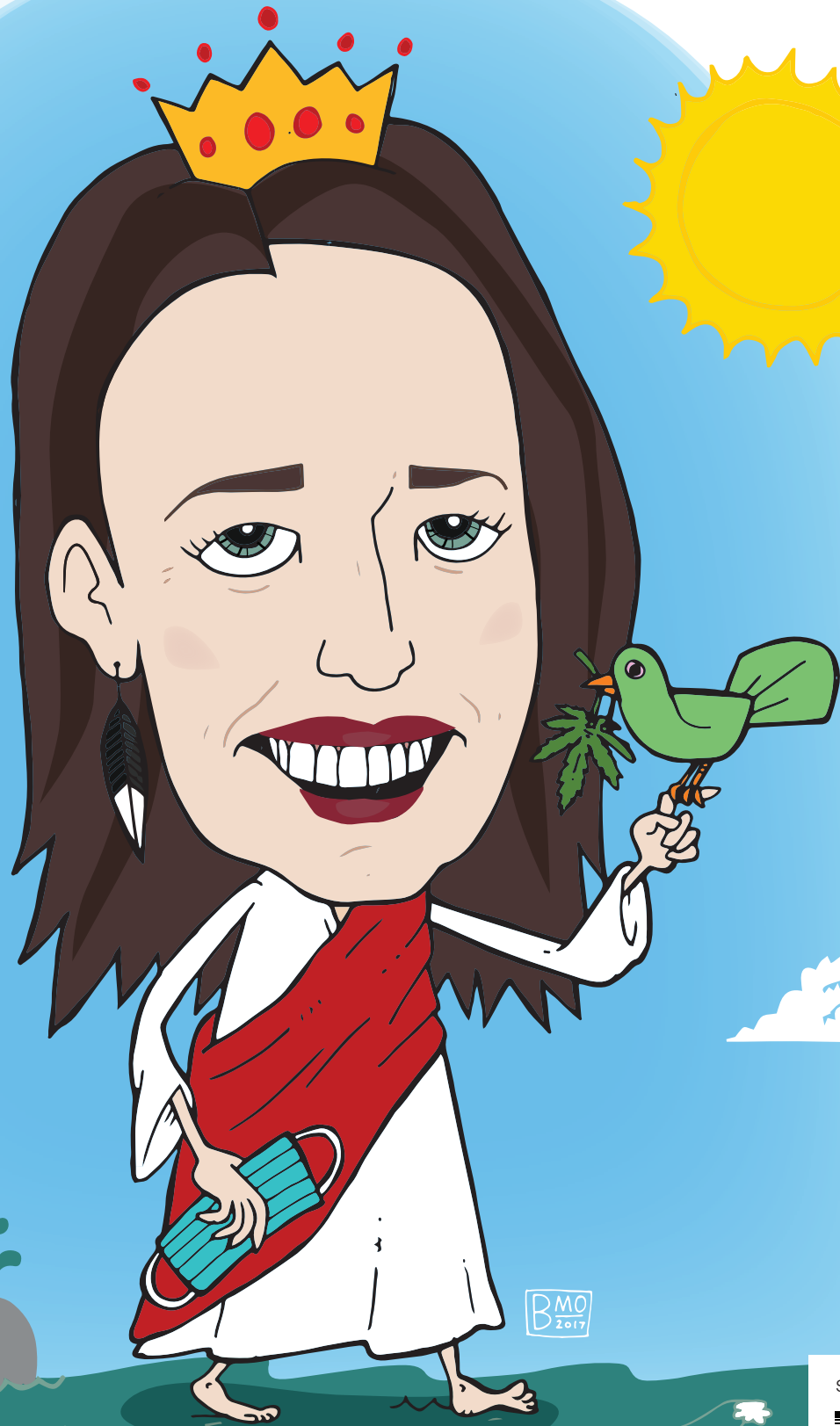


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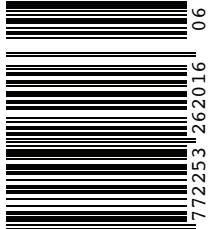


Nº55 • NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2020 • HAWKE'S BAY UP CLOSE, IN DEPTH



Blessed, now what?

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BayBuzz November/December 2020

Climate change will test Labour mandate. Why is our response to mental illness failing? Tech innovation helping farmers. Home care needs major boost ... and respect. Local builders are going green. HB councils engaging digitally, but still distrusted. Onekawa company beating plastic. Are you plastic conflicted? Finding farm labour a mounting problem. Public art & design comes to town. Try coastal horse trekking. Time to detox yourself ... or go bush? Local authors ... great books.

Cover illustration: Brett Monteith. This page: Exploring Hawke's Bay on horseback. Photo: Florence Charvin.



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ISSN 2253-2625 (Print)
ISSN 2253-2633 (Online)



This document is printed on an environmentally responsible paper produced using Elemental Chlorine Free (ECF) pulp sourced from Sustainable & Legally Harvested Farmed Trees, and manufactured under the strict ISO14001 Environmental Management System.

Featured contributor



Sarah Thornton, writer

My parents claim I've always been a storyteller. So it's no surprise that for the past 30 years I've been writing and sharing stories through my public relations and writing business, working with respected national and global brands and being published in major business, travel and lifestyle media. I'm thrilled to now be a contributor to *BayBuzz*, helping to uncover the gems of people and businesses who call Hawke's Bay home, but so often fly under the radar.

In this issue I catch up with Stacia Jensen, who started her LilyBee Wrap business literally on a kitchen table, and who was recently awarded the globally recognised B-Corporation certification.

Photo: Florence Charvin

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Illustration from *Egg and Spoon: An Illustrated Cookbook* by Alexandra Tylee and Giselle Clarkson

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Building green. Photo: Florence Charvin



Photo: Tom Allan



Photo: Tom Allan

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FROM THE EDITOR
TOM BELFORD

As you're reading this, two (hopefully) new governments will be taking shape.

Labour will be settling in with its solid majority of MPs, "a mandate" as our PM likes to say. But that also means no 'handbrake' excuses for any future non-delivery in areas like climate change and social equity.

Jacinda Ardern has scored very highly on disaster response - to attacks from a terrorist and a virus. But now the challenge is managing transformative change, through innovative policy and programme development matched with effective, brisk execution on the ground, which will require a cabinet team at least as capable as she individually is.

In the US, let's hope like hell that a process of recovery and healing (on so many levels) from a disastrous Trump presidency is already underway, notwithstanding the fact that the man himself cannot be displaced until January 20. If there were ever a countdown of days to be more relished than the final death throes of the Trump catastrophe, it hasn't occurred in my lifetime. And, as I write, dare I even dream of a change in party control of the Senate?

If I've predicted incorrectly, at least I have the good sense to be living in Hawke's Bay!

We have plenty enough challenges to tackle here in our region of modest size but mighty ambition.

A few of these are examined in this edition. Two of our most under-served populations in Hawke's Bay are the mentally unwell and those ageing alone at home. Bridget Freeman-Rock writes on our deficient mental illness care in *Must move on mental health*. And Abby Beswick investigates home care for seniors and the disabled in *Home care deserves more respect*.

On the environmental front, the two biggies are addressing climate change and ensuring freshwater safety, quality and availability. My Sep/Oct article, *HB's water politics*, provided an overview of the latter issue; this time I look at our inadequate response to climate change at both the national and regional level in *Climate Change ... day of reckoning is here*. The Government must make critical emission reduction commitments to us and the world by year's end, while our regional council searches for traction on the role it should play.

Other articles deal with vexing issues like providing the workforce we need to harvest the full bounty of our horticultural sector and dealing with the unrelenting accumulation of plastic in our everyday lives.

But we're a pretty able crowd here in the Bay, and we can take these issues on.

For example, you might find it surprising that energy-inefficient buildings are a major cause of emission growth in Hawke's Bay. Mark Sweet examines how our local best building practices are responding in *Building Green*.

And innovation is rampant in our HB food production sector too, as Keith Newman explores in *Data mining drives innovation*.

Even our councils are flirting with innovation as they use technology to inform and interact with us citizens in new and more convenient ways, as Andrew Frame reports in *Councils engage digitally*.

Need some uplifting after all that hard reading?

Our Culture section provides that, kicked off by Kay Bazzard reporting how art and design are lifting our public spaces. She's followed by horse trekking, body detoxing, books by local

authors and a prod to "get out of the house" and enjoy the paradise called New Zealand.

Finally, as much as we love *BayBuzz* the magazine, for more timely and bite-size insight into what's happening in Hawke's Bay, be sure to check out *The Buzz*. That's our online service at www.baybuzz.co.nz, where our content and audience has been exploding since back during lockdown, when we seriously ramped-up our online commitment.

And there's much more to come on that front. Behind the curtain, while you're enjoying beaches and BBQs and kicking back with this magazine, we're quietly preparing a brand-new *BayBuzz* website and online service. So stay tuned.

Meantime have a great holiday season and kick-off to your summer!

Tom Belford
tom@baybuzz.co.nz

Tom has been a two-term HB Regional Councillor. His past includes the Carter White House, building Ted Turner's first philanthropic organisation, doing heaps of marketing consulting for major non-profits and corporates.

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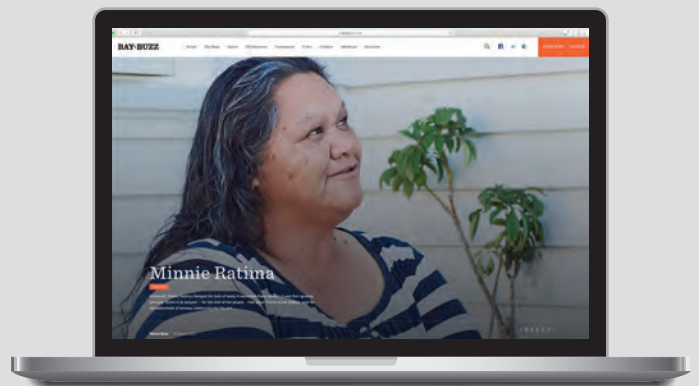
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With that support, at a time when local journalism has never been more important, we commit to bringing Hawke's Bay in print and online:

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- The most informed coverage of our recovery from the Covid pandemic.
- The most comprehensive window into our region's arts and culture and community achievements.
- The most provocative and inspiring views and opinions on where Hawke's Bay should head and why.



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LIVE HERE GIVE HERE



HAWKE'S BAY
FOUNDATION



Linda Bainbridge and Peter Dunkerley at The Knowledge Bank. Photo: Tom Allan

HAWKE'S BAY KNOWLEDGE BANK

The history of some of the most interesting and influential Hawke's Bay families and events are being captured and digitised safely for posterity thanks to Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank, which is managed by the Hawke's Bay Digital Archives Trust.

The brainchild of the late James Morgan, former Editor of Hawke's Bay Herald Tribute, the Knowledge Bank was established in 2011. It has a team of approximately 100 dedicated volunteers who preserve the region's history by scanning and transcribing family and business photos, documents and oral interviews from Stoneycroft, a historic building in Hastings.

"James had the vision for many years," Knowledge Bank Chairman, Peter Dunkerley, says.

"When the Hastings District Council was considering the future of Stoneycroft, there was a need to find a purpose for it rather than renovating and leaving it empty, so fortunate timing meant that both projects could work together."

At last count, the Knowledge Bank held 796 collections, of which 456 were available on their website. There were 5000 text documents, 25,000 still images and 238 oral histories available. The information is available free of charge to the public via the Knowledge Bank website www.knowledgebank.org.nz, which has an astounding 35,000 hits a month.

"These are very encouraging statistics and provide a vote of

confidence in the organisation, which gives us every reason to ensure the Bank's long term future."

With the Knowledge Bank growing at a pace that stretches the organisation's funding to the limit, a \$1,000 grant from Hawke's Bay Foundation to help with a new server upgrade was welcomed.

"To ensure all the valuable information that has been collected is secure, we have three backup servers - one on site, one in Auckland and one in Palmerston North. A Cloud backup site is also being considered. We are very grateful for the grant from Hawke's Bay Foundation because as the archive grows, more and more storage is required, and this will be a continuing challenge to fund."

The Knowledge Bank volunteers welcome old family photographs, letters, diaries, oral interviews, community group records and business archives from all members of the public so they can expand and develop their digital library.

"We receive information from local companies, community organisations and Hawke's Bay residents who support the Knowledge Bank's mission to preserve Hawke's Bay's past for future generations," Peter says.

COMMUNITY GROUP FUND SUPPORTS KNOWLEDGE BANK FOR LONG TERM

The Hawke's Bay Digital Archives Trust, which manages Hawke's

Bay Knowledge Bank, set up a Community Group Fund with Hawke's Bay Foundation after it received a bequest of \$12,000 from one of its founding members.

Anyone can donate or leave a bequest to the Knowledge Bank's Community Group Fund to help it grow. The fund's most recent boost came in the form of a bequest from the late Leonora McCormack.

Leonora passed away at the age of 95. She and her late husband, Tom, were well-known farmers from Patoka, who later retired in Taradale. Together they have left a significant legacy to our wonderful region.

Leonora's \$50,000 bequest has been invested, and every year the income generated will support Leonora's chosen charities.

A gift like this ensures the Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank and others can be assured of regular long-term income.

HAWKE'S BAY FOUNDATION: A better and more lasting way to give

Hawke's Bay Foundation provides a simple way to support your local community for generations to come. We receive gifts and bequests from individuals, families and businesses - these are pooled and invested forever, with the income being used to support local charities like Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank, making a positive difference in our community.

Visit hawkesbayfoundation.org.nz to find out more, or follow us on Facebook @[HawkesBayFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/HawkesBayFoundation)



Photo: Michelle Hepburn

Anna Lorck

Third time's a charm! Overcoming two sizable previous defeats, by 6,500 votes to Craig Foss in 2014 and 2,800 votes to Lawrence Yule in 2017, Anna Lorck has finally prevailed, becoming the new Tukituki MP.

Whatever one thinks of her politics or style, and thousands heartily approve, Lorck deserves credit for grit and perseverance over her long

path – 'born and bred' in Waipukurau, cadet journalist, communications consultant, elected to DHB, now MP.

In *BayBuzz's* view, the people of the Tukituki electorate will benefit from Lorck's drive – and place on the winning Ardern team – when it comes to helping deliver better government attention and outcomes to the district in areas like health, housing and economic development.

And she'll stay in touch. She

commented to *BayBuzz*: "One street corner meeting I held in Lane Street Mahora, where the residents talked about how their neighbourhood was a real snapshot of NZ – working families, professionals, business owners, unemployed and pensioners, right across the spectrum – sharing their views on different issues. They told me if I ever needed to gauge how things were going to come and see them. And I'm definitely going to hold them to it!" ●

Did You Know?



F.A.W.C.

1



Wildflower Sculpture Exhibition

1



2



1

1

November event highlights

The 2020 events schedule appears to have been squished into the final quarter of the year. What a November we have! Highlights to mark in your diary: **F.A.W.C!** – the Food and Wine Classic (throughout the region, November 6–15), the 7th biennial **Wildflower Sculpture Exhibition** (Round Pond Garden in Hastings, November 11–15), **Walk of Wonders** (Black Barn, November 18–22), the inaugural **Urban BBQ Festival** (McLean Park, November 28), the **Hawke's Bay Wine Auction** (Toitoto, new date November 28).

And returning in December ...

2

Film under the Stars

Hawke's Bay's dreamy summer movie nights are returning for season 17! The Black Barn OpenAir Cinema will run over nine nights from 27-30 December and 2-6 January 2021. You'll find the full programme at blackbarn.com/events from late November.

3

Greying NZ

The 60+ population grew nationally by 214,100 (3.2% a year) between 2013 and mid-2020 to nearly 1.1 million. This age group now accounts for 21% of New Zealand's population. Hawke's Bay is home to 34,950 seniors age 60+.

4

Cleaner air this winter

Hastings and Napier both met their national air quality targets this year. National air quality rules allow one exceedance each year for Napier and three for Hastings. An exceedance occurs when more than an average of 50 micrograms per cubic metre of air of PM₁₀ (Particulate Matter smaller than 10 microns) is measured over a 24-hour period.

HBRC Sustainable Homes programme manager Mark Heaney says he's pleased with the results of the survey. "Napier hasn't had any air quality exceedances in the last five years and Hastings has had a solid decline, thanks to people changing how they heat their homes. Since 2005, we have replaced 12,067 wood burners which shows how much the community care about protecting their air quality and their health."

5

Up, up and away...

In 2020 the median house price in Hawke's Bay is \$545,041. In 2010 it was \$282,500!

6

Teaming up

HBRC and QEII Trust have established a covenant support programme aimed at protecting and enhancing areas with biodiversity value on farms. The programme will provide funding for retirement fencing for new covenant areas and some support for activities in covenants such as planting and pest plant and animal control. The main focus will be on deer fencing due to the significant impact feral deer are having on native bush remnants across the region.

A covenant is an agreement between QEII and a landowner to protect land forever. The landowner continues to own and manage the protected land, and protection stays on the land, even when the property is sold to a new owner.

7

Hope for the estuary?

NCC finally, as of February this year, has a by-law against industrial discharges into the city's urban waterways, and recently filed its first charge against a local company that allegedly discharged into a waterway flowing into Te Whanganui a Orotū (the Ahuriri Estuary). If convicted, the company could be liable for a fine of up to \$20,000.

On the other hand, NCC itself is under an abatement order to end by November 30 its own illegal discharges from its Awatoto wastewater treatment plant into Hawke Bay, due to a faulty 'outfall' pipe out in the Bay. Of course one might ask: should *any* waste discharge be dumped into the Bay?

7



8



8

Medicinal cannabis in HB

As we write, the verdict is still out on the cannabis referendum.

Meantime, government data shows the number of medicinal cannabis prescriptions by doctors has jumped 84% in the first six months of this year, with about a quarter of this related to mental health conditions.

Hawke's Bay residents make up 3% of medicinal cannabis applications nationwide (37% of applications for prescriptions originate from patients in the Auckland region). Patient application data for HB shows 43% is for chronic pain, 15% for mental health conditions, 20% for sleep, 13% for digestion, 4% for neurological issues, and 6% for cancer.

11



9



9

Senior swim

Senior swimmers have had discounted entry to the Napier Aquatic Centre since 2018, and now the same deal is coming to Flaxmere and Clive pools. The SuperSwim discount offer takes the price of a swim from \$3.80 to \$1 for over-65s who are SuperGold cardholders.

NCC manager for sports and recreation Glenn Lucas says the initiative had been so successful, numbers of seniors using the facility had increased by a third in the first year, and the Colgan Foundation (a worldwide charity focused on education, sports and healthy lifestyles) has now stepped up to enable a similar deal in Hastings.

10



10

Water rules

Heading out for some fun off the coast this summer? Do yourself a favour and check out HBRC's Safety on the Water material here: <https://bit.ly/30shpHR>

11

Warning: Xmas danger

Careful this Christmas! Last year, ACC received over 3,200 injury claims from Christmas day alone. Among them, 68 people were hurt by Christmas trees, lights or decorations, 48 claims were ham or turkey-related, 40 injuries came from fireworks or sparklers, 10 from Christmas crackers and a further 47 may be deemed 'champagne-related injuries'.

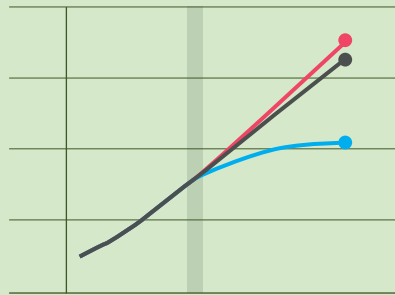
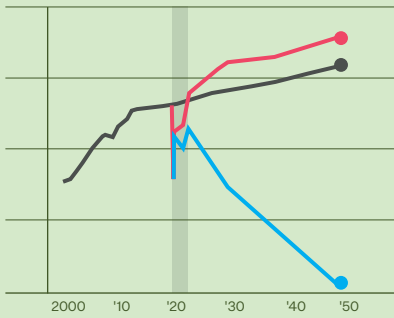
The Heat is On! Global Warming Update

Global CO2 scenarios

January 2020 to December 2050

Fossil fuel emissions
In gigatons CO2

CO2 concentration
In parts per million



China surprise

2020 just keeps on delivering the surprises! Chinese President Xi Jinping has stated to the UN General Assembly that China – by far the world’s largest greenhouse gas emitter – will aim for “carbon neutrality” by 2060 and a CO2 emissions peak before 2030.

China watchers are now looking to see how the country will define “carbon neutrality” and what concrete steps it’s planning to transform the targets into action.



South Korea leads the way with green economic recovery

Wanted: green economic recovery

Economists are looking at the extent to which recovery spending by governments is being channelled in directions that would produce long-term environmental sustainability benefits. Green investments account for roughly 1% of the overall \$12 trillion currently pledged by major economies recovering from pandemic-induced recessions, according to a recent BloombergNEF report.

South Korea is doing best with their green economic recovery, but overall, much more could be done, as NZ’s Green Party has proposed.

Smaller brick, little difference

Pandemic year 2020 has seen a historic global emissions drop, but the planet doesn’t seem to be paying much attention. As the graphs below show, atmospheric concentrations are still rising because this year’s drop, big as it is, isn’t expected to be long-lasting enough to make a dent in the long-term CO2 trend.

Atmospheric scientist at Texas Tech University, Katharine Hayhoe puts it this way:

“The long-term upward trend in CO2 (carbon dioxide) is the result of cumulative, not annual, emissions — every single brick we’ve been putting on the pile every month since the dawn of the Industrial Era. Today, adding a brick 25% smaller for one to two months isn’t going to make a big difference.”



fat reserves they have built up in the summer and autumn and wake to breed again in the spring.

These warmer winters can wake the bats up earlier, and they set out to hunt, only to find their main food supply, flying insects, are scarce, then the bats use up their stored energy and starve. The study shows that Britain’s largest bat – the noctule bat – is adapting to this threat by moving north to hibernate.

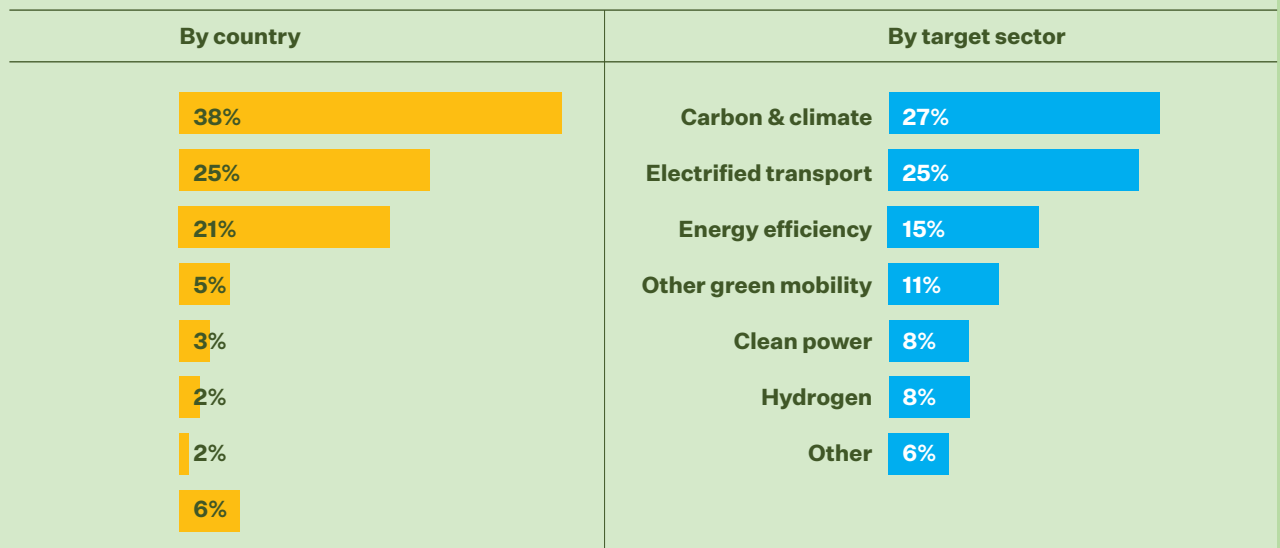
Going batty

A recent European study shows that the warming planet is changing the migration and habitation of Britain’s bats, butterflies and dragonflies. Bats need stable, cool conditions in order to sink into a torpor that lasts usually from November to March. During the hibernation period, they live off the

The juvenile males appear to be leading the way by finding winter quarters north of where they were born and then staying put to find a mate the next summer, thus the bats move further north with each generation.

Share of government green stimulus spending

January to August 2020



NZ's climate plans 'Insufficient'

New Zealand is currently rated 'Insufficient' by the independent Climate Action Tracker. The CAT's assessment states that "New Zealand is one of the few countries to have a zero emissions goal enshrined in law, its Zero Carbon Act, but short-term policies cannot yet keep up with that ambition. Noteworthy is the fact that the 2030 greenhouse target was not updated in the newly-submitted NDC; only a hint was included that this could happen in 2021."

'Blobs' more likely

Here's one for the 'it's just part of the planet's cycle/earth has been doing this for millennia/it's not all down to humans' crowd. In the journal *Science*, climate scientists have revealed strong evidence that future marine heat waves will intensify and occur much more frequently as a direct result of anthropogenic (based on human industry and agriculture) climate change.

Charlotte Laufkötter and her team at the University of Bern in Switzerland, focused on seven of the last's decade's marine heat waves, and calculated the relative probabilities that a similar event could have occurred with and without human influence. They found that human activities such as greenhouse gas emissions made the heat waves much more likely to occur.

"For several of these heat waves we got a human contribution of 100%,



New evidence indicates future marine heat waves will intensify and occur more frequently

meaning that they could not have occurred without anthropogenic global warming," said Laufkötter.

These included the infamous 'Blob' that lingered off the coast of the Pacific Northwest from 2013 to 2016, causing mass sea life starvation, and the intense Southwest Atlantic heat wave in 2017. The study also predicted how much more common such heat waves could be in the future. Even if total warming was kept to 1.5-2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, Blob-like heat waves that normally occur once every 100,000 years would come about every decade. And at 2-3 C of warming, such heat waves would happen every decade or even every year.

Ice melting from below

A team from Bangor University has recently published a study looking at why sea ice is melting in the eastern Arctic Ocean. Their research shows that the influence of heat from the interior of the ocean has now overtaken the influence of the atmosphere.

While atmospheric heat is the dominant reason for melting in the summer, it has little affect during the polar winter. However, the ocean warms the ice from below year-round.

The new research shows that this influence has more than doubled over the past decade and is now contributing to the melting of nearly a metre thickness of sea ice each year.

Happy Christmas!

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ABOVE: Artwork by Deb Lee

Must move on mental health

Story by Bridget Freeman-Rock

Deborah Grace and Deb Lee have a vision for a walk-in crisis response centre for mental health in Hawke's Bay.

A place with a welcoming, culturally inclusive, non-clinical environment, offering trauma-informed, integrative therapies alongside medical care and social services, and basics, like a feed and a shower, in a way that's coordinated, comprehensive and timely.

A place where you wouldn't have to repeat your story over and over, "like a robot", or get lost in navigating the complex, fractured web of disparate, often duplicate services, programmes, ministries, non-government organisations.

As it stands, "You need a good advocate or many years' experience of the system, unfortunately, to know where to go," says Grace. And when the need is acute, it can be hard to be seen: "You need your episode to be between 9-5, really!"

Currently, access to in-person mental health services is through GP referrals or appointments. And while that process is a lot easier now than it was in the past, and the triage system works well, there are barriers to seeing a GP in the first place (cost, registration, operating hours, post-Covid telehealth), and overstretched services with limited places have long waitlists - if you have low-moderate needs, you could be waiting three months. Yet distress, unchecked, can quickly escalate.

For many, "It's after midnight when the shit gets real," says Lee, "and ED is the big, red arrow".

Both women, who have lived experience of mental illness, are on the DHB's Partnership Advisory Group (PAG), Grace as chair, which with renewed engagement under David Warrington, service director for Mental Health and Addiction (MHA), has been given a seat at the decision-making table.

In 2015 they helped co-design the new acute inpatient unit, Ngā Ra Rākau; in 2020 they have a voice in shaping how those presenting with mental distress

could be better, more appropriately assessed and supported, with a review underway for a different, more cohesive approach.

New crisis model needed

As with the Emergency Department, which is seeing record numbers of people, the DHB's Emergency Mental Health Service (EMHS) is run off its feet with an inexorable rise in demand.

In most cases, "it's like cracking walnuts with sledgehammers".

"What we are seeing in EMHS," says EMHS manager Alexandra Palacio, "is not more mental illness but more social distress - poverty, housing, job loss, family harm. Often, it comes down to identifying the barriers to mental wellbeing, and addressing immediate needs, such as finding somewhere to live, first. These are needs that can't be met clinically but show up at our door as distress. We have to become really skilled in dealing with this, which is about building relationships and a multi-sectoral approach."

The DHB is currently reviewing its crisis model, says Warrington. "Our idea is to be able to provide a service that's almost a one-stop shop, that can do anything from assisting social distress through to managing major mental disorder. This will require us joining up with our NGO partners, with our iwi partners, MSD, police. We're just working through that at the moment with the Ministry of Health as to what that might look like, and how we can join up the sector to manage the demand."

Critically, any such hub will need to be well-integrated, with good linkages and connections to what's available in the community.

"There are many good people out there who are already doing good work, especially around suicide prevention," says MHA medical director, psychiatrist Anoek Dechering-Raes, "and it needs to be a lot wider than what we as a DHB can do. Secondary care services are a minute part of it."



ABOVE: Artwork by Deb Lee

Peer support

Deborah Grace is keen to see a ‘mental health café’ as part of the proposed hub, similar to the one successfully trialled in England and now being rolled out across the UK - “It dropped admission rates to ED by 33%”.

Staffed by volunteers with lived experience in a neutral area, the café is open to anyone who needs it and operates outside of business hours. “People can turn up, whether that’s at 3am or on a Sunday afternoon - they can have a cup of tea, or talk with a friend, or ask for help ... Seeing how others cope with their specialty strain of mental illness is really helpful.”

Peer support models are one way the DHB is looking to bridge the gap in the workforce (there are not enough skilled counsellors, for a start), which is likely to present even more of a barrier when the new primary health initiative comes into effect.

The government has pledged to frontload more resource for mental health services into primary care, with particular focus on targeted programmes for youth, Māori and Pasifika.

Hawke’s Bay has yet to see any of the Budget 2019 \$450 million investment into expanding access to services (as of July, RNZ reports, only \$32 million had been spent nationwide), although the PHO, Health Hawke’s Bay, promises “primary integrated mental health services will be rolled out soon”. Along with cited Covid delays, Newsroom’s mental health reporter Laura Walters says the reason for the slow roll-out is workforce constraints.

David Warrington believes the government’s

approach is the right one. “It’s about trying to get onto things early to prevent people from getting to the point of needing secondary services.”

Silent pandemic

Sir Peter Gluckman, in a report he co-authored in Sept 2020 on youth mental health, says greater urgency is required. He points to a silent pandemic of mental distress amongst youth, globally, with the last decade witnessing a rapid, concerning rise in psychological distress and suicide rates (NZ’s being notoriously high).

Here in New Zealand, poor mental health in youth is persistently inequitable and worsening, and the impacts of Covid-19 on youth are likely to be extensive and enduring.

Since lockdown began Lifeline has seen a 25% increase in calls and texts of people in distress, with Youthline reporting a 50% increase in texts from young people reaching out for support, worried largely about “failing life”.

While anecdotally doctors in general practice speak of seeing the impact of Covid-19 on people’s wellbeing, Anoek Dechering-Raes says the only real discernible Covid-correlated upsurge in demand for acute services they’re seeing in Hawke’s Bay so far is among teenagers.

“During lockdown it would have been difficult for many of our kids, particularly those from deprived families, to study.” And now they’re back at school but there’s the culmination of practice exams, the uncertainty of final grades, the schools themselves

“Our idea is to be able to provide a service that’s almost a one-stop shop, that can do anything from assisting social distress through to managing major mental disorder. This will require us joining up with our NGO partners, with our iwi partners, MSD, police.”

DAVID WARRINGTON, DHB’S SERVICE MANAGER FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

been worn down, and they’re finding it harder to keep up the momentum of learning.

“I think there is a lot of pressure on them, and we have seen that over the last few weeks. Lots of really distressed kids, because of exams.”

Teachers are also observing elevated levels of anxiety and more unpredictable or overly aggressive behaviours among primary and intermediate school students.

On the election trail, Labour vowed to roll out Mana Ake - resilience programmes for primary school kids, developed in Canterbury, Kaikoura in response to the earthquakes and terrorist attack - across the country, and to expand the workforce of allied health workers (social workers, counsellors, psychologists, etc) in schools.

Elephant in the room

While 1 in 5 New Zealanders live with mental illness and/or addiction in any given year, for Māori it’s 1 in 3, and for those in prison, 2 in 3.

We may not lock our up ‘mad’ in 19th century asylums anymore, but we do lock up some of our most mentally vulnerable in prisons (91% of the prison population have had mental illness or substance problems within the months prior to their conviction), and disproportionately our indigenous.

Māori are less likely than non-Māori to access primary mental health services, more likely to get later intervention, to be sectioned (compulsory treatment order), secluded, restrained. Incarcerated. And they’re more likely to take their own lives.

“What drives distress are the things we don’t like to talk about - things such as the prevalence of psychological, physical and sexual violence across our society, inequity, racism, intergenerational poverty and the impacts of colonisation, writes NZ’s suicide prevention officer and former chief coroner Carla na Nagara in a recent article in *The Spinoff*.

“As a society we have not been ready to own these issues, much less to acknowledge their relationship with our suicide rate. It is much easier to consider suicide a problem to be solved solely by services, because the alternative is to accept that we have serious issues of inequity and human rights to address.”

Hawke’s Bay has a high suicide rate, in line with other regional, low-socio demographic, high-deprivation areas, says David Warrington. “If you go through the necessities of life (a house, some education, food,

enlighten

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Hawke's Bay has yet to see any of the Budget 2019 \$450 million investment into expanding access to services (as of July, RNZ reports, only \$32 million had been spent nationwide), although the PHO, Health Hawke's Bay, promises "primary integrated mental health services will be rolled out soon".

love, being looked after), or lack thereof, and then look at the high use of drugs and alcohol, exposure to adverse childhood experiences, to trauma— we've got reasonably high levels of all these factors, which plays out in early teens, early adulthood."

Community-led care

For many in our communities, including Pākehā, the Western biomedical model of care is too narrow, with an over-reliance on pharmaceuticals and an under-acknowledgement of the role cultural supports can play in prevention and recovery.

Māori, broadly speaking, want to exercise their rights of self-determination in their care, with more kaupapa Māori services, inclusive of traditional healing modalities and working within frameworks such as Te Whare Tapa Wha (spirit, body, mind, whānau).

While Pasifika, who often feel alienated within the system, want to develop services based on 'Pacific ways' that are holistic, community-centred and culturally informed.

Both have demonstrated during Covid-19, that when entrusted with managing and delivering their own care and health response, outcomes have been overwhelmingly efficient and successful.

We will need to see more of this, the experts say: communities leading the charge from the front. Which means changing tack from a top-down, paternalistic approach to diverse, cross-sector collaborations, and shifting the locus of attention from the apex of acute need to the 'flaxroots' of prevention and wellbeing.

How this will be effectively overseen and administered in the commissioning of services is still, however, a question for the government.

It's everyone's responsibility

The DHB is funded, as a rule of thumb, for 3% of the population that's estimated to experience severe mental illness in any given year.

"We see in secondary care services about 3.4% in Hawke's Bay," says David Warrington. "But it's important to realise that there are a whole lot of people outside that [figure] who live their lives relatively well in the presence of some form of mental illness,

and who don't require hospital-level services."

The general public doesn't always see it that way, however. Certainly, there's societal intolerance for the eccentric, the odd, those on the spectrum of mental illness (EMHS are frequently contacted to deal with someone perceived as 'crazy', when it's not medical services that are required but understanding), reflecting ignorance more than anything.

There's still stigma and discrimination - "just truckloads of it" - even more so around addiction. Even though the majority of New Zealanders (50-80%) will experience mental distress or addiction challenges in their lifetimes.

We need to understand that it's our issue too, and that much like Covid, mental wellbeing requires collective action.

In our busy, disconnected, uncertain world that means going back to basics: checking in on our neighbours, supporting friends who are struggling in practical ways (like cooking a meal), making time for our children, keeping an eye on our teens. Having the courage to stop and ask a stranger who seems upset if they're ok - it may seem trite and you might be knocked back but the fact that you asked can often make a real difference.

And it means, as a society, addressing the social determinants of mental ill-health: poverty, trauma, colonisation. And that's no quick fix.

Now for the plan

It's been over two years now since the He Ara Oranga Inquiry into mental health and addiction was published, with its ambitious, aspirational agenda for a whole-of-person, whānau-centred approach that shifts mental wellbeing from the periphery to the front and centre of health.

All but two of its 40 recommendations were accepted (in principle at least) by the Ardern coalition government, and commendable steps have been taken:

- re-establishing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission;
- setting up a Suicide Prevention Office and a cross-party working group;
- committing an unprecedented pot of funding for primary mental health services;
- moving to replace the Mental Health Act with a more humane and dignified law).

However, we're still to see a strategic direction, let alone the whole-of-government, all-of-community action plan it's going to require.

The danger is, we'll see ad hoc bits and pieces rather than the transformative, systemic change being called for.

Mental health commissioner Kevin Allan believes that the government's Covid-19 mental health recovery plan, *Kia Kaha, Kia Māia, Kia Ora Aotearoa*, provides a good foundation for such a plan - it needn't be complicated, it just needs to ensure there's an enduring commitment to implementation. And that as a matter of priority.

Covid-19 has only sharpened that attention to the need for such a paradigm shift, while also demonstrating what is possible when there is the political will and public backing to do what needs to be done.



ABOVE: Deb Lee and Deborah Grace. Photo: Sarah Cates

Living with Mental Illness: Deb's Story

When Deb was a young mother in the 1990s, an horrific event she was privy to “caused a catastrophe in my head,” triggering acute psychosis and her journey with mental illness.

“I have schizophrenia,” she explains, “I own that. It’s not a big deal, usually, though in the early days it was, struggling to get a diagnosis, wondering what the hell was going on. I’ve been sectioned maybe 4 or 5 times, with some voluntary admissions as well. I had nearly a year in the Ashburn Clinic down in Dunedin. It wasn’t because I wasn’t managing, I could just see the cycle: I go in and they give me all those pharmaceuticals, I zombie out for a couple of weeks, then I come home and slowly stagger back into my life until it happens again. So, the idea of going to the Ashburn was to retrain my brain, really. Which I did. You have to, because all the system can offer you is pills.”

Determined to take charge of her own wellbeing, Deb tailed off medication with clinical support, and replaced it “with things like mindfulness, meditation, nature, yoga, exercise, better diet, a lot of art, my dog, reconnecting with family and friends, and volunteer work—that’s been really crucial to me - and my paid work which gives me a sense of purpose.”

Deb, who once trained as a teacher, works in a local primary school one-to-one with vulnerable kids; a job she got through Network Personnel - Disability Resource Centre, and an example of a successful community partnership that makes a mutually significant difference in people’s lives.

“I’m a voice-hearer, and I’m sort of comfortable with that now,” says Deb. “Except when I can’t function like I usually do. And I’ve been fine, all these years, medication-free.”

Until Covid, compounded by a string of personal losses, pulled the rug from under her feet.

Deb lives alone on a small urban section but normally her days are busy, filled with other people, a lot of talk, a lot of activity. When lockdown was announced in March, her siblings, worried she’d get bored and restless on her own, encouraged her to move out to rural Kereru, where her daughter and son-in-law were living on a cattle farm, preparing for their impending move to Taranaki to take up new jobs, a baby on the way.

Deb, who loves gardening, says in some ways it was well timed because she had “heaps to do”, throwing herself physically into “turning the place into something you could put in House & Garden.”

However, “It was the middle of the Hawke’s Bay drought, and whenever you went out, the cows would follow you because they thought you were going to feed them, and I picked up their anxiety and the community anxiety as well. A lot of the farmers had already sent their animals away, so I would go out walking for miles along the main road, and there’d be no stock, no life; it was bleak and hot (it never rained the whole time I was there), apocalyptic, really.

“Cellphone coverage was bad and I had no mates, I was just marooned, like a refugee, in this landscape!

“I was using all my techniques that had worked for me for years to keep myself in reality, in the here and now, and useful. But the desolation, and the one o’clock news, hearing every day what was going on in the world and in our country, feeling so powerless - like standing on the edge of the world waiting, and you don’t know what you’re waiting for, whether it’s a bus or an iceberg, or God only knows. And I slowly began to slip in my mind.”

Deb believes that with early intervention and some early reflection “before I lost my insight”, she might have been saved from the psychosis she’d eventually

go into. But her family didn't know her signs well enough and were preoccupied with packing and the uncertainty of whether the move would even go ahead or not, what the different alert levels meant. And Deb had none of her supports: "I couldn't see my doctor or my key worker, who acts as my regular touchstone."

The day before the country moved down to Level 3, Deb's daughter miscarried, in what was a traumatic experience for all - she couldn't get through to the doctor on the call-back system and when Deb drove her "flat-tack" to the health centre in town, distraught and "bleeding out", was turned away because she didn't have an appointment. It was not until the following morning that she received medical care, on what was also Gypsy Day, when share-milkers and farmworkers around the country change farms, herds.

"We come into the health centre for this appointment with their loaded-up vehicles and trailers, all their worldly goods, their hopes and dreams... and yeah, the scan confirms the baby's gone. We come out, standing in the car park, just crying, holding each other. Then they get in their vehicles and drive away..."

"You can imagine, I'm finally home and the whole fucking world has changed - not only my inner world, the world literally has changed, and I've just lost my kid, my grandchild, no mum [Deb's mother died unexpectedly earlier in the year]. It was an extreme set of circumstances and the timing of it, it was like a cruel joke. I sat with that and just got totally derailed."

At this point, when "the schizophrenic symptoms rocked up", Deb's chronology becomes shaky: "I

don't remember, but somehow the key worker was able to get back in action. They could see that I was in trouble and got the Home-Based Treatment Team involved [a specialist mental health team, mainly psychiatric nurses, that work all hours, with a view to keeping people out of hospital and in their own homes], with daily, even twice-daily visits."

Deb also had practical, spiritual and wrap-round support from her friends, her neighbours and wider community, which helped see her through this "horror" period. With the shift to Level 2, she was able to attend Harakeke (the day intensive programme at Ngā Ra Rākau), where the predictable routine and the connection with both her peers (who understood what she was going through) and staff (the same, constant three) provided the crucial stability to recover - "connection is the answer to everything".

She's now back at work in the job she loves ("the school is amazingly supportive") and, in the lead-up to Mental Health Awareness week when I speak with her, busy developing her vision for a one-stop-shop crisis hub in Hawke's Bay.



Royston Hospital is pleased to sponsor robust examination of health issues in Hawke's Bay. This reporting is prepared by *BayBuzz*. Any editorial views expressed are those of the *BayBuzz* team.

Where to turn for help

Need to talk? Free 24/7 helplines

Call or text 1737 anytime to talk with a counsellor or to connect with other mental health and addiction helplines.

Lifeline: 0800 LIFELINE (0800 543354)
or free text HELP (4357)

Youthline: 0800 376 633

Local Services

**Emergency Mental Health Service,
Hawke's Bay:** 0800 112 334

Your GP

Awhina Whānau Services (free kaupapa Māori counselling services and education programmes for individuals and their families, open to all):
awhinawhanau.service.org.nz, 06 878-4827

Directions Youth Health Centre (one-stop shop in Hastings for youth health and social support):
0800 967742

Online support and e-therapy

The Journal (a free, personalised, online programme that takes users through a series of lessons on staying positive, creating lifestyle changes to improve mental health, and problem solving): depression.org.nz/get-better/the-journal

The Lowdown (a website to help young people recognise and understand depression and anxiety): thelowdown.co.nz, 0800 11757, text 5626

Aunty Dee (an online tool for helping youth work systematically through a problem): auntydee.co.nz

SPARX (an e-therapy tool to help young people with depression, anxiety or stress, based on cognitive behavioural therapy)

Covid-19 phone apps to support mental wellbeing

Mentemia (mental wellbeing coaching with John Kirwan)

Melon (online community and peer support, resources and webinars)

Staying on Track (strategies and skills for dealing with worry and stress)

For a comprehensive list of helplines, support services, online resources and e-therapy options, see www.mentalhealth.org.nz



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Peter Crawshaw and builder Bernie Kirton installing Qpod recycled plastic floor insulation.

Building Green

Story by Mark Sweet

With the passing of the Zero Carbon Bill in November 2019, New Zealand committed to reducing all greenhouse gas emissions, except biogenic methane (animals) to net zero by 2050.

Buildings are responsible for approximately 20% the country's carbon footprint (39% globally) arising from greenhouse gas emissions from the manufacture and transportation of the materials used in construction, disposal of construction waste, and the use of fossil fuels for heating, cooling, and cooking.

Currently New Zealand's electricity production is 85% renewable (hydro, thermo, wind, and solar) with the aim of being 100% by 2030. To assist in achieving this goal residential and commercial buildings need to minimise heat loss, and maximise on-site opportunity for electricity production.

Innovation in developing low carbon impact building materials is well advanced, and in Hawke's Bay there is a commitment among most players in the construction industry to energy efficient and sustainable building practices.

Architecture

Marie Fleming, partner in Studio 26 Architects with Gary Pidd, is the founder of Sustainable Building Group Hawke's Bay, and a trustee on the Sustaining Hawke's Bay Trust.

As an architect, Marie says, "We start with basic sustainability in everything we do, like orientation, sustainable choices in materials, thermal mass in concrete, and maximum insulation." Gary adds, "Old state houses, back to

Photos by Florence Charvin

Innovation in developing low carbon impact building materials is well advanced, and in Hawke's Bay there is a commitment among most players in the construction industry to energy efficient and sustainable building practices.

the 1940s and 50s had to be orientated to the sun, but today it's often not part of the thought process."

As for materials, "We make sustainable choices like using Adobe timber which is untreated." Adobe is one of several timber brands, which instead of being treated with chemicals - chromium, copper and arsenic - is kiln-dried with the natural starches in the timber enlivened to act as preservative.

"With insulation we usually choose Batts and Mammoth." Pink Batts are made from 80% recycled glass, Mammoth insulation is certified zero carbon and made from recycled plastic.

"The warm roof is something I really like," says Gary. Warm roof insulation is installed on top of the rafters, under the roof cladding. "Not only does it stop condensation, but ventilation isn't required."

Asked about the energy efficiency and sustainability rating systems offered by the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC), Gary and Marie, fully support the initiative, but no clients have yet requested NZGBC assessment.

However, they point to other assessment tools, which guide their decision making.

"The Living Future Challenge has very strict guidelines. In choosing products and materials they have Declare and Red List." Declare is a transparency platform and data base where all the ingredients in a material or product are declared, and if they contain toxic chemicals, or their processing is harmful to the environment, they do not qualify for 'Red List Free'.

Sustainable materials choice, and energy efficient design and build, are givens for most architects today. And they are conscious of other aspects of the construction industry which need addressing.

Of concern to Marie, and a major aim of the Sustainable Building Group, is management of construction waste, which country-wide makes up 40-50% of waste going to landfills. She is currently consulting with Hastings District Council over including 'waste management plans' in high-value building consent applications.

Although not currently required by law, waste diversion for recycling from building sites is well established, and Marie acknowledges Atkin Construction as being leaders, and mentions Bin Hire as offering an excellent service in 'waste diversion.'



Lizzie Atkin, Richard Catley, Kelvin Bently and Jason Gillies at the Bupa retirement village in Ulyatt Road, Napier.

Construction

In 2010 Atkin Construction were the first Hawke's Bay company to become a member of NZGBC. "We are a firm that genuinely cares about the lasting impacts of construction waste," says marketing and HR manager Lizzie Atkin.

Quantity surveyor, Richard Catley, explains. "We set up recycling stations on our building sites where elements are separated: treated and untreated timber, metal, plastic, and the landfill bin has a sad face." And, says Lizzie, "We have a dedicated person (Kelvin Bently) who takes care of recycling on all our sites. He makes sure we are maximising what can be re-used."

But it's more than just sorting. Forethought at every stage is employed, and Richard gives an example. "This morning I was looking at a job with one of our foremen and the sheets of material he has to put on come in a certain size. It's pre-finished and expensive. We have to make it fit certain spaces, and to make it look right we've got wastage, so we worked out exactly where the cuts should be, and how we use the off-cuts."

Currently Atkin Construction are building the Bupa retirement village in Ulyatt Road, Napier, and the clients specified they wanted the build to achieve the NZGBC rating of Homestar 6.

"We are a firm that genuinely cares about the lasting impacts of construction waste."

LIZZIE ATKIN,
ATKIN CONSTRUCTION
MARKETING AND HR MANAGER

"Sol Atkinson is helping us with Homestar on the Bupa job," says Lizzie.

Residential

Architect Sol Atkinson, is the sole Homestar assessor in Hawke's Bay, and on a rear section in Brookvale Road, Havelock North, he has designed the region's first Homestar 8 house.

"We engaged a consultant, Sustainable Engineering from Whanganui, to do energy modelling using passive house software, which told us where we were in terms of energy efficiency."

Immediately obvious is a difference in framing from conventional house construction.

"Instead of the standard 90mm framing there's 140mm," says Marcus Hill, general manager of TW Property Group, who introduced Sol to the clients when they purchased the site through Tremains Real Estate.

The wider framing increases the space between studs, "reducing heat loss", and thick ceiling insulation, "stretches to the eaves line".

Insulation is a big component in energy efficiency, and often overlooked, is heat loss to the ground through the floor. Sol has specified a locally-manufactured under-floor system, Qpod, which "forms a waffle dome structure", with high insulation values.

The house can generate 4kW from ten solar panels on the roof, able to take batteries, and as the clients are elderly and home most of the day, they will use much of the output directly, saving up to 50% on electricity. And a 3,000 litre water tank captures rain water which is used for toilet flushing.

In his capacity as Homestar assessor, Sol is consultant for several house-building projects, including those for Kāinga Ora (formerly Housing New Zealand) which specifies its housing be to Homestar 6 standard.

Private developers are also building to Homestar certification, which for TW Property Group, includes an 18-house cluster in Flaxmere.

Although Homestar is the most widely-adopted measurement tool for energy efficient and sustainable housing, there are other house-building systems, like eHaus, which achieve very high standards.



Building a Homestar 8 house.

Commercial

Wallace Development Company are soon to deliver to their clients the new 5,351 square metre Kmart store in Napier.

Kmart are Australian-owned, and if the building were being built there, it would need certification for meeting a prescribed standard of energy efficiency, as do all new buildings in Australia over 1,000 square metres, and existing buildings up for sale or lease.

In Australia, 80% of electricity production comes from coal-fueled power stations. It can be assumed that is why their required energy efficiency standards for commercial buildings are far higher than in New Zealand.

However, as Mike Walker, Wallace Development manager explains, “Here we must meet the (New Zealand) building code, but most often we exceed requirements.”

With Kmart, a multi-layered ceiling/roof system and thickened wall insulation is installed to maximise the efficiency of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system (HVAC).

There was discussion about providing solar generation on the roof, but the clients chose not to at this stage. “The project is client-driven and we have to be cost effective.” However, the adjacent 1,000 square metre tenancies for Torpedo 7 and the three hospitality/

food retailers will be solar-assisted.

An example of Wallace Development’s approach is the renovation of Vero House office building, 70 Tennyson Street, described by reporter Marty Sharpe as, “One of the tallest, and ugliest buildings in Napier.”

The ‘ugly’ street facade has been softened, and a feature made of the cross-brace earthquake strengthening.

Commercial tenants are to occupy the ground and first floors, the three upper floors being refigured into five apartments. Here the building code insulation requirements have been far exceeded - floors, ceilings, walls - both to maximise HVAC efficiency, and provide acoustic barriers between tenancies.

Wallace Development Company’s commitment to energy efficient and sustainable building is reinforced by a subsidiary company, Integrated Energy.

Integrated Energy

What began in-house for Wallace, as a way of streamlining electricity accounts for their tenants, has grown considerably since inception in 2017.

Business development manager Keryn Trollope, explains: “By grouping tenancies together we realised we could negotiate better rates with electricity providers by being a collective.”

Providing energy solutions to a wider market was a first step, and, says Keryn,



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Marcus Hill and Sol Atkinson with builder Sean Skeet.

“We’ve moved into sustainability because many business have sustainability in their KPI’s (Key Performance Indicators) and, for landlords and property owners, we know getting long-term good quality tenants is key.”

Solar power generation is now a key component of the business. “The point of solar is to reduce the draw from the grid. It particularly suits commercial buildings, being occupied during the day.” As an example, Keryn cites the 2,900 square metre Tech Collective in Ahuriri, which generates around 30kW of electricity.

A current install is for Giant Brewing Company in Havelock North. The system size is 8kW, producing 20,000kW a year, which on estimated grid consumption of 100,000kW, achieves 20% reduction from mains supply.

Battery storage of solar generated electricity is a feature Keryn sees as having great potential, but “the technology is still evolving” and “prices need to drop” for cost effectiveness.

“But in the future,” Keryn says, “properties with suitable roofs for solar could charge batteries which could be taken off-site. So, if you’re a construction firm you could use batteries for

“If cement were a country it would be the third highest polluter in the world.”

SHAUN THOMPSON-GRAY, HDT

temporary supply on building sites, or you could take one home to charge the electric car, or take it to the bach.”

The Future

The challenge for the building industry to be carbon neutral by 2050 is formidable.

“We need to be building carbon zero now to meet the target,” says architect Shaun Thompson-Gray.

And his firm, HDT, is attempting that with the new \$70 million elective surgery hospital in Hastings.

Shaun is the only accredited Green Star professional in Hawke’s Bay. His clients, Westside Healthcare, have joined the Green Building Council, and enthusiastically support the

achievement of a Green Star rating for the building, a Hawke’s Bay first.

Westside managing director, Colin Hutchison, says, “It was a no-brainer for us. We wanted an environmentally-friendly building, and we wanted to build sustainably for the next generation.”

Shaun Thompson-Gray says, “Green Star is a holistic tool that looks at energy efficiency, the quality of materials, and it looks at the environment created for staff.”

Wellbeing of those who use the building, although not a zero carbon factor, is taken into consideration. “Part of Green Star assessment is the environment you’re creating, which includes views to the outside.”

The vista will be over extensive plantings of native species, prioritising plants indigenous to Heretaunga. Rainwater from the roof is captured to provide trickle irrigation to the gardens.

The use of concrete in the foundations and floor is of concern to Shaun. “If cement were a country it would be the third highest polluter in the world.” Portland cement processing requires calcinating limestone at high temperatures, using massive energy input, leading to the release of waste carbon dioxide. (CaCO₃ + heat ~ CaO + CO₂)

He thinks we can readily stop using concrete in house building, “but with commercial it’s harder, and until we come up with an alternative, there’s no choice.” Research and development of environmentally friendly cements is intense, including using bacteria to grow bricks. None have yet achieved large-scale commercial use, and with 98% world production being Portland, the road is steep.

The building industry is not alone in having to make critical changes if we are to reach the Paris Agreement of zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Fortunately, the industry is peopled with drivers of change across all disciplines, as well as clients, who are determined to make a difference.

Shaun Thompson-Gray finishes the interview by referencing David Attenborough’s documentary, *A Life On Our Planet*.

“When he was born 93 years ago, 66% of the planet’s biodiversity (wilderness) was left. Now it’s half of that.” And over the same period carbon emissions have risen from 280 to 415 parts per million, and still climbing each year.

“We all have to own this problem,” he says.



Peter Crawshaw, Qpod sales manager.

Qpod

Designed by Stephen Crawshaw, and manufactured by a robotic machine in his company's factory in Hastings, the Qpod flooring system consists of large moulded plastic pods, which en-mass, along with steel mesh and concrete, form the subfloor foundation structure.

Production began in 2018, and Peter Crawshaw, Qpod sales manager, says, "We started slowly, making sure of our processes ... Current production per day, from one machine, is enough for two houses."

Business is brisk, and the company is considering investing in another machine.

In addition to forming high thermal-mass insulant value, the pods themselves are moulded from 100% recycled plastic, which are 100% recyclable.

The pods can be stacked like chairs on the back of a ute, which although a minor environmental consideration, does cut down on truck deliveries of bulky conventional polystyrene pods.



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Environmental Impact Assessment

Assessment of the environmental impact of buildings is the preserve of the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC), a non-profit organisation with membership of over 500 businesses from all aspects of the construction and property industry.

Their aim is to “accelerate the development and adoption of market-based green building practices.” This is achieved by comprehensive assessment criteria applied to buildings, both residential and commercial.

Residential: Homestar (6 -10 stars)

To rate a home’s performance and environmental impact, Homestar awards points across several categories: resource efficiency, energy, comfort, water, waste, materials, site, and home management.

Typical new houses built to minimum Building Code standard achieve 3-4 Homestar. Whereas a 6 Homestar home will use significantly less energy and water, and will have less moisture or condensation issues, making it healthier to live in and more affordable to run. 10 Homestar is international best practice.

Feature	Building Code	6 Homestar
Ceiling insulation	R 2.9 - 3.3	R 3.6
Wall insulation	R 1.9 - 2.0	R 2.8
Concrete slab	Raft/pod R 1.3	Raft/pod/slab edge R 2.2
Windows	Standard double glazed R 0.26	Thermally broken double glazed R 0.31w
Ventilation	Opening window area 5% of floor area	Dedicated extraction in kitchen and bathrooms
Water efficiency	Not required	WELS 3 star shower WELS 3 star toilet WELS 4 star taps
Construction waste management	Not required	Waste management plan in place

Commercial: Green Star (0 - 6 stars)

To rate a commercial building’s overall environmental impact, Green Star rating tools award points across nine categories: energy, water, materials, indoor environment quality, transport, land use and ecology, management, emissions, and innovation.

Offices: NABERSNZ (0 - 6 stars)

NABERS is an Australian rating system, adopted here in 2013, which solely measures and rates the energy performance of office buildings. Unlike Green Star, which is applied at

the design and construction stage, NABERSNZ is used once buildings are occupied and operating for a year or more. ●



Unison is pleased to sponsor robust examination of energy issues in Hawke’s Bay. This reporting is prepared by BayBuzz. Any editorial views expressed are those of the BayBuzz team and do not reflect the views of Unison.

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Home care deserves more respect

Story by Abby Beswick

Napier-based carer Tamara Baddeley and I are due to speak at 1.45pm. At 1.38pm she texts: ‘Hi Abby. I’ve just got home. Can you give me 10 minutes to get some lunch?’

A home and community support worker for 21 years, Baddeley works on average 24 hours a week, for \$23 per hour. She isn’t rostered for breaks, so is forced to grab a bite to eat while driving between clients or, like today, wait until she gets home.

Today, her first client was at 8am – a 37-year-old woman who suffered a traumatic brain injury at birth, resulting in physical and intellectual disabilities. Baddeley’s allocated visit time is one hour and 15 minutes, during which she gave the woman a bed bath (time restrictions mean clients usually only have a shower three times a week, with a bed bath on alternate days), brushed her teeth, used a sling and hoist to get her into an electric wheelchair, tidied the bedroom, put the washing out, put the rubbish out, made a cup of tea, prepared lunch, put the wheelchair into the car, transferred the woman into the car, drove her to her day programme and returned her car home.

Baddeley carried out similar tasks for her next two clients: a lady in her mid 60s who is recovering from a stroke and a man in his late 60s who is a paraplegic due to a car accident several years ago. She’ll see one further client later in the day.

As a carer, Baddeley and her colleagues are the front-line workers who ensure some of our most vulnerable members of society are happy,

Photos by Florence Charvin

Time restrictions mean carers now spend less time with clients, some employers refuse to roster travel time between clients or breaks for carers, and work hours aren’t guaranteed, to allow employers the flexibility to cut workers’ hours as clients come and go.

comfortable and well looked after. These workers are essential to the more than 2,600 senior clients in the region who they care for, enabling them to remain independent and at home as long as possible, relieving pressure on our hospitals and saving millions on aged-care costs.

As we face the impact of an older population, the role of carers has become increasingly valuable. Yet they remain among our most undervalued workers in the country.

A daily challenge

New Zealand Health Group, which owns Geneva Healthcare and HealthCare NZ, is the country’s largest provider of home and community support services. Along with other private providers and not-for-profit organisations, they employ carers like Baddeley to look after our elderly citizens.

Despite spending more than two decades in the industry, little has changed, says Baddeley. She describes a sector stuck in a time warp of poor pay, hours and conditions at the expense of carers and clients – “the very people they’re supposed to support”.

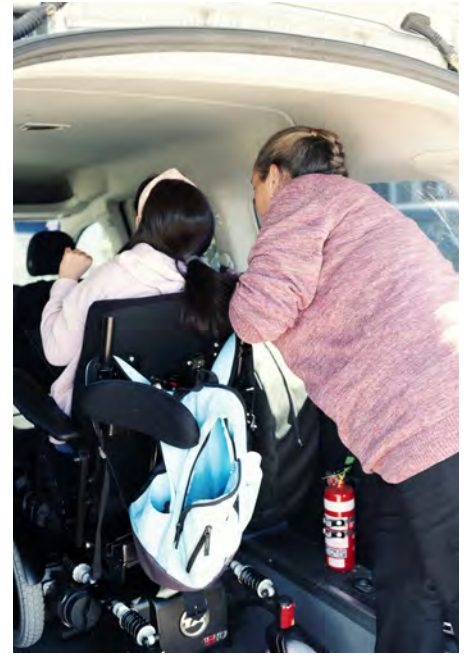
Every day it’s a struggle to perform the required duties for her clients in the time allocated. In addition to household work, she helps clients

with personal tasks like showering and dressing. It’s not something you can rush, says Baddeley. You need to take time to get to know a client, make sure they feel comfortable and learn to do things their way. Baddeley encourages her clients and gives them the confidence to do small tasks for themselves, while she fills in the gaps. It’s constant, demanding work that requires physical strength, adaptability and a gentle touch as she navigates the most intimate personal care.

The main private care providers for home support are Geneva, Health Care of New Zealand and Access Community Health (Green Cross). Along with some other medium size private providers and a number of not for profit organisations, they employ workers like Baddeley to care for our elderly citizens.

As client demand has grown, Baddeley has watched care services that were already under pressure become dangerously overstretched. Time restrictions mean carers now spend less time with clients, some employers refuse to roster travel time between clients or breaks for carers, and work hours aren’t guaranteed, to allow employers the flexibility to cut workers’ hours as clients come and go.

“We’re not prepared for the amount



of care that we're going to need in the future because we can hardly cope with the level of need in the community now," says Baddeley. If nothing changes, clients simply won't get the care or carers will stay overtime to give them what they need and not get paid for it, she warns.

Covid brought an additional set of challenges. During lockdown Baddeley worked seven weeks without a day off to ensure clients' needs were met and visitors to their homes were kept to a minimum. To keep her and her clients safe, between each visit she went home, showered and changed. There was also a lack of PPE available through employers, so Baddeley sourced her own and sent it to work-mates who needed it.

There's another part of the job that's not often talked about - dealing with the death of clients. During two of her worst years, Baddeley lost 16 clients and throughout her career, she's lost more than 50.

At times the emotional and financial stress has been overwhelming, says Baddeley, who admits being close to burnout more than once. "I haven't chucked it in yet. I've been tempted a few times."

"It's women's work"

To be frank, Baddeley and her colleagues do the work many of us wouldn't want to do, yet we know our parents or ourselves, could one day desperately need her care. Why then have carers remained at the bottom of the pay scale, unappreciated and unrewarded for their work?

That's simple, says Baddeley. "It's women's work. It's what women do. They do it at home - they look after the kids, they look after the husband, they look after the in-laws or their parents and their grandparents. They've always done it; it's part of their DNA. So they don't need to be paid for it and if they are, let's give them the bare minimum. That's what it has always been."

So why stay? "I love the variety of people I get to meet and support, and the fact that I'm always learning from them. I get to be a part of their life for however long the time is that I'm with them."

"You build up relationships with these people. We're not supposed to, but we're not robots. You cannot go into someone's house and undress them, shower them, dry them and redress them and not develop some sort of a mutual respect and friendship."

A win, but it's not enough

Carers have been fighting for change for years. Alongside her role as a carer, Baddeley is convenor of the community support services council in NZ trade union, E tū, which represents workers in residential and community aged care, disability, and mental health. Baddeley and a team of representatives spent five years campaigning for equal pay for workers in carer roles, arguing that their low rates of pay were the result of systemic gender-based pay discrimination.

On 18 April 2017 more than 50,000 workers in the sector celebrated victory, with the Care and Support Workers (Pay Equity) Settlement

Agreement. This resulted in pay increases of up to 45% for care and support workers, who can currently earn up to \$25.50 per hour, at the highest pay rate (Level 4 qualification). This top rate will peak at \$27 per hour next year, the final year of the settlement.

The pay settlement is great, but there are other significant issues in the industry that need addressing, says E tū director of health, Sam Jones. Top of the list are ensuring employers stick to their commitment under the legislation to put people through training, particularly at the higher levels, and provide them with enough hours to have income security. Currently they're falling short on both fronts, he says.

"What we do see is employers really reluctant to train people in Level 4 in particular and that's because people will end up on \$25.50 at the moment, and \$27 from next July." Employers aren't rewarded for having a workforce trained to the highest level, says Jones. "The funding model incentivises these employers to not train everyone up to that level and that's the opposite of what the Government wanted to achieve when they set it up."

Work hours are also going in the wrong direction, says Jones. In-home carers are typically guaranteed 15-18 hours a week. There aren't enough carers, yet employers don't guarantee workers anywhere near the hours they deliver, says Jones. In fact, statistics show as little as 20% of the total hours delivered are guaranteed to workers. The main reason for this is despite consistent volumes of work, providers pass the risk of losing clients onto



the workers, to avoid paying them if they don't have replacement hours available.

Adding to this is a system set up to provide clients with care during two main blocks of time – morning and night. While some care needs to be done at set times, such as medication and health needs, other tasks like domestic duties could be done at other times. However, extra travel time and costs remain a barrier. “At every level, not enough has been done to spread some of this work across the day to facilitate decent jobs with enough hours”, says Jones. The fragmented nature of funding, split between the Ministry of Health, DHBs and ACC and multitude of private providers has compounded the issue, leaving workers in a constant state of financial uncertainty.

“The stress that it adds to your life, every week, hoping you'll get rostered for enough hours is unbearable. What it does is it stops young people coming into the industry and it drives people out of the industry. It's diabolical,” says Jones.

The union is also campaigning for paid travel time between clients as this is currently often not rostered, even when client visits are back-to-back, making it impossible for workers to meet their schedule.

Home care is meant to be the Government's answer to supporting our ageing population in an affordable way, but the sector isn't being treated in a way that makes it a viable answer, says Jones.

Care on Call, which employs more than 90 carers in Hawke's Bay, refutes

the claims. Spokesperson Kristina Fleming says the company rosters and pays staff for travel time and breaks, and supports them to upskill. Patterns of work are reviewed every few months and guaranteed hours vary between carers, she says. “It's a dynamic environment and demand for services moves around a lot.”

New Zealand Health Group chief executive Josephine Gagan also says guaranteed hours vary between staff depending on their role, training, availability and client needs. Workers are provided training, upskilling and professional development opportunities. Break and travel times are managed as part of rostering, she says. “We work closely with staff and the unions regarding the terms of employment and pay.”

Our ageing population

Like everywhere in New Zealand, the population of Hawke's Bay is ageing. There are 30,390 people aged 65 or older in the region, according to Statistics NZ. Ten years ago the figure was 20,490. The bottom line is, this growing number of elderly citizens is putting increasing pressure on an already stretched health system.

A recent DHB board report on Ageing Well in Hawke's Bay highlighted a number of risks impacting our ageing population. These include the need to attract and retain a skilled workforce, limited capacity with growing demand, service gaps and an increase in complex cases.

As the number of seniors goes up, so does the cost of care. There are

three funding streams for senior home care: the Ministry of Health, ACC and the District Health Board. In the 2019/20 year, Hawke's Bay DHB spent \$19,810,278 (excluding GST) on home support. Compare that to the two previous years, 2018/2019 and 2017/2018, when it spent \$18,321,095 and \$16,956,900 respectively. The money is used to provide bulk funding to private companies that employ carers and community organisations that fund home care support services.

In response to our ageing population, the DHB is following guidelines set out in the national Healthy Ageing Strategy – a 10-year plan aimed at improving the health of older people. As part of this the DHB is undertaking a number of strategic approaches, underpinned by increased home care and community support. This is aimed at keeping people well at home and able to return home safely from hospital as soon as possible.

Making inroads

In spite of an often-bleak picture, there are also bright spots. Community organisations are a huge source of care, support and social connection for our senior citizens.

Enliven, run by Presbyterian Support East Coast, offers intensive home support and day programmes. These are funded by the HBDHB, Ministry of Health and ACC and provide physical, mental and social wellbeing to elderly people. Home support clients receive specialised care from a team of experts that maximises their independence and helps them achieve their goals,



Age Concern seniors afternoon tea. Photo supplied.

with an overall aim of keeping people safely at home along as possible.

Currently, 250 local seniors use the service and demand is increasing, says Presbyterian Support East Coast social services general manager, Mary Wills. Their services are continually evolving to meet changing needs. One such area is increased diversity of older people. “In the next 20 years we’d expect to see more Māori and Pasifika people in that older age group, so our services need to respond to that,” says Wills.

Charitable organisation, Age Concern, is dedicated solely to supporting people over 65 and provides a range of government and non-government funded services. These include, intervention services for people who need social support or community care, ageing well services to keep people healthy and active, and social connection.

Last year they supported 8,000 Hawke’s Bay members, and Covid has triggered increased demand particularly due to social isolation, says Age Concern Havelock North manager Carol Winters. Their services are a lifeline, says Winters. For some elderly people, their carer will be the only person they see. After 10 years in the organisation, she’s watched the level of need for aged care and our response as a society, change dramatically. Carers play a “hugely valuable” role, says Winters.

In December last year, Hawke’s Bay District Health Board launched home support service Hoki ki te Kāinga. Targeted at older people, the service supports medically stable hospital patients who prefer to be at home,

to return earlier than they otherwise would. The short-term intensive programme funded by ACC and the DHB helps clients regain their wellbeing and physical abilities, with therapist visits up to four times a day to help with things like exercise, dressing, showering and cooking meals.

Hoki ki te Kāinga team leader Amy Williamson says the aim of the service is to get people back to being as independent as possible and building their confidence so they can continue to live in their own home as long as they want to. Māori and Pasifika clients have particularly responded to the service positively as whānau support is such a strong part of their wellbeing.

Being at home surrounded by loved ones rather than isolated in a hospital plays a significant role in their rehabilitation, says Williamson. “People have been incredibly positive about the service. It’s all about making it work for the person and what they want,” says Williamson. There’s been huge demand for the service, which has supported 150 people to-date, and they’re already looking at ways to increase the number of people they can support.

What needs to change?

In spite of best efforts, we’re in no way prepared to meet the growing need for senior care as we head towards the bell curve of an older population. The demand it is already putting on our health system, front-line care staff and families is unsustainable.

Private care employers say they’re regularly meeting with funding agencies and reviewing their services to

clients as part of future planning, but it’s not enough.

“We’ve got more older people needing help, we’ve got no more money and we’ve got the services needing to go around,” says Winters. As a result, the allocated amount of time a carer spends with a client has to be shortened. She’s seeing carer fatigue “big time” – both in paid carers and family members, often elderly themselves, who take on a carer role. “It’s unbelievable and none of this is going to get any better,” she says.

Jones advocates for better treatment of carers across the sector, including guaranteed hours, delivery of training, and support for workers. He would also like to see carers employed directly by district health boards, rather than private companies. This would ensure workers are treated fairly and allow our trained care workforce to be utilised in the best possible way, particularly during situations like a pandemic, he says.

The pay equity legislation expires in June 2022, when the union will be re-engaging with the Government. Slipping back to the minimum wage is not an acceptable outcome, says Jones. They will continue to fight for workers’ rights and take individual employers to the Employment Relations Authority who fail to comply with the legislation.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, attitudes towards carers need to change. If there was a greater level of respect from managers, employers and the community, everything else will follow, says Baddeley. “How can looking after someone not be considered a real job?” ●

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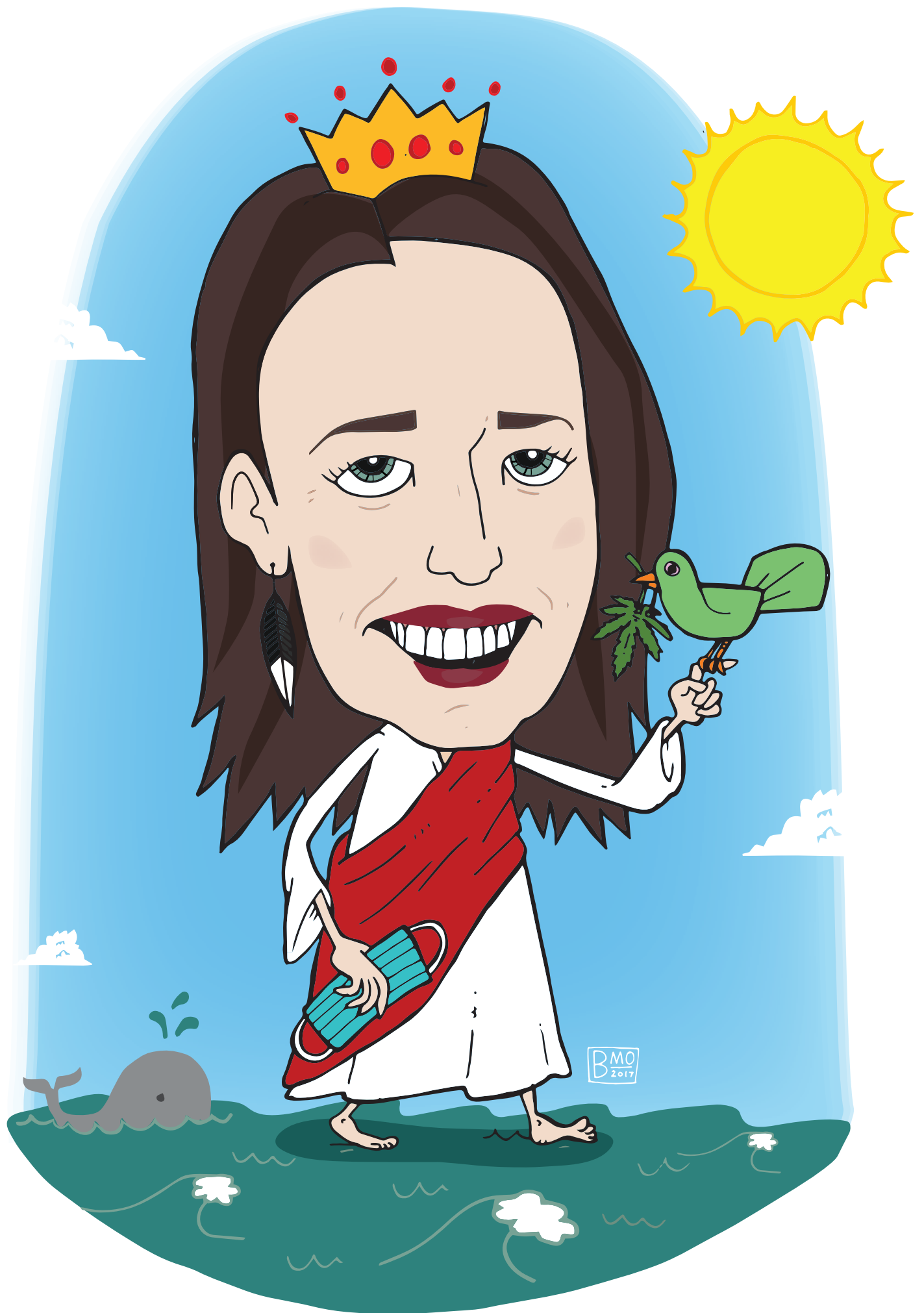
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Climate Change ... Day of reckoning is here

So, now the Labour Party and Jacinda Ardern have a mandate. But a mandate for what?

Political update by Tom Belford

Truly progressive reform in poverty and income inequality, health care, farming practices, global warming mitigation?

Or cautious clinging to the centre, putting some lip gloss on safe, incremental ideas that ultimately won't achieve the transformations required in these critical areas. A determined effort to serve up a politically inoffensive omelet when the severity of the challenges require eggs to be broken.

Selling big ideas is a forte of our Prime Minister, who above all is a master communicator. If anyone can lead and rally the public behind challenge, she can ... if she has the will.

But let's just examine one of these areas, which gives reason for apprehension - global warming.

A chorus of political pundits - from journalist Rod Oram to former PM Jim Bolger to former Green Party leader Russel Norman to the Newsroom team of Jonathan Milne and Marc Daalder - have voiced concern over Labour's timidity on climate change.

Over the past three years, the Ardern Government has been frozen in place after proclaiming addressing climate change as "our generation's nuclear-free moment". Meantime, our greenhouse gas emissions have steadily increased, with net emissions almost doubling since 1990.

Says Bolger: "We'll eventually, soon, get a vaccine for the virus. But there's no vaccine for climate change. That requires hard, difficult and often unpopular policy decisions. We have to see whether the new government will

want to face up to that."

It has been easy - and not without reason - to blame the Government's cautiousness on climate on NZ First's opposition. But that excuse is gone.

And at the same time, the most passionate and articulate champion of action, Green Party co-leader James Shaw, might also be gone from his post as Climate Change Minister by the time you read this. If he is not, there's some hope.

Where's the action?

On climate, the Government will need to first formulate its domestic policy - which includes key decisions about energy, transportation and farming - and then as a global citizen reassess the binding commitment it must make to the international community through the so-called COP26 process.

The Climate Change Commission established by the Zero Carbon Act will soon propose three five-year emissions budgets, covering the periods 2022-25, 2026-30 and 2031-35. These budgets, considered to be 'apolitical', can be ignored or revised by the Government, which must announce its plans by year's end.

Key to these budgets is allocating limits across the various sectors of the economy. And that's where the rubber meets the road.

With regard to energy and transportation, perhaps the bellwether issue is dealing with cars.

Road transportation accounts for 40% of all CO2 emissions from burning fossil fuels in NZ, up 93% since 1990.

Yet earlier this year, the Government infamously abandoned its plan to enact NZ's first-ever fuel efficiency standards for automobiles in the face of opposition from partner NZ First. This after acknowledging that "the vehicles supplied to New Zealand are among the most fuel inefficient and polluting of any OECD country".

'Clean green' New Zealand is the only OECD country to not have such standards and even those proposed were at the lenient end of the spectrum.

Meantime, Boris Johnson has announced a five-year speed-up of the UK's elimination of new petrol and diesel cars, including hybrids - none are to be sold in the UK after 2030.

Other countries that have announced plans to ban petrol and diesel cars in the future (by either 2030 or 2040) include Denmark, France, Ireland, Netherlands, Israel, Sweden, and Iceland, with Norway (where the EV market share is already expected to be 55% this year) setting the pace at 2025.

The other bellwether for signalling the Government's ambition (or not) for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions will be its treatment of farming. NZ's ag sector (i.e, its ruminant animals) produces the preponderance of our emissions.

Tethered to NZ First, the Government has been constrained in its approach to on-farm emissions. Targets have been set, with industry given three years to sort out how those might be met. The Neanderthal wing of NZ farming, led by Federated Farmers and beloved to the National Party, has whinged and yelped about its need to play a part in

the nation's climate response.

Fortunately, other industry voices have been more forthcoming regarding the willingness and capability of the ag sector to meet the challenge.

Fonterra, sensitive to overseas markets, has been providing more than 10,000 of its suppliers with individual farm reports measuring their on-farm emissions, with an expectation they will now plan to mitigate them.

Beef+Lamb New Zealand has been looking carefully at on-farm carbon sequestration and recently released research indicating that woody vegetation on NZ sheep and beef farms is offsetting between 63% to 118% of their on-farm agricultural emissions, with the average farm offsetting about 90%.

If that's the case, one can ask ... what's all the fuss about?

Progressive NZ farmers are already moving ahead, with a surge of interest in 'regenerative farming' practices that increase the carbon retention capacity of soils. The Green Party proposes a \$297 million fund to help farmers transition to regen practices. By comparison, Labour weakly - almost apologetically - announced \$50 million to help farmers prepare their farm environmental plans, with vague rhetoric indicating these might expand to include emissions mitigation.

So, cars and cows will determine how serious the Labour Government will be regarding climate change.

Global requirement

Reflecting NZ's current international obligation under the Paris Accord, The Zero Carbon Act commits New Zealand to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (besides agricultural methane) to net zero by 2050 and to severely reducing agricultural methane emissions as well. Those reductions must be carried out in a manner consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Our current commitment limits NZ to 601 million tonnes of emissions over the decade to 2030. However, the Ministry for the Environment now says that a limit of no more than 516 million tonnes would be required to meet the 1.5°C requirement. And we are presently at 707 million tonnes of CO₂e.

No one - policymakers or scientists treats the 1.5°C target as achievable at this point. To meet the Paris target and limit warming to 1.5°C, the world needs to achieve cuts of 7.6% year-on-year for the next decade, and effectively reach zero emissions by 2050. Commitments

Labour went 'hard and early' on Covid and was rewarded ... it missed the 'early' boat on climate, but it can still go hard.

made by all nations would need to be three times more ambitious to limit warming to even 2 degrees.

The Government will need to present its new targets at the next climate summit meeting - COP-26 - now scheduled for November 2021 in Glasgow. Will New Zealand be a leader on climate? Verdict out.

Meanwhile, in Hawke's Bay

According to the government's official calculations of greenhouse gas emissions over the 2007-2018 window, Hawke's Bay, which at 3.1 kilotonnes of CO₂e accounts for only 4% of NZ's total GHG emissions, reduced our emissions by 7.1%.

In Hawke's Bay, agriculture accounted for 65.5% of our GHG emissions, while methane accounted for 61.9% of our total emissions. So, our challenge is ruminant animals, but at least these farm emissions have decreased slightly.

And before we blame it all on the cows, note that household emissions in Hawke's Bay rose 9.4% over this period. That's us humans!

Locally, the Regional Council is the torchbearer for action on climate change. The territorial authorities have too many other problems to deal with, like decrepit water infrastructure, to worry much about global warming, so they've happily left that issue to HBRC.

The previous Regional Council boldly resolved to ban oil and gas production in Hawke's Bay, at a time when this seemed a real threat and before Government. And later declared a 'climate emergency'.

But since then, apart from the major project to address coastal erosion and inundation as a result of global warming (i.e., sea rise and more severe weather events), HBRC attention has shifted elsewhere - there was Port future-proofing to finance and myriad water quality issues to address.

And then there's 'water security' - originally, 'water allocation', or which

user group gets first dibs on limited water while the freshwater ecosystems suck eggs? Now re-packaged as a noble and urgent response to climate change. The real issue in dry times is soil resilience, which requires improving water retention and healthy root systems, in turn a matter of wiser farming practices, not dams. But I digress.

The point here is that the Regional Council is presently rudderless when it comes to climate change. Staff papers emerge periodically reporting on Council's in-house travel savings and energy efficiencies, and plans to protect the Heretaunga Plains from severe weather flooding. All well and good, but hardly sounding like a war-status response to a 'climate emergency'.

A proposal by Councillor Barker to install a 'climate unit' at HBRC to spearhead a more energetic approach floundered, in part because of Covid-induced budgetary constraint, in part because regional councillors didn't want to unilaterally fund a unit that would benefit other non-paying councils, and in part because no one really had the energy.

At present, the compromise is for HBRC to conduct a public education campaign (launched 26 October) aimed at establishing that the climate issue is 'for real' and informing and engaging the public around actions they can take to help address the challenge.

To test the public appetite for the Regional Council making a greater investment in the issue, a substantial public survey has been undertaken. And this will be followed by more formal eliciting of ratepayer views during the long-term planning process early next year. Creation of a 'climate ambassador' position will be mooted.

The survey results would seem to support more vigorous leadership by HBRC on the climate issue. *BayBuzz* was able to examine a more detailed breakdown of views by two ends of the age spectrum - those under age 40 versus those age 65+ - and indeed some interesting differences emerge. Here are some of the highlights.

Across generations, about six in ten respondents are concerned about the impact of climate change in our region. Fewer than two in ten are "not concerned".

However, for the younger cohort, climate change is deemed more important and more attributed to human activities (versus natural processes), with greater concern about its impact on their future quality of life.

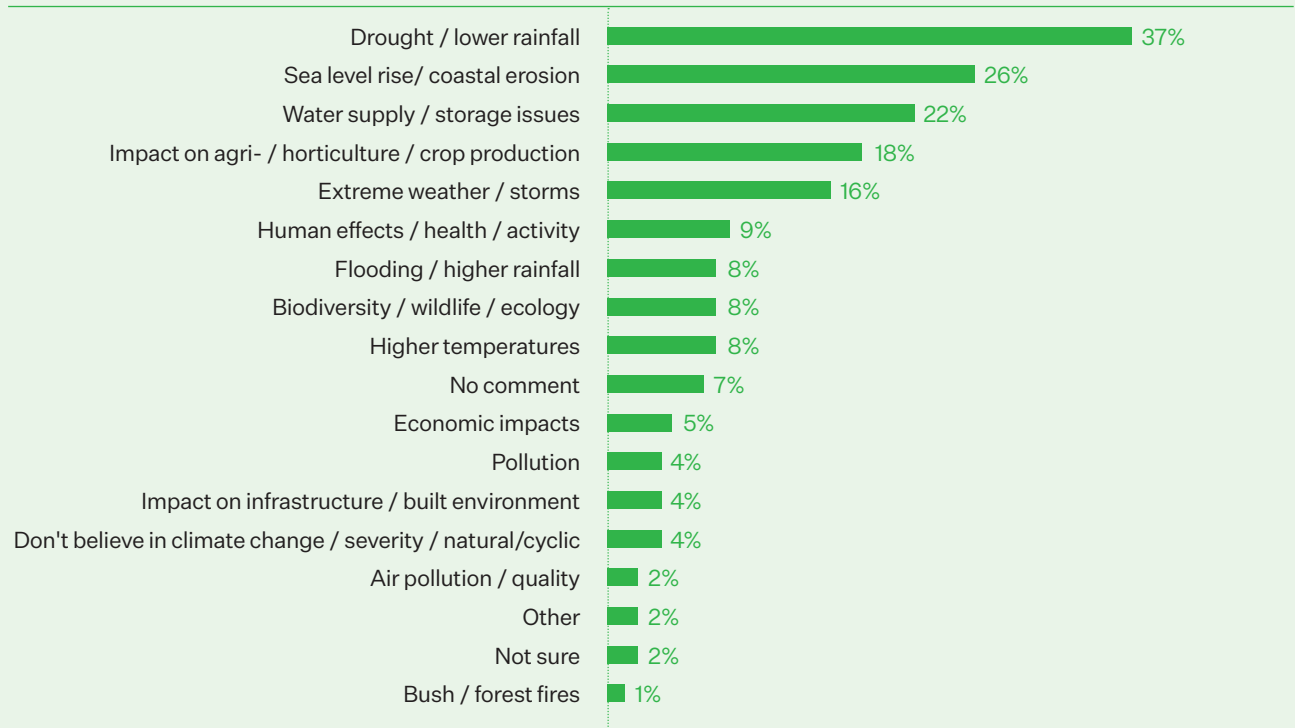
In response to the open-ended questions:
“What would you say are the most important challenges facing New Zealand in the next 20 years?”

	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
Climate change	44%	20%
Economy / debt / employment	32%	22%
Drinking water quality / issues	26%	41%

“How concerned are you about the impact climate change may have on your quality of life?”

	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
Not concerned	17%	33%
In the middle	23%	25%
Concerned	60%	43%

Here’s what all respondents believe the impacts of climate change will be in Hawke’s Bay:



So, what to do?

Those under-40 are more likely to be “a lot to a great deal” personally involved in activities or behaviors to reduce their impact on the environment than those 65+ (47% versus 36%).

What are those activities?

List of environment-related activities taken in the past 12 months	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
Worked/volunteered for an environmental organisation/club/committee/trust	47%	23%
Regularly walked/cycled to reduce car travel	55%	61%
Regularly used public transport to reduce car travel	16%	12%
Minimised your waste by recycling regularly	97%	96%
Minimised your waste by using a compost or similar system	78%	79%
Regularly used reusable products instead of plastic	92%	92%
Installed household products to save energy	84%	90%
Taken measures to conserve water at home	67%	77%
Taken measures to reduce home energy use	70%	79%
Considered energy use or greenhouse gas emissions when making major purchasing decisions	63%	58%
Avoided or reduced eating meat	48%	44%
Avoided or reduced eating dairy products	31%	22%
Regularly used biodegradable/eco-friendly household products	77%	80%

Hawke’s Bay farmers ... note the dietary changes!

And why do people get involved in these activities?

Top five named driving forces	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
For future generations / children & grandchildren	36%	28%
Care / respect for nature / environment	29%	17%
It's the right thing to do / being responsible / good citizen	21%	10%
Awareness of / concern for pollution / waste	13%	20%
Awareness of environmental / climate issues / effects	21%	8%

And finally, to the question of the Regional Council's role in all this ...

One can see why our territorial councils would be just as happy to wash their hands of the matter!

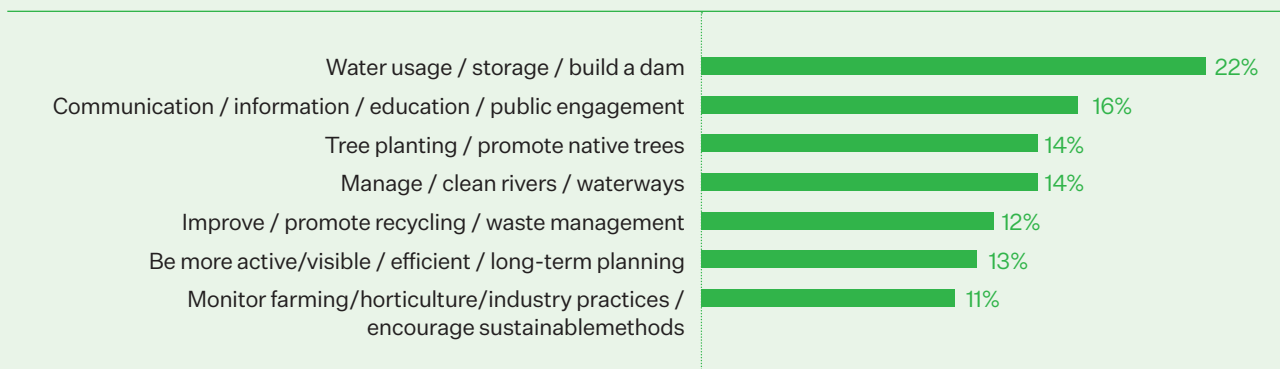
The survey asked: "When you think about responsibility for actions on climate change in Hawke's Bay, which main organisation do you think of?"

Main organisation responsible for actions on climate change in Hawke's Bay	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
Hawke's Bay Regional Council	41%	44%
Ministry of the Environment	22%	14%
Don't know	11%	10%
District or City Council	8%	8%
Environmental Protection Authority	7%	4%
Department of Conservation	6%	7%
Other	5%	13%

As the following chart indicates, it's the younger cohort that doesn't believe the Regional Council is doing enough to prevent and reduce the impact of climate change.

How much do you agree or disagree that Hawke's Bay Regional Council is doing enough to prevent and reduce the impact of climate change?	Aged under 40	Aged 65+
Disagree	41%	22%
Generally unsure	34%	34%
Agree	25%	44%

And finally, asked (open-ended) what HBRC should be doing to address the impacts of climate change in Hawke's Bay, these were the actions suggested by 10% or more:



Plenty there to keep the Regional Council busy. But until next year's public consultation on the HBRC's next long-term plan, the verdict awaits as to how much ratepayers are willing to pay to see these activities given priority and undertaken.

Given that schedule, we should expect to see the new Government move first on the climate issue, given the legislated timetables outlined earlier.

What to watch for? The formal role, if any, of James Shaw and the Green Party. Government response to the Climate Commission's emissions budgets. Government action on cars. Government action on farm emissions.

As one pundit noted, Labour went 'hard and early' on Covid and was politically rewarded ... it missed the 'early' boat on climate, but it can still go hard.

Stay tuned! 🟢

UNISON ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP SPARKS BRIGHT FUTURE FOR YOUNG LOCALS



► *Unison Graduate Engineer, David Bredda – who joined the company through its Engineering Scholarship programme – in the Unison Control Room.*

Unison Networks is delighted to be offering an Engineering Scholarship to the value of \$10,000 per year of study to one lucky student.

Offered biennially, the scholarship is open to New Zealand students who are intending to, or currently studying a Bachelor of Engineering, majoring in either Electrical or Mechatronics Engineering.

In addition to the financial contribution, Unison offers the student vacation work and may offer permanent employment, subject to satisfactory completion of the relevant degree and available positions.

General Manager, Networks and Operations, Jaun Park says the aim of the Scholarship programme is to attract and develop the next generation of engineers to support Unison's vision of leading a sustainable energy future.

"Our ability to deliver a sustainable network for future generations relies on attracting and retaining talented employees with a passion for innovation.

"The excellent technical skills and innovative mindset of previous scholarship recipients gives us confidence that the future of our network is in good hands, which ultimately supports our purpose of enabling communities to prosper."

Graduate Engineer, David Bredda, is one of seven current employees who joined Unison through its Engineering Scholarship programme. Receiving the scholarship in 2017 while studying Mechatronics Engineering at the University of Canterbury, he is now putting his theory into practice, working behind the scenes in Unison's Control Room.

"Electricity distribution is an exciting industry and being involved in the fast-paced and dynamic environment that keeps Unison's network running

is a rewarding experience. We use real-time data to assist our field crews to restore power to customers as quickly as possible when there's a fault on our network, then analyse these faults to determine how the impact can be reduced, or avoided, in the future.

"I've also been lucky enough to participate in site visits and an aerial patrol via helicopter which has given me a deeper understanding of how our network affects the communities we power.

"The company provided me with unrivalled support throughout my studies and has since enabled me to apply and build on my university learnings with real-world engineering experiences. Anyone considering applying for the scholarship should give it a go," says David.

**APPLICATIONS FOR THE UNISON ENGINEERING
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VIA THE WEBSITE: WWW.UNISON.CO.NZ/SCHOLARSHIP**



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Illustration: Israel Smith

Councils engage digitally ... skepticism remains

Story by Andrew Frame

Once upon a time we had the Town Crier - ringing a bell and loudly proclaiming with a "Hear Ye! Hear Ye!" the latest news, announcements, or local bylaws to the townsfolk in the street.

Then along came moveable type, and newspapers with dedicated council reporters kept tabs on local goings-on for a long, long time.

Over the past decade or so, though, the big, traditional mainstream media networks across New Zealand and the world cut back their regional resources to protect corporate profits and focus on main centre happenings and central government decisions.

In places like Hawke's Bay it's meant less local news, or less depth to that news. Councils' communications departments took up a fair bit of the slack with more press releases covering council work or decisions, but they and the remaining local media often copped flack for these press releases being merely reprinted verbatim without discernment or investigation.

Digital revolution

To say there has been a "Digital Revolution" in media and communications of late is a massive understatement. You just have to look at the fortunes, or misfortunes, of traditional mainstream media outlets to see that the trade winds are blowing away from print formats and strongly in the direction of digital media.

With mainstream media seemingly abandoning much of regional New Zealand, provincials are using a bit of that legendary Kiwi ingenuity to create their own local hubs of news on social

media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

Local councils have upped their game, similarly moving more of their communications online with Facebook pages, online promotional videos, graphics and photos, and live streaming council meetings, events and updates featuring staff and councillors.

Moving to a far more direct and interactive form of contact with their residents and ratepayers on social media does have its pluses and minuses, though.

On social media you can't just hide behind a press release like you can in a daily newspaper. It is social media, so there will be questions, interactions and even, heavens forbid, criticisms!

BayBuzz reached out to Hawke's Bay's five councils (online, of course) to get their thoughts and experiences on the move to digital communications and all have responded.

Councils' communications evolve

When asked "What different formats do the council use now versus, say, five years ago?" Napier City Council's manager of information services, Duncan Barr said, "We are using the same digital marketing tools as five years ago (Google advertising, Facebook and Instagram), but the way we use them continues to change as the capabilities of the platforms grow. For Facebook and Instagram, Facebook Business Manager allows strategic targeting with various advertising options and engagement tools."

Craig Ogborn, NCC's communications & marketing manager adds,

"NCC's social media and digital marketing are now an essential part of how we communicate with our community, providing a platform where we can directly engage with residents. Previously, this kind of one-to-one communication would have had to happen in person or over the phone. The fluidity of digital marketing means we can optimise and measure all of our campaign activity so that we are reaching residents how, where and when they want.

"We're also producing more videos to make it easier to engage and get our key messages across, and provide tools such as the rates guide, which make it easy for people to see the impact of any budget or policy changes."

Naomi Fergusson, group manager, marketing & communications at Hastings District Council also notes a shift to using far more video. "This is a mixture of both pre-recorded video posts and live streaming. Video generates far more engagement from our followers, helping us to reach a larger audience and attract more followers. Obviously social media has become far more 'congested' over the last five years so it's even more important to create engaging content."

Hawke's Bay Regional Council's marketing communications manager, Drew Broadley, says, "Our digital communications have stepped up considerably - particularly over the last 18 months to two years. Five years ago our digital media probably accounted for about 10-20% of our comms, but will now be nearer 50%. We will need to increase this substantially over the coming 18

months as the shift to digital information increases exponentially.

“We have stepped up Facebook advertising in the last two years and over the last year we have started to use other social media channels, such as Instagram to reach younger markets with lighter content, i.e. Parks and Trails, and also LinkedIn for more thoughtful subject matter. Our website is increasingly becoming a knowledge-base which we update and develop continually based on online feedback.”

Wairoa District Council says the majority of their communications now go through online platforms, mainly their website and Facebook. “Five years ago traditional media formats were used a lot more and online comms would have made up less than half of our reach.”

While digital media has become a communication juggernaut, amongst Hawke’s Bay councils it has yet to make traditional media obsolete. “Social media is our base platform for reaching out,” says Naomi Fergusson, “but for topics that are important in terms of impact (the number of people impacted/cost to rate payers/significance of impact) we always still add in the traditional platforms such as print and radio.” This is a common theme throughout the councils.

Social media distancing

For Napier City Council a successful example of how digital communications can be used was the recent draft Annual Plan 2020/21 consultation.

“Due to COVID-19 all face-to-face meetings were cancelled and replaced with Facebook Live sessions,” says Craig Ogborn.

“Over the three sessions, we reached significantly more people and saw a spike in submissions. Alongside these, a comprehensive digital campaign was established to reach and engage with Napier residents. This included creating content that worked across our website and all social platforms resulting in 45% of NCC’s website traffic coming from its social channels, with clear spikes in traffic that could be related back to the certain posts.”

NCC also encouraged people to use their dedicated community engagement website, www.sayitnapier.co.nz rather than fill in paper forms. “96% of submissions were received online and the Facebook Live sessions reached an average of just under 9,800 viewers each time.

During lockdown, video updates

Thirty percent of (polled) BayBuzz readers say councils “are not much interested” in our feedback and another 37% believe “councils mostly look for confirmation of decisions they’ve already taken”. More digital tools won’t alone cure that skepticism.

from the mayor, accompanied by sign [NZSL translation], were also a great way to reach the community.”

For Central Hawke’s Bay District Council, the Covid lockdown was the beginning of streaming council meetings online. “Although council and committee meetings are now once again held in person, we have continued to live stream these meetings to our Facebook page. Viewership numbers of these meetings fluctuate with anywhere between 300-1,800 people tuning in to watch the live-stream through the course of the meeting,” according to communications and engagement manager Courtney Henderson.

Councils live stream

Some councils’ meetings in recent years attracted criticism for their lack of openness and transparency. But now closed-door gatherings during working hours that may have involved anything from rubber stamps to mystic runes, for all we knew, have had their shutters thrown open. The advent of live video streaming has made it possible for almost anyone anywhere to be able to see local government decisions being made.

HBRC have live-streamed council and committee meetings for about the last six years. They use the services of a video-streaming company. The feedback has been good and ratepayers appreciate the transparency. “We normally get between 200-300 engagements and then have 47 people that follow our dedicated YouTube channel. This gets approximately 20-50 views after each meeting,” says Drew Broadley.

“The Facebook comments on live-streaming posts provide us with some instant feedback about what is being discussed in council meetings. We don’t receive a huge amount of comments unless the subject is a ‘hot topic’”

NCC started consistently streaming

their council meetings just under a year ago - a new feature for the newly elected council. For about a year before that they were occasionally streamed.

Ogborn says the viewership and engagement of streamed NCC council meetings can fluctuate depending on the topics covered, but has been averaging between 1,000-2,000 views at a time, with the highest reaching 8,700 views. “This helps keep our residents informed and provides transparency. It has also been beneficial for the mayor to do video updates following council meetings. These have been really well received, with some reaching up to 10,000 views.”

HDC began to incorporate live-streaming in late 2019, mostly for public Council meetings. “This enables a larger audience to tune in and see what’s going on in council and makes it far more accessible for people following a certain topic. We average about 2,000 views per video and generally the audience is quite a positive one. We don’t expect the majority of our community to mark it in their diaries as a ‘must watch’ but the fact that people can jump in and watch online makes Council more accessible and transparent, and enables residents to ask questions on the live-streaming post.”

Wairoa District Council trialled live streaming on Zoom during the Covid lockdown and say they are working on live streaming some community meetings and workshops on Facebook.

Anti-social media

Like everything else in life some parts of social media aren’t all sunshine and positivity. One can’t expect everything posted online to be welcomed with fanfare, total agreement and conformity. Trolls and toxic environments abound on some platforms.

Council social media pages are no exception, given that decisions made in local government can be quite contentious or not appealing to everyone.

All the councils say they have guidelines for the content of their Facebook pages and have steps in place to deal with breaches or abuse. They also all said it was just part of what comes with having social media platforms that give such broad reach and direct engagement with their communities.

But it isn’t just about online abuse these days, either. Fake news and conspiracy theories have sprouted and spread faster than noxious weeds with social media platforms often acting as the world’s biggest greenhouses aiding

their growth.

Like the others, Wairoa District Council notes, “If someone provides misinformation in a comment on one of our posts we seek to clarify and provide the correct information as this will benefit other members of the community.”

“Sometimes we do have to publish content we know is going to generate some heat on social media, because we believe in transparent conversations. We also see these as opportunities to correct misinformation. However, yes, of course that does generate some passionate comments. As long as people stick to commenting on the issue, we let people have their say, even if it’s not what we want to hear,” summarises HDC’s Naomi Ferguson.

Thumbs up or sad face emoji?

While measures of ‘likes’, clicks and online analytics indicate that Hawke’s Bay councils’ digital diversification is paying dividends, we wondered what those on the other side of the screen, keyboard, or smart-phone thought. So with our own online poll we asked *BayBuzz* readers how these moves online had changed their interactions with their local councils.

Just over half of respondents rate their local or regional council as having improved the level of engagement with its residents/ratepayers. Few see them backsliding.

While over 70% have never attended a council meeting in person, over half have watched a council meeting live via Facebook, or a stored live-streamed meeting.

Virtually everyone (95%) has visited a council website, where heaps of information is in fact available for those who care, with three quarters visiting a council Facebook page.

The same tools are used for speaking up. Almost 70% have entered a submission online, whereas 65% have emailed a councillor or council on an issue.

But while respondents say the digital tools have improved the level of engagement, and many do participate, many nonetheless believe it still hasn’t changed the actual outcome of decision-making.

About three in ten respondents agree councils take feedback somewhat or very seriously. However, 30% say councils “are not much interested” in our feedback and another 37% believe “councils mostly look for confirmation of decisions they’ve already taken”.

More digital tools won’t alone cure that skepticism.

So while online engagement certainly seems robust, there may be a need for such involvement earlier on in the decision-making process and citizens need to see more evidence that councillors and staff actually listen.

Councils cannot operate effectively without public interaction and the more they interact in good faith, the better and more effective results can be!

With more of daily life moving online, so must councils’ engagement with the public. Hawke’s Bay’s authorities certainly seem to have a decent handle on this to date, with perhaps a tweak or two still required.

As council communications continue to evolve, one thing is certain - the revolution will be digitised! ●



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TE KAIHĀPIERA-KOHĀKI O TE MATAU-Ā-MĀUI

The graphic features a central white tree icon. The left side of the tree is set against a lush green landscape with rolling hills and a misty valley. The right side of the tree is set against a dark, cracked, and desolate landscape, representing the consequences of climate change.

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Hawke's Bay may never be a Silicon Valley, but it does face a compelling opportunity to differentiate from other regions by embracing hi-tech innovations that can transform its primary and food production sectors.

This will require overhauling and fine tuning our economic engine with a maturing convergence of smart technologies to optimise production, performance and compliance in a world where 'big data' rules.

Big data is at the heart of the emerging automated economy of robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), machine vision and the Internet of Things (IoT) that tracks, traces and reports on production processes, the lifecycles of animal and land health, and our goods and produce.

Stuart MacIntyre says merging and analysing data from previously-fragmented information silos is at the heart of "the Enterprise 4.0 data-driven digital industrialisation of enterprises".

MacIntyre, a thought leader and business advisor who's recently returned to Hawke's Bay, believes there's huge commercial opportunity for the region to engage with big data and hi-tech innovation.

After 20 years in the telco industry in the UK with British Telecom and heading the mobile strategy team for Singtel Optus in Australia, MacIntyre is living



Stuart MacIntyre describes food and agriculture as “one of the least digitised” sectors.

on the outskirts of Havelock North, eyeing the potential for food and agriculture which he describes as “one of the least digitised” sectors.

He believes we can transform our food and beverage, wine, meat and horticulture industries to become our point of difference in the same way Tauranga is attracting automation and robotics companies to support its kiwi-fruit industry.

Arrow head momentum

MacIntyre envisions a centre of excellence working together to attract people and capital; “an arrow-headed approach to get momentum” rather than a lot of generic attributes.

He says a number of “very smart, cashed-up people” are returning to Hawke’s Bay because of Covid-19, buying property and looking for opportunities to invest which could help set us up for an innovation explosion.

They will, however, need to face

some obvious home truths; the worsening picking and packing labour shortage, the need to attract and retain competent millennial tech talent, whether there’s sufficient support from councils and others for fresh ideas.

Hi-tech covers everything from the smarts embedded in machinery to intelligent manufacturing and production systems, telecoms, networking, software development, software as a service (SaaS), and intellectual property (IP) – the protected ideas behind such innovations.

Much of Hawke’s Bay’s tech innovation and business development has been centred at Ahuriri. The Business Hub on Bridge St has core tenant Business HB alongside council development groups, Callaghan Innovation, the Icehouse and the HB Chamber of Commerce.

Just down the road, Wallace Development’s Tech Collective has a cluster of tech leaders including telco

NOW, global accountancy exemplar Xero, property management mavens Re-Leased, software and web developer WebFox and a host of others.

Similar innovation hubs and shared work spaces for those involved in the gig or contract economy are emerging in Hastings, where the Kiwibank help-desk team are based and in Havelock North, where predictive AI-based customer service analytics company Fingermark is located along with a host of smaller developers.

Hi-tech ecosystem evolving

The most recent attempt to sharpen the tech focus is ‘Hi-tech Hawke’s Bay’, as part of the Matariki Regional Development Strategy, with a vision is to build “a dynamic world class hi-tech ecosystem”.

It has about 150 members from 80 organisations and businesses and an advisory group of 10 tech entrepreneurs, experts, innovators and



A number of “very smart, cashed-up people” are returning to Hawke’s Bay because of Covid-19, looking for opportunities to invest which could help set us up for an innovation explosion.

influencers dedicated to raising the profile of the sector, while attracting new businesses, investors and tech skills.

Dave France who chairs the ‘cluster group’ started with a blank canvas and continues to be surprised at the new business, start-ups and low profile specialists he finds while mapping out the regional eco-system.

He notes a strong focus on “ag and hort tech” and a big underlying trend of embedded technology and sensors

as part of IoT.

For example, sensors might be used to monitor soil moisture to run irrigation more efficiently, taking sap or leaf samples to improve the nutritional balance of trees or collecting information on climate and rainfall. “If you start gathering those variables you can start to build some intelligence.”

Local innovation ranges from moving platforms and robotic arms for harvesting fruit (including vision and colour detection) to robotic grading systems, tray filling, labelling, packing and stacking in the packhouse.

Agritech brings about \$1.5 billion annually to our export economy. In fact the top 20 agritech companies spent \$97.3 million in R&D in 2019, according to the TIN Agritech Insights 2020 report.

The Labour Government poured \$11.4 million into its Agritech Industry Transformation Plan to push for deeper changes, largely driven by our zero carbon target, which will require deeper pockets to comply.

Critical convergence ahead

France believes it’s a critical time for ongoing innovation with a range of technologies coming to maturity. “While some have been in a

standalone environment, now you have big data and AI merging with vision technology starting to build some real capability.”

France agrees the future of the region depends on creating a centre of excellence around what we’re already good at: agriculture, horticulture, viticulture and food production.

To be effective next wave innovations need to drive efficiency, sustainability and increased revenue, while reducing labour needs and costs and generally making life easier for producers to make informed decisions.

EIT is working closely with Hi-Tech HB and continues to adapt its computer science and related courses and expand its efforts to consult with and meet the region’s technology needs.

An integral part of the any future strategy will be the Food Innovation Hub or Food East in Elwood Rd, Hastings which received \$12 million from the Provincial Growth Fund.

It’s due to open in early 2022 hosting academic and research institutions in a bid to innovate in the sector, attract and incubate food, beverage and agritech businesses, and potentially create 500 jobs and add \$100 million to the regional economy over the next 15-years.



AI now mainstream

Artificial intelligence (AI) still sounds sci-fi futuristic, but is in fact mainstream with a growing number of local companies using it, often alongside machine vision and learning and automation and data analytics.

MindHive, based in Havelock North with offices in Auckland and Tokyo, combines AI and machine vision for customised traceability, quality control and process monitoring across industries and in 'operationally intensive' environments. And Quanta AI has partnered with CRIs to access government data on all land parcels in New Zealand using AI data analytics to provide environmental and financial insights to calculate the returns and risks of diversifying, with forestry for example, on under-used land.

Havelock North-based specialist developer MyEnviro uses AI powered analytics in its environmental monitoring which connects all aspects of farm life by aggregating a range of metrics from a sensor eco-system and satellite-enabled mapping.

The desktop software and app can monitor soil health, water quality, emissions, fertiliser application, pasture growth and other changes in the

environment by digitising farm environment plans (FEPS) in real-time.

Good data helps with all manner of production and process forecasting, but perhaps the most difficult of all is the weather and all its permutations.

Local company Metris, with offices around the country, continues to grow its range of services, including alerts for frosts, wind, rain, temperature and other weather events.

Atmospheric scientist Mark Bart purchased the 25-year-old-business in 2017 from founder Howard Staines and has taken it way beyond standard weather prediction, with weather stations and wireless sensors providing text and phone alerts to about 5,000 orchardists.

Metris installs sensors for clients, is working with plant disease models to help forecast spraying programmes, and through APIs (application programming interfaces) allows others to plug their websites and systems into its weather modelling and data systems.

Niche to necessity

There are dozens of other tools available or under development across Hawke's Bay to help with the exponential demand to digitise records and reporting and optimise farming,

growing and land use ... and simplify compliance.

Gretchen King, managing director of Porangahau-based Cloud Farmer (formerly AgRecord), believes her rural record keeping start-up, created "for farmers by farmers" is well positioned to deal with the technophobic and has great export potential.

Cloud Farmer doubled its client base in 2019 and there was a surge of uptake during the Covid lockdown with the app Cloud Farmer now used by a couple of hundred medium-to-large scale sheep, beef and deer farms.

The cloud-based system can gather data off-line then synchronise across devices regardless of location when in wifi or cellular range.

Farming friends had developed a website to help neighbours digitise their record keeping and asked Gretchen to develop a business plan, then in 2013 with 20 farmers onboard she and her husband Leyton were asked if they'd like to take over.

"It was a great prototype built from scratch around farmer's needs. Normally you build, then learn from your mistakes."

Gretchen, a former high country shepherd and farm recruitment

Gretchen King, managing director of Porangahau-based Cloud Farmer, believes her rural record keeping start-up, created “for farmers by farmers” is well positioned to deal with the technophobic and has great export potential.

consultant with a background in marketing and business development launched Cloud Farmer within two years of developing the desktop software.

Simplify data collection

The goal is to make data collection and communication as simple as possible and to keep a finger on the pulse of what farmers are facing and are likely to face in the future.

Gretchen’s team of seven rural women have “walked a few miles in the farmers shoes, know the business and are talking to farmers every day”.

Modules include purchases and sales, health and safety, planning, time sheets, stock treatment, medicines, drenching, dipping, docking

and recording movements through National Animal Identification and Tracing (NAIT) tags.

A notetaking feature replaces the farmer’s diary to jot down casual observations about animal growth, the state of fencing, the health and safety chat they had with the junior, or environmental details.

Gretchen says farmers are doing incredible things with riparian planting, erosion control and monitoring creeks, rivers and dams but changes in regulation will increase the need for accurate data collection.

That includes new freshwater policy, biodiversity, tougher controls on nitrogen levels and now controversial ‘pugging regulations’ that determine the percentage and depth of hoofprints in paddocks.

“It’s really stressful stuff and farmers are looking for the easiest way to comply without changing their business or spending half their time in an office looking at a computer.”

The main rival is FarmIQ, which Gretchen says is about analysis and benchmarking which can prove overwhelming for many farmers, while Cloud Farmer is “unapologetically simple”.

The greatest competition is still pen and paper with farmers saying “we know we should change but haven’t got around to it”, although she believes “the pain point” is coming.

She claims there’s “spade loads of opportunities” for Cloud Farmer and an opportunity to become an exporter and dominant player once economies of scale are worked through.

Gretchen’s team, advisory board and developers are currently reassessing where they should be in the next five years ... among the challenges is how far she and her team are prepared to stretch themselves.

Some are working mothers helping run farms while Gretchen and her husband run 12,000 stock units of beef and deer and sheep on their Porangahau property.

Automating orchards

Back in the horticulture sector the pressing perennial problem is a paucity of pickers and packers, creating an almost desperate need for automating.

That presents opportunities and challenges for automation and electrical design engineers like Rob Elstone, who wishes he had the time and funding to keep pace with his ideas.

He learned the trade with Hastings automation and design specialist Fruit Handling Systems, which merged with Compac Sorting, then tried to fill the gap when they shifted focus in 2016.

Elstone formed Hortworx, alongside his father Paul and friend Jarod Eichler, a mechatronics engineer or specialist in electrical, mechanical, robotics and systems control to companies with their orchard, packhouse and warehouse automation.

They’ve been “flying under the radar” integrating off-the-shelf technology and local developments creating robotic bin fillers for apples, potatoes and onions, bulk bin fillers for apple juicing, and working on specialist robotics that can be added into packhouse lines.

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The future competitiveness of farming, horticulture and food processing may depend as much on the convergence of brilliant ideas, collaboration and hi-tech innovation as it does on quality land and labour.

A current project is a driverless orchard platform for pickers. “Currently all the platforms are from the US and Europe but we’re going for fully autonomous vehicle control,” says Elstone.

Hortworx is partnering with The Smart Machine Co which builds autonomous vehicles for mowing, spraying and trimming, and has R&D projects for integrating 3D scanning for fruit weight and other orchard information.

Elstone believes there’s a strong local and international market for his technology and while he has “big dreams and lots of ideas” he’s currently taking things step-by-step. Investing “a couple of hundred thousand” for a prototype machine when they sell for \$30,000 each is a big risk.

So is finding staff with the right skills, including mechanical, maintenance and servicing people, particularly when “everyone in Hawke’s Bay” is looking for the same skillsets. “We have to find those people from out of town or turn work away,” says Elstone.

Doing more with less

It’s not only pickers and packers who are in short supply but young technically astute workers. School leavers typically head away to attend university or gain work experiences and part of the plan by EIT, the Hi-tech Hawke’s Bay group and others is to entice them back once they’re ready to settle down.

In the meantime, Stuart MacIntyre suggests programming and development skills needed to “spin up prototypes” to take the region further down the automation path may need to be sourced offshore.

Erik van den Hout has been forced to rethink growth plans for his DataNow platform by adopting a more scalable and interoperable model that allows clients to “inject their data” from an API (application programming interface) into a web site.

With less hardware installation required he has closed his offices and works remotely with a handful of contractors to help large industry collect and analyse data.

DataNow provides “real data from raw data” delivering customisable reports, live displays, logic and calculations, including trends and alert reports through mobile phone apps.

It’s a kind of profit and loss (P&L) approach to the production line that identifies trends and potential problems which can impact the bottom line if not attended to, says van den Hout.

He wonders why so many companies make big decisions on gut feelings.

DataNow can measure efficiencies and isolate areas that are negatively impacting profitability at a quarry, cement mill or bagging operations.

It’s currently in 35 sites including WineWorks, all Ravensdown sites, Fulton Hogan, Firth, Greymont, Holcim and Winstones, with organic growth to their branches and possibly even offshore.

Crunch time for data

The gathering, storing, understanding and smart use of data will continue to be at the core of future innovation and decision making across most sectors.

In his capacity as a farmer, Stuart MacIntyre recently attended a meeting where Hawke’s Bay farmers and planners were learning how the Rangitikei Catchment group got mass buy in for managing water and waterways.

Once farmers realised they could provide data about nutrient levels in different streams in their eco-systems they came up with new and innovative management ideas. “In the old world where quantitative data didn’t exist very little was happening, but

this crystallised minds to look at the data,” says MacIntyre.

Rather than fragmented strategies spread too thin to achieve a vision, he reckons that’s the kind of collective approach Hawke’s Bay businesses need to move to the next level.

“An innovation hub can’t just be a talk shop, the old cliché that it takes a village to raise a child is the same for the information game,” says MacIntyre, who’s on the Hi-tech Hawke’s Bay advisory team.

And that requires a long-term strategic approach backed by local councils rather than quick wins, “a big melting pot with lots of experimentation accepting that there will be failures even to get 10% doing very well”.

One of the unknowns, says Dave France, is the skills becoming available with ex-pats adding their companies and their expertise to the ‘brain pool’. He’s trying to identify and connect people into the local ecosystem so they gain an appreciation of who else is in their back yard.

“The real magic is picking people with a similar mindset who want to reach a common goal ... to collaborate and work together more effectively ... to pool resources and expertise and quickly start looking nationally and internationally,” says France.

Covid’s closed borders have challenged ‘business as usual’ by accelerating online options and highlighting new tools and techniques to diversify and differentiate.

A Callaghan Innovation survey earlier this year revealed 60% of recipients saw the lockdown as an opportunity to use technology to reshape their organisations and the economy.

Here in Hawke’s Bay we keep telling people that ‘great things grow here’, promoting lifestyle, sunshine hours, schools and soil, but that’s not going to be enough to attract the skills or the investment needed to keep heartland industries ahead of the curve.

The future competitiveness of farming, horticulture and food processing may depend as much on the convergence of brilliant ideas, collaboration and hi-tech innovation as it does on quality land and labour.

If indeed returning hi-tech entrepreneurs and investors are looking to back winners, then our tech start-ups need to grab their attention with inspiring market-ready solutions that can easily translate into export dollars and a better bottom line for our regional economy. ●

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Don't wait to innovate

The Covid-19 pandemic has been a huge catalyst for change. Overnight borders closed, markets disappeared, and at Level Four, the majority of businesses closed.

In Hawke's Bay, up until March, many businesses were operating comfortably, enjoying the benefits of high consumer confidence, strong primary sector performance and a ten-year low in unemployment. Business was going along just fine, with no need to upset the apple cart.

Yet lockdown and its commercial impacts caught many businesses napping, especially in the area of digital capability. Many in Hawke's Bay were not set up for e-commerce, let alone optimised. That meant that while bricks and mortar premises were closed, no business could be done. The demand for e-commerce support was huge, as businesses rushed to get online.

Early adopters of digital marketing and e-commerce weathered the challenges brought by Covid-19, with innovation forced on those dragging the technology chain. Covid-19 is the catalyst for change in so many areas - healthcare consultation, remote working, and meetings, to name few. It rapidly accelerated trends and new ways of working that otherwise would have taken years were truncated into a few short weeks.

Challenge always drives innovation.

Nationally, Callaghan Innovation reports that since Covid hit there has been a significant upsurge in R&D activity. Project Grant funding programmes, which is funding to undertake research, concept development, prototype development, undertaking trials etc has doubled compared to this time last year. Demand for Callaghan's new R&D loan programme and existing

Lockdown and its commercial impacts caught many businesses napping, especially in the area of digital capability. Many in Hawke's Bay were not set up for e-commerce, let alone optimised. That meant that while bricks and mortar premises were closed, no business could be done.

programmes (R&D Experience grant student interns) have outstripped forecasts. Anecdotally, applicants are bringing a sense of urgency and buoyancy to the discussions, which is fantastic.

But it got me to thinking, and asking the question: were we too comfortable pre-Covid? Why should necessity be the mother of invention? Is it human nature to wait until change is forced upon us? And how, now that many businesses have had innovation forced upon them, can they sustain it?

The answer is an obvious "yes". But change and innovation doesn't come easy. To be innovative is to be creative, open to change, open to risk taking and open to discomfort. Something that many could find unpalatable.

Theodore Henderson, writing in *Forbes*, said: "Innovation is vital in the workplace because it gives companies an edge in penetrating markets faster and provides a better connection to developing markets, which can lead to bigger opportunities, especially in rich countries.

"It can also help develop original concepts while giving the innovator a proactive, confident attitude to take risks and get things done. Tried-and-tested methods may be reliable, but trying out new things is a worthwhile experiment."

With Covid-19 as the innovation catalyst, let's harness that momentum and embed innovative practices into business-as-usual, and not go back to a pre-Covid 'cruise control'. There are sound commercial reasons for putting innovation at the heart of every business.

Global consultancy McKinsey says that riding the right waves of change, created by industry and geographic trends, is the most important contributor to **business results** ... a company benefiting from such tailwinds is 4-8 times more likely to rise to the top of future performers.

The question of how to achieve an innovation culture remains. Does it always have to be on a grand scale? George Miller, co-founder of Mogul, and a keynote speaker at Business Hawke's Bay's innovation conference last year, says entrepreneurs come in all shapes and sizes, and so does innovation.

"Innovating doesn't have to mean creating the next big industry disruptor. Micro-innovations in your business can be just as important to the economy.

"In our business, we have focused on small ongoing innovations like the automation of repetitive tasks. This has meant not only is the work more profitable, but the team has more

We also need to embrace the concept of “pre-competitive collaboration” and cluster groups so that sectors can work together to address barriers to recovery and harness opportunities for sustainable growth.

capacity to do higher-value work.”

At Business Hawke’s Bay we believe that greater innovation and entrepreneurship will unlock Hawke’s Bay’s and New Zealand’s full potential. If we want to create a thriving national and local economy we need high-growth companies creating higher value jobs and driving productivity through innovation.

We also need to embrace the concept of “pre-competitive collaboration” and cluster groups so that sectors can work together to address barriers to recovery and harness opportunities for sustainable growth.

Most of all we need to foster innovation, and for many that means big

change.

Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO, an exemplar Silicon Valley firm fully immersed in design thinking methodology, says the myth of innovation is that brilliant ideas leap fully-formed from the minds of geniuses.

“The reality is that most innovations come from a process of rigorous examination through which great ideas are identified and developed before being realised as new product/service offerings and/or capabilities.”

Much has been written about how to foster innovation. In a *Forbes* article, Harvard Business School’s Teresa Amabile offers seven strategies for creativity that can serve as a checklist for leaders who want to create a culture of where the ideas flow.

1. Clear goal setting - but with autonomy on how to get there.
2. Work assignments that match the individual’s interests and provide positive challenge.
3. Open communication systems that facilitate idea exchange, co-ordination and collaboration.
4. Feedback that is frequent, constructive, and supportive.

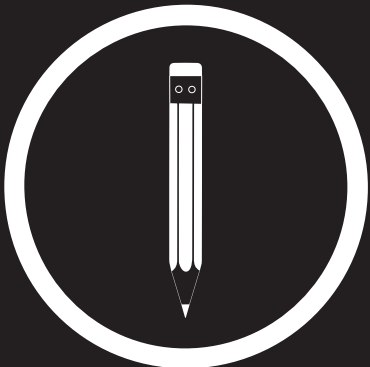
5. Equitable and generous rewards and recognition. If you desire innovative behaviour, you must reward it.
6. Absence of unnecessary bureaucracy.
7. Supportive collaboration.

What *HBR* loved about Amabile’s list is that “it doesn’t require ‘artsy’ approaches. They can be systematic and corporate - and yet, when they’re in place, they make the magic of creativity happen.”

So come on, Hawke’s Bay. Let’s keep the innovation going. Let’s make innovation an everyday practice.

It doesn’t have to be big, and it doesn’t have to happen in a Eureka! moment. Innovation builds better products and services, better customer and user experiences, and stronger, more resilient businesses. Take the initiative now and don’t let necessity be the mother of your invention. ●

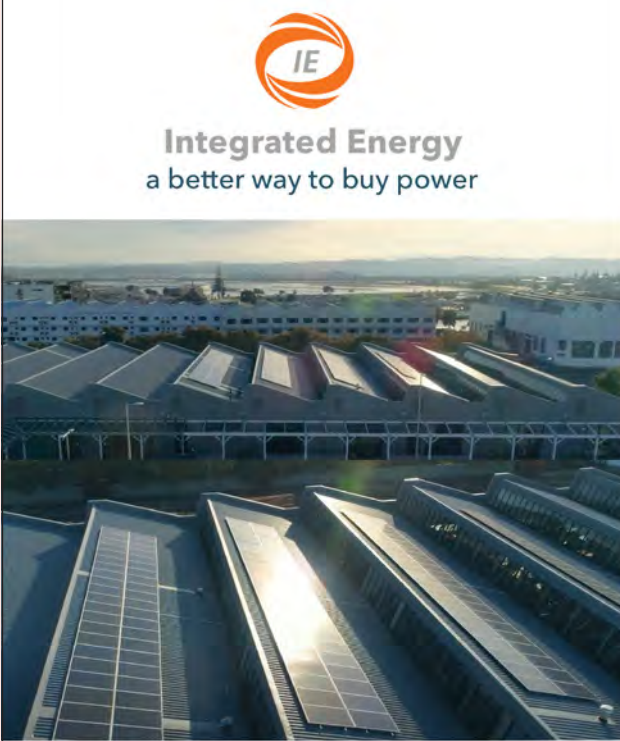
Carolyn Neville is CEO of Business Hawke’s Bay, the region’s economic development agency, delivering tangible outcomes for business growth and attraction.



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Hawke's Bay economy: leading indicators and measures of economic performance

Hawke's Bay housing market




29* DAYS TO SELL


Down from 32 days

*As at August 2020, compared to 12 months ago. Source: REINZ

Housing




14,468 people receiving accommodation supplement, up **14.2%***




*As of 1 August 2020, compared to 12,665 12 months ago. Source: MSD

New record median house price





New median house price **\$594k**



up **20.1%***

*As at August 2020, compared to 12 months ago. Source: REINZ


Regional economy



Hawke's Bay is NZ's **#2** regional economy*

*ASB regional economic scoreboard. Q2 2020


Seasonal workers




Hawke's Bay needs **10,000** seasonal workers for 2021 season*

*Oct '20 – Apr '21

Jobseekers



7,767 receiving jobseeker support assistance, up **40%***



*As of 1 August 2020, compared to 5,547 12 months ago. Source: MSD

Listed jobs



24%

increase in Hawke's Bay jobs listed on Seek*

*July '20 compared to the month prior

Livestock



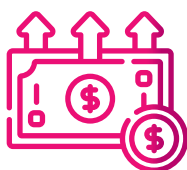
Monthly livestock
kill for June down

-12.5%*



*June 2020 compared to 12 months ago. Source: Statistics NZ

Visitor spend



\$45M

visitor spend in August, up

10.1%*

* Compared to August 2019, \$41.2m. Source: Hawke's Bay Tourism

Profile of Hawke's Bay
construction sector*



7,762

jobs, contributing
7.1% of regional GDP



Construction sector
business units by size # of
businesses

0 employees	1,345
1-5	424
6-9	99
10-19	74
20-49	40
50-99	18
100+	10

TOTAL 2010



Top 5
occupations:

1. Builder
2. Electrician
3. Carpenter
4. Labourer
5. Plumber

* 2019. Source: Infometrics Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Profile

For more data and insights visit www.businesshb.nz



LilyBee Wrap beats plastic

Households around the globe are ditching single-use plastic to package their sandwiches and snacks, opting for an eco-friendly food wrap made right here in Hawke's Bay.

LilyBee Wrap produces more than 196,000 wraps each year at its Onekawa factory, saving 20 million metres of plastic destined for landfill.

Like many small businesses, LilyBee started life on a kitchen table, the idea forming out of owner Stacia Jensen's desire to create a sustainable eco-wrap that was both functional and beautiful. The wraps, made from locally-sourced beeswax, natural organic cotton, organic coconut oil and gum tree resin, now adorn sandwiches and cover fridge fixings in countries including Australia, the US, Japan, Canada and the UK.

Not bad for a self-described 'accidental entrepreneur' and former yoga teacher who started the business in 2015 with only a stall at the Hawke's Bay Farmers' Market.

"I had always wondered what people did before the invention of plastic, which has had a hugely detrimental affect on our planet. I began playing around with ideas and came up with a plastic wrap alternative. I had also just fallen pregnant at the time, so it was even more important for me to do something that would benefit future generations."

Stacia, a Portland native says her "American sensibility" underpinned her approach when considering developing a new eco-product.

"Americans want things to work well and be done well. Eco-products traditionally have been expensive and often underperform. My ethos is that the product must work as well if not better than a 'regular' one. It also needed be fun and benefit people's lives, as well

"If you give people an accessible way to change, they will do it. Even if that means using beeswax wraps for your food or taking out half a bag of rubbish less a week. Small steps can lead to big changes and LilyBee is a living example of that."

STACIA JENSEN, LILYBEE WRAP OWNER

as our planet's. It's that approach that has seen our business flourish."

Stacia is quick to point out that her life is not eco-perfect, but that gives authenticity to the LilyBee brand.

"Because of the way we've positioned ourselves, we're not seen as preachy. I have a three-year old so still have some plastic in our house. But we're making small changes all the time. If you give people an accessible way to change, they will do it. Even if that means using beeswax wraps for your food or taking out half a bag of rubbish less a week. Small steps can lead to big changes and LilyBee is a living example of that."

Pre-Covid, two-thirds of LilyBee's business was export-led, but that has now reduced, with Stacia focused on domestic sales for the foreseeable future. Far from being discouraged, Stacia and her two other shareholders see this change in focus as an opportunity.

"We're totally ok with the situation actually. It's a very different business model when you export - the margins are slim so we're not convinced it was the right thing anyway. Luckily we have a really supportive domestic customer base and while we're still a small business, we've grown in leaps and bounds. We're doing a lot of soul searching and are in no rush to get

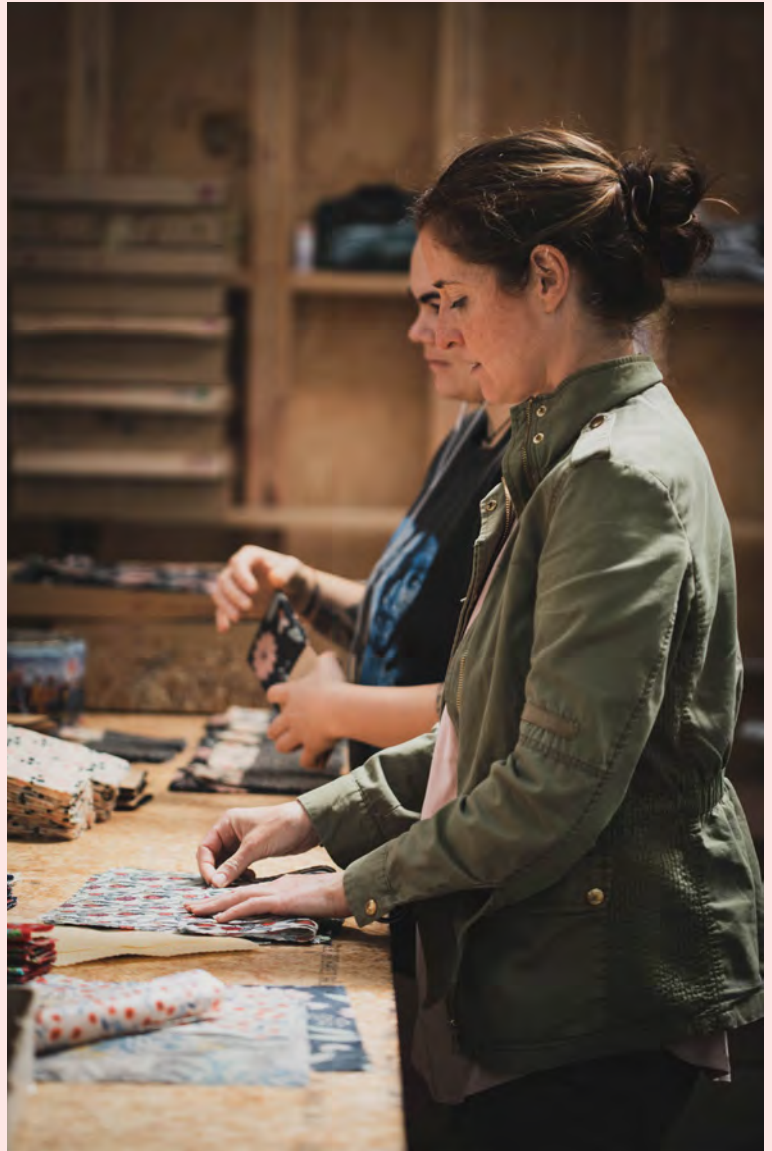
back to the US, which was one of our biggest export markets."

Stacia says every business decision the team makes is considered under both a financial and wellness lens. Wellness is a thread that weaves through any conversation with Stacia and during the Level 4 lockdown, wellness was a high priority.

"It was a challenging time for everyone and people needed to do things to heal themselves. Some of our 20 staff worked remotely, others worked longer hours. I operate a high trust model with my employees and trusted everyone to make decisions about working during lockdown that were right for them.

"I know how much work we get out of people and we try to balance that with wellness. I've seen that pay off over and over again. Wellness - whatever that looks like - leads to enjoyment, commitment, meaning and purpose in people's lives. It's not a purely transactional relationship. But it still needs to be balanced with financial reality, which sometimes means making tough decisions."

It is this approach that saw LilyBee recently awarded B-Corp certification, a global accreditation that certifies companies based on how they create value for non-shareholding stakeholders such as their employees, the local



Stacia Jensen and team making beeswax wraps by hand at their Onekawa factory.

community and the environment. In the current ‘greenwash revolution’ - where everyone wants to be seen as green and good - B-Corporations celebrate social enterprises that use business “as a force for good”, giving consumers a steer on businesses that are socially and environmentally responsible.

LilyBee joins 3,500 other B-Corp companies in 74 countries. Globally the movement is acknowledged as a key driver in the global shift to redefine success in business, away from strictly numbers on a balance sheet. Stacia says she always knew she wanted to pursue becoming a B-Corporation.

“B-Corp is very prominent in the US and a lot of businesses I admire are certified. Our business was already aligned with a lot of what B-Corp is about so a massive shift wasn’t needed. It’s a rigorous standard and as soon as your business doesn’t align with the values of B-Corp, you have to reapply

for certification.

“B-Corp helped us solidify our thinking; commit it to paper. It’s about being accountable and not just paying lip service to words like ‘sustainability’ or ‘social enterprise’.”

B-Corporations are also legally obliged to consider the impact of their business decisions and incorporate them into constitutions, and there is an expectation any business will continue to evolve. For Stacia, this is crucial in keeping her accountable.

“More than anything, B-Corp is about evolution. So much of what we already do shares B-Corp’s ethos and practices, but we know we can do more. It’s a natural extension of what we do and who we are.”

Currently Stacia is looking at restructuring the business and exploring how it can become more employee-owned.

“People are at the heart of our company and we believe those who put in

the work should receive the benefit. It’s about balancing money with purpose and wellness. When you realise that an extra \$50 a week will make a huge difference to someone you work beside every day, it motivates you and it’s humbling. Sometimes balancing the books is not easy and we don’t always get it right, but we’re always trying. Wellness and balance anchor our decision making throughout every aspect of the business.”

Future expansion and diversification plans for LilyBee are also in the ‘mapping’ phase.

“We’re playing around with ideas and anything we add to the range will be produced under the B-Corp lens now. This is us.” ●

Sarah Thornton, a communications pro, covers the Hawke’s Bay business scene for *BayBuzz*.



Plastic – friend or foe?

When plastic was first developed by British inventor Alexander Parkes in the early 1860s it was hailed as something of a miracle substance. Light, durable, easy to sterilise, cheap to make – nothing else could match it.

Jump forward 150 years and the need for these properties, which help to protect and preserve goods, and which benefit the way we travel and communicate, is being actively questioned. To many, plastic is a visible product that symbolises over half a century of rampant consumerism, exacerbated by a bloated world population and is becoming one of the biggest environmental disasters of the modern world.

Plastic has transformed society for the better ... but not the environment.

To many, plastic is a visible product that symbolises over half a century of rampant consumerism, exacerbated by a bloated world population and is becoming one of the biggest environmental disasters of the modern world.

It's everywhere

Plastic remains unchallenged in terms of its beneficial properties and has gone on to be refined into a plethora of variations, all with different uses. As a result, it's come to inhabit just about every aspect of our lives. Be it the clothing on our backs, the electronics we use, the vehicles we drive, the toys our children play with, the medical equipment which saves and sustains lives, and the credit cards we too frequently flex.

It's even used to glue some teabags

together, makes up about 50% of the volume of modern aircraft, and enables us to own televisions as thin as paintings.

Despite negative press, plastic does actually offer a number of environmental benefits. Its light weight, durability and efficient production generally result in fewer carbon emissions over its lifetime compared to other materials.

Consider how much extra steel would be needed for a car or plane which had no plastic in it, and how much heavier and less fuel efficient they would be. Plastic piping requires far less energy to make than metal alternatives and its durability reduces the chance of water loss through leaks. The list goes on.

Food packaging is where we interact with plastic in the most tangible and arguably the most wasteful way. Here too it has a purpose – prolonging shelf life and keeping food safe. This reduces emissions by preventing perishable food from ending up in landfill.

Today the consumer eagerly and rightly questions excessive packaging, but there's more to the story. Consider the humble plastic-wrapped cucumber. The simple plastic protective sheath means it stays fresh for around 21 days, rather than just seven.

Change is coming

Now I'm not saying there isn't a global problem with plastics, there is, but change is coming. Two significant Ministry for the Environment announcements have been made over the past year (declaring plastic packaging a priority product, and proposing a ban on some plastics), while the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 is being put to full use.

We are also seeing increasing action by the packaging industry – driven by consumer awareness and demand for

greater sustainability, and by Government action – with major industry players having pledged to make their packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025.

There is also some exciting innovation happening. Compostable and biodegradable food packaging and fruit stickers, compostable food packets, kiwifruit knives made of kiwifruit skin, bird netting clips made of grape marque, and soft plastic made into fence posts are just a few examples.

Internationally, innovation that turns waste plastic into useful, valuable items or replaces plastic with environmentally-friendly alternatives makes the news just about every week. Clothing made from shopping bags, houses made from plastic bottles, sports equipment made from old fishing nets, and edible straws and packaging are just a few examples.

Here in New Zealand we're also seeing more manufacturers and producers move to plastic types which can be recycled onshore and facilities exist to recycle PET, HDPE, LDPE and PP – plastics with the recycling symbol 1, 2, 4 and 5 on them. However, the capacity for collecting and recycling them varies greatly and doesn't come close to recycling it all.

Better informed consumers are demanding change and we are facing a pinch point where existing infrastructure and services are struggling to keep pace. Supermarkets have moved to PET (type 1) plastic baking and butchery trays, yet very few kerbside recycling collections offer a collection for these products nationally. Products claiming to be compostable and biodegradable suffer from a lack of localised processing capability able to cater for these emerging packaging types.

Beyond the recycling bin

Recycling also doesn't have to be



Today the consumer eagerly and rightly questions excessive packaging, but there's more to the story. Consider the humble plastic-wrapped cucumber. The simple plastic protective sheath means it stays fresh for around 21 days, rather than just seven.

limited to what we put in the bin at kerbside. PP (5) is used in a huge array of products from furniture to televisions, computers, toys, food containers and car parts.

Take car bumpers, as an example of a potentially huge, untapped resource, with approximately 1,400 tonnes of type 5 plastic going to landfill each year. We are currently working on a recycling project for them, and while it's in the early stages our trial work shows potential.

However, despite all this promise of a better future it's important to keep in mind the amount of plastic produced

globally each year is still increasing at an alarming rate. And there is still a problem around excess, overuse and general disregard for the environmental danger plastic poses.

Change certainly starts with us as individuals and by taking simple steps – a refillable water bottle, use your own container for takeaway sushi, have a look at what type of plastic an item is made of – can it be recycled or better yet is it made of recycled material – and let that sway you on whether to purchase it or not.

We need to replace our view of plastic as a throwaway material with one which respects it, both for its potential to cause harm and to be used for good. ●

Dominic works on sustainable solutions at 3R Group. 3R design, implement and manage product stewardship schemes for individual businesses or industry-wide groups. They also help businesses take a fresh look at their waste to first minimise and then recover what would otherwise be wasted.

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Our picking dilemma

Hawke's Bay is booming. Retail sales have been strong and a friend from the car industry says they've set a new car sales record in August. If you have any significant building to do, the lead times are typically 6-9 months.

The Covid doom merchants were wrong. Or were they?

Some corporate bankers in Auckland tell me the peak of their 'distressed loans' was three years after the global financial crisis. The big wheels of the economy grind to a halt slowly and this new government has some challenges ahead of it.

In the rural sector we often talk about major negative events requiring a 'two-year work out'. So it is with the sheep farmers in Hawke's Bay after last year's drought. Many had to sell down their capital stock and another bad year is baked in the cake. It's easy to read about such things but you don't really understand the emotional toll that drought took on farmers until you talk to them face to face. They are tough buggers but it didn't take much to get the bottom lip quivering this year.

"One death is a tragedy, a million deaths a statistic," Stalin purportedly said. It's perfectly true. Politicians and economists pontificate over the big numbers but the real experience is that of individual businesses.

My own apple sector is heading for trouble this year and it's all about labour. Each year we get an 'Approval to Recruit' (ATR) 121 RSE workers from Samoa. There is a perception that these guys pick all our apples, but in our case they make up only one third of our pickers. Another third is typically made up of working holiday makers from around the world and the final third from locals. So at present only one third of our workforce is available.

Given that big foreign exchange earners like tourism and hospitality continue to be badly hobbled by

Covid-19, you'd expect this new government to ensure that primary industry exports continue at full speed. It's for this reason the RSE workers are likely to return and this poses little Covid risk to NZ. After the measles crisis Samoa were quick to close their borders and have remained Covid-free.

Many think getting our RSE workers back will solve our harvest problems, but we'll still be missing the backpackers.

Over summer there are about 60,000 working holiday makers in NZ. While these are often short-term workers who stay for only a few weeks, they are irreplaceable. Many of them saw a couple of toilets and showers on our orchards and asked if they could live in vans or tents on site. If I were 22 and touring the south of France I'd sleep in a van to save a few shekels too.

The big advantage of backpackers is that many of them don't need beds and our labour crisis is really an accommodation crisis.

The Government is spending about \$30,000 a day on emergency housing in Hawke's Bay. We've had a harvest labour crisis for several years, but also a housing crisis. Much criticism can be levelled at John Key's government for failing to recognise the housing crisis but Labour, in their first term, failed to deliver on its grand plans to build houses.

Government statistics show that net migration in the 5 years from 2010 was only 19,000, while in the next 5 years it was 276,000. Covid is driving the number higher still with record net migration of almost 80,000 in the year to June 2020. Most of the foreigners have left NZ, but the Kiwis continue to pour back in. Every tourist cabin and ageing motel in Hawke's Bay has been signed up to emergency housing.

The RSE scheme has been somewhat of a political football since its inception. Each year we have our

total numbers confirmed in January and bring them here almost immediately. Some who have invested in worker accommodation have found it sitting empty as they secured fewer RSE workers than they had hoped. The uncertain nature of RSE policy has been a significant disincentive to those looking to invest in housing. This winter I had a 'shovel ready' provider ready to build, but only if I signed-up to rent the facility for six months. In the midst of Covid uncertainty I couldn't sign and he wouldn't borrow and build.

"If you pay decent money, you'll get the workers," I'm often told, but the money isn't the problem. The *average* RSE worker earns about \$1200 a week in the height of the season and we are budgeting for a 12% increase in wages this year.

Even the minimum wage has increased 30% in recent years, while inflation has risen just 8%, so wage growth is happening. Make no mistake, we employ a lot of minimum wage earners. The key reason for this is lower productivity. We now employ a lot of people past retirement age, as well as those with mild physical or mental challenges. Many of these people work within their capacity and we appreciate their contribution. It's tough, physical work and some only pick half as much as an RSE worker might.

There have been some stories about worker exploitation of recent times. From what I know these exclusively relate to labour contractors. The big apple growers look after their RSEs well as they have skin in the game. They need pickers for the next decade or two and can't pack up and disappear like a labour contractor can.

The contribution of foreign seasonal workers has been immense in our industry. Our permanent employees have doubled in the last 7 years and



RSE workers pick just a third of the harvest

half as much,” he replied. That’s a rational decision, but not great for the local economy. Such moves force supply down and prices up so that will hurt you at the supermarket.

The most important thing a government can do is instil confidence. Right now there is more than a whiff of fear in the apple industry and across horticulture in general. That fear stifles investment and employment. Even I’ve cut down some trees to make the harvest more manageable. It costs about \$9 a box to get the crop to the point of harvest and that could sink you if you can’t turn it into cash.

I’m expecting a really tough year in 2021, but farming has always been cyclical. We’ll hunker down for a year to two but come back strongly. The food story out of Hawke’s Bay still looks amazing and with a few bold tweaks to government policy there will be no stopping us.

In the meantime, strap on a bucket and give us a hand. ●

Paul Paynter is our resident iconoclast and cider maker. Sometimes he grows stuff at Yummyfruit.

the seasonal workers have helped that happen.

Many don’t like the idea of migrant labour, but apples in Europe get picked by seasonal workers from Eastern Europe, while in the USA it’s guest workers from Mexico. These short-term workers support year-round employment for local communities, but more

importantly, they ensure food security.

I had a call from a zucchini grower in Northland the other day who is really struggling to get Kiwis to do the hard work. He normally gets a small contingent of RSE workers during his peak season. Given it’s an annual crop and he could see the worker crisis coming, I asked him how he reacted. “I planted

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Spring detox?

Looking in the mirror, some of you might think that you have blossomed over the winter months and need to do something to get back into shape.

Some of you might even be considering a detox.

Spring is a popular time to detox according to some beauty magazines, health and wellness bloggers. It seems that everyone has their own take on detoxifying, from detoxes for the skin, juice detoxes, fasting, liver detoxes and colon cleansing.

Beyond the hype and trendy headlines, detoxification is real and involves many biochemical processes. Detoxification is a normal part of our daily internal housekeeping. As you are reading this article, your body will be undergoing detoxification. By doing this it will be helping you adapt to the foods and toxins that you have been exposed to during your day.

In our current environment we are exposed to far more toxins than our ancestors. Toxicity is a major health concern in today's world. Our bodies are having to cope with new and stronger chemicals and more air and water pollution. Our food is sprayed with pesticides and farmers use chemical fertilisers in the soil to increase crop yields.

Many food products are refined, high in sugar and contain food additives and preservatives, which put an additional load on our systems. Our bodies also have to cope with prescription drugs that we use for health conditions. We clean our homes with strong chemicals. Many of us use chemically-laden creams and potions on a daily basis and regularly indulge in alcoholic libations and caffeinated creations.

All these factors add to our toxic load.

Sometimes this unrelenting barrage can overwhelm and overtax our bodies detoxification processes, particularly when they aren't supported by a

balanced lifestyle or healthy eating.

My advice to you would be to take a long-term strategic approach to detoxification rather than a detox in spring. The best way to protect yourself in our toxic modern world is to support whole body detoxification, with simple, everyday actions. Otherwise you may become more vulnerable to developing unwanted health conditions.

I would also encourage you to seek out professional advice when contemplating a detoxification cleanse. If you are not supported appropriately, you could end up feeling really bad. Buying a product off the shelf could do you more harm than good.

If your detoxification pathways are already a bit sluggish, you have the potential to tax your system further. Like anything you intend to do, it's always good to prepare, plan and set appropriate and realistic goals to achieve a positive outcome.

How does detoxification work?

Your whole body is involved with detoxification and for it to take place efficiently it relies on each body system functioning well and in synergy. The gut, skin and lungs are physical barriers to prevent toxins from entering the body.

There are many systems involved in detoxification, but the liver and kidneys play leading roles in this process. The liver changes nasty toxins into harmless agents and dumps wastes into bile, which is transported to the intestines and eliminated through our stools.

The blood carries waste to the kidneys and we eliminate these through our urine. When our elimination and immune systems are healthy and robust the body can usually handle everyday exposure to toxins.

If our liver and kidneys are functioning under par, toxins have the po-

tential to recirculate. These recirculating toxins can cause cellular damage or become stored in fatty tissues. The body stores toxins in fat to protect us from the harm that they could do to our tissues and organs.

A note on weight loss. When losing weight, toxins in the fat cells can be released, which can cause further damage if precautions aren't taken to prevent this. Prepare your detoxification pathways so that they support slow steady weight loss. This can be achieved by increasing water intake, having sufficient fibre, and eating a wide range of nutrients (vegetables fruit, nuts, eggs, seafood, grains, seeds) that contain vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, selenium and zinc.

Exercise is also an important player in weight loss and detoxification, since toxins can be released through sweating.

Warning signs

Our bodies are truly amazing and continue to perform these detoxification processes day in and day out twenty-four seven. Sometimes we are given clues that our body's functions are not working as efficiently as they should. Signs of toxicity and impaired detoxification may present as:

- Digestive disturbances (wind, bloating, diarrhea and constipation).
- Food allergies or intolerances.
- Fatigue, headaches, brain fog or poor memory.
- Skin conditions such as psoriasis, eczema or urticaria.
- Bad breath (halitosis) or bad body odour.
- General aches and pains.
- Not being able to lose weight.

Sluggish detoxification

Various causes can compromise our natural detox process. Making poor food choices and consuming coffee

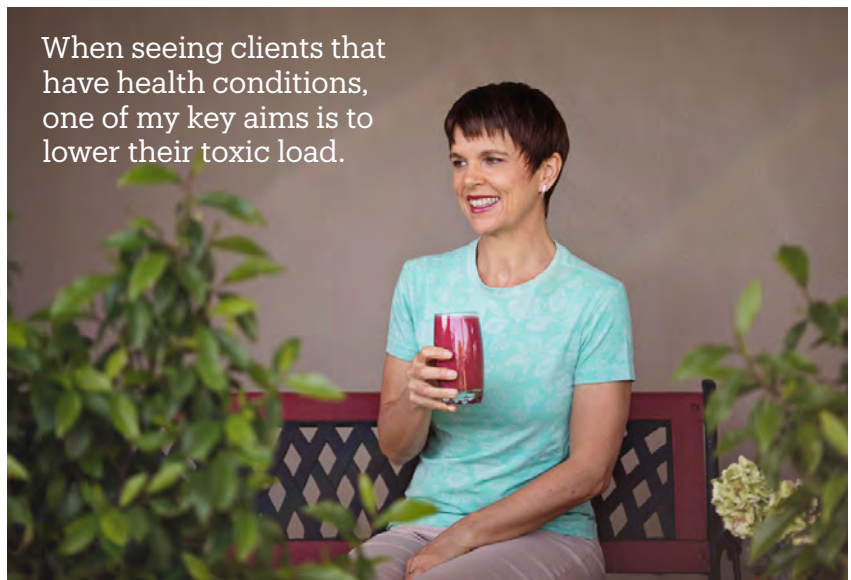
and alcohol on a regular basis. Taking medications (prescription or otherwise) or smoking cigarettes. Exposure to common environmental toxins such as artificial perfumes, household chemicals, heavy metals, herbicides and pesticides. Our pathways need nutrients to function and if we are nutritionally depleted, they may be sluggish.

Toxic exposure can contribute to an increased toxic load, which can impact your immune system negatively. Due to lifestyle and genetic factors, some people are able to detoxify efficiently, where others perform these actions slower. The key to optimising detox function is to reduce your overall load and to support your natural detoxification pathways.

How can you reduce toxic exposure?

- Drink filtered water and bathe in filtered water where possible.
- Choose organic produce to reduce your exposure to pesticides. If budget is a concern, consult the Environmental Working Group's 'Clean 16' list for fresh produce, which is less likely to have pesticide residue. Wash your fruit and vegetables thoroughly.
- Choose environmentally-friendly body care and household products.
- Moderate your alcohol and caffeine intake.
- Get help to stop smoking.
- Choose whole foods that don't contain additive or preservatives.

When seeing clients that have health conditions, one of my key aims is to lower their toxic load.



When seeing clients that have health conditions, one of my key aims is to lower their toxic load.

The gut is the immune system's first line of defense and is responsible for properly eliminating toxins. One needs to have regular bowel motions to allow toxins to leave the body. Gut bacteria help identify intruders and communicate with the immune system. Any imbalance here will disrupt the immune response. A healthy intestinal lining stops toxins and other pathogens from passing into the blood stream where they can travel to organs and other parts of the body causing inflammation and contributing to future health conditions.

In summary, if you do decide to do a spring detox, I would always recommend that you do it under supervision. The process will rule out any underlying health problems and make sure you do it safely.

A trained practitioner will help you to identify external toxin sources, will support your gut health and ensure that you are getting the right nutrients to support your detoxification pathways. They will also advise you on the importance of sleep, types of exercise, nutrition and how to manage your stress. The best approach is to make good lifestyle choices most days so that your detoxification pathways work efficiently to support your health.

The adage, 'prevention is better than cure', would be my motto. ●

Hazel Thomas is a registered clinical nutritionist with a special interest in gut health, food sensitivities and children's health.



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Culture

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HASTINGS
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Art and design lift public spaces

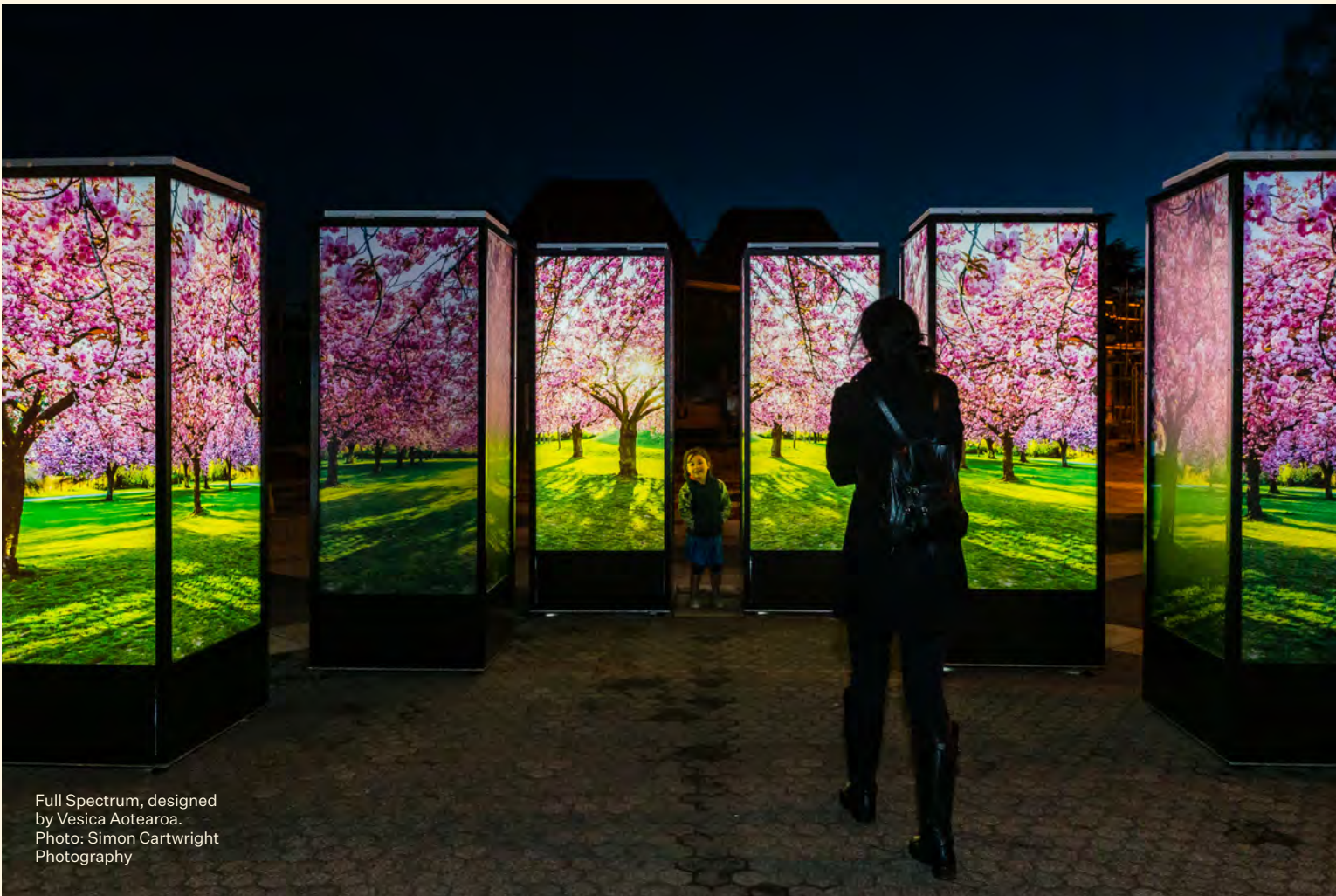
Story by Kay Bazzard



Hastings City Centre
Activation Officer,
Andrea Taafe.
Photo: Tom Allan

Culture

Visit Hastings these days and the terms 'revitalisation' and 'urban design' are becoming a reality in our central city business district. The new mini parks, expanded pavements for café dining, walk-through and landscaped laneways and new business developments suggest real headway is being made.



Full Spectrum, designed
by Vesica Aotearoa.
Photo: Simon Cartwright
Photography

These spaces and enhancements have attractive finishing touches with well-designed seating, paving, curvilinear paths, tree planting with trellises and sheltered corners that invite us to linger, eat lunch and relax. Featured in many city spaces are murals, sculptures and artistically configured installations designed to stimulate interest and curiosity.

BayBuzz has been exploring some of these developments and what is behind them, checking progress and discovering how they come about, who is making the decisions.

Behind the scenes there are policies and processes that have been developed to ensure that agreed arts and cultural values are integrated into Council projects through the Hastings District Council Revitalisation plan that is being activated, with the Toi-Tū framework consulted and its key priorities (a list of eleven) measured and ticked off.

The Toi-Tū Strategic Framework acknowledges that the arts are essential in uplifting the wellbeing of the people. It addresses potential barriers to participation by encouraging community inclusion and in supporting creative sector employment and enterprise. It is intended as a regional strategy but not all councils have as yet endorsed it.

The Revitalisation Plan recognizes the important role of art in enhancing the quality of life by stimulating the interplay of culture, Māori and European history, city enhancement and civic pride. The Blossom Festival, HB Arts Festival, and Fringe in the 'Stings add to the dynamics while local artists who provide the art work such as mural painters Cinzah Merkins, Jil of Aotearoa, Dali Susanto, designer Jacob Scott and sculptor Ricks Terstappen become our local creative heroes.

Art works are being introduced into projects by various teams working at the Council including the Toitotoi community engagement team, Parks and Reserves team and for longer term and major projects, the dialogue between departments ultimately results in commissions to artists for inclusion of permanent structures, murals and temporary installations.

Andrea Taafe, who works from Toitotoi is the city centre activation officer, charged with bringing the 'Wow factor' into our city spaces: fun, interactive installations, street art, games and performance.

Temporary art installations

Her activation projects are usually temporary, such as the lightboxes in Civic Square. "This is an opportunity to celebrate us, Heretaunga - for example, during Māori language week, the lightboxes showed art images on three sides the fourth side carries a translation in te reo Māori. The lightboxes are flexible and can be moved, images are easily changed and it's an opportunity for our artists to be engaged," says Taafe.

Another of the temporary installations in Civic Square recently was 'Full spectrum' - the octagonal light forms by Anton van Dorsten who designed and made the installation, using local fabricators and several other skilled tradespeople, and who works with Taafe as project manager on many of the installation projects.

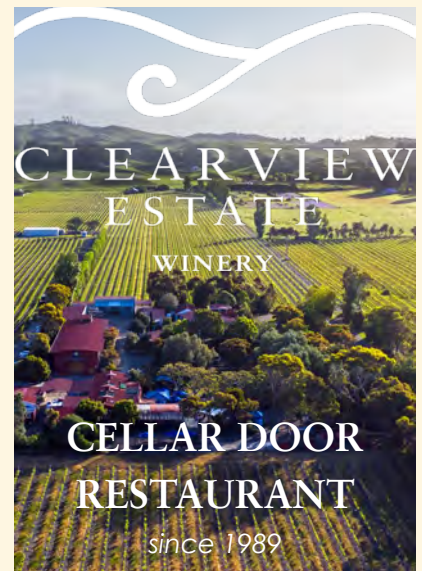
Leading the community engagement team at Toitotoi is Megan Peacock-Coyle. "My long term plan is for Hastings to be the art installation capital of New Zealand," she says. "Every six weeks, we introduce something new; the trumpet flowers were hugely popular as we know from social media, with very positive feedback ... from kids and a wide range of age groups."

As part of the community vibrancy plan, a database managed by Toitotoi of local artists is used to communicate, clock new names and invite expressions of interest. This provides an opportunity to pitch ideas for stories, poems and outdoor exhibition ideas for new, high quality projects, to create work for artists and others and provide an opportunity to have local creatives' work exposed in a very public way.

Hastings-based artist John Eaden views these developments with forty years of experience as a community arts administrator in Auckland. In his opinion, temporary installations are a good way of gaining public interest and engagement and in highlighting possibilities. However, they are frequently undertaken by public art providers whose work travels around the country and is therefore generic, so he strongly supports initiatives that encourage and support local artists to undertake the projects.

Augmented reality tours

Megan Peacock-Coyle outlines their newest project designed to help locals and visitors track the history, cultural values and public art around the city



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Philipp Meier's *Prunus Awanui* in his Onekawa workshop. When complete, it will be installed in Landmarks Square, Warren Street, Hastings.

- it will offer a unique experience using cutting-edge technology.

They are collaborating with local creatives to build a Heretaunga App to access an 'augmented reality walking tour of the city', described as an immersive experience using mobile technology to bring to life 'stories of our place and our people'. The experience will provide a platform for tourists, students and community to engage with local traditions, events and icons throughout the years.

She explains how it works. "At certain points throughout the Hastings City, when you open the application it will activate the first part of your journey with a 3-dimensional map highlighting your path. As you walk around the map you will see that features through Hastings will be highlighted. Upon touching these it will come to life and identify elements of the narrative that experience holds."

Currently, the narratives are being collated with local historians and key representatives from throughout our community. The application and tools are being built in preparation for stories to be added. The filming process will start in late October/early November with the Heretaunga App

being presented in early December.

Permanent sculpture

Permanent artworks are being integrated into a number of Council projects by the various sectors of the council.

'Prunus Awanui' is one such artwork destined for the newly-extended Landmarks Square in Warren Street, where Parks and Reserves have commissioned Philipp Meier to construct a major artwork as a tribute to the late former mayor, Jeremy Dwyer. It is the initiative of the Landmarks Trust, who acts as an advocate for the community by lobbying and working with Council on issues of landscape, history, architecture and art in public places.

Meier's massive artwork (a cherry blossom) is made from fabricated stainless steel and will add further vibrancy to the area. The steel structure offers safe climbing fun for children in an area of raised lawn. The mini-park has been extended into a neighbouring car park providing an area of lawn to sit, lie or play, with trees and low vegetation to the rear of the space, with the planting filtering the view for the Fun Buns outdoor dining area.

Reflecting the collaborations within

council, Toitōi's Andrea Taafe has introduced mini-stages into the design with lighting and power, making it a multi-faceted performance space. "It is sheltered," she says, "and it could be used for a Shakespearean play, a music performance or other community event."

These art and design initiatives are a positive story for Hastings and one of passion and vigour from those who seek to make it happen.

But it would be very understandable to take the route of trying to please everyone, which can result in non-controversial, banal public art that briefly brightens and quickly becomes like wallpaper, so an additional 'visual arts' measure is desirable to balance out the art and entertainment values.

"Ideally," says John Eaden, "the presence of public art denotes an informed and engaged society, underscored by a progressive and insightful civic administration. It is important that the planning and commissioning of public art be undertaken by experienced and qualified professionals with a grounding in the arts and who have an authentic approach to the content and relevance required for a given artwork or project." ●

21 november 2020

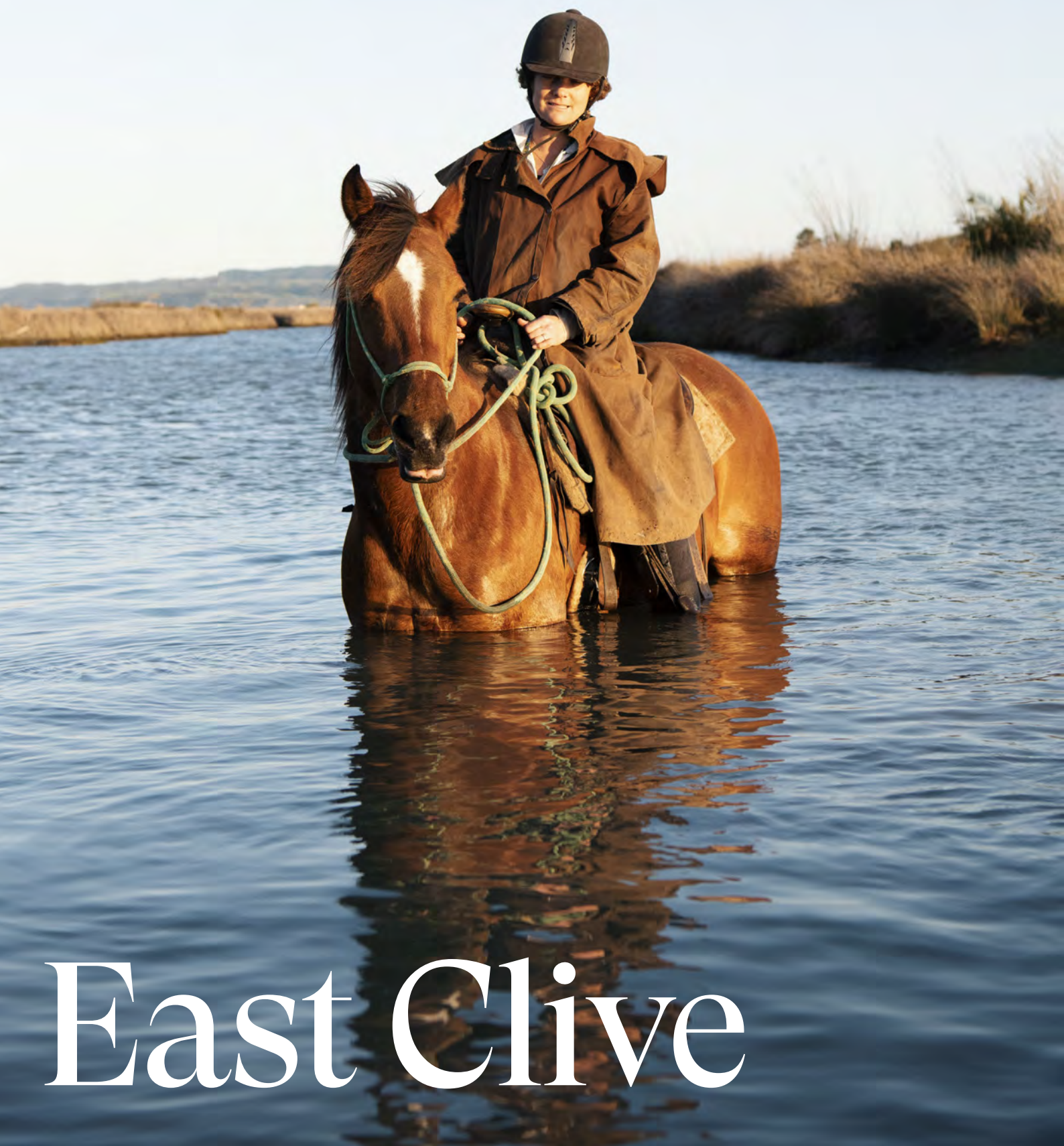
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28 february 2021

east2020



Wellesley Binding, 3 Studies for 'The Island' (Red Poles), 2020

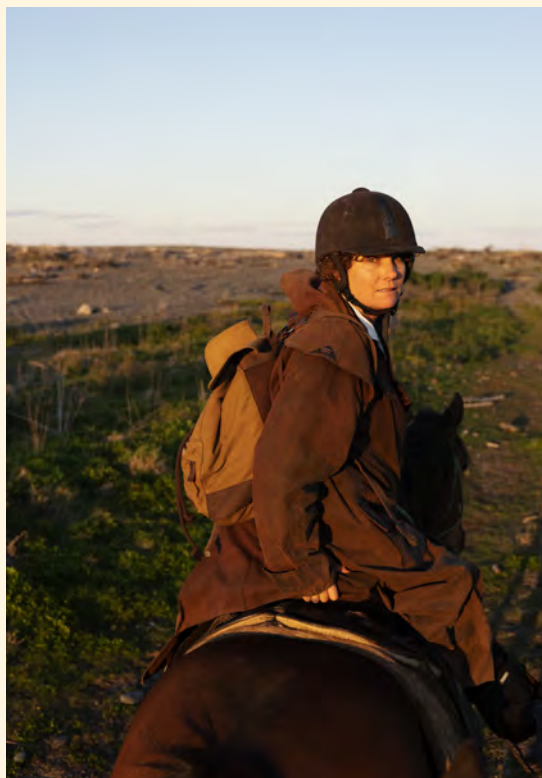
gillian appleby //
peter baker // kay
bazzard // lizzie beere
// mauricio benega
// wellesley binding
// amanda blewett
// jo blogg // richard
boyd-dunlop // kathy
boyle // richard brimer
// scott brough // linda
bruce // annette bull
// maiken calkoen //
anthony chiappin //
marion courtille //
brad donovan // john
eaden // leslie falls //
lisa feyen // jane gray
// david guerin // tony
harrington // michael
hawksworth // andy
heyward // rangituhia
hollis // cap jacobs //
anna jepson // asaki
kajima // justin kite //
chika lindsay // susan
mabin // leah marshall
// kaye mcgarva //
cinzah merkens //
tracey morgan //
gaeleen morley //
leanne morrison //
clare plug // john ruth
// ken sando // ema
scott // dali susanto
// paula taaffe // ricks
terstappen // david
trubridge // nic tucker
// patrick tyman //
suzanne vesty //
putaanga waitoa // lee
warren // rae west //
bernie winkels



East Clive



on Horseback



Waitangi Regional Park covers 300 hectares of land between Awatoto and Haumoana, linking the Tukituki, Ngaruroro and Tūtaekuri Rivers as well as Karamū-Clive waterways and coastal reserves, with multiple entry points along the Hawke's Bay iWay.

This narrow five kilometre strip of coastline is a vital, dynamic ecosystem - a breeding ground for inanga (white-bait) and home to multitudes of birds, including the little egret (a small white heron, uncommon elsewhere in NZ) and a colony of rare tarāpuka (black-billed gulls).

On a restless, windy day in September we set off on horseback to explore the East Clive stretch of it.

Our journey starts off School Road in Dzidra McHenry's sub-tropical garden, ringed by stands of rustling nikau palms and eclectic outdoor sculpture, horses grazing the lawn. Dzidra wears a 'fair dinkum' Australian oilskin coat that flaps down to her shins. She hands me one to wear too to keep out the wind and the salt, as we make our way to the hitching post.

Her coastal Boutique Horse Trek business wins Trip Advisor accolades from her clientele, mainly overseas tourists who've never ridden a horse before, while the late afternoon, after-work rides she expressly offers women - "to take the stress out of their day" - are popular 'therapy'.

Dzidra's horses are fully trained and sweetly tempered; they know exactly what to do. Forget everything you think you know, she says, it's all about body language. She briefs us on natural horsemanship: the movements to make to signal left and right, to stop, to slow down, how to modulate our voices, when to lean forward and when to pull back - no crop, bit, spurs required; in place of a bridle, a rope loosely held.

I'm on Nugget, a pretty 'stationbred' dun with kohl-ringed eyes; Florence on the gelding, Paddy, heroically takes photos from the saddle.

We step quietly up the road (the horses have yet to be shod for summer), past paddocks with new calves and lambs, a potter of pukeko, and tidy new-build houses. Past the Hastings waste water treatment plant, where every day 35,000-70,000 cubic metres of Hastings District's flushed sewage (more, curiously, at the height of the horticultural season) flows through a



biological filter process before being pumped 2.7 kilometres out to sea.

We file across the embankment and limestone cycle trail, and along a dirt track between wetlands, in the estuarial "edge zone" between low-lying coastal farmland and - beyond stones and scrub and random, industrial concrete piles - the wild beach.

We see black swans with cygnets, paradise ducks flying low in formation, a white heron, shags. It's too early now in the season for welcome swallows, but soon, here, you'll be able to watch their flit joyous swoop for bugs. It's a great spot for birding.

We turn to the beach and ride along the edge of the sea, the wave-scoured, gravelly shoreline, through the white, frothing end-swirl of waves. We look past concrete groynes (an attempt to staunch coastal erosion) towards the Awatoto smoke stacks, and beyond to Mataruahou, Napier Hill, shadowed by the trace of the bay curving round to Whirinaki and Tangoio. We pass the Tsunami Bar - a driftwood shelter, high up on the beach, and a guerrilla art-beautified 'bunker', the word 'Arohanui' writ large.

Picking our way back across stones towards Clive River in late sunshine, everything is suffused with gold light. Looking inland, I am struck once again by the horse-shoe shape of the Bay, the way our alluvial plains are circled by hills, from Cape Kidnappers and Te Mata to Kahuranaki, the Paki Paki lime works, Roy's Hill, Poraiti, and beyond the Kaweka and Ruahine ranges. The land ripples out, like some geological metaphor, from Waitangi

Estuary where the Tākitimu waka landed some 1,000 years ago, and where William Colenso's mission station was built in the 1840s.

The horses wade through a stream, stopping to paw the water for fun. Out on the Clive River mouth there are waka ama teams and rowers training, a lone kayak. Further out on the sandspit, cars parked up, a line of rods, the silhouettes of people fishing. As we bend in our saddles to the river and the horses bend their heads to eat the rich grass, we bask for a moment together in the day's glorious outbreath, under a big sky where the Heretaunga Plains and its major rivers meet the Pacific Ocean.

It's a sedate ride back - we're relaxed yet alert. For riding keeps you in a continuous, quietly active relationship with the horse: adjusting position, trying to read the horse as the horse reads you, like Argentine tango - an improvised dance communed through the subtle shifting of pressure and weight. In that moment of relationship and the quiet joy of an equinox spring evening, all our workaday concerns dissipate in the lilac light - the sky turns slowly purple before indigo as the wind drops away into an unexpected stillness.

You can walk this stretch of coast anytime, starting for example from Ever-Swindell Reserve at the Clive bridge or Richmond Rd Reserve near the waste water plant. By horse: for a coastal horse trek to the Clive river mouth, a horseback winery tour to Te Awanga, or a bespoke trek by arrangement, Dzidra and her horses can be found at boutiquehorsetreks.co.nz ●



Three launches for local talent

Hawke's Bay is awash with bookish talent. Since we emerged, blinking, out of lockdown, anyone with an artistic bent has been beautifully overwhelmed with things to do, see and hear. These books are all exquisitely written by writers you might bump into in our sun-showered streets, produced by award-winning publishing houses, and recently launched into the world.

Egg & Spoon: An Illustrated Cookbook - Alexandra Tylee and Giselle Clarkson
(Gecko Press, \$39.99)

This is such a special book. Like anything Alexandra writes, it has a simple charm and elegance, and in this case, as befitting a cook book aimed at younger cooks, a lovely warmth.

In an eggshell, this is a collection of delicious recipes that use good, wholesome ingredients to muck about with. There are rules, but you can blend, break and batter them. Food is nurturing, food is kind (there's a note on why we choose free range eggs).

A line at the beginning of the recipe for Walnut Thumbprint Biscuits epitomises *Egg & Spoon* for me. It says, *there is something nice about little round biscuits*. That's from the mind of a poet because it says so much in so few words: it's lovely to have nice things; simple things are hugely satisfying; little things are cute; soft shapes with no edges are delicious; calm down, sit down and appreciate the time it takes to eat your little walnut biscuit.

Fantastic Mr Bean – Mary-anne Scott, illustrated by Lisa Allen
(One Tree House, \$20)

Mary-anne is the author of five books for children and young adults, all of which I've read and loved. This one is for readers of about 6 and up, or for families to read together.

Young Lachie is desperate to be cast as Fantastic Mr Fox in the school play ... and he is! But then, there's a line he

won't cross - he is not up for the soppy stuff with Mrs Fox. Recast as Farmer Bean, Lachie hurls himself into the role, creates props with his wonderful older brother and stinks up the house whilst *getting in character*. The night comes and disaster may strike, but not if fantastic Mr Bean has anything to do with it.

This is a cracker of a wee read - funny, child centred and heroic.

The launch: whānau; fun; a huge, delicious bee cake.

Tree of Strangers – Barbara Sumner
(Massey University Press, \$35)

It is often said that truth is stranger than fiction. This book proves such a thing to be true. Barbara Sumner takes us deep into her experience of adoption, the legacy of its trauma and the incredible story of her search for her parents.

The yearning in the book is incredible. The way in which Barbara explains the empty ache she feels, the things she can't process, and the connections she's not sure she can make are raw and soul-searching and shocking. Her daughters are her lifeline, connecting her to her future and her past.

She finds a link to her mother, Pamela, and embarks upon a journey that reads like a tightly plotted novel, events and revelations inspiring awe, shock and the rapid turning of the pages.

The launch: emotional: there were adopted children present, and at least one mother who never saw her child before they were taken away. ●

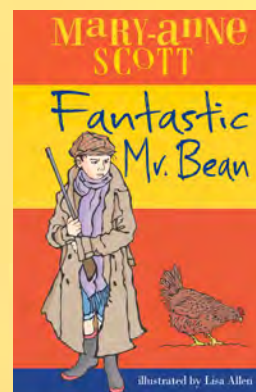


Illustration by Giselle Clarkson from *Egg and Spoon: An Illustrated Cookbook*



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Pack light, we're off!

Trip to Bali is off. Glad I went to Europe last year. Shopping in Sydney's been pushed to 2022. Christmas will be quiet with the rellies locked out of NZ. The tight fiscal pinch means a roadtrip south is off the table til next year.

Home's dull: Lockdown used up all interest in Staycations. Fun is cancelled, excitement's on hold. Passports are wrapp'd in archival tissue and stored in an heirloom tomb, a relic from the days when we had adventures overseas.

And on top of that this po-co-Lo* flab is hanging about, my inner couch potato having binged *Killing Eve*, every dish on *Master Chef*, *Upright* while horizontal.

The wild's calling. I'm pulling my OE macpac from beneath the bed, dusting off my big girl boots and heading for the Great Outdoors. I'm driving til the tank's at halfway then walking into the hills.

I'm no Action Fan. I prefer bookshops to bootstraps. I like coffee in a cafe cup, not a thermos flask. There's nothing wrong with scroggin but there's also a lot right with a *pain au chocolat* and I'm not shoving one of those in my pocket for the rest-stop at the lookout point.

The thing I like is doing nothing while doing something. I love the feeling of being physically exhausted but mentally awake. There's no thinking about doing it, there's just getting it done. Then there's no debrief, no summary report, no unpacking of strategic misalignments. There's just that deeply satisfying ache of accomplishment.

Getting out into the elements is catching on as a panacea to stay-at-home orders.

My gung-ho friend in the UK is a new mum and she's smitten with her kitten, but she's also smitten with getting her kit off and swimming in sub-zero

temperatures. It's called wild swimming. In open water all-year-round swimmers traverse lakes and rivers, even the sea. It's not a sport, it's a lifestyle, with most diving in every day, wearing nothing but a bathing suit and occasionally booties and gloves. Neoprene is a no-no. A succor for sanity, wild-swimmers discover the serenity of isolated idylls while freezing their proverbials off.

And with wild-swimming researchers finding a 40% decrease in incidence of infectious diseases affecting the upper respiratory tract, this could be the Covid cure we've been looking for.

There's another group of adventurers who are taking their dogs with them. Canicross is cross-country with a mutt attached to your midriff. Depending on where you're at in the pro-am scale, either you and the dog run side-by-side or the dog drags you up hill and down dale, while attached to an umbilical cord/1950s vibrating belt contraption. Sometimes you ride on a scooter, which seems a little more sensible, making you into a one-dog-mushing team.

Wandering about aimlessly was always part of the point of overseas travel, but doing it with clues (once upon a time provided by the Lonely Planet) made it more fun. Same goes for audacious adventuring at home. Rogain is orienteering on speed; metrogain, its urban equivalent.

A team sport, the aim is to find markers, plot courses and move quickly. Which reminds me of the time I went to Marrakesh with two girlfriends and just had to buy a pair of maroon babouche so got dragged, at pace, through souks and squares fuelled by khoudenjal and orange juice while avoiding snake charmers, Barbary apes and pick-pockets.

Metrogaining in Taihape doesn't seem quite so intrepid but it's all we have so we'll make do 'til the borders re-open.

Bounding through Jemaa el-Fnaa lends itself well to parkour, that city-running craziness that turns urban streetscapes into obstacle courses. To blend that with tramping is a natural next leap. Anyone keen should take up coasteering. This entails a trek along the intertidal zone of any coast. Participants climb, jump, dive, swim, scramble ... really anything to get them from where they are to where they want to go. It's what we used to do when we couldn't afford the entrance fee to a UNESCO Heritage Site, so climbed in the way the locals did. Perhaps coasteering would be even more fun if there were armed guards positioned above the rocks at Cape Kidnappers.

Whether you swim it, jump it, walk it, climb it or tramp it, get out of the house and do it. Rediscover what you loved about exploring new environs - that wonderful wanderlust - and do that here. Let your body move and your mind go along for the ride.

We've had our winter of discontent. Now it's time to pull our (tramping) socks up and get back into it. The world might not be open to us but this country is. And for all the millions of people still under house arrest, New Zealand looks like paradise, so we must make the most of it, for their sake, and for ours. ●

*po-co-Lo = post Covid-19 Lockdown

Photo opposite: Tom Allan

COMMON ROOM

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Just tap it

It has been a long wait, but Albert is here. Long awaited. Longed for and here.

Albert lives with his mother and father in Auckland. A grandmother hovers. Ah, the joy such a small bundle can bring. Albert is just begun. He has already clocked up an impressive three months.

Albert is my grandnephew, but he can call me Grandy, more a moko than a nephew. His mother more a daughter than a niece.

Three weeks ago, at the time of writing, Auckland moved into level two. Gloved, masked, sanitised and sanitised some more I finally met our beloved baby. A miracle of love, life and family.

Finally, I was able to hold this blessed bundle, smell his newness and allow a few tears to flow. Seemingly before I had arrived it was time to go.

The getting into Auckland was easy, it was the getting out that challenged.

My sister lives in a glamorous high-rise apartment with breath-taking views of the city and beyond. Bunking there for the night was not a hardship and now it was time to head back to the realities of life on a farm.

A last hug and the lift whispered me down to the tranquil granite-lined, tropical plant-filled foyer. Huge wall to ceiling, gleaming glass doors beckoned me forward.

A discreet button pointed 'tap to exit'. I elbow tapped. Nothing. I tapped again. Slight mechanical noise. I tapped again and again and by the tenth tap I threw the elbow out and finger stabbed. I suppose I was a good twenty stabs in when I decided that this swishy, swanky piece of Auckland architecture was just a pile of rubbish and I would have go back up to my sister's floor and get some help.

I wanted to go up but the elevator was not of a mind to grant me that wish. Down certainly, but up? Certainly not. I retreated into the menacing, granite foyer with the threatening flora. I looked around. Nobody anywhere.

By now it was creeping towards 9am, the time I was meeting my friend



Gloved, masked, sanitised and sanitised some more I finally met our beloved baby. A miracle of love, life and family.

Brenda Liddiard. I had bought a painting from her. She would be waiting.

"I'll phone her," I said. "No I won't," I replied, as I pictured my phone locked inside the car.

Looking around I noticed ground floor flats. I knocked on every single one of those feckers and no one was home. I tried another 'tap to exit'. Liar. Then, as if in slow motion, a woman walked out of the lift. She was surprised to see a flustered old woman shuffling rapidly towards her.

"I can't get out! Can you let me out?" implored the old one.

"Oh yes," she smiled divinely, "it can be a little stiff. You just tap this button."

"Just tap it!" I said, keeping the maniacal look to a minimum. "Just tap it! Yes, I did try that."

"Oh?" she puzzled as she tapped the button and ... pushed the door...

Well I didn't see that coming. Tap and push. No I didn't see that one coming at all.

I thanked her and leapt into my car. Turned on the GPS but forgot the sound. Sound is helpful in a city raging with cars, red cones and workmen. No

sound means wrong lanes and wrong lanes means upsetting Serena. Serena is the woman who lives in my phone.

One U-turn and a few special words later and I was back on track heading down Mercury Lane. I had been promised a parking building and there it was smiling its welcome. I smiled back and drove into its dark embrace. A little too dark perhaps. HmMMM. A young man chatted by explaining that this was a residents-only building.

I smiled my thanks and headed back from whence I had come. One small problem. The whence I had come was now blocked by huge metal gates. Another wait, another rescue.

Just around the corner a Wilson's car park beamed and asked its ransom. I paid. Collected my painting with a second one to keep it company and headed home. One wee stop at my 'Why Knot' shop and I was gone.

Can't wait to see you again wee Albert. Can't wait for your chuckles.

And if I could, I would bottle all that security and love from your mummy and your daddy and your mormor and give it to anyone and everyone who could do with an extra hug. ●

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