoping for the best. You can't manage what you don't measure

YOUR BUSINESS



CHRIS WHELAN

As a business coach working with small and medium-sized enterprises, I see this all the time. Owners with good intentions, strong work ethics, and solid offerings – but no clear picture of what's working

and what isn't. They're basing decisions on gut feel, not facts.

Here's the reality: you can't improve what you don't measure. And you certainly can't lead with confidence if you're guessing.

Let me tell you about a local trades business I recently worked with. Great team. Busy as anything. But they had no idea where their

jobs were coming from, or which ones were profitable. They were spending thousands on advertising without tracking results. When we started measuring a few simple numbers (like cost per lead and conversion rate), it turned out their favourite campaign was a flop, and one they were about to cancel was their most effective. That change alone saved them more than \$12,000 a year.

Precision isn't a luxury, it's essential

Especially in small business, every dollar and every hour matters. You don't have room for waste. That's why testing and measuring is not just a good idea, it's essential. It gives you clarity, control, and confidence. It's the difference between hoping things improve and knowing why they are. You don't need fancy software or an MBA. Just a few core numbers tracked weekly can transform how you operate.

What should you be tracking?

- Start simple. If you're running marketing campaigns (online, print, radio), measure:
- how many leads came in from each source
 - how many turned into paying customers
 - what each lead cost you.
- In your sales process, track:
- how many quotes you send
 - how many convert
 - the average size of each sale.
- In operations, ask:
- are jobs being completed on time
 - are customers satisfied, or calling back with complaints
 - how many hours are chargeable versus admin or downtime?



And of course, in your finances, keep a close eye on:

- gross and net profit
- overheads
- cash flow
- revenue per team member.

Don't just collect numbers, use them to test. Try two versions of an ad and see which one works. Test two different follow-up emails. Trial a new pricing model. One small tweak could double your results, but only if you're measuring.

The secret is in the rhythm

Testing and measuring works only if you do it regularly. I recommend weekly check-ins. Don't wait for month-end panic. Build a dashboard of 3-5 key numbers and review them every Monday. You'll catch issues early and spot opportunities before your competitors do.

If you run a team, share the numbers. When

people know what success looks like – and how they're tracking – they take more ownership. Precision becomes part of the culture, not just a management task.


Work smarter, not just harder

Testing and measuring isn't about being a control freak. It's about working smarter. It helps you cut what's not working, double down on what is, and spend your time and money where it counts.

In tough economic times, that edge can be the difference between staying afloat and growing stronger.

So, what's your stopwatch?

- If you're not already tracking a few key numbers in your business, now's the time. Choose three. Start small. Be consistent.
- If you're looking to improve your business's performance, contact Chris at the Centre of Business Excellence – chris@wcbe.co.nz or 022 2332 669.





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This series of profiles on local businesses is supported by Land Matters and Pritchard Civil

Sophie Pritchard, who was encouraged to study law by her father, who said she should be a lawyer “because I argued with him too much”.

Photo supplied



Lawyer Sophie happy to be back in Ōtaki

Many of the family names that became well established in early Ōtaki have disappeared to other parts – not so the Pritchards.

New generations are growing up in the town, and some who have lived and worked elsewhere have felt the pull to return home. So it is with Sophie Pritchard.

Sophie is a senior solicitor at Gibson Sheat, working in the commercial and property team. Although based out of the firm’s Lower Hutt office, she spends most of her time working from her Ōtaki home.

“I’m really lucky I’m with a firm that gives me that flexibility,” she says.

The daughter of David and Jacqui, Sophie grew up in Ōtaki, going to Waitohu School and Ōtaki College before completing her secondary education boarding at Nga Tawa, near Marton.

She went straight from school to study for five years at Canterbury University, getting a BA in communications and political science, and a law degree. She was encouraged by her father, who said she should be a lawyer “because I argued with him too much”.

Her first job was with an Auckland law firm, then a finance company, before moving to Wellington in 2009 and a position as a solicitor then senior solicitor with Gibson Sheat. She spent seven years there, while also marrying and having three children.

The family moved back to Ōtaki after the third child. Sophie completed a certificate in functional nutrition and helped sister Alice with a menu, cooking and systems for the new Back Yard Kids in Riverbank Road.

She’s returned to Gibson Sheat last year, and is grateful that she can work part time, and mostly from home.

“I do 25 hours a week and work one day in the office at Lower Hutt. I remember when I left eight years ago, I just couldn’t see then how a law firm could operate with people working part time.

“I think it’s a great sign of the times and how we’ve progressed since then. Covid has obviously got a lot to do with that. I find it great that I can be stimulated with the work I do and at the same time be able to look after the children.

“That’s been a real bonus for me, and quite a unique thing with Gibson Sheat that they’ve been flexible. In turn, I think all the employees do their utmost in the hours they have because they appreciate it so much.

“It’s important for women to know that they can have a career and look after children. They can do both.”

Sophie clearly enjoys the legal work, saying it calls on a wide range of skills, including

communication and organisational expertise, and problem solving.

“It’s quite creative in a lot of ways. People come to you and you have to think outside the box to find a solution. You never know what’s going to be thrown at you – it’s quite a dynamic role in that way.”

Sophie’s work at Gibson Sheat covers practical, everyday legal needs, including:

- commercial property
- buying, selling or merging a business
- structuring and funding
- start-ups and small businesses
- residential property
- mortgage recovery.

If you’re based in Ōtaki or the wider Kāpiti-Horowhenua area and need legal advice, you can get in touch with Sophie at Gibson Sheat, 04 916 6439 or email her at sophie.pritchard@gibsonsheat.com



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HĪTŌRIA/History

Pinched pot a relic of times past

In late 2018, the relic of a once-thriving local industry was gifted by the Ōtaki Museum to the Friends of the Ōtaki River (Fotor).

The try-pot, as the cast iron cauldron was called, had been passed on to the museum by Guy Burns of Raumati, where it had been sitting in what was then farmland.

OUR HERITAGE



NICKY TREADWELL

Apparently the pot had originally come from Kapiti Island.

The name “try-pot” comes from the term “trying” – the process of melting down whale blubber into oil. In the early stage of whale hunting, these pots were sited on land where the whalers (who at that stage had only small vessels) could bring the carcass to butcher it and throw the

stripped blubber to render it down.

Later, when larger vessels were used, the pots would be affixed to the deck of the boat, allowing the whalers to keep pursuing the whales while processing those they caught.

Whale oil was very valuable at the time, being used for heating, lighting and lubrication. With one whale carcass providing up to three tonnes of oil, the whalers were onto a good thing.

The try-pot gifted to Fotor was identified by museum historian Rex Kerr and Fotor deputy chair Eric Matthews as having been made by Carron Foundry, Falkirk, Scotland, in the mid to late 1800s. This pot was one of few relics of the industry sourced from Kapiti Island itself.

In his book, *Kapiti*, author Chris Maclean states: “Yet, despite Kapiti’s long record of human inhabitation, little is known about its archaeology”. He notes further that regeneration of the native vegetation since possums were eradicated from the island in the 1980s “has hidden almost all of the evidence of Kapiti’s past”.

Another two pots were salvaged from the undergrowth, however, and are on display outside the visitor centre on the island.

In 2018, Fotor had recently completed a lookout that provided wonderful views of both the river estuary and the island itself. This was the perfect place for the try pot to be placed, along with some interpretive signage. Eric Matthews and others created a space with seating, with a concrete “compass” on the ground accurately showing which directions important and related places were sited.

Over the years, Eric has kept the pot oiled, and painstakingly touched up the names on the concrete compass. He has also created many of the other signs along the stretch of the river, acknowledging people and organisations who have helped Fotor with plantings, hard landscaping and pathways.

The pot was set in a concrete pad, and for security and safety had a metal stake driven through it to hold it firmly in place. Sitting within a wider area of picnic areas and native plantings, the lookout and its surrounds were a far cry from the state in which it had been – an illegal site for fly dumping, garden waste covered with noxious weeds and other undesirable species. Input from Greater Wellington Regional Council, iwi, local businesses, the Department of Conservation, and Kapiti Coast District Council meant that the feature was a truly community driven project that was completed over 20 years.

On May 26 this year, local resident Errol Maffey

posted photographs on a local social media page under the title “Another sad moment in our community”. The photographs showed the grim state of the lookout after thieves had removed the pot and the signage.

The community reactions were of outrage and sadness. For Eric, his wife Vanessa and other members of Fotor, it was heartbreak. Who could have done this vandalism – and why?

Some believed the pot’s removal was likely to have been to get money for scrap metal. Eric doesn’t think so. He believes the old cast iron wouldn’t be worth much at all. But whoever did steal it, it was unlikely to be a spur of the moment piece of vandalism. Taken during the night, it would have required ropes, more than one person and a strong vehicle to tow the pot from its fixings.

Perhaps the thieves were just not very smart – it’s not easy these days to get a quick buck from a metal recycler for stolen metal. Most recycling businesses adhere to stringent rules to deter this happening as much as it once did.

Or maybe, given the signage was taken, too, the perpetrators wanted to have their own piece of the history of Ōtaki and her island.

For the local families whose descendants’ names were listed on the signage as being the whalers who operated from Kapiti more than a century ago, this must hurt as much as it did Eric and Vanessa. One can only hope that if the pot is still intact, and maybe sitting in someone’s garden, that it is found – or returned – if that person has any conscience at all.

■ Nicky is a former journalist and landscape architect. Having been in Ōtaki for only 17 years, she says she barely rates as a local, but sees it as home.



The whaling pot and a whale bone at the Ōtaki Beach lookout, unveiled on November 28, 2018, by then Ōtaki Museum chair Judith Miller and historian Rex Kerr. Looking on are Guy Burns (in cap) who gave the pot to the museum; Friends of the Ōtaki River (Fotor) deputy chair Eric Matthews, who arranged for its installation at the lookout; and Fotor chair Max Lutz (blue shirt).

ŌTAKI SCHOOL 1964

Compiled by Debbi Carson



ŌTAKI SCHOOL, 1964 (A class of 6-7 year-olds – can you identify anyone?) Teacher unknown.
Back row, from left: unknown, Steven Mathie, unknown, unknown, Gavin Sims, Brian Young, Peter Tse.
Row 2: Terama (aka Patrick) Winterburn, unknown, John Gerrard, unknown, Paul Hawea, Derek Case, Jeffrey Edhouse, unknown, unknown.
Front sitting: unknown, unknown, unknown, Ida Rauhihi, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown.

Photo: Gavin Case



Miss Julie Wilson, employee of Gilroy Hairstylists, Ōtaki, and winner of the intermediate day style (under four years) section of hairdressing competitions at Whanganui. Thursday August 7, 1969.
Photo: Horowhenua Historical Society

Rainbow Warrior bombing – 40th anniversary

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

July 10 marks the 40th anniversary of the bombing of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior*.
The *Rainbow Warrior* was about to lead a protest flotilla to Mururoa Atoll, where France ran its nuclear weapon testing programme.
A team of French secret service agents attached two limpet bombs to the ship in Auckland Harbour, while Greenpeace members were sleeping aboard.
After both bombs were detonated, photographer Fernando Pereira drowned in his flooded cabin.
While the bombing temporarily disrupted

Greenpeace’s campaign against French nuclear testing in the Pacific, it also turned public opinion against the French government and its nuclear programme for years.
For many New Zealanders, the bombing was a shocking act by a supposed ally. It was also one of the biggest news stories of the decade, so Ngā Taonga holds many radio and television records related to the bombing and its aftermath.
Among the items online is a moving video from 1987 that shows the farewell ceremony for the wrecked boat before it was permanently sunk.
To watch, visit ngataonga.org.nz and search for the reference number F2S684.



Photographer Fernando Pereira, above, and at left, the bombed *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland Harbour.



TAMARIKI FUN



The Universe in pictures

The largest digital camera ever built has taken its first pictures of the Universe. These colourful photos show distant stars, galaxies, and bright space clouds called nebula. The images were captured by the Vera C Rubin Observatory, which sits on a mountain in Chile, South America. Over the next 10 years, it will explore the skies above the Southern Hemisphere, helping scientists learn more about space. Its first images include the Trifid and Lagoon nebula, both thousands of light-years from Earth. A light-year is the distance light travels in a year – about 9.4 trillion kilometres. Among the images are the Virgo Cluster, a group of galaxies, including two bright blue spirals. The camera is looking to take pictures of 20 billion galaxies in total. The observatory is named after Vera Rubin, a scientist who helped uncover clues about dark matter, a mysterious force in the Universe. Scientists are also using the camera to learn more about dark energy, another puzzling force in space.

A WINTER HOBBY: YOUR OWN NEWS CLIPPING SCRAPBOOK

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

A scrapbook – scissors – glue – newspapers, magazines

CLIPPING involves cutting out articles, pictures or certain parts of newspapers, magazines, or other sources to paste into a scrapbook.

CLIPPINGS usually contain the same theme, You can follow your own interests, for example sport, recipes, animals, people you like.



I STARTED A SCRAPBOOK of clippings as a child, following Ōtaki friends and family who made it into the newspaper. As an adult I found it and thoroughly enjoyed reading all the stories I had forgotten about.

IT WILL KEEP YOU INTERESTED in what is going on in your world through your local newspaper. And you can decorate it with your own pictures and doodles.

Lifeguard Lilo the poodle

A new lifeguard called Nilo, a poodle, has joined a dog rescue team including four labradors at Las Lindes beach in Malaga, Spain. Together they help swimmers in trouble by jumping into the sea and guiding them back to safety. Nilo works with his handler, Miguel Sanchez-Merenciano. Miguel goes into the water first, and Nilo follows to assist with the rescue. Nilo wears a bright life vest and even has suncream on his nose to protect him from the sun.



While labradors and newfoundlands are the usual lifeguard dogs in Spain, Nilo is showing that poodles can do the job, too.

In fact, poodles were once used for water rescues in northern Europe, thanks to their warm, curly fur.

The word poodle comes from the German word puddeln, which means to splash.



Debbi

WORD MAKER

U N I V E R S E

Can you make 131 words from UNIVERSE?
Answers below.



CADE'S RAINY DAY WORD SEARCH

U O R A K Y I F C U T D T W L Z G U V A
O B H A L L E R B M U S S M P Q J E B F
N V R U I C G C Y K I N A H G K J B F Z
C L M Q C N L T P M P U X C M M N L P U
O U F L N Y C W A E V M O Y E W K N L A
D A W H C N K O B Q F X E B L R S I J M
K H O A J C I O A D F V W P I T O M L U
J I L I Y B M A S T C Z C B D V S F E R
P E S L X M Z T R P K L O U N T S O I R
H I M W Q R O R R J K K O Y W G E V R V
Q W I M F O N T R K A I Z U M B L I P F
Q H P B B T R F I G V Y H A D J D W W N
S Q K M Q S T N C X T L R D M S D R J C
N L U O U G L U L U Z H A J W S U A F C
U G Y S X U J W U H L I F D W M P Z O A

Find the words at right in the puzzle.

CLOUDS – FORECAST – FROST – GUMBOOTS – HAIL – MIST
MUD – PUDDLES – RAIN – RAINCOAT – STORM – UMBRELLA

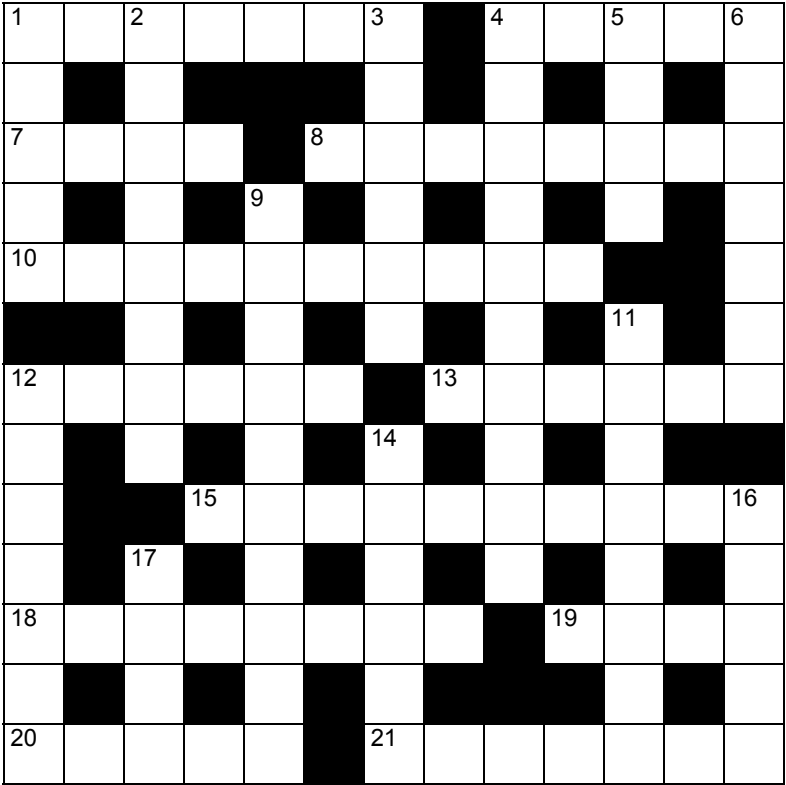
Olympic balloon returns

A year after it first amazed crowds at the 2024 Paris Olympics, a giant glowing balloon has returned to the skies. Now called the Paris Cauldron, the helium-powered balloon lifted off again recently above the Tuileries Garden, just as the sun was setting. About 30,000 people watched the relaunch, which happened during France's annual music festival, the Fête de la Musique. The balloon, which no longer has Olympic symbols, will rise into the sky every evening from June 21 to September 14 every year for the next three years. Special shows are also planned for Bastille Day on July 14 and the anniversary of the 2024 Olympic opening ceremony on July 26. The display is meant to become a summer tradition in Paris. Designed by French artist Mathieu Lehanneur and powered by the energy company EDF, the 30-metre-tall ring looks like a flame but doesn't use fire. Instead, it glows with LED lights, mist, and fans that create a magical effect visible across the city.

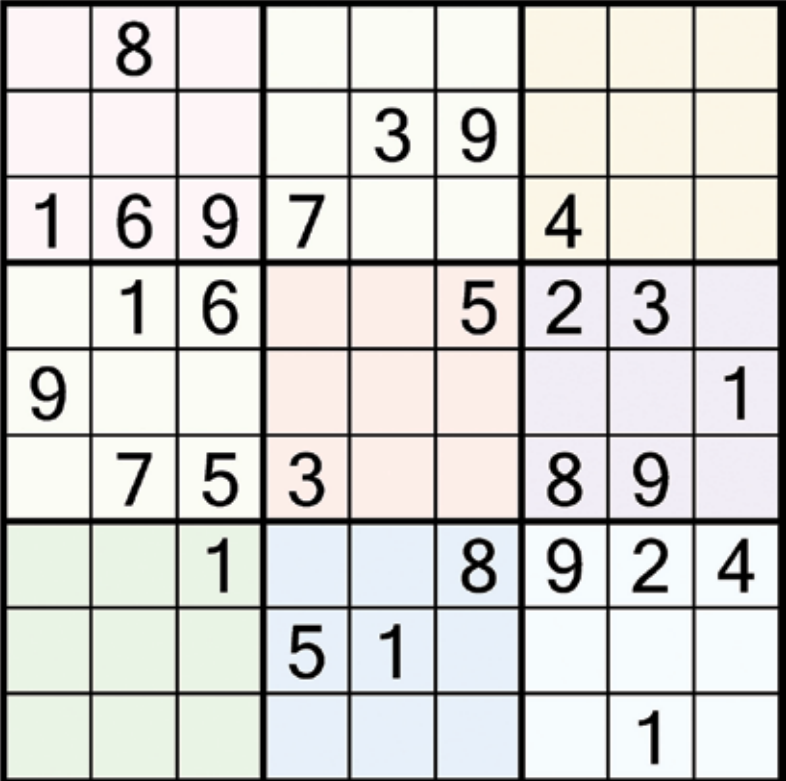


UNIVERSE: WORD MAKER ANSWERS from above: 7-letter words: 1. enviers 2. inverse 3. veiners 4. venires 5. versine, 6-letter words: 6. envier 7. envies 8. nerves 9. nieves 10. reives 11. revise 12. revues 13. veiner 14. venire 15. venues 16. versin 17. ensure 18. enures 19. insure 20. inures 21. nereis 22. rusine 23. seiner 24. serine 25. serine 26. urines 27. ursine, 5-letter words: 28. erus 29. evens 30. never 31. never 32. never 33. never 34. never 35. never 36. never 37. never 38. never 39. never 40. never 41. never 42. sieve 43. silver 44. veers 45. veins 46. venue 47. verse 48. vers 49. vines 50. vines 51. virus 52. ensue 53. enure 54. ernes 55. inure 56. nurse 57. reins 58. resin 59. reuse 60. rise 61. eruv 62. even 63. ever 64. eves 65. nevi 67. revs 68. rive 69. veer 70. vees 71. vein 72. vier 73. vies 74. vine 75. vins 76. vise 77. erve 78. erns 79. esne 80. tres 81. rees 82. rein 83. reis 84. rims 85. rise 86. rues 87. ruin 88. rune 89. runs 90. ruse 91. seen 92. seer 93. sene 94. sere, 3-letter words: 95. eve 96. rev 97. sev 99. vie 100. vin 101. vis 102. ens 103. ere 104. ern 105. ers 106. ins 107. ire 108. nee 109. nus 110. ree 111. rei 112. res 113. rin 114. rue 115. run 116. sue 117. sei 118. sen 119. ser 120. sin 121. sir 122. siv 123. sue 124. sun 125. uni 126. uns 127. urn 120. use, 3-letter words: 121. en 122. er 123. es 124. in 125. is 126. ne 127. nu 128. re 129. si 130. un. 131. us.

THE CROSSWORD #1952C (answers below right)



SUDOKU PUZZLES thepuzzlecompany.co.nz
MEDIUM #95M Use logic and process of elimination to fill in the blank cells using the numbers 1 through 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Puzzle solution page 27.



CROSSWORD #1952C ACROSS: 1. Compass 4. Bogu, 7. Mitt 8. Passport 10. Corriedale 12. Takahē 13. Swivel 15. Referendum 18. Neil Finn 19. Snag 20. Roomy, 21. Tempest. **DOWN:** 1. Comic 2. Matariki 3. Shandy 4. Bush lawyer 5. Glow 6. Satchel 9. Michael Fay 11. Evidence 12. Trainer 14. Peanut 16. Might 17. Biro.

ACROSS

- 1. Direction finder (7)
- 4. Fake (5)
- 7. Catcher’s glove (4)
- 8. Official travel document (8)
- 10. Sheep named after a North Otago estate where the breed was created by the estate manager (10)
- 12. South Island flightless bird (6)
- 13. Spin (6)
- 15. National vote on an issue such as changing our flag or voting system (10)
- 18. Kiwi musician who played with Fleetwood Mac in 2018-19 (4,4)
- 19. Problem (4)

- 20. Spacious (5)
- 21. Storm (7)

DOWN

- 1. Amusing periodical (5)
- 2. New Zealand’s newest public holiday (8)
- 3. Beer and lemonade mix (6)
- 4. Common name for the climbing blackberry plant (4,6)
- 5. Radiate (4)
- 6. Shoulder bag (7)
- 9. Businessman in America’s Cup Hall of Fame (7,3)
- 11. Testimony (8)
- 12. Coach (7)
- 14. Edible seed in a shell (6)
- 16. Power (5)
- 17. Ballpoint (4)



- 10. Hyde Park.
 - 9. Wintertell.
 - 8. True.
 - Petersburg.
 - 7. Saint
 - 6. b. Germanic.
 - 5. b. Biathlon.
 - 4. a. b.
 - Shakespeare.
 - 3. b. William
 - 2. c. France.
 - 1. a. Norway.
- ANSWERS
WINTER QUIZ

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF TRUST BENEFICIARIES
Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Beneficiaries of Electra Trust will be held at the Council Chambers, Kapiti Coast, 175 Rimu Road, Paraparaumu, Friday, 25 July 2025, commencing 12 noon.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

- 1. Presentation of the following:
 - (a) Annual Report
 - (b) Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2025
 - (c) Report of the Auditor
- 2. Report on the operation and Financials of Electra Limited (the Company).
- 3. To appoint an auditor for the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2026. "THAT the Controller and Auditor General or his appointee be appointed as auditor for the Trust"
- 4. Authorise the Trustees to fix the remuneration of the Auditor of the Trust. "THAT the Trustees be authorised to fix the remuneration of the Auditor of the Trust."
- 5. To review and discuss the Code of Practice for the Electra Trust.
- 6. Report on the Company's compliance with the Statement of Corporate Intent.
- 7. General Business

By the order of the Trustees
Anne Robb, Trust Secretary
Levin

WINTER QUIZ
Answers on page 23.



- 1. What country has a town that gets no sunlight during the Polar Night?
a. Norway b. Iceland c. Sweden
- 2. Where were the first Winter Olympics held? a. Canada b. Austria c. France
- 3. Who wrote the play *A Winter’s Tale*? a. Ernest Hemingway b. William Shakespeare c. Oscar Wilde
- 4. How many sides does a snowflake have? a. 6 b. 8 c. 9
- 5. What Winter Olympics sport combines both cross-country skiing and shooting? a. Duathlon b. Biathlon c. Skiathlon
- 6. The word winter comes from what language family? a. Hellenic b. Germanic c. Celtic
- 7. What European city is home to the Winter Palace?
- 8. True or False: You can get sunburn from snow.
- 9. What is the name of the Starks’ ancestral home in *Game of Thrones*?
- 10. What famous London location hosts an annual ‘Winter Wonderland’?



Ōtaki River entrance tides
July 11- August 13

<https://www.metservice.com/marine/regions/kapiti-wellington/tides/locations/otaki-river-entrance>

Please note: The actual timing of high and low tide might differ from that provided here. Times are extrapolated from the nearest primary port for this location, so please take care.

		HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
FRI 11 JUL	-	04:06	10:15	16:22	22:34	
SAT 12 JUL	-	04:46	10:56	17:01	23:12	
SUN 13 JUL	-	05:26	11:36	17:40	23:51	
MON 14 JUL	-	06:07	12:17	18:20	-	
TUE 15 JUL	00:32	06:49	12:59	19:02	-	
WED 16 JUL	01:16	07:34	13:44	19:49	-	
THU 17 JUL	02:03	08:22	14:34	20:40	-	
FRI 18 JUL	02:56	09:14	15:30	21:40	-	
SAT 19 JUL	03:54	10:13	16:34	22:47	-	
SUN 20 JUL	04:58	11:18	17:46	23:59	-	
MON 21 JUL	06:07	12:29	18:58	-	-	
TUE 22 JUL	-	01:09	07:17	13:38	20:04	
WED 23 JUL	-	02:12	08:23	14:38	21:00	
THU 24 JUL	-	03:08	09:20	15:31	21:49	
FRI 25 JUL	-	03:58	10:11	16:18	22:34	
SAT 26 JUL	-	04:44	10:57	17:01	23:16	
SUN 27 JUL	-	05:27	11:38	17:41	23:55	
MON 28 JUL	-	06:08	12:17	18:19	-	
TUE 29 JUL	00:33	06:47	12:54	18:57	-	
WED 30 JUL	01:10	07:25	13:31	19:35	-	
THU 31 JUL	01:49	08:04	14:11	20:17	-	
FRI 1 AUG	02:32	08:46	14:56	21:05	-	
SAT 2 AUG	03:20	09:34	15:51	22:04	-	
SUN 3 AUG	04:17	10:32	16:58	23:14	-	
MON 4 AUG	05:22	11:41	18:12	-	-	
TUE 5 AUG	-	00:27	06:31	12:52	19:19	
WED 6 AUG	-	01:30	07:35	13:51	20:12	
THU 7 AUG	-	02:20	08:28	14:39	20:56	
FRI 8 AUG	-	03:04	09:14	15:21	21:34	
SAT 9 AUG	-	03:44	09:55	16:00	22:12	
SUN 10 AUG	-	04:23	10:34	16:38	22:49	
MON 11 AUG	-	05:02	11:13	17:17	23:28	
TUE 12 AUG	-	05:42	11:53	17:57	-	
WED 13 AUG	00:08	06:24	12:34	18:39	-	

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SUDOKU SOLUTION #56

5	1	7	3	6	2	8	4	9
8	9	3	4	1	5	7	6	2
4	2	6	8	7	9	1	3	5
9	6	8	1	2	3	5	7	4
1	4	5	7	9	8	3	2	6
7	3	2	5	4	6	9	1	8
3	5	4	2	8	7	6	9	1
2	8	9	6	3	1	4	5	7
6	7	1	9	5	4	2	8	3

Culture change needed on ref abuse

By Ian Carson

Things seem back to normal after the Horowhenua-Kāpiti Rugby Union ditched a weekend of games on June 28 because of continued referee abuse.

But let's hope not. There needs to be a new normal where referees and their assistants can take to the field and not feel threatened or intimidated – during or after the game.

And let's not assume this is just a rugby issue. Referees, umpires and other officials in all sports seem to feel the wrath of players, coaches and spectators. Abusing a referee, whether verbally or physically, seems in itself a national sport.

That's perhaps where the problem lies.

We can argue that Kiwis are passionate about their sport, though probably no more nor less than other nationalities. We just need to look at the fervour of a London football derby, or an NBL final in Los Angeles.

But if we want things to change, there needs to be a culture change in our attitude to officials. A game of rugby should be tough – as it always has been – but enjoyable. Crowds should be flocking to the ground, but they're not.

Why? Because families don't want to be there when spectators make their own sport out of abusing the referee, often in the foulest of language.

Let's face it. If grassroots rugby is to survive and continue to attract great players, it needs

to tidy up its act. It needs to – as the HK union did last month – cancel more games. Local unions need to support their officials more, and clubs need to ban spectators and coaches who disregard common rules of respect for officials.

As a rugby referee of 26 years, I've experienced my fair share of abuse. I've been shoved in the back, spat at and had coaches so close to my face I can smell their venom.

Having started refereeing at a relatively late stage of life, I brought an element of maturity to how I dealt with these situations. Sometimes it was by using the sanctions available to a ref – yellow or red cards, sending a spactator from the ground (yes, a ref can do that) or calling a game off. At other times a quiet chat works.

Most referees start much younger, so they're likely to be vulnerable – less thick-skinned. But even in the junior games they're likely to be appointed to first, these refs can come in for terrible abuse, mainly from parents and coaches.

Many talented referees have given up after just a few games. That doesn't help to grow the sport.

Referees sometimes get it wrong. But if we don't give them some respect for giving up their time – at weekend and mid-week games, at regular referee meetings, keeping fit, studying the laws of the game, writing card reports, and attending judiciary meetings – there won't be anyone left to give kids and adults alike a game they should be able to enjoy.

Boys do Ōtaki proud in Christchurch

Two young Ōtaki tennis players had a second and third placing at Wilding Park, Christchurch, tennis event last weekend.

In the three-day Tennis Canterbury junior winter tournament (12 and under), Charlie Wright (seeded second for the event) and Max Beauchamp (seeded 4th) won through to the semi-finals where they came up against each other on Saturday, with Max winning 6-1, 6-4.

In the final on Sunday, Max faced the first seed, Christchurch player Jacob Smith, and went down 4-6, 6-1, 10-6 after giving it everything against a higher-ranked player.

Charlie came 3rd after a no-show from his opponent for the 3/4 match.

The Ōtaki Sports Club said in a social media post: "Awesome to see two talented local players putting in the hard yards and getting great results so far from home."

Charlie Wright (with racquet) and Max Beauchamp at the Christchurch tournament.
Photos supplied



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