

BAY BUZZ

2023
MAY
+JUNE

Art and soul
Keeping the spirit uplifted

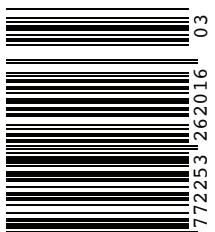
Bridges of Hawke's Bay County
Rebuilding the connections

Let's talk about sex
What are kids being taught?



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OF HAWKE'S BAY

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OF HAWKE'S BAY

Location, location, location!

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Photo: Florence Charvin

BayBuzz
May + June
2023

Making the tough recovery choices. Ecosystems have suffered too. Will bridges ever last? Wairoa's self-help prevails. Too little action on climate. Sex ed in the classroom. Grading Unison. Renewables prospering. Meet REDA. HB arts rebounding. Our Pacifika community. Winemakers re-group. Pillars of resilience. Miracle workers: sauce & sleep.



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Articles online at:
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Editorial enquiries
editors@baybuzz.co.nz

Advertising enquiries
Mandy Wilson
027 593 5575
mandy@baybuzz.co.nz

Reach BayBuzz by mail
BayBuzz, PO Box 8322,
Havelock North



About the cover

If we are to safeguard our environment we must ensure the next generation is aware of their inheritance and trust they will nurture it. See page 18 for Tess Redgrave's report on how we are doing. Photo: Florence Charvin

BayBuzz Team

EDITOR: Tom Belford
LIFE EDITOR: Michal McKay
SENIOR WRITERS: Tom Belford; Abby Beswick; Rosheen FitzGerald; Bonnie Flaws; Michal McKay; Tess Redgrave; Mark Sweet
COLUMNISTS: Andrew Frame; Fiona Fraser; Yvonne Lorkin; Kate McLeay; Paul Paynter; Dominic Salmon; Jess Soutar Barron; Ian Thomas; Louise Ward
BUSINESS WRITER: Brenda Newth
VIDEOGRAPHER: Patrick O'Sullivan
EDITOR'S RIGHT HAND: Brooks Belford
PHOTOGRAPHY: Florence Charvin
ILLUSTRATION: Ruth Mitchener; Brett Monteith
DESIGN: Unit Design - Max Parkes; Giselle Reid
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Giselle Reid
ONLINE: Elizabeth-Marie Nes; Lee Tong
BUSINESS MANAGER: Steph Lowry
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From the editor Tom Belford

Much of this edition is about recovery.

What councils, businesses, our creative sector, community groups, need to do - are doing - to re-group and chart a path to a more sustainable future for Hawke's Bay.

I suppose each of us looks at the situation through different lenses. For some, disaster still stares in their face each day, while for others a few hours of power loss are already history. Others are moving on to repairing and rebuilding. And others are charged with the official responsibility for making tough planning decisions that will shape the future economic, social and environmental well-being of our region.

Their choices would be hard enough as it is, without the additional need to contemplate that disasters like Cyclone Gabrielle are expected to become more 'commonplace' as the planet warms.

We will all be challenged around issues of risk tolerance, short versus long-term costs and benefits, defining what's best for most, sharing public

burdens, and even safeguarding our individual mental wellness and stamina.

One presentation I heard talked about the psychological healing from a catastrophic event like this cyclone taking perhaps two or three years to process. Acknowledging that, we all need to be attentive to the needs of each other.

At the same time, it's not all doom. There are opportunities to be captured as we rebuild wiser, causes around which we can collaborate as a community, and occasions and achievements to celebrate too.

Our articles provide information and views from all these perspectives. I hope you find them insightful and helpful.

Finally, with great sadness, I want to note the passing of Napier's legendary social justice advocate Pat Magill, at age 96.

I first met and started writing about Pat and his exploits, especially his championing of the Napier Pilot City Trust, in 2008. Of course, by then

Pat was already 50-60 years into his advocacy of social justice, community development, crime prevention and criminal justice reform, improved Pakeha/Māori relationships, and overall social well-being.

Pat fervently believed our local councils had an important role to play in these matters, a view which had not been traditionally accepted. But with his sheer passion and persistence coupled with a lovable manner he made his views impossible to resist. The book about his life is aptly titled, *Pat Magill - Leading From the Front - a vocal advocate for love, inclusion and a better New Zealand.*

Pat's touching of us made us better. Very few communities are blessed with the likes of Pat Magill, and we desperately need more of them to inspire and lead us.

Tom Belford



Pat's touching of us made us better. Very few communities are blessed with the likes of Pat Magill, and we desperately need more of them to inspire and lead us.

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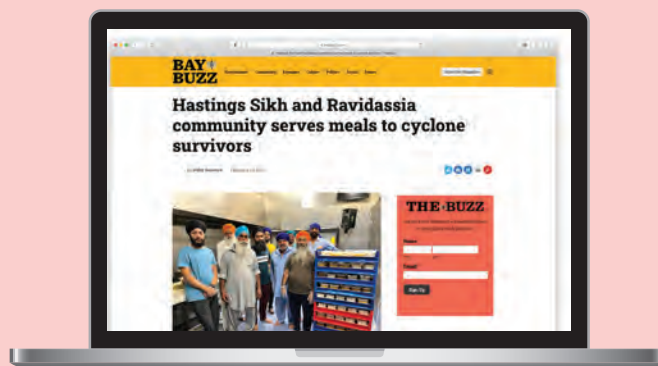
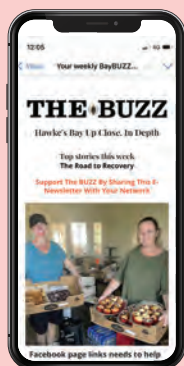
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Our Foundation Sponsors provide year-long support to our magazine and online service, helping to ensure **BayBuzz** can deliver quality journalism to Hawke's Bay readers, connecting and informing our community.

BayBuzz commit

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:

- The most in-depth insight into the major environmental, economic and social issues challenging the region.
- 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.



Not receiving our free weekly e-newsbrief, **The Buzz**? Simply visit www.baybuzz.co.nz and register your email.





SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION TRAINING

Aroā Whakamomori Akoranga Āraitanga

Mates4Life Hawke's Bay is a **FREE** suicide awareness and prevention programme for workplaces and organisations across Hawke's Bay.

Mates4Life is focused on preventing suicide, and assisting workplaces to reduce harm and increase health and safety for their employees.

An employee who is distressed at work is a risk to both themselves and others.

By equipping staff with the skills to recognise that someone is not OK, employers are able to reduce the risk of a workplace incident.

- **CREATED BY HAWKE'S BAY PEOPLE**
- **DELIVERED BY HAWKE'S BAY PEOPLE**
- **FOR HAWKE'S BAY PEOPLE**

"On behalf of Vet Services, I would just like to thank the Mates4Life team. The opportunity to participate in this programme has been amazing. The way you guys deliver your messages and the interaction with people is a credit to you all. Talking about such a difficult topic and the way you normalise it really is what makes it work. Our business has definitely benefited immensely from this experience and Hawke's Bay is so lucky to have you all to deliver this message."

Camille Flack – Vet Services Hawke's Bay

"The session was well received, people have come away feeling more comfortable to start a conversation with someone at work. It has also given them the tools to connect with a friend or family member that may be suffering. The more people talking about mental health, suicide awareness and prevention the more likely we will be able to reduce these numbers. The Mates4Life programme better equips people with the skills to start a conversation and keep someone safe."

Gavin Streeter – Isaacs Plumbing, Pumping, Electrical



REGISTER YOUR ORGANISATION HERE: www.mates4life.org.nz

BayBuzz Hero Jack Jensen

The arrival and aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle saw the emergence of thousands of local heroes who stepped up to help our communities. The stories of selfless support – we could fill a book!

Here at *BayBuzz*, we were really struck by the individual effort of Jack Jensen, due to the collaborative approach and Jack's focus on mental health. MSFT Productions founder and creator Jack has for the third March in a row run 'Spark That Chat', a month-long awareness and fundraising campaign.

Jack and his crew picked up shovels and got on diggers and cranked into the physical clean-up work in the first couple of weeks post-Gabrielle, then as things settled into a more official response phase, and March arrived, Jack and MSFT settled into the work of mental health promotion.

Using their massive social media platform, networks, real world community and contacts, MSFT reach out and get people talking. The business and brand itself has grown and developed in parallel with Spark That Chat over these recent years, and MSFT's professional emphasis on the outdoor / adventure sport and events sectors links up fittingly with the need for more chat about mental health, especially for the younger male cohort.

Having lost three mates over three years to mental illness, Jack is passionate about preventing suicide and helping people see all the magic – all the froth! – worth sticking around for. That's why he throws all his time and energy for the month of March into getting people talking, thinking and reaching out. This March he says, it was even more important, given what the people of the Bay have been up against.

As well as content production, MSFT has an apparel arm to the business. All proceeds from apparel in March were donated – over \$29,000 – split evenly between the Mental Health Foundation and Cyclone Relief.

"My whole purpose is to help people," Jack says. "Fortunate to be able to do it."



Photo: Florence Charvin

The Buzz
Lizzie Russell



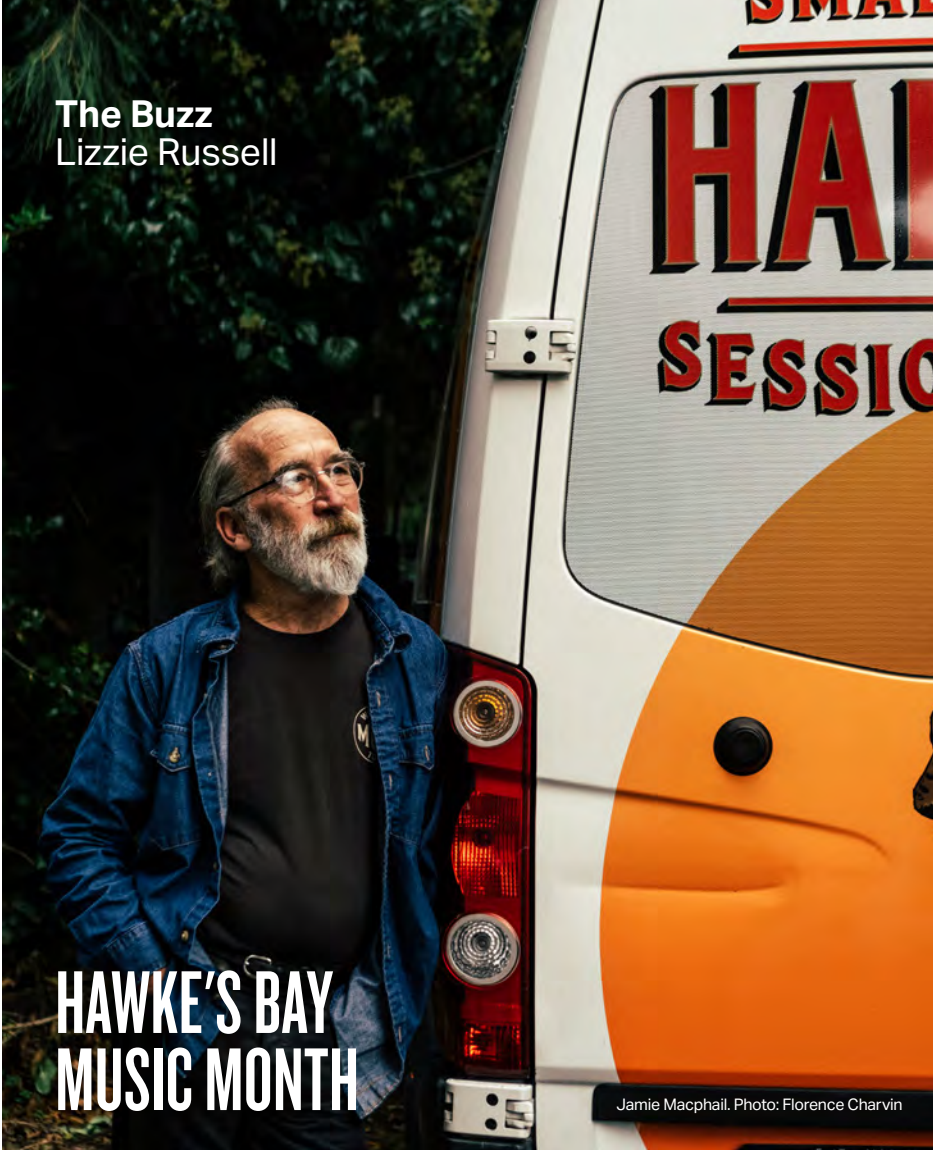
EMERGENCY KIT

In the second half of February, who among us promised that NOW, after THAT, we'd finally put together the emergency kit? And who among us has? Here's your latest reminder to get the essentials packed up and put somewhere accessible for if (when) disaster strikes again. Civil Defence NZ recommends the following contents for your household emergency preparation kit:

- Water for three days or more — make sure you have at least nine litres of water for every person. This will be enough for drinking and basic hygiene.
- Long-lasting food that doesn't need cooking (unless you have a camping stove or gas barbecue) and food for babies and pets.
- Toilet paper and large plastic buckets for an emergency toilet.
- Work gloves and a properly-fitted P2 or N95 mask.
- What we all learned during the Gabrielle days was that cash is king and radio still rules.

Today is the day – get your kit sorted!

The Buzz Lizzie Russell



HAWKE'S BAY MUSIC MONTH

Jamie Macphail. Photo: Florence Charvin

This year, NZ Music Month is HB Music Month, thanks to Jamie Macphail's plan for 16 concerts around the region throughout the month.

If you've had the pleasure of attending any of Jamie's Small Hall Sessions concerts over the last couple of years, you'll understand the unique, warm, generous vibe and the quality of live music on offer. Since the beginning of the Small Hall Sessions, we've been introduced to fantastic artists from outside the Bay and outside Aotearoa. So this feels like great timing, to celebrate and discover local talent and come together as community in these special community spaces, after all that the region has experienced in recent months.

"As a community we are in a state of shock and recovery; it's the right time to help provide income and an audience to Hawke's Bay artists," says Jamie. "It's also a chance for respite and community building ... music unifies and heals."

"Small Hall Sessions are a catalyst for gathering, and these HB Music Month gigs will be too. When a community comes together it grows stronger. People find comfort in the company

of others, and they can lean on one another and connect with each other on a really meaningful level," Jamie says.

"Live music is a panacea, a fortifier and a sanctuary."

Each of the 90-minute concerts, each in a different hall, will include an emerging artist, an established artist and an artist with a national profile. The line-ups have been selected and curated by Sarah Terry, Head of the School of Music at EIT; Richie Jackman, owner of Napier Music Machine; and Kevin Murphy, Events Manager for NCC and founder of The Backline Trust.

Tickets to the gigs are being kept low at \$25 each, thanks to support from Hawke's Bay's councils and the NZ Music Commission.

Check out the offering at smallhallsessions.co.nz to suss out which (and how many) gigs you're going to head on out to. From Maraekakaho to Matapiro, Pōrangahau to Puketapu, and a dozen other spots in between, these are going to be some very rewarding and enriching road trips!

SMITH & SHETH Sommelier Sidebar



Wine clubs have been on the radar of wine aficionados for decades, but have recently entered a new era with improved technology and familiarity with online subscription services in our post-lockdown world. However, not all wine clubs are created equal. Smith & Sheth sommelier Jason Lambert offers his top three tips on what to look for in a great wine club.

Access to unique and rare wines

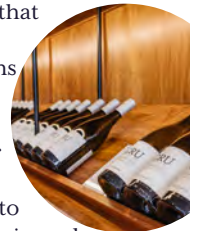
A regular shipment of current release wines simply isn't enough these days.



A great wine club should offer special library and limited release wines just for its members throughout the year. We love being able to surprise our Whānau members with a special mixed pack of both current and back vintage wines we know they've enjoyed previously.

Flexibility

Everyone's budget looks a little different, so a club that offers a range of membership options ticks the flexibility box. At Smith & Sheth, we offer 6 or 12-pack shipment options, the ability to customise the wines in each delivery and pause or skip a shipment without penalty.



Simplicity

Spend less time worrying about logistics and more time enjoying what's in the delivery. A great wine club makes it clear what you'll receive each shipment, the cost, and reliable delivery. Getting exceptional wine to your doorstep doesn't need to be difficult, and with a dedicated wine concierge, we're pretty proud of our seamless Smith & Sheth wine club experience.



Ready to join a wine club that makes you feel like whānau? Come and chat with our Oenothèque team or book a call online with our wine concierge for more information. Jason ☞

www.smithandsheth.com

The Buzz
Lizzie Russell



N.O.W. NILS ON WHEELS

For a coastal city, Napier has few spots to sip coffee and take in an unimpeded ocean view. Nils Kuhlsen has rolled NOW Coffee into Westshore and is filling that gap.

Known and loved by many a hospo teammate and punter (you may recognise him from Emporium, Matisse, more recently The Tennyson), German-born Nils is now out on his own, in his re-furbed 1978 Bedford bus, parked up opposite Westshore School overlooking the beach.

School parents, teachers, tradies, morning walkers, and locals on their commute climb the bus steps each morning and slide into the retro vinyl seats to get caffeinated and catch up. On sunny days, people lounge on the grassy slope that leads toward the beach. On rainy days, the bus is a cosy hideout.

In a project that has taken four years, Nils has given the interior and exterior of the bus the full treatment, keeping the nostalgia, but updating the power source to solar, so there's no noisy generator, just the sound of the waves as they tumble to shore, the frothing of milk for a perfect Switch flat white, and friendly chatter as the morning soundtrack.

Nils is in his seaside spot Tuesday to Saturday, 7am to midday.

Photos: Florence Charvin



LET'S TALK TUKITUKI AUTUMN SERIES

Meeting

Venue

Monday 22 May	10:00am	Lantern Gallery, Havelock North Function Centre 30 Te Mata Road Havelock North
Monday 22 May	5:30pm	Onga Onga Community Hall 34 Bridge Street Onga Onga
Tuesday 23 May	5:30pm	Otane Town Hall, Higgins Street, Otane
Wednesday 24 May	5:30pm	Maraekakaho Church Hall 50 Kereru Road, Maraekakaho
Thursday 25 May	5:00pm	Clubs Hastings, 308 Victoria Street Hastings Upstairs
Friday 26 May	10:00am	St Andrews Lounge, 300 Market Street Hastings

**All meetings are walk in*

These meetings are an opportunity for me to hear about what's important to you, and to let you know more about how the Government is working together with Hawke's Bay and Tuketuki. To keep connected on the work we are doing, please sign up to my email newsletter at lorcktalk@parliament.govt.nz, and if you would like me to hold a meeting in your community, please get in touch with my office.

Anna Lorck Your MP for Tuketuki
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Authorised by Anna Lorck MP,
129 Queen Street East, Hastings





Climate (in)action

“everything, everywhere, all at once”

With so many developments to absorb on the climate change front, it’s perhaps best to start with the big picture and work our way back to how New Zealand and Hawke’s Bay presently fit in.

Global scene

In the last few months, international debate has been driven by the ‘Synthesis Report’ issued by the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in March. In 37 pages it summarises the 10,000 pages of research the IPCC has released over the past five years. It sets the stage for COP 28 at year’s end.

Said UN Secretary Antonio Guterres: “Humanity is on thin ice - and that ice is melting fast ... This report is a clarion call to massively fast-track climate efforts by every country and every sector and on every timeframe. In short, our world needs climate action on all fronts - everything, everywhere, all at once.”

The IPCC report observes:

- “Global GHG emissions in 2030 implied by nationally determined contributions (NDCs) announced by October 2021 make it *likely* that warming will exceed 1.5°C during the 21st century and make it harder to limit warming below 2°C. There are gaps between projected emissions

from implemented policies and those from NDCs, and finance flows fall short of the levels needed to meet climate goals across all sectors and regions.”

- “Limiting human-caused global warming requires net zero CO2 emissions.”
- “If warming exceeds a specified level such as 1.5°C, it could gradually be reduced again by achieving and sustaining net negative global CO2 emissions. This would require additional deployment of carbon dioxide removal, compared to pathways without overshoot, leading to greater feasibility and sustainability concerns. Overshoot entails adverse impacts, some irreversible, and additional risks for human and natural systems, all growing with the magnitude and duration of overshoot.”
- The report emphasises that nations must address both mitigation (actual reduction of GHG emissions) and adaptation, noting: “Delayed mitigation and adaptation action would lock-in high-emissions infrastructure, raise risks of stranded assets and cost-escalation, reduce feasibility, and increase losses and damages.” Without mitigation, adaptation options will become increasingly constrained and less effective.

- “The choices and actions implemented in this decade will have impacts now and for thousands of years.”

In short, the panel says the world must cut GHG emissions to 60% below 2019 levels by 2035 (and emissions must peak before 2025 for a 50% chance to hit 1.5C with little or no overshoot) - or we’re screwed ... and collectively nations are nowhere close to doing that.

Authors do emphasise that the technical know-how is available to meet the challenge. Even Guterres calls the report “a how-to guide to defuse the climate time-bomb”. What is lacking is political will.

Under the Paris Agreement, nations were required to submit commitments (Nationally determined contributions - NDCs) regarding the GHG emissions reductions they would make by 2050. The next round of NDCs must be made in 2025, and nations will begin to formulate fresh commitments as the next global climate conference (COP27) occurs this December.

Guterres wants developed countries to reach net zero by 2040, not 2050. He calls for no new coal plants by 2030, an end to burning coal in rich countries that same year and all countries by 2040, and ceasing all licensing and funding of new oil and gas.

In the meantime, China has approved

more coal projects than all other nations combined in 2022, while the US proposes new oil drilling in Alaska.

New Zealand lags

So, how is New Zealand faring?

Since 1990, the base year for all nations reporting to the UN, New Zealand's gross emissions have increased by 19% and net emissions by 25%. Only the waste sector's emissions have decreased (by 18%) since 1990, as we have got better at managing solid waste at municipal landfills. NZ has had the second-highest increase in net emissions since 1990 of industrialised nations, behind Turkey. We rank fifth in the OECD for total emissions per capita.

During the 2017 election campaign, Jacinda Ardern asserted: "We will take climate change seriously. This is my generation's nuclear free moment."

Newsroom senior reporter Marc Daalder counters: "I don't think that the action we've seen from the Government over the past two terms, or over any term of Parliament ever, has been consistent with Jacinda Ardern's proclamation."

Our Climate Commission has been quite grumpy that its recommendations for tougher emissions policies have not been accepted by the Government.

However, NZ does now have the Zero Carbon Act and the Climate Change Commission, as well as its first Emissions Reduction Plan, a roadmap for emissions reductions over the next 15 years (arguably sufficient to meet NZ's current NDC commitment under the Paris Agreement). And we're a world leader in renewable energy - only Norway and Brazil generate a higher share of renewable energy.

We aim to be carbon neutral by 2050, with biogenic methane emissions at 24-47% below 2017 levels. All farms were to have measured their GHG emissions by the end of 2022 and have mitigation plans in place by 2025.

Some good news from the Ministry for the Environment is that NZ gross GHG emissions in 2021 were down 0.7% from 2020, after a 3% decrease in gross emissions in 2020 compared to 2019.

With the country's transport fleet responsible for 39% of total domestic CO₂ emissions, the rapid uptake of electric vehicles is a positive trend. Our car fleet is one of the dirtiest in the OECD. About 20% of the 100,000 light vehicles sold in New Zealand last year were battery electric. There are more than 69,000 EVs - plug-in and full-electric - on the roads, a more than 80% jump

During the 2017 election campaign, Jacinda Ardern asserted: "We will take climate change seriously. This is my generation's nuclear free moment."

compared with the end of 2021.

A new national EV charging strategy recently announced by Transport Minister Michael Wood aims to provide charging hubs every 150-200 kilometres on main highways, a public charger for every 20-40 EVs in urban areas, and public charging at community facilities for all settlements with 2,000 or more people. This would see tens of thousands more EV chargers across the country.

The Government also plans to revise consenting rules related to wind and solar installations, after a March Infrastructure Commission report said that NZ needed to dramatically speed up the consenting process for new power projects to have any chance of meeting its 2050 GHG emissions targets.

Announcing the planned rules, Environment Minister David Parker said: "We are not saying that everything should be consented, but it needs to be easier than it is now." The new rules provide for fast tracking wind/solar consent applications and address issues like 'amenities', where 'outstanding landscape' concerns have prevented the development of wind farms in particular. The discussion document says: "[It would] enable renewable electricity generation activities in other areas, including where there are potential adverse effects on local amenity values, so long as effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated to the extent practicable." Parker says the need for renewable energy must be recognised and every region needs to do its bit.

Alongside a promising trend with respect to EVs, we've had declining coal use, with less coal burned in the last quarter of 2022 than any quarter since 1990.

However, the Government is yet to finalise terms with respect to pricing agricultural emissions, our biggest problem. A levy structure for farm emissions was outlined late last year, and a pricing system must be in place by 2025, but details are yet to follow. Until this is resolved, it's impossible to envision how NZ meets the aspirations of the UN and, more critically, the needs of the planet.

Will we toughen up on climate action? It wasn't a good sign when the

Cabinet dismissed the recommendations of the Climate Commission and Climate Minister James Shaw late last year and suppressed the possible price of carbon in NZ's Emissions Trading Scheme. A higher price range, as recommended, would have incentivised decarbonisation.

Commission Chair Rod Carr wrote to Newsroom: "... If the Government chooses to constrain price discovery, the NZ ETS will play a weaker role and the Government - now and in the future - is more likely to need to adjust the emissions reduction plan to include further regulations and other policies to drive emissions reductions and ensure budgets will be met."

And if we do not actually reduce emissions more aggressively, NZ will need to try to buy its way to net zero by purchasing offsetting overseas carbon credits, at a cost that could hit \$24 billion, according to a Government report in April.

With a slowed and inflationary economy, politicians as a breed are loath to support initiatives that involve near-term costs with long-term benefits. And the NZ consumers who elect them seem to be no different. The percentage of Kiwis committed to "living a sustainable lifestyle" has dropped from a 13-year high of 43% in Kantar's 2022 report to 32% in this year's survey, Better Futures 2023. Climate change does not rank amongst the top ten concerns of New Zealanders (although extreme weather events ranks eighth).

Choosing a more aggressive path to reducing NZ emissions is confronted by that reality. Yet the cost of not tackling GHG emission aggressively is daunting. A March report by Deloitte - *Asia-Pacific's Turning Point* - says that a business-as-usual approach will actually reduce GDPs.

Looking at New Zealand, Deloitte says: "This report challenges the assumption there is an additional cost burden to decarbonising New Zealand's economy over the next decade, by showing the direct connection between decisive climate action and future economic prosperity."

The report estimates a \$4.4 billion loss in NZ's GDP from 'inadequate' climate action by 2050 (escalating to \$48 billion by 2070) versus a \$64 billion gain from 'decisive' action (i.e., action that kept temperature rise to 1.5C). The 'turning point' for NZ where the benefits of rapid decarbonisation outweigh the costs could occur around 2036 says Deloitte.

Says Deloitte: "Under 'decisive action', New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions

Decarbonisation can be an economic engine

Inadequate climate action could take
-\$4.4 billion
off New Zealand's GDP, in net present-value terms by 2050, if warming reaches 3°C*



Decisive climate action could add

\$64 billion

to New Zealand's GDP, in net present-value terms, by 2050 if warming is limited to 1.5°C, compared to inadequate climate action**

* Inadequate climate action aligns with the SSP2-4.5 scenario.

** Decisive climate action aligns with the SSP1-1.9 scenario.

reduce by 75% in total by 2050 compared to 2022.” Efforts required include “incentivising investment in decarbonisation in key areas to reduce biogenic methane, set up new markets and infrastructure for renewable energy (e.g., hydrogen), and meet the needs of an increasingly electric fleet (e.g., transmission and rapid charge infrastructure).” Currently we are committed internationally to emissions reduction of 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.

Of special importance to NZ's export-driven economy, Deloitte warns: “If no change is made and New Zealand falls behind, key exports could be impacted as trading partners commit to net zero targets and start to focus on the sustainability of their imports.” As then-PM Ardern noted last year in previewing the Government's agricultural emissions approach:

“With or without the Government's proposals the world is changing and New Zealand needs to be at the front of the queue to stay competitive in a market that is increasingly demanding sustainably produced products.

“Tesco, the biggest buyer of New Zealand products in Britain, wants all their products to be environmentally accredited and reach net zero across their entire supply chain by 2050.”

Heaps of economic analyses echo the proposition that the economic benefits of renewable and circular energy products and services (and avoidance of damaging effects) will surpass the losses associated with clinging to carbon.

Is HB hot about climate change?

Not really.

We have a Climate Ambassador,

Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau, at the Regional Council. In response to Cyclone Gabrielle, she recently wrote: “But more than ever, we must ask how we can slow this thing down. We're in a leaky boat and we can't just keep bailing out the water; we have to try and close up the leaky hole. Slow down the catastrophic events.”

The rhetoric seems more urgent than the action.

Our territorial authorities have appointed staff leads for marshaling climate action in their jurisdictions, having been handed profiles of each jurisdiction's GHG emissions. And a working group convened by HBRC including these folks and a small number of outside voices are supposed to be developing a regional Emissions Reduction Plan.

Apparently that plan will include: Waste, Working with Nature, Transport, Emissions efficiencies in the rebuild. Will the plan have some real grunt, or will we simply be urged to recycle, cycle for recreation and scooter around Napier more?

HBRC is working on a *Climate Change Risk Explorer*, a spatial-based risk assessment tool that layers hazards, assets and other information under different climate scenarios, potentially of use in informing recovery plans.

The working group has no primary sector representation. Addressing the region's agricultural emissions seems to be in the ‘too hard’ basket. Precisely at a time when re-thinking the ‘how, where and what’ of our region's agricultural economy should be a top priority.

Fortunately, the gap in council leadership has not stopped businesses like

Napier Port, HB Airport, Pan Pac, Silver Fern Farms, WineWorks and others – from progressing major sustainability programmes that include reducing their carbon footprints. *BayBuzz* has been reporting on these initiatives online.

Climate work has undoubtedly been slowed by cyclone emergency demands on council staffs. But perhaps of greater worry is the public's apathy and competing worries, like inflation.

This warning is raised by the Kantar survey, which observes in its conclusions: “Perhaps the issue of greatest surprise is the 24-39% of those who were affected by Cyclone Gabrielle who still do not rate Extreme Weather as an issue of concern.”

Reports and economic analyses from the UN and the likes of Deloitte and virtually every global food producer/ marketer are not at the top of most consumers' reading lists.

But if this cyclone event in our own back yard hasn't served as a blaring alarm that we cannot proceed business-as-usual, it's hard to imagine what might spur more urgent action in all sectors, by all players, to both mitigate and adapt to global warming.

As UN Secretary Antonio Guterres pleads: “... our world needs climate action on all fronts – everything, everywhere, all at once.” If you read nothing else about what must be done, **scan and read his full remarks** accompanying the Synthesis Report. ●



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**OUR
ENVIRONMENT
IS HURTING
TOO**



Story by Tess Redgrave

Photo by Florence Charvin

When Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) scientists tested the quality of water in the Eskdale River in early April, they found one lonesome bug.

"This means the river is pretty well lifeless," says Science Manager, Dr Anna Madarasz-Smith.

When Cyclone Gabrielle slammed into Hawke's Bay unleashing rainfall levels 500% above normal, and river flow averaging more than 1000% above normal, it set in motion a chain reaction of events that are still unfolding in our landscapes and natural environments.

Here's another example. Waitangi Park and the adjacent Waikahu wetland on our Hawke Bay seafront were ravaged by the cyclone. Even in early April, the area looked like a bomb site with flax and grasses contorted backwards, dried silt and mud jostling for room with piles of wood debris, and bits of jack-knifed railway track lying about.

In 2018 Ngāti Parau hapū and iwi, Forest and Bird and other organisations worked alongside HBRC to create the 15-hectare Waikahu wetland focused on restoring the mauri of the awa by providing new habitat for mahinga kai and taonga species.

Although it's thought the wetland is recoverable, the cyclone has nonetheless wiped out years of patient restoration work, and it's not just the plants that are suffering.

Ngaio Tiuka, director of the Ngāti Kahungunu Taiao Unit, wonders about the special spawning grounds created for fishes, and inanga (whitebait) in particular, to migrate into the wetland.

With the wetland lying two metres above the Tūtaekurī River, a fish pass mimicking a small stream was built with resting pools for the fish to pause on their journey.

Inanga normally spawn on a king tide laying their eggs in grassed areas where water transitions from salty to

"It's time to press the reset button."

Nathan Burkpile

fresh. A month or so later, and on the next king tide, the eggs hatch and the juveniles all go out into the river and then out to sea.

"But the storm has modified their habitat," says Tiuka. "The river banks have been scoured out and are now too steep for fish to get up. Inanga spawning is likely to suffer."

If these things are happening at one wetland and one river, what is the ecology like across HB's many streams and estuaries? Are there plenty of macroinvertebrates like crabs, bivalves, worms, amphipods to keep the water healthy?

HBRC's Pieri Munro says understanding the impact of the cyclone event on our rivers, lakes, estuaries and coast, as well as on our land, will take many months of data collection and analysis.

"It is also likely that these effects will last for many more months," he says, "as sediment deposition in rivers and estuaries continues to impact ecosystems."

HBRC's science team is working with top scientists from NIWA, GNS and New Zealand universities to measure and understand the impact of cyclone Gabrielle on our environment. Slips, landslides and areas of soil erosion are being mapped, measured and tested for their stability, and laser technology is being used to understand how river channels might have changed with the floods and therefore potentially behave differently in the future.

Professor James Brasington, director of the Waterways Centre for Freshwater Management at Canterbury University and working with NIWA and HBRC, has developed 3D models of flood affected regions of Hawke's Bay and Gisborne using high resolution helicopter laser scanning. With this data he had been able to map, by early April, the distribution of silt (sediments) deposited in the Eskdale Valley and said then "we estimate the flood deposits from Cyclone Gabrielle [in the Esk] are about 8,500,000 tonnes".

The recently-formed Silt Recovery Taskforce comprising HBRC and

"Now is the time to step back and rethink things holistically and intergenerationally"

Emma Horgan-Heke,
Environment Centre

Hastings District Council (HDC) staff says it will likely take many months, if not years, to remove silt deposited on orchards, farms, roads and residential properties across the Hastings district - depending on how much is recoverable.

But let's pause here. Is it sediment? Or silt? Or both?

Associate Professor Peter Almond, from Lincoln University's soil and physical sciences department, says 'silt' is being used as a generic term for the sediment that has ended up on floodplains in Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti.

And local soil scientist, Phillip Scofield says the sediment that came down our rivers is made up of various proportions of silt, sand and clay depending on the rate of water flow that distributed them. Each has a different mixture of soil particles:

- Clay - less than two microns in size. Soft and sticky, and shiny and smooth on the surface.
- Silt - the particles between two microns and 50 microns. Soft and smooth. Silky between the fingers. Has ripples and patterns to it.
- Sand - bigger particles again from 50 microns to 2 mm - then it's called gravel.

"Silt, sand, and clay is about half of what a really healthy soil is," says Scofield who is Chair of the HB Future Farming Trust. "The rest is mainly air, water, and organic matter."

He is hopeful that sediment that is only about half a metre deep can be remediated by getting life living in it again as soon as possible, "getting roots in it, aerating it and rebuilding it".

We know sediment has damaged some 4,000 hectares of arable HB land and 47% of crops, and wreaked havoc on people's lives and homes.

But what about the sediment that has been spewed out to sea by the Tutaekuri, Ngaruroro and Eskdale river mouths, and there, mixed with among other things, sewerage that has bypassed the biological trickling filter plant at Napier City Council's damaged sewerage treatment station?

Pieri Munro says because of contaminants from urban and rural land flushed into our waterways, rivers and beaches across Hawke's Bay remain unsafe for swimming. He says HBRC water quality monitoring is ongoing and *BayBuzz* understands results will feed into both LAWA (Land, Air, Water Aotearoa) National River Water Quality updates and HBRC's next SoE (State of the Environment) reporting.

It is also likely, that because of land

"We are part of the taiao and we have to look after natural processes and work within limitations."

Ngaio Tiuka,
Ngāti Kahungunu

and stream bank damage, any rain event could remobilise sediment out-pur into our sea.

And in fact, many of our inland streams and waterways have been gouged out with flooding, riparian plants that have died or washed away, and trees fallen or dying a slow death because their roots have been immersed in water for too long.

The once picturesque Karamu Stream walk weaving below Havelock North is an example of this - a ghost of its former self.

Planting at Irongate Stream, which flows into the Karamu at Longlands, "has been pretty well wiped out," says Tom Cole, tree planting co-coordinator for Forest and Bird's Havelock Hastings branch.

"The flooding caused the water to pond and some 4,000 trees and over 30 species planted by Forest and Bird in the last two years are gone."

"It's disappointing but I guess if you plant on a flood plain this is the risk. We will need to discuss whether to re-plant or change tack for the future?"

Cyclone damage to Te Mata Peak was "significant", says Mike Devonshire, chair of Te Mata Park Trust.

"We estimate over 100 slips occurred throughout the Park and we lost several hundred young trees due to the slips. Many larger trees were lost, and more were damaged that have since been removed due to safety concerns."

With trees down across the Bay and bird habitats lost, many say they've noticed a reduction in bird numbers and an increase in insects.

"Flooding displaces many pest animal populations from their natural habitat," explains Pieri Munro. "Add to this widespread debris and spoilt agricultural produce and potentially it fuels an increase in populations."

Farmer and Gimblett Gravels viticulturalist Bruce Wills says there are "definitely less birds about", though he doesn't have hard evidence other than not needing bird nets on his grapes this year!

Wills is Chair of the QEII National

Trust and a past National President of Federated Farmers. He has been up in a helicopter surveying cyclone damage on our inland farming landscapes and gives me a birdseye view.

"Some areas have been untouched while others have been wiped off the face of the earth," he says. "Trees are down everywhere and 100s and 100s of kilometres of fences have been severely damaged or lost, particularly in gorges and steep areas.

"Our national practice of riparian planting has been destroyed too with scores of kilometres washed away. In some cases flaxes have been unearthed and have floated down narrow flooded streams blocking them.

"Riparian planting is nice to have and good for keeping stock away from the water. But now there is a whole question around riparian planting. It's not the golden panacea we thought it was. I talked to one farmer that had seven kilometres of riparian planting on a small but significant stream. He'd spent time and money on this but not a single plant is left now and no fences. What does he do now? We are encouraged by government and council to do this stuff. But is it sensible to go back and repeat?"

Also a member and former president of the NZ Poplar and Willow Research Trust and member of the Right Trees, Right Place Trust, Wills says it is estimated that *pinus radiata* accounts for 80% of Gisborne's foreshore debris, while wooded debris that's washed up on Hawke Bay's foreshore is only about 20% *pinus radiata*. [A HBRC report that came out after this assessment confirmed that HB foreshore debris consisted of a mixture of pine, willow, poplar and 'other'. At all but one of the surveyed sites, there was little evidence of slash, indicating that the majority of pine came from erosion of hillsides and streambanks.]

Another new dilemma for Bruce Wills and QEII is what to do with covenanted native plantings that have been destroyed in the cyclone. There are more than 250 covenants on farm lands across Hawke's Bay. Once land is covenanted it is legally retired for conservation "in perpetuity".

"How are we going to manage this,?" asks Wills. "If a block of bush has been destroyed should we covenant it? Or do we consider uplifting the covenant? We're going to have to be pragmatic and make sensible calls. It's too early to assess exact numbers and damage but it is something we have to consider."

Ask Wills to tell us in one sentence

what we need to do to protect farmland from future cyclones and he says, “plant trees, keep stones out of the rivers, and shoot deer.”

Conservationist, scientist and chair of Biodiversity Hawke’s Bay’s Trust, Charles Daugherty says deer are contributing to HB and NZ’s carbon emissions. “They undermine biodiversity initiatives big time by causing soil and vegetation loss that makes flooding worse when it happens.”

To find out more about this, I contemplate the Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges as I sit talking with retired Taradale land management specialist Garth Eyles.

Eyles began his career with the Ministry of Works and has worked in land and soil management and biodiversity programmes all his working life.

“The importance of the Tararua, Ruahine, Kaweka, and Kaimanawa ranges to Hawke’s Bay is not understood by most people,” says Eyles.

“These ranges are where our rivers start and where our water supplies come from. However, the ranges are unstable. They comprise very broken and easily shattered greywacke rock.”

Eyles says HB’s land is young - just a baby - at two and a half million years old with the greywacke at its surface constantly shifting. (By comparison Australia is billions of years old.)

“We think we can stabilise our land, but we can’t. Geologically it’s an active environment.”

The Ruahine and Kaweka with their unstable greywacke are where the highest rainfalls occur both in volume and intensity. And it’s this combination of natural instability and location that make the ranges extremely susceptible

to massive erosion during major rainfall events.

“The only natural condition limiting this risk is the quality of the native vegetation that holds the surface together,” says Eyles.

And here we return to the subject of deer. He has long worried about the fragility of the greywacke and how feral deer in ever increasing numbers chomp down the native forest’s understory exposing rock so that when a cyclone hits “all hell breaks loose” as about 40% mudstone and 60% sandstone greywacke is swept in bulk down into the rivers to become sediment and gravel.

In January 2022 Eyles wrote a Talking Point in *Hawke’s Bay Today* arguing that a lack of effective deer control for the past 40 years had severely damaged the vegetation on the HB mountain ranges.

“At a time of climate change when rainfall intensities are meant to increase, it is ludicrous that the administrations of DoC and HBRC have allowed the potential erosion risk in the ranges to increase,” he wrote.

“All that is needed is a cyclone hitting the ranges and waves of gravel will once again come down the rivers ...”

Eyles was on the metal. The rest is history.

Now more than ever, he wants to see feral deer wiped out of our ranges.

“In recent years we have had so much sediment channelled out to sea by our stopbanks,” he says.

“Now we need bigger stop banks because we don’t look after our mountain land properly.”

Hawke’s Bay’s taiao, from our mountains to the sea, is hurting. And yet it

is this same environment, and the way we treat it, that for many can be part of the road to healing, resilience and to a new future.

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua - “I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past” - is relevant here. New thinking in landscape architecture showcased in a viewpoint in *Newsroom* after the Auckland floods [<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/comment/practical-strategies-for-climate-change>] suggests if we pay close attention to the underlying indigenous landscapes beneath our urban areas, we may better be able to ‘slow down’ the impacts of flooding.

Garth Eyles notes core sampling from Lake Tutira that shows there have been seven storms bigger than Cyclone Bola in the seven thousand years since it was formed.

Flooding is deeply embedded in our region’s history. There is a story of missionary William Colenso in his whare at Waitangi Mission Station in Clive, in the mid 1840s, getting out of bed one evening only to find himself wading in water. On opening his front door, he saw a waka and its occupants paddling passed.

Colenso called the Heretaunga Plain “a dirty great swamp”.

The first big flood recorded in Hawke’s Bay was in June 1867. The next, in 1897, with newspaper stories uncannily similar to ours for Cyclone Gabrielle.

“Never in the history of Hawkes Bay has there been such a disaster,” *The Auckland Star* reported on 13 May 1897. “...terrible floods caused great loss of property as well as loss of several lives ... just after dark the large

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embankment at Redcliffe, near the Waiohiki native reserve, at the back of Taradale, burst, being carried away by the great pressure of the flooded Tutaekuri River. Almost at the same time the Ngaruroro River, which flows into the sea at Clive, broke through the railway embankment at Waitangi ...”

A 1938 flood reported 12 feet of silt in some places in Esk valley. In 1980, the Ngaruroro, despite the diversion scheme, broke its banks and 20 kilometres of stopbanks were replaced. There was flooding with Cyclone Bola in 1988 and then in 2018 major flooding and silt again in Esk Valley.

“Why not slowly allow our rivers to return to their original channels and flood plains, as recent floods show they always will?” asks Biodiversity HB’s Charles Daugherty.

“We’ve taken away the rivers’ capacity to deal with, and usually contain, heavy rainfall on the land through wetlands and wide river plains, and their capacity to restore aquifers.”

He suggests we need to start planning for managed retreat. “Countries around the world are implementing this, and guidelines are developing. We’re a huge province and we’ve got room to move people away from the coasts and floodplains.

“The odds are we will get more and bigger storms with the warming of the oceans and atmosphere bringing more rain. And with that don’t we all have a responsibility to think differently as we try to fix things in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle?”

One person whose full time job is to think about our rivers and waterways, is Nathan Burkepile. He cut his teeth on a big natural flood plain management scheme with First Nations in the United States. He is a trained ecologist and now NZ Landcare Trust’s Hawke’s Bay regional coordinator supporting catchment and community groups with the aim of improving our water quality and our environment.

Nathan’s call to action is that “we have to hold water on our land”.

“For a hundred-plus years we’ve drained the land to get water off as quickly as possible. If we hydrate the landscape, water would filter naturally through our land, sink into the ground, reduce downstream flooding and reduce the impacts of drought.

“We need to restore our wetlands, streams and rivers, and plant more trees (mainly natives) in our paddocks to hold water on our land.”

Ironically, Burkepile says Hawke’s Bay

“For a hundred-plus years we’ve drained the land to get water off as quickly as possible. If we hydrate the landscape, water would filter naturally through our land, sink into the ground, reduce downstream flooding and reduce the impacts of drought.”

Nathan Burkepile

could be facing a drought next summer and this concept of “holding water on the land” is the same way to mitigate for heat as for floods. “Water held on the land cools it by as much as two degrees.”

He says we treat our streams like the Karamū and the Taipo as drains pushing water through them instead of letting them connect to the flood-plain and flood regularly. He cites Karituwheua Stream in Havelock North where he has worked with the Fulford Road Landcare Group placing leaky log weirs into the stream to “slow the water down”.

During Cyclone Gabrielle the Tukaekuri and Ngaruroro breached their stopbanks in 22 places - a total of 5.4 kilometres of broken stopbank, 28 kilometres of weakened stopbank, while 190 kilometres is still intact. The broken bits have largely been fixed now by HBRC and Burkepile is not advocating we get rid of them.

“We have to work with the stopbanks,” he says. “But we need to start buying land back either side of them and start pushing them out so the rivers have more room to breathe and we build bigger bridges over them.”

I drive with Burkepile out to Maraekakaho where we look across a lumpy paddock - an old flood plain - to the Ngaruroro stopbank. He suggests we start widening our rivers in their upper catchments - like the place he and I are looking at. “See,” he points, “you could lose marginal grazing land here and gain flood protection to stop flooding further downstream.” It would also encourage water to seep down into the groundwater, or water table, and re-charge the Heretaunga aquifer.

“If we lose some productive land in this process of making room for the rivers perhaps we could grow crops on the floodplain,” suggests Burkepile. “And perhaps we could use raupo to create a new fibre.”

Burkepile says we’re stuck with a legacy of alluvial geomorphology in Hawke’s Bay, but “we need to start

moving towards natural flood management. We need to do a cost-benefit analysis and reassess.

“It’s time to press the reset button.”

Ngaio Tiuka oversees the aspirations of Ngāti Kahungunu for the use and management of marine and freshwater fisheries within its rohe and is responsible for providing high quality analytical advice and research.

He says in terms of how rivers are managed, including flows and flooding, their ‘mana’ and ‘mauri’, his iwi had already been supporting the concept of ‘making room for rivers’ before the cyclone.

He sees giving true respect to ki uta ki tai (mountains to sea) and the natural processes of our waterways - including protecting and reconstituting natural flood plains, limiting river encroachment, widening stop banks, re-zoning areas unsuitable for housing and certain land uses, indigenous revegetation and creating or enabling more wetlands and estuaries - “are all part of building back better and working with the taiao”.

“Some people think we want to go back to the dark ages.” He laughs. “We don’t. This is about sustainability, being pragmatic and logical. This is more than a ‘nice to have’ environmental aspiration. Who doesn’t want to look after their drinking water, enjoy our waterways or dare I say, *be safe from flooding*.”

Te Ao Māori view of the environment is that “it’s not something over there separate from us,” says Tiuka. “We are part of the taiao and we have to look after natural processes and work within limitations. How much we take from our waterways for example, what do we put in them?”

“We can’t just exhaust nature’s resources.”

The Environment Centre Hawke’s Bay agrees. It has put together an advocacy paper asking “how can we create climate resilient communities in Hawke’s Bay after Cyclone Gabrielle?”

“Our immediate reflex will be to rebuild what has been lost, and in the same way,” says spokesperson and CEO, Emma Hogan-Heke.

“But the way we have built and planned in the past has made our communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Now is the time to step back and rethink things holistically and intergenerationally, and to restore our communities in a way that is more resilient and supports healthy people and ecosystems.” ●



KATIE NIMON & CATHERINE WEDD

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With losses projected in the billions for Hawke's Bay, not including damage to natural landscapes and ecosystems, planning for our future economic, environmental and social resilience poses local decision-making challenges of unprecedented scale and complexity —

TOUGH RECOVERY DECISIONS AHEAD

How will they be made?



Yes, as historical photographs document, we have had massive flooding before in many of the same areas and with similar impacts – buried homes, swept-away bridges and destroyed production.

But today Hawke's Bay has much greater sunk investment - dare I say - in the areas devastated by Cyclone Gabrielle. The stakes are far greater. And the magnifying reality of climate change adds even more weight to planning decisions.

With responsibility for recovery planning and implementation spread across so many disconnected decision-makers - agencies, councils, businesses, individual landowners - one can only hope for uncharacteristic collaboration and vision as our navigators chart a path forward.

Although an 'official' structure exists, the choices that need to be made - and the number of them - even if all parties play by the rules, will require discussions and problem-solving to occur through processes and around tables yet to be set, some with no HB precedent.

Official structure

At the top of the official pile with respect to near-term recovery is the newly-created Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency.

The Regional Recovery Agency is responsible for pulling together a comprehensive immediate recovery plan for the region, drawing upon both district-based plans developed by our councils ('Locality Plans') and region-wide plans developed by the RRA staff (in formation, perhaps

two dozen) to address six cross-cutting areas: Environmental Resilience, Economic Growth, Whanau/Community Wellbeing, Primary Sector, Resilient Infrastructure and Recovery Transition. The RRA work will also integrate the responsibilities of government agencies (e.g., MSD, Transport etc) into the overall regional plan.

The key aim is to marry local determination of need - largely led by our five councils - with regional sorting of overall priorities.

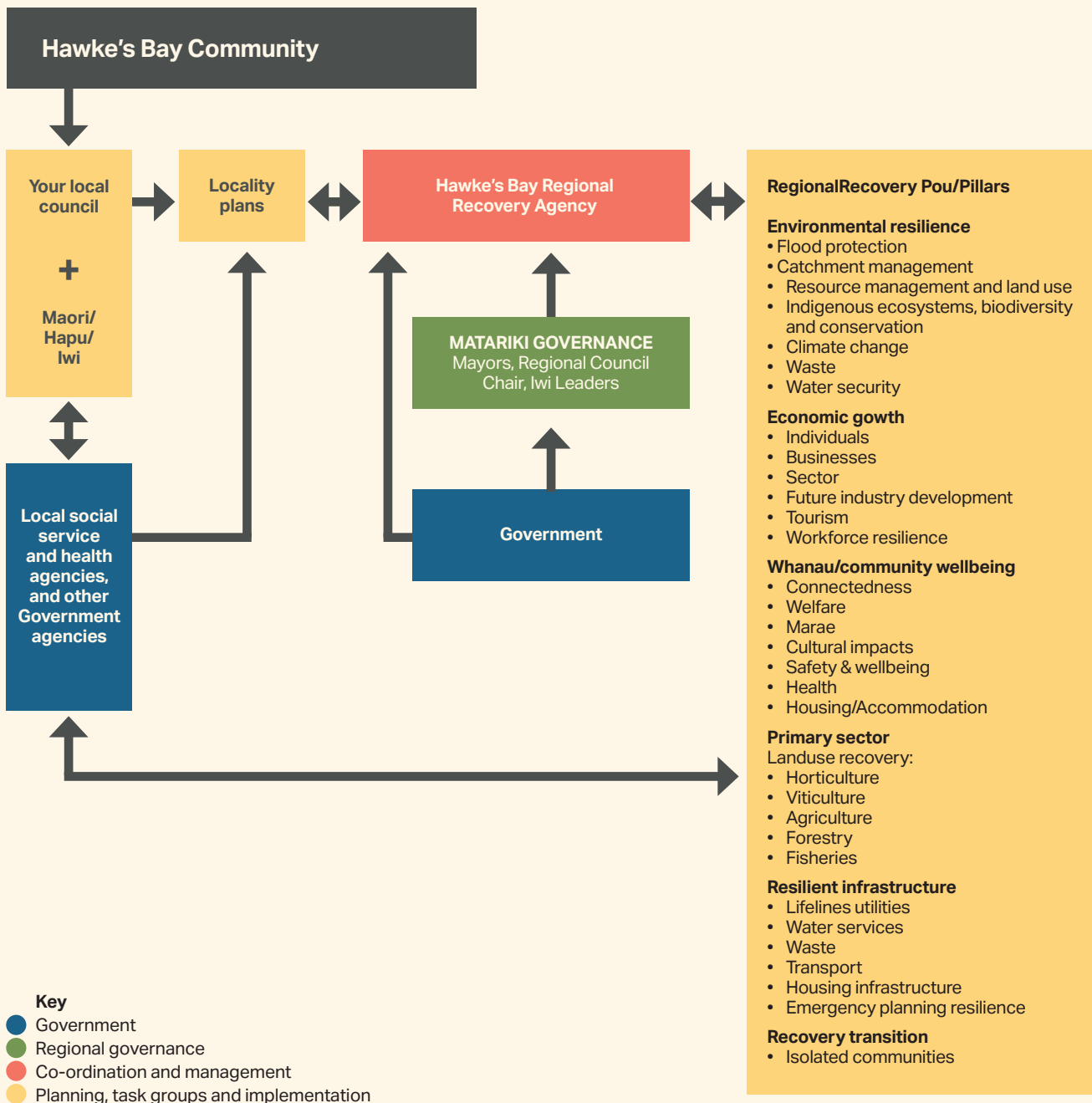
The Government - assumed to be the major funder of recovery (on a 60/40 basis with local funding, we hear) - will be expecting the region to set forth its needs *as a region*, with one voice, and will expect that outcome to be ensured - and progress against milestones overseen - by the RRA's Oversight Board.

That Board is chaired by Blair O'Keefe, a seasoned HB-raised executive, currently serving as chair of Napier Port and HB Rescue Helicopter Trust, and a director of Unison amongst other governance roles.

The RRA and its Oversight Board is where the sifting of competing local priorities and need to address broader challenges requiring truly regional solutions that cross territorial lines will occur. As noted above, the Government will want to hear one voice, one programme, one budget. Individual councils and sectors (primary producers, tourism etc) are not supposed to 'end



Photo: Florence Charvin



run' this structure ... we'll see!

Implementation of the regional plan will be left in the hands of councils and agencies, alongside private sector partners and service deliverers.

Initial 'Locality Plans' were completed in April and will be regularly revised. Councils have - in one form or another - set up internal structures and roles to play their part. For example, HBRC converted its Environment Committee into a Cyclone Recovery Committee, chaired by Councillor Sophie Siers; NCC is adding a 'Recovery Manager' and a 'Emergency Management Officer'; HDC aims to have its own 'Recovery Plan' for the district drafted by 30 June.

Another player sitting in this official mix is the new Regional Economic

Development Agency (REDA), chaired by our most recent Napier Port chair, Alasdair MacLeod. Elsewhere in this magazine MacLeod explains the role of his agency, but basically REDA's mission is to look still further into the future in plotting HB's economic resilience.

Will all these groups play nicely with one another? Stay tuned.

Not so straightforward

It gets more complicated still.

Many other important players will have a significant role in the region's recovery and future resilience, some of them outside the immediate 'control' or direction of our local elected officials. Examples include Unison, Transpower, Ministry of Transport, Ministry for the Environment,

communications providers ... to say nothing of banks and insurance companies and their interplay with the region's growers and other key businesses.

Here's where the decision pathways are even more uncharted and opaque.

Think about some of the most important decisions that must be made.

For example, Awatoto - an NCC-owned wastewater treatment plant (which seriously impeded clean-up and spews into the marine environment), a submerged Unison sub-station, a number of sizable businesses (largest, Ravensdown), a destroyed rail line, with HBRC regulating the consent conditions under which some of these operate. What do each of these parties want from each other? What environmental

There are many other important players with a significant role in the region's recovery and future resilience, some of them outside the immediate 'control' or direction of our elected officialdom.

conditions apply? Who convenes the parties? Where and how does the future 'plan' for Awatoto actually get made?

That's a busy day's work. And multiply it by dozens more.

The Redclyffe power station, owned by Transpower, the major electricity feed supplying Unison for HB, 'protected' by HBRC stop banks. Who decides the resilience plan for that infrastructure - higher equipment, stop banks on steroids, re-location? Who speaks for us locals? Who decides the appropriate risk tolerance for nearby EIT, Taradale? For the rest of Napier/Hastings District electricity users? Who reviews Unison's asset management plan or risk audit ... to say nothing of Transpower's? Where does accountability ultimately lie for 'the plan'?

Or take a drive through Eskdale. Vast acreage totally destroyed - production land, other businesses, homes, rail line, school. A wasteland. Again, multiple players and decisionmakers. Do those local landowners act in unison, walk away together, or is it each man/woman/business for themselves? Again, who convenes, offers vision and 'adjudicates' for that catchment?

Or take silt removal. The HBRC estimates 5-6 million cubic metres out of 12 million deposited by flooding will need to be removed. Who's first in line, based on what expectation of future resilience and productivity? What's the cost split, reflecting what public/private good? What land is considered a lost cause?

And - stepping further from public accountability - what if any of these decisions are effectively made by overseas banks, insurers or disappointed investors?

Financial players will make property-by-property decisions on what future risk, if any, they wish to carry going forward. Banks have no obligation to keep our local businesses alive, even though they make money off millions of dollars

of council funds. Insurers have incentive to identify blame (e.g., were stop banks mismanaged or poorly planned, who put electrical infrastructure in dumb places?), so as to potentially recoup some of their losses. Is there litigation in our future?

Around the world financial institutions and major corporations are under shareholder pressure (and government mandates) to formally identify and reduce their exposure to climate change, whether that involves their overall carbon emissions profile or simply their exposure to severe weather risk. That pressure will steadily increase.

Performance review

Whether or not it goes to the extreme of litigation, there will certainly be 'performance' reviews examining the most obvious of concerns.

HBRC has announced a \$700,000 'independent' review of the performance of its stop banks, with recommendations on future direction expected. Also announced by HBRC is a review of our region's civil defence response, but HBRC Councillor Neil Kirton has blasted the slow pace of getting underway, as well as questioning the independence of the reviewers.

With equal vigour, Council Kirton should insist that Unison owner, HB Power Consumers' Trust, chaired Diana Kirton, commission an independent review of Unison's preparedness for the Gabrielle-scale disaster. As we reported in March/April *BayBuzz*, the current Unison 2022-32 Asset Management Plan describes how: "... Unison is undertaking a Capability Project to better understand the vulnerability of its network to extreme events." The outcome of that project should be publicly disclosed.

The Government will be looking at the country's overall preparedness for future weather calamities as part of the charter for the Cyclone Recovery Taskforce headed by Sir Brian Roche.

As announced by Minister Grant Robertson: "The Taskforce will oversee specialist groups of experts who will advise the Government on what is required for the recovery and how to improve resilience to climate change and severe weather in the future ... Climate resilience will be a core objective of the recovery."

Weather dependency

Where 'climate resilience' goes, and how far, will become potentially controversial. The Roche Taskforce will look



Anna Lorck

MP for Tukituki

Electorate office

Karamu Chambers
129 Queen Street East,
Hastings

Office Hours

Tuesday – Thursday:
10.00am – 4.00pm

Monday & Friday:
by appointment

06 870 1470

anna.lorckMP@parliament.govt.nz



Labour



Authorised by Anna Lorck MP, 125 Queen St East Hastings

Arguably, this would raise issues around our regional economy's weather dependency. In the past treated more as a matter of drought and water shortage, and now perhaps equally perceived as more occasions for extreme rainfall, transportation-blocking slips, and flooding.

at "managed retreat as well as other adaptation and resilience issues". The Government will likely decide where homes can be built, not local councils.

Managed retreat has been examined thus far in Hawke's Bay as a coastal phenomenon - in response to sea rise and coastal inundation. When the issue became who might pay for such 'mitigation', the wheels on this process locked. Why would ratepayers on the hills and in the 'interior' of HB pay for the woes

of those who relish living by the sea?

Well, now we see we're *all* affected by climate change and its certainty of more frequent, more severe weather events.

Locally, although HBRC has the nominal lead on preparing for climate change, a sizable role might fall to REDA, the afore-mentioned Regional Economic Development Agency.

In two years or so the Regional Recovery Agency will disband and councils will be beavering away at immediate recovery projects, some that will occupy a few years. REDA is supposed to take a longer view, and one would think that view needs to consider the optimal future mix of economic activity in the region, factoring in the likely impacts of climate change.

Arguably, this would raise issues around our regional economy's vulnerability to weather. In the past, treated more as a matter of drought and water shortage, and now perhaps equally perceived as more occasions for extreme rainfall, transportation-blocking slips, and flooding.

Accountability

When it comes to councils, we have accountability mechanisms in place

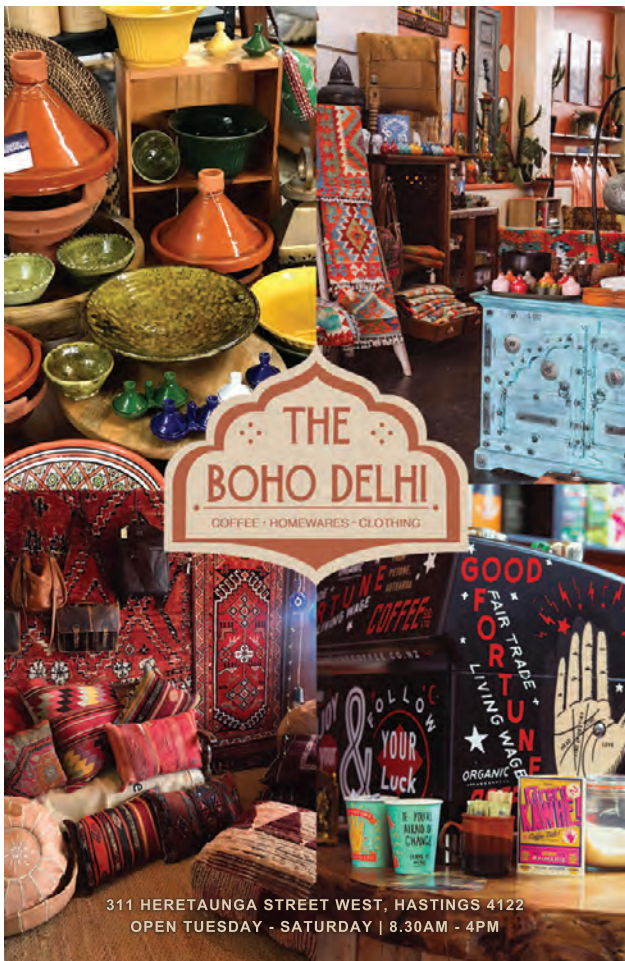
- elections, required public consultations, open meetings and information disclosure requirements - as imperfect as these sometimes are.

But as for the likes of our Regional Recovery Agency and its Board, and REDA, this is uncharted territory from a transparency standpoint. How much of their planning will be visible and how it will be informed by public input and held accountable is yet to be indicated.

At least, both of those agencies are appointed by our local elected officials (and iwi).

But lines of accountability are quite blurred, if they exist, when it comes to how entities like Transpower, Unison, Waka Kotahi or Spark operate and make decisions crucial to our livelihoods. And even more blurred when banks and insurers can determine which businesses survive ... or don't.

The issues of public engagement, accountability and transparency will be critical as tough trade-offs - involving both public and private sector players - are required in the months ahead. More so than 'normal' times, the public is anxious about the future and will need confidence in decisions made and their rationale. ●



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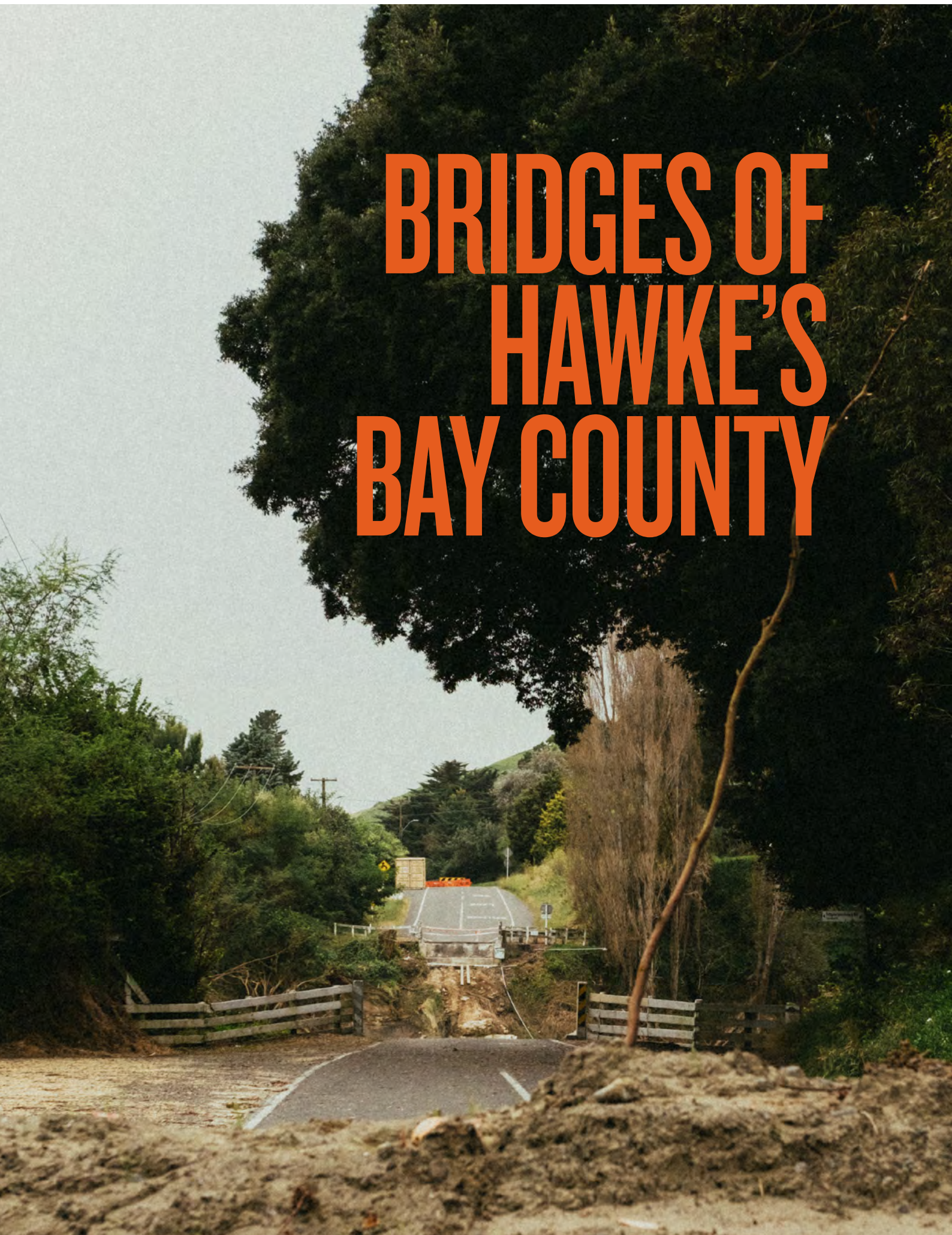
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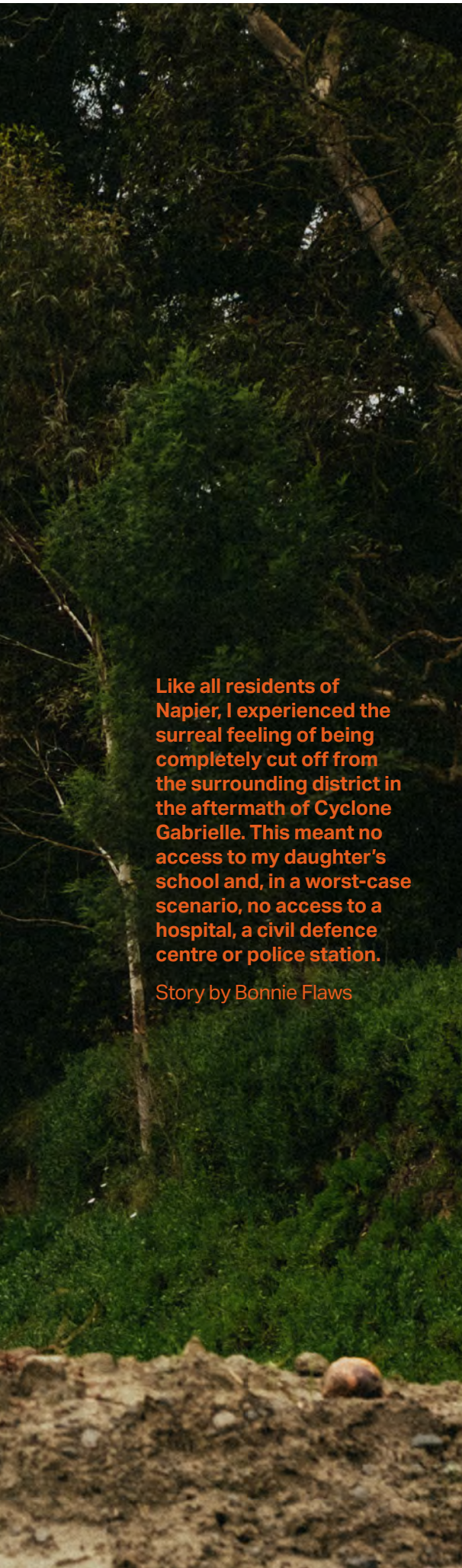
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HAWKE'S BAY UP CLOSE, IN DEPTH

BRIDGES OF HAWKE'S BAY COUNTY





Like all residents of Napier, I experienced the surreal feeling of being completely cut off from the surrounding district in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle. This meant no access to my daughter's school and, in a worst-case scenario, no access to a hospital, a civil defence centre or police station.

Story by Bonnie Flaws

OPPOSITE: Puketapu Bridge was washed away in Cyclone Gabrielle, 2023. Photo: Florence Charvin.
BELOW: Puketapu Swing Bridge in 1909. Credit: Lester Oliver.



Later, when things opened up a bit, driving back and forth between Napier and Hastings seeing the devastation of the railway bridge at Waitangi, and crossing numerous bridges set me off on something of a philosophical musing about both the importance of bridges in our day to day lives, and also about what they symbolise: connection.

Bridges are more than just a piece of engineering; they allow families and communities access to other places, do business, socialise, keep safe and to be resilient against external forces.

Here in the Bay, where settlements are close enough together to be thought of as extensions of one another, we cross them all the time. How many of us live in one city but work in another, or regularly use services not based in our hometown? That's just how life is here.

Gabrielle's legacy of destruction

Hastings District is home to 268 bridges, of which 16 were destroyed and 28 significantly damaged in the February floods. Similarly, a number of bridges on state highways, under the care of Waka Kotahi were also badly damaged, including Waikare River Bridge, near Putorino, which remains impassable at the time of writing.

A recent update from the Hastings District Council advised that 16 bridges and river crossings had been damaged beyond repair and many others had been severely damaged, leaving communities isolated or with restricted access. Many of these bridges are on rural roads that are still closed, and open only to residents and essential services.

I began to wonder about the history

of these bridges and went looking for information - when they were built and any social context around them. To my delight, I found an entire chapter on bridges in a book called *History of the County of Hawke's Bay part III* (hence the title of this story), along with a rather hefty history of its river management in part IV. All historical accounts that follow are from these two volumes.

In a conversation with Hastings Deputy Mayor Tania Kerr, she explained how Hawke's Bay County Council had joined Hastings City Council and Havelock North Borough in the 1980s to create Hastings District Council. At the same time, Taradale Borough joined with Napier City Council - and that's how we got to where we are today.

Kerr is from one of the many rural flood-affected communities, and with her husband has farmed on the Glangarry Road for 33 years. She has represented rural communities for 21 years - for Tūtira and Te Pōhue on the Hastings rural community board and as Mohaka Ward councillor.

Not only is she very connected to the district's rural communities, she is a passionate advocate. Mohaka Ward stretches from her home patch down to Whirinaki and Esk, across to Pātoka and down to Omahu, and represents two thirds of the Hastings District. The ward includes the most significantly impacted communities, excluding Pakowhai.

Kerr was not on the farm at the time of the flood - she and her husband were out of town, but she's had to deal with damage and the cleanup, and she has extensively toured and engaged

with people in flood affected communities ... an ongoing job.

She tells me about the emotional impact and the incredible frustration she feels about what could have, should have, might have been done before the storm.

“Anger, disappointment, tiredness - I’m still tired. And at times [have felt] incredible helplessness knowing that there were families weeks later still cut off, still unable to make a phone call, use the internet, still couldn’t access town, couldn’t get stock off.

“Even now, there are some farms that between them and the world is a bridge that limits the weight of stock they can take out. These are the bridges that are still damaged.”

Flooding – a perennial issue

Hawke’s Bay County Council was formed in 1877, a time of floods according to the history books, and was dealing with ‘river problems’ from the get go.

What became clear from reading these histories was that rivers, floods and bridges were an ongoing preoccupation throughout the county’s, now district’s, history. Early settlers in Hawke’s Bay were concerned with protecting themselves from floodwater

- as well as how to profit from the bounty of the rich silts that came down with each flood.

Former Napier mayor and educator, Henry Hill was quoted in 1898, at an address to the Philosophical Institute, as saying:

“The rivers flowing over the plains are the bearers of nature’s richest gifts and it is folly to send into the ocean the millions of tons of valuable soil brought down. Settlers on the areas subject to floods should build their houses on stilts above flood level, plant trees to intercept the flood and let the floods raise the level of their land.”

The first publicly subscribed stop banks were built in 1870 at Papakura. Willow planting on riverbanks was introduced in 1877. And the Hawke’s Bay Rivers Act was passed in 1876, “to make provisions for the management of rivers in the Province of Hawke’s Bay”.

“One depressing fact was generally accepted at this period. There was no hope of stopping flood waters. They came with regularity and increasing force as the bush was stripped from the high country. The problem at issue was - where to direct the flood waters.” [History of Hawke’s Bay County part IV.]

One such flood was in 1897, in which

a great many bridges were impacted:

“The flood of 1897 brought disaster to the county council bridges. After it, it was necessary to raise a special loan of £12,000 to rebuild or repair: Redclyffe, Omahu, Rissington, Ohiwia, Kikowhero, Okawa, Kuripapango, Longlands, Waitangi, Karamu Bridges; also 3 on the Taupo Road, 3 at Puketitiri and many smaller bridges.”

Our bridges have time and time again been the casualties of floods, as you will see. Now, a major programme of work to repair damaged roads and bridges after Cyclone Gabrielle is being undertaken by Hastings District Council.

“While access is mostly open in urban areas there’s still a lot of damage on our rural roads - lots of slips, drop outs, temporary crossings, and many roads are still one-lane only and are in a precarious state. People need to treat every rural road as a work site and slow down,” a recent council roading update advised.

A council spokesperson said it was currently estimated that it could cost about \$150 million to replace all bridges with modern structures and there were still many unknowns which could impact the final design and cost.

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Kids crossing at Rissington

I want to highlight some of the key bridges being repaired and their historical antecedents, with regards to floods. For the most recent update, go to the council website.

Rissington Bridge

After Gabrielle, the Rissington Bridge over the Mangaone River was the number one priority for repairing, the “life-line bridge”, followed by Dartmoor, says Kerr.

This bridge was first built in 1885, but was washed away in the flood of 1897, and replaced in 1898. It was destroyed again in 1924, and according to the historical account, children crossed the river to school on a pulley for years until a new bridge was built in 1930.

Kerr said she was particularly upset to see Rissington Bridge go, as HDC had only a few years ago invested money into strengthening it so that it could take heavier trucks.

“We spent significant money on the Rissington Bridge. It was a treasured structure, and it was really sad to see it tangled there on the bank,” she says.

As in the 30s, after Gabrielle Rissington locals constructed a raft crossing and then a flying fox, and with council help created some culverts and a low-level crossing with a causeway.

A Bailey bridge was completed in early April to much celebration, reconnecting Rissington, Puketitiri and Pātoka, and now allows for weight of up to 50 tonnes, meaning farmers can now move livestock before winter, Kerr says.

“For Pātoka, we had a formal Māori blessing, a ribbon cutting and the

community walking over the bridge, and the first vehicle. Then the community stayed and talked and caught up with each other. It was just a sunny joyous afternoon.”

Dartmoor Bridge

The next bridge down on the Mangaone River from Rissington is the Dartmoor Bridge, also destroyed in Cyclone Gabrielle.

“They got a raft crossing, and then some assistance to get a bigger raft and trained operators - and that’s how the children got across to go to school. If they didn’t cross there they had about an hour and a half drive back up and around to get to the Rissington Bridge,” Kerr recounts.

According to historical accounts, the Dartmoor Bridge was first built in 1924, at a cost of £3,000 pounds, but was severely damaged in the 1931 earthquake. A temporary low-level bridge was erected in 1932 to allow flood waters to wash over it. Another permanent bridge was built in 1933, but was lost again in the flood of 1938.

In this flood, “one hundred and sixty feet of it on the Hastings side disappeared without a trace and was found several years later, buried under 20 feet of silt downstream, when trial borings were being taken for a replacement bridge.”

To help Dartmoor residents getting to market without adding an extra 40 miles, a temporary hardwood bridge was put in place, but it too washed away in 1944 and was rebuilt.

“The war ended but the discussions

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about this bridge did not. The argument was that, at this point, flood waters were confined and rose to a great height so that it was almost impossible to build a bridge high enough to escape debris and floating trees. It was argued that, with a low-level bridge, flood water and debris would flow right over and that it was better for the settlers to lose the use of their bridge for a few days than to lose it permanently.”

It wasn't until 1954 that residents once again had a permanent bridge, at a cost £11,500. This one stood for 70 years, only to be washed away again in 2023.

HDC says Dartmoor now has an 87-meter temporary bridge, wider than the original and taking up to 40 tonnes, which pending an engineering report, may go up to 50 tonnes. It can therefore now take trucks and trailers and allow for agricultural equipment and livestock movement. This Bailey bridge will be in place for about two years while a new bridge is designed.

Puketapu Bridge

Puketapu bridge linked a community, Kerr says, which has been split in half as a result of the flood. Residents are carpooling to get kids to school presently. Repairing this bridge is also key to easing congestion between Napier and Hastings - as one of three of five bridges knocked out over the Tūtaekuri.

Hastings District Council is undertaking modelling to decide the future of Puketapu bridge post-Gabrielle, and timeframes are yet to be confirmed. Waiohiki bridge, near EIT, is next in line for repair with a temporary bridge, which will ease congestion on the expressway, Kerr says.

Historical accounts say Puketapu bridge was first built in the 1860s using military labour, but a county engineer found it to be unsafe in 1877. A new bridge was built around 1892 but washed away in the 1897 flood. A temporary bridge was erected, and then a new suspension bridge was built in 1906.

“Napier Town band was on hand to lead the march on the bridge, as it had been ... for almost every civic or military occasion since the 1860s. The bridge was believed to be the largest single-span bridge in the North Island and its four concrete towers held ten cables of plough steel obtained from England.”

After the 1931 earthquake constant repairs were required to the bridge and in December 1948 a driver and his son were killed when an overloaded truck went through the decking. After this it was a pedestrian only bridge. A new

bridge at Puketapu was opened in May 1963, only to be washed away again in 2023.

Brookfields Bridge

Now this little one lane bridge with a lay-by in the middle was quite dear to me, as I drove over it most days to take my daughter to school in Hastings. There was something very country, very quaint, about waiting for the oncoming traffic to clear before driving on, and on occasion running into trouble when two vehicles came onto the bridge from both ends at the same time. Doesn't everyone have a story or two of that happening, followed by a stressful reversal back off the bridge or onto the lay-by?

“Brookfields Bridge was a sad little bridge,” the historical account begins.

“It was built in 1900 to play a part in the ambitious river control scheme which would protect the Heretaunga Plains from ever again being drowned.

“For 36 years it spanned a grassy channel waiting for the river to come through. Occasionally, the Tutaekuri overflowed into the channel and the bridge knew what it was like to be a real bridge with real water underneath, but its moments of glory were brief and rare. Mostly cows grazed and boyscouts camped and lovers walked underneath it as it waited and waited to become a working bridge. When the river finally came through in 1936 the bridge was too old and too tired to cope and it had to be retired in favour of a new concrete bridge.”

Watching this concrete bridge collapsing into the floodwaters in February on news footage, was to appreciate the awesome power of water - and to mourn the end of an era, as it's unlikely to be rebuilt as a one-lane bridge, I dare say.

A traffic study is being undertaken to decide where a permanent replacement bridge might go and timeframes have yet to be confirmed, HDC says.

Waikare River Bridge

Built in 1941, it is a critical freight link, as well as a key connection for rural communities.

Waka Kotahi says that restoring complete access between Napier and Wairoa is the ultimate goal.

This may have been completed by the time this issue hits the stand, as the design work has been completed for the Bailey bridge replacement and the process for site works and preparation for installation has begun. Waka Kotahi



Rissington Bridge opening. Photo: Tania Kerr

anticipated that it would be open in mid-to-late April, weather depending.

Kerr tells me that many communities remain very isolated, including those reliant on the Waikare River Bridge.

“You can only travel between Tūtira and Bayview at certain times of the day, and the road is still so fragile that in another weather event, it can be shut very quickly, so the community can't plan very well. The ability to get stock off farms is still limited, it's not as easy to get trucks in and out. In an emergency, how do you quickly get to the doctor?”

“So, in the Tūtira and Waikare communities, yes, it's still tough and there are still families living beyond bridges that are damaged.”

One family that lives on the other side of the Waikare Gorge have had to walk from one side of the gorge to the other in order to drive to see their son at boarding school. Another farmer with several properties that are all isolated from each other, keeps a vehicle on either side of a crossing in order to continue general farm operations. So rural people are still very much at the coalface, she says.

“It's two months in on a journey that is going to take years.”

I asked the council whether, given the frequency of the district's bridges washing away down through time, they were confident that this time they could engineer bridges which can withstand nature's forces. A spokesperson said:

“We can engineer structures to a very high standard, but the cost could be significant/prohibitive, and there are no guarantees.” ●

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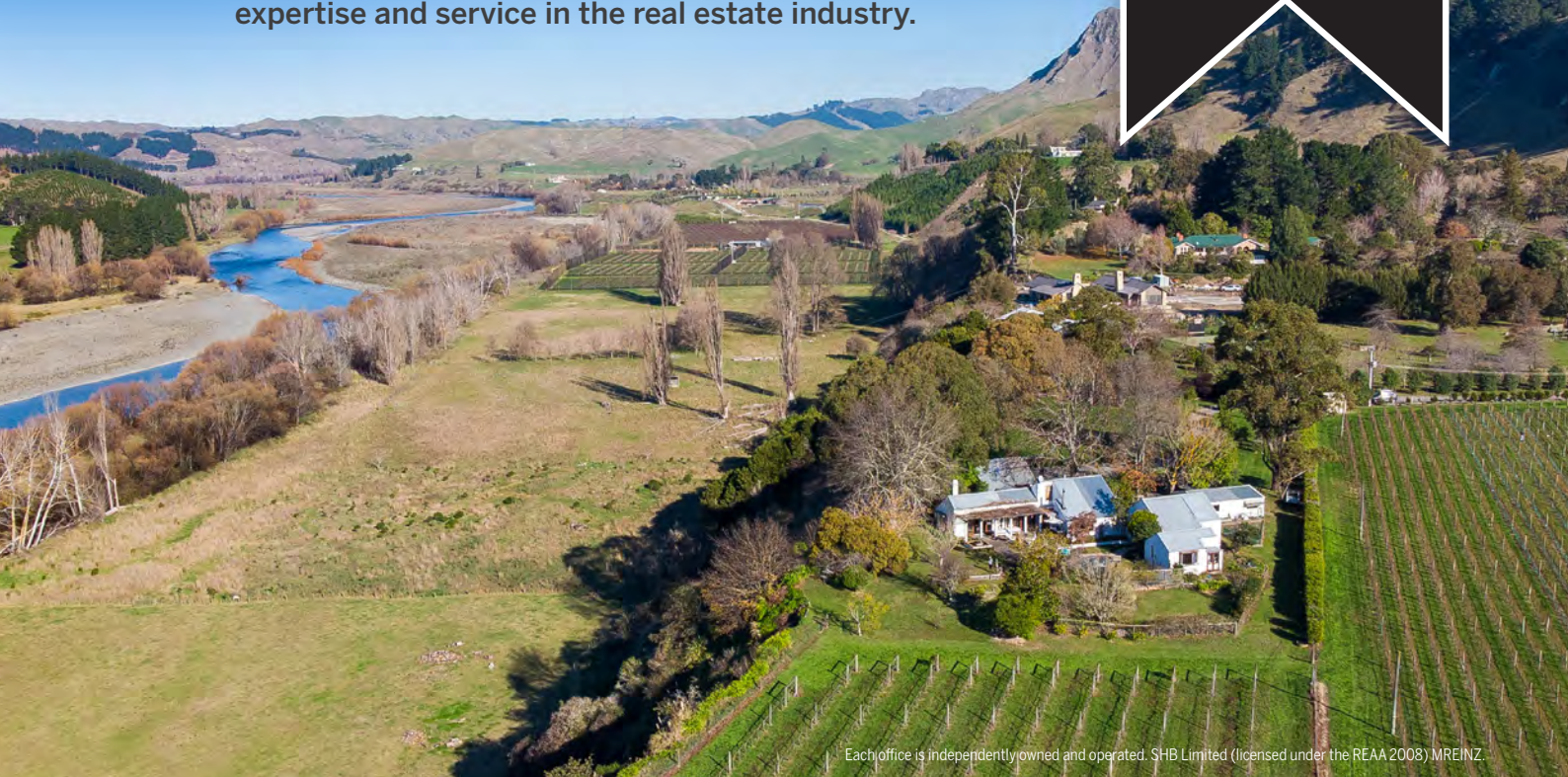
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THE LONG WINDING ROAD TO WAIROA RECOVERY

Story by Andrew Frame

Photos by Ricky Wilson - Credit: Stuff Ltd



Three Bridges at Risk of Collapse ... Building Better Roads ... Wairoa 'a priority' for NZTA ... State Highway 2 reopening to take up to three months ...

These are headlines you would expect in the immediate aftermath of a cyclone, but they are all from weeks and months after Cyclone Gabrielle cut the northern Hawke's Bay town of Wairoa off from the rest of New Zealand.

Regional Council data reveals the cyclone caused the Wairoa River to flow higher than 7,100 m³/s. That's nearly three times higher than the previously highest recorded (in 2015).

Effectively cut in two when Cyclone Bola felled Wairoa's main bridge in 1988, it was a similar tale of two towns during Gabrielle.

North Clyde, the half of town on the northern side of the Wairoa River bore the brunt of the town's flooding when the river poured in through the showgrounds, inundating nearby areas. Further upstream, access to Frasertown and Lakes Waikaremoana and Tuai, along SH 38, was also temporarily cut off.

Around one-third of Wairoa's homes were damaged with approximately 150 households displaced.

BayBuzz asked Wairoa Mayor Craig Little, HBRC's Wairoa Councillor Di Roadley and local businesswoman Dianne Downey, owner of 'The Limery' about recovery efforts and the challenges the town and district face.

Precipitation preparedness

Could any key entities (central and local government, organisations or national infrastructure networks) have been better prepared for Cyclone Gabrielle?

"Cyclone Gabrielle was an unprecedented national disaster. Its severity shocked our country. Wairoa was alone and isolated with no roads in or out of the district, no power and no communications," says Mayor Craig Little.

"The local responses and decisions that were made were based on what was happening and what was known at that moment in time. I am sure that in hindsight, there are areas that could have been improved and we will all learn from this, which could help us be better prepared next time.

Given Wairoa's isolation and situation, I believe our localised response and mobilisation of our united

community was amazing. I acknowledge our Wairoa Civil Defence response and staff. I have absolute admiration for our local Wairoa team that carried on despite being cut off from all support.

"However, I believe the over-arching national Civil Defence model is not fit for purpose and needs to change. Wairoa District Council's resources have been absolutely strained. Whilst we had some support from Hawke's Bay Regional Council in the Civil Defence response, we urgently need additional support from the regional council for our recovery."

Little has been critical of Hawke's Bay Regional Council's cyclone response in a letter to HBRC chairperson Hinewai Ormsby that was released under the OIA in April.

Hawke's Bay Regional Councillor Di Roadley says: "We can't control the weather, but moving forward we can be prepared for whatever nature throws at us. Cyclone Gabrielle didn't behave as predicted, the path it travelled and the quantity of rain that fell far exceeded the projected expectation.

"The extraordinary magnitude of this event has made clear that we have areas for improvement. One obvious shortfall was the ability to communicate when the relied upon systems failed. As a nation we need to explore all possibilities to ensure that our ability to respond during an adverse event is strengthened."

Dianne Downey, owner of The Limery believes more could have been done by national organisations, given the early warnings of Gabrielle's anticipated severity.

"Metservice rain radar showed 'purple' indication of heavy rain in the hill areas of Gisborne, Wairoa and Napier 72 hours prior to rain starting in those areas. Lakes like those at Kaitawa and Tuai (part of the Waikaremoana Hydro scheme) in the ranges should have been lowered in preparation days



before, not hours.”

“Civil Defence relied on digital data not physical markers therefore no ‘Plan B’ was in play given the Metservice predictions.” She adds, “No siren or alarm sounded either physically or on cell phone to alert people to evacuate yet we have had this in the past for tsunamis and Covid.”

Immediate challenges

Mayor Little says, “Getting people back into their homes and looking after our community, including businesses and organisations is our priority.”

“Lack of roading connectivity and isolation remains an issue. State Highway 2 between Wairoa and Napier has been significantly damaged. We know contractors are working hard and NZTA Waka Kotahi has prioritised getting this highway open.”

At the time of writing the road connection with Gisborne had been re-established, but State Highway 2 connection south to Napier was still cut off at the Waikare Gorge. A temporary Bailey bridge isn’t expected to be in place until the end of May.

“Locally our roading and bridge network was severely affected. Two bridges are unrepairable, and others need significant repair work. We still have roads closed. We are fortunate that our local roading contracting business QRS is based in Wairoa, and we have other local contractors who we have been able to draw on to help us on our district roads.”

Dianne Downey agrees that road access is their main issue. “The biggest challenge is access! Access of goods to market, access for specialist trades coming in, access for supplies, gas and fuel deliveries.”

She questioned when road closures needed to happen, having heard the road to Gisborne would be closed for two days in the middle of the week to replace a culvert. Her preference “would have been for Saturday/Sunday as Tuesday/Wednesday are heavy trade days for producers and manufacturers such as us. Staff cannot get to and from work.

“Decisions like this are obviously made by non-businesspeople who have no understanding of economics and productivity,” she says.

Water, water, everywhere!

“Our immediate ability to make water for our township was wiped out by Cyclone Gabrielle. However, it is the work we have been doing on our water resilience that got us through,” says Little.

“Our electric water pumps were submerged in 30 metres of water and silt and took days to pump out using local council staff and the local fire brigade volunteers.

“Our Wairoa water team, with some external support, got our supply up and running within five days. Council has been focussing on water resilience and water loss and because of this we have increased our capacity. Stored water in our reservoirs could have supplied our township for a week. Having

“We have no alternative routes and, as has been evidenced with the closure of SH2 to Napier, this has a tremendously negative impact, particularly from health, whānau and economical perspectives.”

Wairoa Mayor, Craig Little

enough stored supply and getting our ability to make water back up and running so quickly in such extreme circumstances is a huge tribute to our council staff and also to Affco who we worked in partnership with.”

The Wairoa mayor considers these infrastructure recovery efforts are an indication his stance against central government water reforms is well founded. “This demonstrates the power of localism, having locally based staff with skills and knowledge.”

Future-Proofing Wairoa

“The challenges around Wairoa’s isolation need to be recognised,” says Mayor Little.

“We have no alternative routes and, as has been evidenced with the closure of SH2 to Napier, this has a tremendously negative impact, particularly from health, whānau and economical perspectives.

We need the state highways to Gisborne and Napier to be more resilient and we need State Highway 38 to be vastly improved and brought up to a state highway standard for the future safety of all our people.”

“We are one of the most digitally challenged areas in New Zealand. Because of our geographical isolation, we should be prioritised around digital investment and yet we are lagging behind. Cyclone Gabrielle has demonstrated our district needs significant central investment to give us parity with the rest of the country.

“Our Wairoa airport was our lifeline during Cyclone Gabrielle. However, our runway is too short for larger planes which meant a lot of flights into Wairoa were by helicopter. Using a larger plane would have cut down the helicopter trips considerably. A longer runway will also provide resilience for health/medical flights. We are hoping the government will recognise this need and support this project.

“We also need to work with the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council and

“We have seen the best of community spirit and leadership through this awful time. Individuals have put the needs of others foremost and stood up as leaders; this resource is one of Wairoa’s greatest assets.”

Hawke’s Bay Regional Councillor, Di Roadley

Central Government in a meaningful way to develop a plan to mitigate the extremities of future flooding.”

Councillor Roadley agrees more involvement and funding from central government is required. “Money doesn’t solve everything, but it is the great enabler. Wairoa is a vast area with a small population and rating base. We need additional Central Government support and funding to ensure that we have options to mitigate repeating the same cycle of vulnerability that our communities and businesses are suffering now.

“Protecting our people from flooding is paramount. Flooding of the Wairoa River is a known risk. Moving forward we need an approach that protects our people and businesses from the floods while respecting cultural rights.

“Building a roading network that is fit for purpose and able to withstand the impacts of weather is critical. We need to have confidence in the resilience of our life-line services including power, communication and telemetry/warning systems.”

Dianne Downey, too, stresses the importance of access, but notes

another vulnerability. “The other issue for Wairoa is power. We are faced with continuous power cuts (a nightmare for machinery) as there is only one main line coming in, yet in the ranges we have a hydro power scheme!”

Opportunity Ahead

Craig Little thinks, “Wairoa’s opportunity is to be better than it was. Some of our biggest challenges are the same issues we have been talking about for years, roading and bridge resilience, digital connectivity, longer airport runway etc. We need support to upgrade this infrastructure and, in particular, have State Highway 38 fit for purpose as a state highway.”

He adds, “...we are resourceful, we know our people and we know our needs. If we are supported, the opportunity exists to rebuild and make Wairoa even better with infrastructure and services that are on a par with the rest of the country.”

Councillor Roadley echoes the need for Wairoa not to be overlooked again, “We need Central Government support” while emphasising local leadership. “Locally we are united, and we will work collectively to place the Wairoa district in the best possible position. Wairoa must lead Wairoa’s recovery and we need expert support, funding and courage to make change. We must be responsible for our own decisions and actions, focus on what is important and keep our eye on the horizon.”

He Tangata, He Tangata, He Tangata!

Clearly apparent throughout coverage of Cyclone Gabrielle and its aftermath has been people working together and

helping each other - mucking in, providing food, shelter and assistance.

Being cut off by the loss of transport and communications lines in Wairoa it was an even more key feature.

“We have seen the best of community spirit and leadership through this awful time,” Di Roadley emphasises. “Individuals have put the needs of others foremost and stood up as leaders; this resource is one of Wairoa’s greatest assets. We must utilise the wisdom of many and be the example of how the sum is always greater than the part.”

“Wairoa’s response was totally local,” summarises Mayor Little. “We were isolated with no communication, we were alone. This event highlights the need to support localism and recognise that smaller isolated rural communities cannot be treated the same as metropolitan New Zealand. We need solutions that suit us.

“We have over 200 yellow-stickered homes that our people can’t live in. It is heart-breaking to see whānau who have lost lifetimes of possessions, and now their houses are too damp to move back into and need considerable repairs.

“Wairoa District Council has assisted with silt removal and the removal of flood-affected items because we had to support our people. We have been cleaning the silt up from the main street playground to at least get some normality back into children’s lives.

“Our community has shown what we can do and how we work together and with support from volunteers, both within and outside of our district, we are making progress. We are a strong community, but Cyclone Gabrielle certainly gave us a hiding.” ●

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LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

When it comes to relationships and sexuality education, the stakes are high. Get it right and kids will be armed with the information they need to make healthy choices throughout their youth and beyond. Get it wrong and it can have harmful lifelong impacts. As schools grapple with the content and delivery of sex ed classes in an ever-changing society, the question remains: are our kids being taught what they need to know?

Story by Abby Beswick

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is one of the key areas of learning within health and physical education in the New Zealand curriculum. Covering physical, social, mental and emotional wellbeing, it's an important subject. Yet for many parents, the content and delivery of these lessons remains a mystery. And unfortunately, in many schools little priority is given to sex education.

At intermediate level, students are likely to learn about their bodies and puberty. As they progress to high school, the topics include positive relationships, managing their health, contraception, online behaviour, coercion, and consent, among others.

While the national curriculum provides an excellent set of guidelines and resources to support sex ed classes, incredibly, there are no requirements around what topics must be covered. It's therefore up to individual schools to decide what and how they teach students, including deciding what is age appropriate and relevant.

The flexibility of our curriculum means students around the country are having vastly different experiences learning RSE. In addition to concerns around inconsistency, there are other barriers and challenges to our children receiving high quality and meaningful RSE, a recent national survey found, including a lack of teacher training. Around the country, teachers are calling out for better training so they can walk into classrooms feeling comfortable and confident.

From the parents' perspective, there are concerns that our kids are learning too much too soon. A lack of transparency from schools around what their kids will be taught is further compounding the issue. We explore New Zealand's relationships and sexuality education and talk to those affected - a parent, student, teacher, and expert - to get their views on this important subject.

The parent

Paul Paynter was shocked to discover what his son learned in sex education classes at intermediate. After receiving an email to say the classes would

be held, the Havelock father-of-two assumed they would simply cover the basics around bodies, puberty and sex. Instead, his son who was then aged 11, came home "totally freaked out" by the classes that included discussions on sex toys, porn (naming websites the kids were told they shouldn't go onto), gender identities and the use of hormone blockers.

The lessons resulted in a lot of confusion for his son, particularly around gender identity and left Paynter also feeling disturbed. "They were talking about all sorts of stuff that was way way way more detailed than I wanted to have him exposed to," he says.

In one lesson, within minutes of the teacher telling his son's class not to go onto sites like Pornhub, one student had accessed the site on her phone. Paynter recognises we live in a different time to when he was taught sex education and the importance of evolving with a changing society, but finds the current approach deeply troubling. "The pendulum has swung way too far and too fast."

Paynter worries that we've moved from a relatively conservative approach to a "promotion of sexuality that's something to rip into as soon as you can and have a great time kids", which sends the wrong message. "There's this idea that we can have universally pleasurable promiscuity and wonderful times from about the age of 14 it seems and there are no consequences - psychologically, emotionally, culturally, societally." We need to be more gentle

"They're asking to run a social experiment with my children. I don't know what the outcomes will be but I'm anxious about those outcomes."

Paul Paynter

in our approach or everyone will pay the price, warns Paynter.

Giving children information they're not ready for, robs them of their innocence. Sex education classes should find a balance of content and delivery that caters to all children, not just the most mature students. Gender identity, for example, should be treated more carefully, he says. "What they're doing now is promoting a myriad of paths for people in terms of gender identity and sexuality way before they've even come to one path ... When you're 11, 12, 13 you don't need that and it isn't helpful. I do think it's an adult layer of complexity being imposed upon minds that are mostly not ready for it." Paynter would also like to see more focus on emotional development, particularly the ability to form long-term relationships, that will build the structures of family and community.

Yes, we need to have open, honest discussions that promote tolerance and acceptance of others. But the topics need to be treated gently, in a way that is age-appropriate, says Paynter. Based on his own children's experiences, he's concerned about how it could impact them and others. "They're asking to run a social experiment with my children. I don't know what the outcomes will be but I'm anxious about those outcomes."

The student

Havelock North High School student Kate* (name has been changed) had relationship and sex education classes from the beginning of her high school

career. Then aged 14, the lessons were taught once a week as part of the school's health and life lessons and covered a broad range of topics as well as building on what she'd already been taught at intermediate.

Kate found the classes comfortable and informative. "It normalised it quite a lot and the conversation around it. If you had questions about specific things you could ask anonymously," she said. Students generally seemed relaxed in the classes, much more so than during earlier classes at intermediate that covered puberty, she says. "I don't really feel like anyone was awkward or held back. It was just a safe environment to ask questions and just learn things. And most people were honestly pretty fine with it ... it was just another class that we went to."

The weekly classes also opened up conversations among Kate's peer group she believes might not have otherwise happened. "I think everyone was pretty open to talking about it. It wasn't really something that people felt they had to be quiet about, especially in my group of friends."

Students learned about a broad range of topics, including consent, protection, STIs, birth control and emotional development. One class about the effects of alcohol and drugs on young people struck a particular chord with Kate. "I found it was really valuable information to have at a young age. It was a mix of things where I felt I already knew that and stuff that I wouldn't have known."

There's little that could have been done to improve the sex ed classes in Kate's view. The topics covered were relevant and age appropriate, as they expanded what they'd learnt at intermediate. "It slotted in quite nicely with our subjects and when people are finishing going through puberty." While receiving some of the lessons from a specialist external teacher could have been beneficial, Kate says their teachers were well-equipped and engaging throughout.

And she has no doubt about the value of good sex education. "I 100% think it's important to have these lessons, otherwise some kids who don't have any kind of parental support or something at home are the ones that are more likely going to end up with a teen pregnancy or an STI or something, are going to be quite uneducated on the subject. They won't know how to handle it or what to do or what they could have done to avoid it."

"Some kids will say nothing, but take everything in. Some kids will sit there and do the work but they won't make eye contact. Some kids really want to have all sorts of conversations."

Annie Macfarlane

The teacher

Tamatea High School head of health, Annie Macfarlane has been teaching sex education for 23 years. Unlike previous generations, nowadays kids get their information about sex from parents, siblings or online - where it's readily available and unregulated - says Macfarlane. As a result, when they start lessons at the start of high school their level of knowledge is often "all over the place".

At Tamatea High School there is a list of topics teachers cover in the classes, such as consent, what makes a good relationship and contraception, but this list is constantly revisited and adjusted to ensure it is tailored to the students in front of them. This is crucial as students' knowledge and needs can vastly differ from year-to-year, she says. "One year the boys coming through had absolutely no concept that girls have a vagina so we had to do some work around how girls are different and this is why they're different ... the real basics that you would assume might be done in primary school. You can't assume that."

Consultation with parents is an important part of the process. The school has previously tried information evenings and surveys via email, with little pick-up for either. Their most recent approach and by far the most successful, has been to hold a curriculum review dinner for students and their families and to discuss sex education as part of that.

It's hugely important for teachers to have a relationship with students before embarking on sex ed lessons, says Macfarlane. Lessons are never taught in term one as students and teachers need time to get to know each other and to develop trust. This creates an environment where students feel

comfortable and supported.

When it comes to the way students respond to sex ed classes, there's huge variety. "Some kids will say nothing, but take everything in. Some kids will sit there and do the work but they won't make eye contact. Some kids really want to have all sorts of conversations." The aim is to make classes accessible and relevant to everyone. Anonymous question boxes are a great way for students to ask anything that's on their mind.

Macfarlane understands some of the topics that come up in conversation may make parents feel uneasy but strongly believes discussing whatever is on students' minds in a safe environment is much better than the alternative. "Given the kids we've got today and what they've got access to I think we have an obligation to answer their questions as honestly as we can." The aim is always to put kids on the right track by building their knowledge and understanding healthy relationships, she says.

So, are kids learning what they need to know? The only way to know this is to talk to families, students and the teachers, says Macfarlane. There's no doubt better teacher training would boost the value of lessons. Teachers are crying out for training on how to approach student questions, decisions on lesson content and how to tackle difficult subjects such as sexual violence, says Macfarlane.

She acknowledges the content and quality of sex ed relies on the school making it a priority. Many schools put the classes "in the too hard basket," or combine them with PE. Currently sex education is taught as part of health and only taken in Years 9 and 10, after which many students don't choose it or it isn't an option at many schools. Sex education should be a subject in its own right, says Macfarlane, who advocates for it to be continued throughout high school as students' needs evolve.

The expert

Senior lecturer at the University of Canterbury and health education expert Dr Rachael Dixon knows more about sex education in New Zealand than most. Last year Dixon collaborated with Family Planning and the NZ Health Education Association on a nationwide survey of secondary schools' teachers' perspectives on teaching the subject. The anonymous survey included 197 teachers from single sex and co-educational state,

“A comprehensive approach to sexuality education has many benefits to young people by positively impacting their relationships with other people and society.”

Dr Rachael Dixon

state-integrated and private schools.

The findings show that while there are positive aspects to our sex education, there continue to be gaps. The results weren't surprising as they “confirmed what teachers have been telling us over several years”, says Dixon.

Teachers reported they were covering a wide range of topics, which they feel confident about teaching. The positives start and end there unfortunately. A lack of time is a big issue, with teachers saying there is not enough allocated in the timetable to adequately cover the subject, to plan or to talk to other teachers to gain insight. Other major barriers included a lack of access to professional development, prioritising the subject and an inconsistent approach to sex education in schools.

New Zealand's flexible curriculum gives teachers a high degree of autonomy regarding the content and learning experiences of their lessons. But it can also have downsides, says Dixon. “Content should be based on what their learners are telling them that they want to learn about, but it also means it can be quite easy for some topics to be left out.”

When it comes to inconsistency, the quality of sex ed classes can vary between schools and within schools, depending on the teacher that's teaching the class. Teachers are struggling with questions around what is appropriate to teach, and when and how to best serve the range of emotional and physical maturity in their classes. We're lucky to have clear guidance and resources from the Ministry of Health to inform teacher planning but teachers need more training so they feel confident going into the classroom, says Dixon.

A comprehensive approach to

sexuality education has many benefits to young people by positively impacting their relationships with other people and society, she says. “We talk about sexuality education being able to develop knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values, and also skills that support people's health and wellbeing.”

To keep students engaged, it's critical that RSE is relevant to them. Dixon urges teachers to ask students what they want to learn and use this to guide planning, and to include a wide variety of genders and voices so young people can see themselves represented.

All parents should feel informed about their school's RSE lessons. “I would have thought that more than any other subject in the curriculum parents should be quite well informed as to what is being taught, when and how.” If there is a gap, it could be because schools aren't approaching consultation in a way that's working for parents, or parents aren't engaged in the process, says Dixon.

She also advocates continuing sex education beyond Year 10 as it currently stands. “It means they are missing out on really important learning.” Some schools are looking at ways to teach RSE at more senior levels, and this is a move in the right direction, says Dixon.

Schools are doing their best to teach sex ed lessons that provide relevant, valuable information in a safe, comfortable environment and many students are benefitting from these lessons. But there is more work to do.

Professional development is at the top of the list, so teachers feel confident and better prepared before they step inside the classroom. A lack of consistency also remains an issue. Students at side-by-side schools can receive a vastly different sex education, depending on each institution's approach. Continuing lessons throughout high school that evolve with students changing needs would also better serve our young people, say experts.

The quality of sexuality education has a long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of our children. It provides them with the knowledge, understanding and skills to develop positive attitudes and relationships as they navigate the world. It's up to schools to reflect on their practice and consider how sex education can be responsive to their students by providing them with the information they need for life. ●

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HASTINGS 1873 - 2023

In June 1873, the Hawke's Bay Herald announced "The name of the new town is to be Hastings. We hear it now for the first time".

Written by Emma Sey, Acting General Manager of Hastings City Business Association

It was a time where strong construction was happening throughout the region, including plans for a new railway line. This was the beginning of Hastings City and over the years that followed, businesses established themselves and visitor numbers increased.

This year, Hastings celebrates its 150th anniversary, and it provides a great opportunity to reflect and celebrate a few of our long-standing businesses that have paved the way for future developments and new ventures as well as becoming icons of our city, known locally and nationally.

Although they are very different businesses in nature, they have much in common, such as quality, adaptability, clear visions, and innovation. They also focus on a high level of customer service. Each are key factors, I believe, as to why they continue to thrive within our community. A community to which they add character and charm, making it a more vibrant place to live, work and visit.

HOLLY BACON

Carl Vogtherr commenced business at Stortford Lodge, Hastings in 1914. He opened the 'Elite' Bacon factory with a delicatessen being opened in Heretaunga Street, near the Grand Hotel, on the day World War 1 broke out on August 4, 1914. This business continued to November 1938.



In 1937, Carl's son, Ernest Vogtherr, returned to Hastings to establish the Hastings Bacon Company, in Karamu road next to the Public Trust Office. The Holly bacon curing tradition was carried on to new premises in 1962, when Holly Bacon moved to its current location at St Aubyn Street East. Gordon Vogtherr joined his father (Ernest) in 1942.



40 years later in 1982 Gordon's daughter Claire Vogtherr joined the firm, which she now runs. Holly Bacon has been a family business in Hastings for 109 years.

THOMSON'S SUITS

In 1957 Mick Thomson opened Thomson's Suits Limited providing suits, jackets, business clothing and fine men's wear to the Hastings and wider Hawke's Bay community. Mick's son Michael started in the store in 1967 and grandson Angus started in 1998 ensuring the Thomson tradition continues.

Although menswear legend Bruce Giorgi, who started in 1987, is now retired, he still helps, as does Michael Thomson, whenever there is a need. The staff include Angus, following on in Mick's and Michael's footsteps.



F.L. BONE



The history of F.L. Bone began in the early 1860's, when Michael Boylan started an Ironmongery business. In 1878, the business was taken over by Harry Sherwood Ruddock and James Atkinson Fryer.

In 1893, F.L. Bone and Joshua Bennett took over the business, changing the name to "Bennett and Bone". Mr. Bennett retired in 1898 and Charles Holroyd joined. The business name changed to "Bone and Holroyd", however the partnership dissolved in 1889 and became F.L. Bone.

While the business began in general hardware it has evolved over the years to meet the needs of customers and is proud to be known as a trusted and reliable importer and reseller of hardware, cooking equipment, and fireplaces.

GRIEVE DIAMOND JEWELLER

Before Herbert (Bert) James Grieve founded Grieve Jewellers in 1933, it was originally a cake shop. The shop was then taken over by his son, Bill Grieve.

Bill's son-in-law, Robert Griffiths, joined Grieves in 1973. A few years later, in 1977, Robert and his wife Barb purchased the business and are still the current owners.

Robert and Barb's son, James joined the family business in 2012 and this year Grieves is celebrating their 90th anniversary in October.





How managers can **influence and reduce workplace stress**

The world is becoming more and more stressed. And it's this anxiety that leads to disengaged (or worse, disappearing) employees. According to Gallup, by late 2021, 34% of employees surveyed said they were actively engaged, with 16% actively disengaged. One major reason for this trend – increased workplace anxiety and stress.



Four ways to deal with stress at work

Better Communication – If communication is so key to business, then managers should take extra care to ensure they are being clear in their verbal and written instructions and answers.

More Empathy – Leaders, managers, supervisors—anyone with direct reports—should lead with empathy first. Empathy allows you to see things from your employees' points of view.

Increased Trust/Empowered Employees – As a manager or supervisor, you have the power to make employees feel valued, confident, and empowered.

Personal & Professional Development – Re-skilling and upskilling are critical aspects of ensuring employees feel confident in their job and can continue to grow. Investing in worker training reduces turnover, helps employees grow, and decreases worker stress.

Putting It Into Practice

We all need to know how to deal with stress at work. And that's where Dale Carnegie can help. Whether you want better people skills or leadership training or programs to reduce stress and worry, we're here to help managers and supervisors communicate more clearly, increase empathy, and ultimately help employees be less stressed.

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Bay Biz

Power out ... how did Unison respond? Thankfully, renewable electricity investments are powering ahead. Meantime, meet a 'power couple' advising Kiwi businesses in the U.S.



Photo: Florence Charvin



Jarden is proud to sponsor BayBuzz regional economic coverage.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE





With power supply to the region cut off and our local electricity network in tatters, a simple cuppa was a pleasure denied to thousands of people in Hawke's Bay in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle.

Story by Brenda Newth

This is the story of how the two main players in getting power to the people - Transpower and Unison - worked together to get the lights back on during February and March.

As well as, of course, exploring the all-important questions about were they adequately prepared and what comes next?

BayBuzz caught up with Unison's Jason Larkin, General Manager Commercial, and Quentin Varcoe, General Manager People and Culture, to learn more about the challenges facing the company and how it responded to the many challenges brought about by the cyclone.

Unison's cyclone response involved more than 250 people in a massive operation that saw all of the company's 13 Hawke's Bay crews on the ground as well as 12 crews from out of region lines companies that swung in behind.

Jason Larkin says that the whole of Unison can be proud. "It has been a team effort. From those in the field working very long hours in those first days and weeks, there was an unending amount of work."

It wasn't just high winds and rain that inflicted damage, but also floodwaters that wreaked havoc on the local network and at Transpower's Redclyffe substation, where connection to the national grid was lost. And with it, power to most of Napier and substantial parts of Hastings District.

Larkin says Unison and Transpower worked together really well, with the preparation for restoring power detailed through the regional 110Kv contingency plan, developed by the two companies after the 2016 snow-storm. This details how (in the event of loss of the main 220 Kv transmission connection) power would be fed from the South through Woodville and Waipawa to Fernhill.

"The fact that we had done this work with Transpower, all the switching plans were in place, all the protections had been engineered and programmed ... it was a multi-year project. It was the difference between having parts of Hastings on within hours or a number of days, had that work not been done. This is testament to the kind of efforts that have been going on to ensure there is resilience between both Transpower and ourselves ... in the event of a major loss of supply to the region," says Larkin.

Speaking of the relationship with Transpower, Quentin Varcoe talks about the initiative that Transpower and Unison showed - working together - to work around the issues affecting Redclyffe. "When we really needed them they shone. Their creativity to get power back on to Napier was something that most people won't understand," says Varcoe.

Each year Unison invests between \$55 million and \$65 million in capital expenditure, with another \$10 million to \$12 million on maintenance. Larkin wouldn't be specific on how much Cyclone Gabrielle has cost the company, saying it was well into the millions (but not tens of millions, yet).

"We have three substations flooded ... they're going to have to be re-located and rebuilt from scratch. The Commerce Commission has given us more time to update our asset management plan."

Diana Kirton, Chair of Hawke's Bay Power Consumers' Trust - the entity that owns Unison on behalf of the people of the region - says Unison's response was phenomenal on all levels.

"I feel that power consumers can be enormously proud of the company that they are all shareholders in.

"Every action has been in the best interest of power consumers ... to the point where they are now individually

knocking on doors," says Kirton.

Unison says that it identifies risks in relation to its network. Larkin says when it comes to capital expenditure one of the factors Unison considers is delivering the best outcomes for the most customers. That means that urban projects are prioritised.

"The three substations ... those vulnerabilities were known from a criticality point of view. They're not at the top of the list. And the reason for that is they are rural with a smaller number of customers. They were planned to be addressed in the future, more from an asset condition and performance point of view. And when they reach end of life or replacement they would have been replaced with a resilient modern equivalent."

Unison describes its new look substations - such as in Windsor, Hastings - as resilient and sustainable. Built 1.5 metres off the ground, with a cable basement that can have water in, or through it and not have any impact on the substation. It's built to the IL4 building standard, meaning it has to be operational after a major event like an earthquake.

Turning to the connections to the national grid, Transpower's General Manager of Grid Development, John Clarke, says that Hawke's Bay is reasonably well served in terms of grid power supply compared to other parts of New Zealand.

Our main grid connection goes from Redclyffe back out past Pan Pac at Whirinaki all the way to Wairakei, and a local network runs down towards Palmerston North, and north to the Waikaremoana hydro scheme.

"It was actually a real blessing for the region during the floods. While the main grid connection was lost, because everything goes through Redclyffe - which was a vulnerability - the Genesis hydro scheme and Fernhill substation



Photo: John Cowpland

“We’re committed to sorting things out, getting a resilient supply. Whether it’s a rebuilt or partly rebuilt Redclyffe, or relocated, it is a priority for us.”

John Clarke, General Manager Grid Development Transpower

both remained running and in service, and that’s why people in Hastings had minimal interruption.”

Redclyffe, on the banks of the Tūtaekuri River was built in 1927. It was upgraded in the 1970s, when engineers assessed the stopbanks as being sufficient to prevent flooding at the substation in a major event. A new switch room was built in 2010 for \$8 million. Surprisingly, flood risk hasn’t always been high on Transpower’s risk radar; a review of historical company documents outlining risks to Hawke’s Bay transmission supply mention snow and wind, but not flood.

Of the damage at Redclyffe, Clarke says it exceeded what had been modelled in the one-in-500-year event scenario, and had any planned resilience work been implemented, it would not have withstood the extent of the flooding experienced.

The 1927 substation was only lightly flooded, the switch room was not affected, and the 1970s substation part of the site, which is the main grid connection, as opposed to the local connections elsewhere, were the worst impacted part of the site, along with the control room.

“Our big challenge is to rebuild the control room.”

Clarke says that resilience is a conversation. With climate change beginning to have an impact, Transpower did a lot of scoping studies in 2020, looking at 170 substations. Redclyffe scored really highly on both risk of flooding and criticality. As a result Transpower planned to put a \$109 million proposal to the Commerce Commission for its 2025-2030 funding period to do three sites.

In the weeks after Gabrielle, Transpower announced that 12

substations nationwide “vulnerable to extreme flooding” would receive additional resilience work. Three of the 12 are in Hawke’s Bay; Redclyffe, Whirinaki, and Whakatu.

Transpower is doing the investigation and costing so that it can upgrade its funding request, and Clarke says it “will be looking for more than \$109 million, particularly around addressing flooding risk”.

Clarke is at pains to point out that flooding is one risk, among a range of risks including seismic, volcanic, rain, and snow.

As for Redclyffe, Transpower will make a “directional decision about the way we’re going in the next three months”, says Clarke.

“Is it viable to look for somewhere else, given the various constraints, or do we just get on with it and roll up our sleeves and build something, even though we’re on a floodplain? We think we can make resilience against a similar event in the future.”

The rough cost of the options for Redclyffe range from \$30 million to \$60 million, with some of the costs covered by insurance.

Clarke reassures: “We’re committed to sorting things out, getting a resilient supply. Whether it’s a rebuilt or partly rebuilt Redclyffe, or relocated, it is a priority for us.”

What was learnt? And the rebuild

Larkin, Unison’s lead on the cyclone response says there is very little Unison would do differently in terms of overall decision making. “I think we made the right calls ... and the results speak to that.” Referring to the teamwork between Unison and Transpower and the initiatives taken to bypass Redclyffe and connect to other parts of the

electricity network in the Bay, Larkin says: “If we had just fixed the problem, and repaired what was damaged, a large part of Napier would still be off.”

Clarke says that Transpower will develop a bigger resilience programme.

“Do we need more temporary or mobile equipment like a temporary control room that we can deploy?”

“We’ll be having a good think about that. But mobile substations and temporary control rooms at grid scale are not trivial things. Maybe we should’ve had some of those things on hand ... to help us recover faster. Especially where you have a lot of sites that may have met standards at the time, but don’t meet current standards,” Clarke says.

Consumer Trust Chair Kirton says that the cyclone has highlighted a number of things for Unison that are going to be cause for reflection when it develops its next business plan.

“Things around the configuration of the network and substations, and working with Transpower with an eye to the future, in light of past events.”

The Trust will be keeping an eye on Transpower’s remedial work with respect to its vulnerable Hawke’s Bay substations.

“Now we know how vulnerable areas can be. We will be speaking up for the consumers to make sure that it is a priority,” she says.

Transpower and Unison are working together on the rebuild, just as they did on the response. Unison recently said it was working alongside Transpower to ensure supply into the region meets demand ahead of winter, with a firm plan in place to undertake the work required to build additional resilience and security in transmission supply, ahead of peak demand during the cooler months.

“The fact that we had done this work with Transpower ... was the difference between having parts of Hastings on within hours or a number of days.”

Jason Larkin, General Manager Commercial Unison

Transpower’s Clarke says the work it’s currently doing with Unison “takes us back to where we were, pre-cyclone”. The first task is to unwind the emergency fixes put in place to compensate for Redclyffe, before proceeding to additional resilience work that Transpower is seeking funding for.

Regarding the future and the right way to supply the region from the national grid, Larkin says that Unison and Transpower are evaluating the options, and that once a decision is made “we’ll certainly be involving the community and stakeholders in that decision, because ultimately there are costs that go along with it.”

It would seem to BayBuzz that keeping local stakeholders well informed of just how our electricity infrastructure providers plan to build back smarter over the long term is a critical transparency and engagement requirement for both organisations, essential to protecting community goodwill stemming from the cyclone response.

Supporting infrastructure – bigger, safer, stronger, smarter?

No discussion on the rebuild of electricity infrastructure would be complete without touching on the stop banks.

We all know that Gabrielle’s devastation was fatal to lives, ways of life, and livelihoods. The big unknown is just how big was it? Hawke’s Bay Regional Council (HBRC) says that it will take a year to do that calculation. Right now its focus is on rebuilding flood protection infrastructure back to pre-Gabrielle levels, which in all but the recently upgraded Taradale stop bank is a 1 in 100 level of protection.

Pre-cyclone HBRC committed to increase the level of protection across all stop banks to 1 in 500, which will



Photo: John Cowpland

come with a hefty price tag and a long timeframe; the short distance of the Taradale upgrade cost \$4 million (co-funded by Government and HBRC) and took two years.

In the meantime the question of whether Gabrielle was bigger than a 1 in 500 event remains unanswered for the foreseeable future. As does the even more critical question of whether a 1 in 500 level of flood protection will be adequate going into a climate change future that NIWA says promises increasingly severe rainfall events?

What can Hawke’s Bay do about building back better, stronger, safer and smarter?

Cam Wylie, geotechnical engineer and CEO of RDCL, says Hawke’s Bay is a dynamic physical environment characterised by floods, drought, earthquakes and even volcanoes.

“The challenges to resilience are many. It is a long term game. Gabrielle is the regional development

opportunity to frame the response and commit to the resilience.”

“If we do not build back better, in whatever form that may be, we should accept that large events will disrupt our, or our children’s, or our children’s children’s lives. With all the tragedy, loss, and cost that comes with these things. Without question that will happen,” he warns.

With that in mind, *BayBuzz* encourages Hawke’s Bay people to get more involved.

We can have a say, albeit indirectly, on the running of Unison by voting for the Hawke’s Bay Power Consumers Trust board. We should pay more attention to oversight of this lifeline utility, and how it performs for the community. But sadly few of us care enough to get involved. At the last election nearly 70% of those eligible to vote chose not to participate in these important elections.

Surely that’s where the real power lies in getting power to the people. ●



Unison's Cyclone Gabrielle response

Photo: John Cowpland

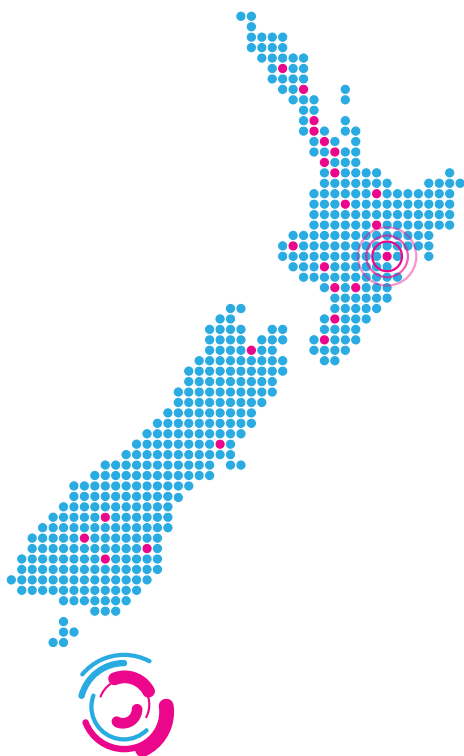
- **Over 60,00 hours**, including extra contractors that came in to help.
- **25 crews:**
 - > 13 Hawke's Bay crews
 - > 3 Taranaki LinePower crews
 - > 2 Hamilton WEL Networks crews
 - > 3 Whakatane Horizon Networks crews (includes 1 Vegetation crew)
 - > 3 Rotorua Unison crews plus management & office support
 - > 1 Taupō Unison crew
- **230 power poles replaced**
- **80 kms of power lines replaced**
- **18 generators** supplying power to around 2580 properties.
- **25 community meetings attended**
- **At 8am on 5 April there are <100 residential connections still without power, that are yet to be inspected and livened**
- **A further 301 properties are unable to be safely reconnected due to flood/ cyclone damage**
- **Has a plan for every customer affected**

Supporting our region's recovery



find out more at
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They joke that their travel bill makes Air New Zealand “very wealthy”, but for two professionals specialising in helping New Zealand businesses take their products or services State-side, a life split between LA and Hawke’s Bay is all part of the deal.

There’s a scene in just about every Hollywood movie or HBO TV series ever made where a bewildered employee who has just been fired from their job takes a box to their desk and carefully packs their coffee mug, their potted plant, “a framed photo of themselves and their kids at the baseball game,” observes Stu Webster. “And then they just leave, never to return to that workplace ever again.”

It’s a trope any viewer of American entertainment is familiar with, but in the US, where Stu and his partner in life and work, Kat Hellyer, spend roughly half their year, it happens every minute of every day.

Unlike in New Zealand, where the road to dismissing an employee is paved with meetings, mediation, and a consultation period, Kiwi companies who have established themselves in the United States have a very different process to follow. Although they can terminate “at will”, it’s Stu and Kat’s job to ensure that they don’t fall foul of the law while moving their staff member on. “Often the employment issues will be similar, but the way you deal with them can be a bit of a maze,” begins Stu. “The red tape can be overwhelming to wade through, the insurance premiums are enormous, and there’s the risk of getting

sued. Educating New Zealand boards of directors on how to terminate a US-based employee is really illuminating for them.”

Stu and Kat are professionals who, by their own admission, refuse to colour inside the lines. Their companies - one, a legal practice and the other, a boutique cross-jurisdictional business consultancy - “connect the dots” between New Zealand and the (highly regulated) US.

The pair met 15 years ago when Stu was a partner at Sainsbury, Logan and Williams, and Kat - who is Hawke’s Bay born and raised - was in town to see family.

Having spent most of her adult life overseas (she attended law school in Hawaii, and has lived all over the States since then), Kat had built a reputation for problem-solving within the agribotics sector. Stu was looking for a lifestyle change and California was calling. “I’d started out at a small rural law firm, I’d been made partner at the age of 29, and I was at an age where I wanted other opportunities. Our worlds collided and suddenly there was a suggestion that I could go to the United States, and that sounded really interesting to me.”

So much so, that Stu embarked on several years of study to take the grueling bar exam in California, allowing him to practice there, as well as here in New Zealand. “I believe I’m one of only a handful of New Zealand lawyers who is licenced across both,” he says. And it’s an enormous advantage Kat says, having someone who knows the intricacies of legislation in both jurisdictions. “Because sometimes, when you’re exporting, the solution to your problem will lie in New Zealand law and other times, Californian.”

Stu Webster, Attorney at Law, operates out of the pair’s Bel Air house or Napier Hill home on purely legal issues, “acting for entrepreneurs on both sides of the Pacific,” he says,

Stu and Kat are professionals who, by their own admission, refuse to colour inside the lines. Their companies – one, a legal practice and the other, a boutique cross-jurisdictional business consultancy – “connect the dots” between New Zealand and the (highly regulated) US.

while their sister business, Pinecone, helps New Zealand businesses wanting to either establish themselves or further expand into the United States. Why California? “It’s the gateway to the US, with a direct flight to Auckland, and it’s the state most Kiwis start with when they choose to export.

“We’re able to tick off immigration requirements, incorporation, distribution agreements, debt recovery, employment agreements - a wide range of assistance. I think our skills are fairly unique in that there are certainly immigration specialists in New Zealand, with large teams of people doing just one thing at a time, and there are specialists in the US too. But very few offer a service straddling the two countries.”

And so far, it’s been popular. Using a website, and word of mouth recommendations as their only marketing tools, they’ve been flat out since launching eight years ago.

Hawke’s Bay businesses make up roughly two thirds of their clientele - household names like First Light Wagyu and Progressive Meats. The other third is mainly Auckland-based businesses such as Blunt Umbrellas. In First Light’s case, Stu and Kat were instrumental in helping seed a US-based sales and marketing team and apply for the necessary US work visas.

Kiwis’ number eight wire mentality is critical to building a successful

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business and being "US-ready," says Kat, but it has its drawbacks too. "New Zealand businesses often feel like they can DIY their move to the United States. It's just not as easy as it sounds and the paperwork is baffling to many Kiwis. One US visa application we helped with recently was over 800 pages long. When it came time to renew, that was another 650."

Ah, paperwork. Kat says a huge hurdle for Kiwis setting up in California is understanding that despite its population of 40 million, its reputation as the home of technology (Silicon Valley) and the leaps and bounds made in the finance sector over the past 20 years, you'll still need to pay your rent by cheque. "Our banking system here is well ahead of anything in the States," she says. "In general, the bureaucracy Kiwis face doing most things in California is a real eye opener."

And for New Zealanders dipping their toe in the shark-infested waters of the United States, there's another fishhook - trade expos. "Distributors will descend on those shows looking for naïve Kiwis to prey on," Stu warns. "Someone will approach a Kiwi on a stand and promise the world - for instance, a distribution agreement getting the product into every supermarket in every corner of the US. And the contract will arrive and it's a retainer of x-amount a month, plus 10% of turnover, and it's for a three year or a five-year term. I've acted for people desperate to get out of these arrangements because often, nothing happens. You're paying a retainer and there's no accountability and no action, and this distributor who you believed was flavour of the month is using your payments to service their overheads, and that's about it."

Kat and Stu also advise on matters such as what sort of marketing budget is realistic for an assault on the US, how to manage production when you're selling into 50 states (not just the two small islands you're used to), supply chain logistics, and compliance.

Overarchingly, there is one massive advantage every New Zealander has when they make their move - and that's the accent. "Who loves Kiwis in LA?" asks Kat. "Everyone does." It's just that the accent won't help you understand signing your distribution agreement with Walmart, or help you get your driver's licence, or your US visa. And you can't ring a big US law firm charging \$10,000 as a signing fee and ask, 'Help - how do I do this?'

"Americans indulge in litigation like it's a sport or a hobby. So it's not uncommon to get a notice to say, 'If you don't stop using our name or pinching our intellectual property, we're going to sue you for a gazillion dollars.' And that, generally, is enough to give an average Kiwi cardiac failure."
Stu Webster

"That's where we step in, and we've had some really lovely moments with Hawke's Bay businesses moving people over, where we'll get a phone call from someone walking out the door of the US Consulate crying with excitement that they've had their visa approved. You feel overjoyed for them!"

Stu also cautions that Kiwis need to be prepared for the "scary letters" they might get once established in the US. "Americans indulge in litigation like it's a sport or a hobby. So it's not uncommon to get a notice to say, 'If you don't stop using our name or pinching our intellectual property, we're going to sue you for a gazillion dollars.' And that, generally, is enough to give an average Kiwi cardiac failure."

Most of the time, though, it amounts to nothing. So we're very good, I think, at offering some reassurance - at saying, 'Let's just take a look at what's actually alleged here and whether we have any obligations.'"

Both Stu and Kat, who say they love the community feeling of Hawke's Bay, are equally passionate about the City of Angels, and believe the dual lifestyle is the perfect mix for them and their businesses. "But more than that," says Stu, "we're just delighted and grateful to be doing such interesting work, helping really great Kiwi businesses, and lots of ingenious Hawke's Bay businesses among them, export their produce and products to the US." ●
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Fiona Fraser is the director of Contentment PR & Communications. Nominate a savvy entrepreneur to feature in an upcoming column by contacting fiona@contentment.co.nz



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Investing in the clean energy transition

The world has woken up to the fragility of many of the systems we take for granted. This ranges from our recent experiences with supply chain bottlenecks and shortages, air travel, inflationary pressures, pandemic-related illness, labour shortages and energy supply worries.

So, while we are currently in the green-energy rush, with the spotlight on renewable energy, it's been an interesting time in energy to say the least.

Rewinding to April 2020, global lockdowns triggered a collapse in demand for oil that saw storage costs hit all-time highs as producers scrambled to slow down oil production. Fast forward two years later, the world experienced an energy supply scare triggered by Russia invading Ukraine which highlighted many years of under investment with electricity, natural gas, and crude oil prices skyrocketed to spikes above US\$120.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine was not the only factor to trigger this spike. In the last 5-10 years as countries have rushed to implement carbon emission reduction targets, there has

From an investment point of view, it's worth noting there are some interesting decarbonisation technologies emerging including carbon capture and storage.

been less investment in new oil and gas supply. Some banks have limited, or even stopped, lending to fossil fuel initiatives forcing a greater reliance on energy from non-western (often state-backed) firms.

Though a fossil fuel, natural gas will have a place in the energy mix. It is viewed as a transition fuel because it can easily be turned on at peak electricity consumption times, and it emits half the carbon dioxide of coal or diesel.

Heavy industry areas are likely to increase their demand notably in the shipping industry, which is facing increased regulations and guidelines to install scrubbers or upgrade fleets to run on natural gas.

However, it's a different story in renewable energy.

Wind and solar account for more than 10% of the world's electricity generation, up from 2.8% a decade ago. Even more impressive is that 78% of 2021's extra electricity generation came from solar and wind.

Both are benefitting from reductions in production costs and soaring uptake. Technology innovation is delivering impressive improvements in efficiency and in solar, 'per watt-hour' costs have dropped by 21% per year for the last 12 years. It's a similar story for wind generation – down over 11% per year over the same period.

Uptake in solar has come from more homeowners adding solar panels and an increase in large-scale utility projects. There have been efficiencies created in large wind utility projects thanks to the use of bigger turbines or installing them offshore in high wind areas.

The issue with solar and wind generation is that you need the sun and wind to do their bit. The key outcome here is that the sector is getting better at finding workarounds for this. Smart energy systems charge batteries in electric vehicles (EVs) during the off-peak rate periods or using heat pumps when electricity is in plentiful supply.

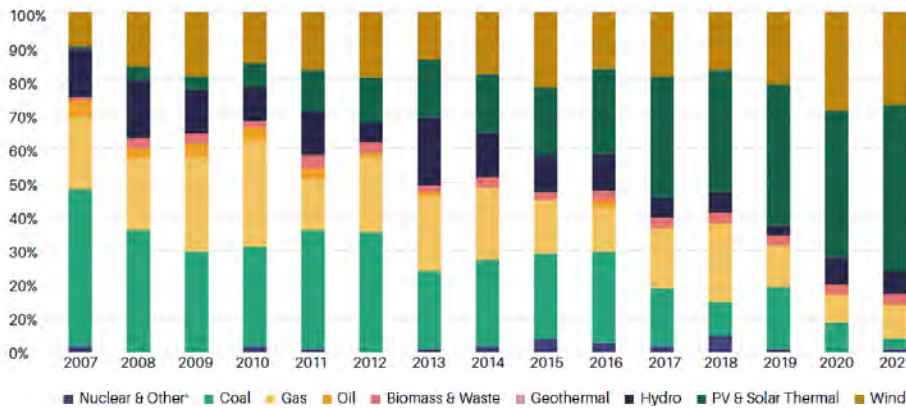
From an investment point of view, it's worth noting there are some interesting decarbonisation technologies emerging including carbon capture and storage.

Decarbonisation incorporates all



The Jarden Hawke's Bay team

Share of global net power additions



the measures taken by businesses, governments, organisations, and households to reduce the level of greenhouse gas (primarily carbon dioxide and methane) emissions into the atmosphere.

Some interesting emerging decarbonisation technologies include carbon capture and storage solutions which actively take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. However, many of these are early-stage developments and require favourable subsidies to

ensure the technology is viable when scaled up.

The shift from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles, hybrids and plug-in hybrids is an active decarbonisation effort.

Keep in mind that amongst all of this, consumer demand for energy has never been higher. With the cost of energy declining and the impressive growth in renewables, we are using more electricity and for things like EVs, heat pumps, and buildings. ●

Jeremy Ward is Director, Wealth Management Research at Jarden. The information and commentary in this article are provided for general information purposes only. It reflects views and research available at the time of publication, using external sources, systems and other data and information we believe to be accurate, complete and reliable at the time of preparation. We make no representation or warranty as to the accuracy, correctness and completeness of that information, and will not be liable or responsible for any error or omission. It is not to be relied upon as a basis for making any investment decision. Please seek specific investment advice before making any investment decision or taking any action. Jarden Securities Limited is an NZX Firm. A financial advice provider disclosure statement is available free of charge at <https://www.jarden.co.nz/our-services/wealthmanagement/financial-advice-provider-disclosure-statement>



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Build back ... wiser

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." began Charles Dickens in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

In the recent events of Cyclone Gabrielle, while our two cities were largely spared from serious damage, our economy took a beating which will reverberate in some areas for the next decade or more. Our challenge is to turn what was for many the worst of times into what becomes, for the majority, the best of times.

From an economic perspective, the cyclone exposed a number of weaknesses in our systems across the region. One of the biggest was the inundation of the Redclyffe electrical substation, and the subsequent lengthy outages which also contributed to a significant outage of telecommunications. It demonstrated to a worrying degree how dependent we now are on electronic means of communication, trade, commerce ... almost everything.

However, even with the restoration of power and the ability to communicate, there was a significant vacuum of information for much longer than was desirable. While Gisborne District Council could mobilise the local press, get information printed on everything that was known at the time about the situation, and hand-distribute them to every Gisborne household, in Hawke's Bay we relied on Facebook posts. No, I don't have the solution to that right now – but we need to sort it out before the next disaster hits.

The cyclone also highlighted our reliance on our primary sector, and triggered a growing realisation of just how badly affected it has been. The primary sector has supported the growth of this region for over 100 years, and we are going to have to support them as they regroup and rebuild.

In the post-Gabrielle environment, being the Chair of the recently established Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency (HBREDA) has taken on a slightly different com-

The recent events haven't changed the mandate. If anything, they have sharpened the need for focus. They have also steeled the resolve of all key leaders in the region to use the disaster that has hit us as a springboard to build back a better and more resilient economy.

plexion. By way of background, HBREDA has a straightforward mandate at a high level – basically to facilitate sustainable economic growth for the region in a manner that involves and benefits the widest possible sections of our population.

The recent events haven't changed the mandate. If anything, they have sharpened the need for focus. They have also steeled the resolve of all key leaders in the region to use the disaster that has hit us as a springboard to build back a better and more resilient economy.

Now, while "build back better" rolls off the tongue, what does it actually mean in the current environment?

From a REDA perspective, it means a few things.

Firstly, we need to take this opportunity to **build a more inclusive economy**. The huge construction projects about to begin to rebuild our damaged infrastructure will need to hire, train, develop and promote local unemployed or underemployed people. We've already begun the work to refine such 'progressive procurement' policies, which will also be designed to ensure that existing local construction businesses are supported to engage in the bigger projects, so that our economy doesn't get hollowed out.

Secondly, we need to identify opportunities to **utilise the existing**

workers who are being progressively displaced as some businesses face a slowdown in demand. We are currently working with two groups who are already building transportable homes, using locally-sourced timber, designed to address both the shortage of permanent housing in Hawke's Bay and the need for quality temporary accommodation for displaced locals, and for incoming workers. Both groups are already training locals in relevant trades. One thing we can do is help aggregate the demand so that the entities can scale up production and provide more employment.

Thirdly, we need to **take a long-term view on how and where we rebuild our infrastructure**. There will be many cheap fixes promoted by those with an interest in keeping costs down – and some of them may well be necessary in the short term. However, none of them can be allowed to become the accepted standard for the longer term rebuild of Hawke's Bay.

One of the projects that we have underway at the moment (it pre-dated Gabrielle by some months) is a review of freight transport and logistics in and out of Hawke's Bay. It highlights (unsurprisingly) that there are many opportunities to significantly improve our transport networks that will both improve our resilience as a region and help us make meaningful reductions in emissions. As an example, improving the Napier-Wairoa Road to reduce gradients and remove tight corners ticks both of those boxes.

Similar projects focused on the resilience of our energy system and our communications systems will be a high priority in the coming months. Just as we commissioned Napier Port to lead the freight study, we will approach energy companies and telcos to test their willingness to take a similar lead role in reviewing our energy and communication improvement opportunities.

We must focus constantly on



Redclyffe substation under water.

From an economic perspective, the cyclone exposed a number of weaknesses in our systems across the region. One of the biggest was the inundation of the Redclyffe electrical substation, and the subsequent lengthy outages which also contributed to a significant outage of telecommunications.

making this current disaster an opportunity to make sure that we unlock the potential for the future growth of Hawke's Bay – for all of Hawke's Bay.

Readers will have noted the appointment of the Board of the new Hawke's Bay Recovery Agency (HBRA), chaired by Blair O'Keeffe. Some worry that we'll have duplicate agencies arguing over whose lane is whose. But no, we don't, and we won't.

The Recovery Agency will be focused on all aspects of recovery and will coordinate and oversee all the key initiatives and programmes required to getting us back on our feet, in a


better state than we were pre-Gabrielle. Its role is transitional. REDA will be a linked part of HBRA's capability, able to provide input, support and challenge to recovery as required, while our longer term, enduring mission remains to look further down the road to ensure the future economic viability of the region.

At REDA, we're excited by the opportunity to work as part of that talented team focused on making our current situation lead us to the 'best of times' for as many as possible. Along with the Recovery Agency, we need to make sure that we really do focus on long-term solutions that our children

and our grandchildren will applaud in decades to come.


Charles Dickens went on to say, in that famous opening line, "... it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness ..." The appointment of the Recovery Agency Board, coupled with the talent and focus being displayed by all those involved, gives me hope that we are more likely to end up in an age of wisdom! ●

Alasdair MacLeod is Chair of the Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency (HBREDA) and former chair of Napier Port.

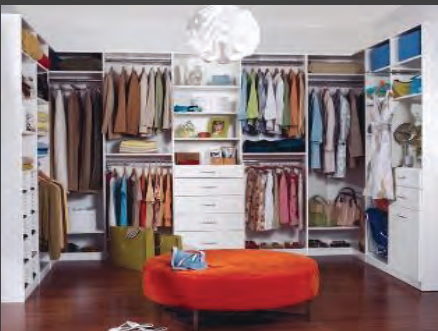


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Climate change, cyclones, and short-term thinking



Photo: Florence Charvin

Humans aren't great at long-term thinking. That's because our brains are wired to react really well to immediate threats.

It wasn't that long ago, in terms of human evolution, that we were mainly concerned with finding our next meal while avoiding becoming one.

Threats like being attacked by a predator have been replaced by other short-term worries. This is well illustrated by the latest Kantar *Better Futures survey* which found 72% of respondents put the immediate concern of rising cost of living as their main concern. Protecting New Zealand's children was second, crime levels were third, availability of affordable housing was fourth, and fifth was violence in society.

Concern around the impact of climate change on Aotearoa New Zealand didn't even enter the top 10, despite the knowledge it will have very real, and dire, economic and social impacts in the future.

And while the effects of extreme weather events did reach the top 10, driven by the January and February storms which lashed the North Island,

this is likely to be short lived. The survey's researchers noted that concern peaked and then dropped even over the period the survey was open.

It's human nature to suppress traumatic events and experiences rather than dwell on them. The news media moves on from the stories of human tragedy. I am very hopeful though that decision makers will keep the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle in mind when planning new developments, infrastructure or upgrading existing assets.

Immediate impact

Here in Hawke's Bay, the scale of destruction left behind by Cyclone Gabrielle has given us a fresh, very stark perspective on our vulnerabilities and what extreme weather, turbo charged by climate change, can do. It's uprooted entire communities, brought long-term hardship to many and devastated the lives of those who lost loved ones.

In the immediate aftermath, sustainability was a secondary consideration to getting people safe, housed and fed before tackling the destruction.

Some 200,000 truckloads

Planning policy and Infrastructure spending shouldn't be an election year lolly scramble or political point scoring. There needs to be cross-party agreement and consensus across all levels of government with input from communities on the priorities, the responsibilities, and the resources required to mitigate future effects of extreme weather over the long term.

(2,700,000 tonnes) of silt settled in the lower five kilometres of Esk Valley. At its peak the Esk River recorded 1.7 million litres of water a second at 3:45am. The Tutaekuri recorded 1.8 million litres, the Ngaruroro 2.9 million litres and the Tukituki 3.3 million litres a second at their peak. Truly astounding amounts of water.

The sheer volume of waste to be dealt with overwhelms all our existing systems, but those systems themselves were also compromised. For example, the Ōmarunui Landfill, a facility that serves the whole of Hastings and Napier had its kiosks washed off its piles, and weighbridges were full of silt. Commercial composter BioRich, which processes a significant quantity of the region's organic waste, was badly flooded. Recycling trucks and facilities were compromised. Damaged roads meant even getting to these facilities was not possible for an extended period.

The sheer volume of waste created was difficult to wrap your head around, even for someone like me who has spent their career in the waste sector.

Household waste needs were dwarfed by the acres of orchard wires, strainers, posts, bird netting, trees, vehicles, slash and animal carcasses all rolled into one mass.

Material that would normally have been recyclable or compostable are destined for landfill due to contamination. Serious consideration is being given to legislation to allow controlled open-air burning of waste.

Construction and demolition waste already makes up around 50% of all waste going to landfill. With over 2,100 homes red or yellow stickered, the scale of deconstruction and reconstruction will see that soar, with limited options for reuse and recycling due to both scale and contamination.

The challenge faced by the region's waste management officers and crews has been immense. They have worked long hours under huge pressure and had to come up with innovative solutions very quickly – their work doesn't go unappreciated.

Ideas are emerging. Can slash for example be shredded and mixed with silt to add nutrient value and create a soil additive? Some of our country's most productive land is alluvial plain after all, but it's a process that happened over millions of years.

Preparing for a different future

One in 200-year storms and floods are becoming one in 100, one in 50-year events. As we have seen, they can hit many communities in quick succession, stretching resources. Coastal communities are already compromised. While there has been discussion about retreat from some coastal areas, inland communities are now also proving vulnerable.

It's imperative we don't miss the opportunity to improve prevention, mitigation and response initiatives. The government review of forestry practices is a good start, but the appropriate use of land is a bigger conversation for this country with large impacts on our economy and jobs as well as our environment. We missed this opportunity after Cyclone Bola and we are now suffering the consequences.

There is much talk about whether pine planting is even a viable long term carbon sink, and criticism of how it reduces productive land. But what if we instead truly incentivised farmers to plant the most erosion prone areas of their land in permanent native forest, while retaining the most productive parts for farming.

The way we build infrastructure and where we place it can reduce its vulnerability. For example, telecommunications companies have been quick to recognise they need to build partnerships with satellite communications companies to back up terrestrial physical infrastructure. Moving landfills and substations away from waterways will need to be considered.

We will need to rethink our inclination to believe we can control where water wants to flow with stop banks and diversions. Instead of seeing wetlands as a barrier to development, we will need to consider incorporating them as natural flood control.

When it comes to building resilient housing, *where* we allow building is a major consideration. But so is *how* we build. There are already examples of future proofing working well when extreme weather strikes. One is the Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood in Auckland, built 24 years ago to very high environmental sustainability standards.

It's built to allow for the natural flow of water, uses a swale system to absorb rainwater, and has a pond. The medium density housing development is also designed as a 'spongy neighbourhood' with minimal paved areas and maximum green space, gardens and trees to absorb water and retain soil.

Another is the Richmond townhouse development in Mt Wellington, which was built over an aquifer and was designed with an extensive stormwater system. It too survived the Auckland flooding unscathed, despite getting 30% more water than it was designed for.

Planning policy and Infrastructure spending shouldn't be an election year lolly scramble or political point scoring. There needs to be cross-party agreement and consensus across all levels of government with input from communities on the priorities, the responsibilities, and the resources required to mitigate future effects of extreme weather over the long term. We cannot afford to let the price paid by Hawke's Bay, Auckland and Northland and our hard-learned lessons of the last few months be for nothing. ●

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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Whatever became of advocacy?

On the evening that preceded Gabrielle, my father, a life-long weather obsessive, sent me a text: *"Taupo road closed. Esk Valley will flood tonight."*

Of course it flooded more spectacularly than anyone expected, but it was always going to flood. The bloke who ran the camping ground knew it too and in kicking out his customers he probably saved many lives. This wisdom, I'm assuming, was based on sound local knowledge and not a PhD in meteorology.

Cyclone Gabrielle was merely a tropical storm when it reached Hawke's Bay. Our rain gauge at work only recorded 150mm for the relevant 24 hours, a significant but not unusual event. The problem was the wind direction. The rain was driving in directly from the east, landing in the ranges and running straight back down the rivers. Rainfall by location (what the press cites) and rainfall by catchment are quite different things.

Many weeks later and despite having two detailed reports prepared by Gus Charteris and Boston Consulting Group, government has not made any significant decisions, barring initial clean up grants. This is immensely frustrating as the social and economic impacts are incalculable.

In my industry, the apple crop will be down about 25%. That means that at least \$200 million of foreign exchange earnings won't be flowing around our community. The impacts on cropping, pastoral farming and wine will nudge those losses to around a billion dollars. You will feel this everywhere you go and for years to come.

You will have noticed very little of the clean-up is occurring on the plains. That's because the apple growers have no money. A 25% loss

You will have noticed very little of the clean-up is occurring on the plains. That's because the apple growers have no money. A 25% loss in income isn't something we can absorb after the trauma of Covid disruptions, labour shortages, a huge spike in freight costs and the Ukraine war causing a collapse in the EU market.

in income isn't something we can absorb after the trauma of Covid disruptions, labour shortages, a huge spike in freight costs and the Ukraine war causing a collapse in the EU market. 2022 was the worst year in the apple business in living memory.

Already we have borrowed our seasonal finance to produce a crop that has partly disappeared. The banks know that any more money they lend us won't be repaid this year. A second year of thumping losses is baked in the cake.

There is a lot of talk about recovery, but there is no money to plant trees again. If they are destroyed in this type of event, so is half your asset value. It will take \$200k per hectare to repair the damage and replant. And if you now own a destroyed orchard, layered in silt, what's it really worth? The banks are quite rightly worried about their security. Even if the government provides funds to replant, I suspect the banks will not support it. Asset values will be seen as quite dubious, while earnings will be hobbled for the balance of this decade. Without some magic solution the industry will shrink by a third.

Defaulting to the ruler

Faced with these dire prospects, you'd expect a lot of public discussion about what might be done about it. Most likely the various industry bodies would be communicating regularly with the media, you'd be incredibly well informed and the government would be under great pressure to deliver a credible recovery plan.

Inexplicably this hasn't happened.

The industry body I know best, NZ Apples and Pears, only seem to have put out one press release in the last two months – an update on the crop estimate. Admittedly they have no chief executive at present and have opted not to appoint an interim CE. The national pan-industry body Horticulture NZ is seen as the best equipped to represent us all, but a quick google will reveal they have been very quiet in the public domain too.

This absence when 'advocacy' and 'representation' on behalf of their members are the first things they mention as their role. To proactively engage with the media and raise awareness of your industry in the eyes of the public is an essential political function.

Sometimes I'm asked for comment by the media and I suggest they ring one of the industry organisations. To my horror they've often replied, 'We've tried that. They say they're working with government and don't wish to comment.' Really? Is there nothing you can say in advocacy for your industry? You'll seldom see a proper politician turn down a media opportunity.

In the rural domain, I put this 'democratic avoidance' partly down to the rise of the corporates. Small business owners are more likely to cultivate an independent spirit. I remember fondly the old days with rough-hewn

farmers on the news, calling it with the agricultural directness of a combine harvester. There was nothing false about them and it was compelling.

Frustrations with advocacy can be seen across rural industries. Beef+Lamb Chairman Andrew Morrison recently lost his seat on the board to a Groundswell-endorsed candidate. This is a rare event amongst rural types, who are relatively conservative by nature and inclined to finding inspiration in the National Party.

So how is it we seem to have lost our political soul? Not surprisingly, I have a theory.

Only two models for government seem to be prevalent. In one a king or tyrant runs the show and progress is made through the careful grovelling of their underlings. Vladimir Putin or the Sultan of Brunei are two contemporary examples. The other model is democratic and attempts to invert this hierarchy, making the powerful leaders the servants of the people.

It's curious to note that there is something in the DNA of humans that wants to default to the powerful ruler.

Longstanding editor of *Harper's Magazine*, Lewis Lapham, outlines this

in his 1993 book, *The Wish For Kings*. He suggests that preference for this model may be based on the attributes it delivers – it is stately, decisive and powerful. Democracy on the other hand is a world of perpetual chaos. It's also seen as slightly unsavoury and amongst many decent citizens, including our industry bodies, something to only engage in as a last resort.

In his book Lapham suggests that many in our society “fear and despise both the theory and practice of democracy”. He recounts a woman he met at a dinner party who thought that democracy should be easy, quiet, peaceful and safe. Like many she wished for government that was noble and orderly. Instead, the system we've signed up to looks like the ceaseless argument of school children. The wish for kings is the wish to avoid the vulgarity and inefficiency that is essential to democracy. In order to find the best balance for our society, no argument is ever entirely won.

The kingdom is the world of King Charles' coronation; a grand display that anoints mortals with a near God-like status. Similarly we wish our democratic leaders were of impec-

cable moral standing and a superior breed in every respect. It's for this reason I think we briefly fell for Jacinda's displays of performative kindness and the subsequent fawning assessments of the foreign media. Another view is that she was a little thin-skinned and guaranteed kindness only as long as you agreed with her.

Democracy has firmly succeeded the old world of kings. It demands that leaders and citizens alike eschew their natural desire to be sycophantic courtiers and take on the responsibility of being political protagonists. Such engagement doesn't have to be especially distasteful and can be worthy of our admiration.

Like many I am fearful that our society is losing confidence in the notion of democratic self-government at every level. The key reason for this is that we seem to have forgotten what it demands of us – the courage to speak out boldly and to hold our elected leaders to account. ●

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



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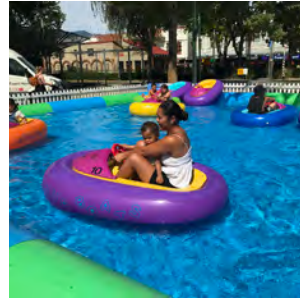
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Life


Flicking through these pages life in Hawke's Bay may look a little dark. On the surface maybe. But dig a little deeper. At the end of each challenging tale told, courage and humanity emerge like beacons of light. Indomitable. And the tight community bonds formed by facing such adversity will ensure this region and those who live in and love it, will rise again.



ABOVE: Three generations of Pasifika women.
Photo: Florence Charvin



Hastings District Council is proud to sponsor *BayBuzz* culture and lifestyle coverage.



The recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle depends not on money alone – though of course it plays a major role. Much depends on what is done to rouse the spirit and ensure the will remains strong to salvage what is lost. So, we invited some of the various culture 'voices' in the Bay – the practitioners and the visionaries – to share their thoughts on lifting our spirits.

Words by Michal McKay
Photos by Florence Charvin

ART AND SOUL



KIM THORP

Co-owner of Black Barn
Vineyards / F.A.W.C Legend

It is often said that the most emotionally significant art comes out of angst. Many a great book, song, performance, poem, and painting has needed a healthy dose of sorrow to get its point across.

But with Cyclone Gabrielle, that's all way too soon. I have a feeling that the region's emotions were even more wrenched and tested by the cyclone than they were by Covid.

It is inevitable that some good will somehow come out of bad. Some things that weren't great will be better, while other things might just fade into history. And yes, in time we might sing and paint and write about that pain in ways which will hopefully give both comfort and discomfort to future generations.

But how do we get from here to there? How do we move forward and celebrate life again - and when?

I would boldly suggest - about now.

Even those who have suffered the most must be moving through the emotions from shock to monotony - often with a decent dose of pessimism attached. We all need some hope and some indications of brighter days. For many, that might not be art - it might just be a kind word, an offer of help or a laugh at a stupid joke.

But art and performance and entertainment can play a significant role here in lifting our spirits.

On top of this, our country's concern at what we've been through is palpable. The offers of help and supportive ways to cheer us up need to be captured as these too will fade away as normality slowly returns.

There is no shame in what has happened to us. We should look up, accept the offers that are coming our way and embrace them. Be that benefitting from the amazing nationwide fundraiser 'Cooking up a storm' created by Al Brown from Auckland to singing along to Maggie May at the Mission.

At Black Barn we and our artists

quickly decided March was not a time for fun, but we collectively have a feeling that about now is.

Our Bistro opened again for the first time in over a year on April 14. Reservations were chaotic. Similarly, Lorde and the Dance Exponents were rescheduled to be back at the amphitheatre shortly after.

While it might be too soon to look back with insight on the ravages of the cyclone and turn that into art - hopefully it is not too soon to start picking ourselves up, facing forward and letting in a smile.

ANDY HEAST + PITSCH LEISER

Andy - Chair Arts Inc. Heretaunga / Pitsch - Community Arts Development Manager and Festival Director (Hawke's Bay Arts Festival) at Arts Inc. Heretaunga

Our Kaupapa is to make things happen for our community no matter what!

During the 3 years of the pandemic, the team at Arts inc. Heretaunga went to extraordinary lengths and, against the odds, managed to deliver an enviable and uplifting programme of exhibitions and events to our community. Precious few arts organisations across Aotearoa delivered as much during this time and all the hard work paid off, culminating in last years' programme which proved to be the biggest to date.

Arts Inc. Heretaunga works across most arts disciplines and our work in 2022 included:

- The Exhibition Programme at the Hastings Community Arts Centre,
- the Hawke's Bay Arts Guide and Trail (in partnership with CAN),
- the return of the Blossom Parade,
- a 'Taster Series' and
- the main programme for the Hawke's Bay Arts Festival
- an exciting new initiative, the Big Apple Project.

All were designed to raise the spirits of those that took part whether they

were participating artists or audiences. The result? A positive impact on our wellbeing, bringing back the vibrancy and pride we all share in Hawke's Bay.

There was a price to pay though, the year on year, unrelenting challenges meant that by the end of 2022 fatigue and burn out penetrated our stalwart team and we looked to 2023 to recoup, and plan a more sustainable future.

How wrong we were. Cyclone Gabrielle has presented us with an even bigger challenge for 2023 and beyond.

So, what is our response?

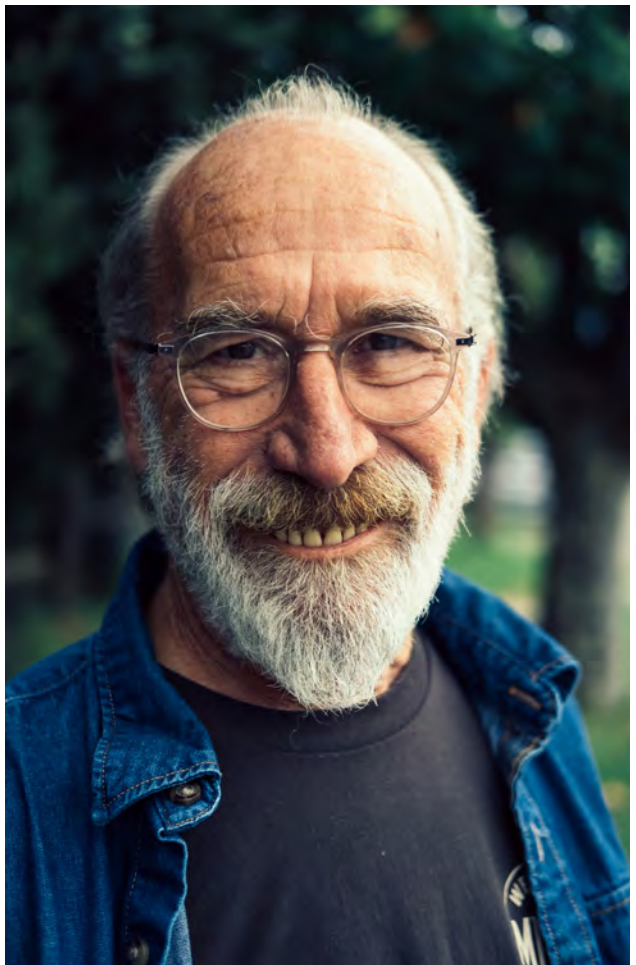
It is still early days and there is much to discuss with our stakeholders over the coming weeks. Securing funding will be challenging set against a backdrop of competing priorities.

That said, the importance of the arts and creativity and the positive impact it can have on the well-being of the community is well understood. And now is even more important. There must be respite built into the recovery. And it will need to be as accessible as possible - more free community programming with the remainder heavily subsidised. We hope our funders share this desire, appreciate the importance of the activities that we deliver to the community and continue to support us.

As it stands now, Arts Inc is moving ahead with the following:

- The Exhibition Programme at the Arts Centre will continue to offer the chance for quiet reflection amongst great work created by our exceptionally talented local artists. Alongside our colleagues at CAN, work is already underway to launch the 2023 Hawke's Bay Art Guide (and associated Art Trail in October) promoting our local artists as the region begins to recover and visitors return.
- The iconic Blossom Parade returns on September 26th as a free community event.
- The Hawke's Bay Arts Festival will return in October, with a focussed series of performances, events and exhibitions.

Given the devastation across the horticulture sector, progressing the



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Kim Thorp, Andy Heast and Pitsch Leiser, Jamie Macphail , Kate Mackenzie.

'Big Apple Project Part 2' is currently in abeyance. The project's success last year was outstanding. Part 2 could be seen as a beacon of hope, renewal and healing. However, we need to assess if there is community support and whether there would be the necessary resources made available before we could proceed.

What has been accomplished since Gabrielle hit is immense. It was made by the community working together 'no matter what'. But it is a fraction of what is needed to move forward. Working together, Arts Inc. Heretaunga's part in the recovery will continue to support our arts community to uplift the spirits of our community.

KATE MACKENZIE

Artist / Twice winner of W.O.W

For a long time, I have been painting about new paradigms, changing mindsets and human adaptation. The realisation that this is where the rubber meets the road makes me delve deeper into this narrative and I can't ignore a powerful beacon that has lived inside my head for as long as I can remember. It is the power of "hope", but I see this word as a verb, because we all must play our part in keeping it alive.

When invited to share my perspective on the years ahead I asked myself whether I had suffered enough to be qualified to write something. My family were the lucky ones and I questioned why we were spared and was our purpose to be supporters for those in need? 'Survivor-guilt' has become a common term. It has been heart-warming to see the guilt translated into kind acts of tangible and spiritual help for our flood victims and I have to say this community spirit is giving me hope.

Alas it is early days, and we know this support is a drop in the ocean to what is required, with the future so uncertain for many.

I worry about the coming winter as we hibernate into our homes and support begins to wane. This is why I believe art and culture is required more than ever. Live music and public art displays can create a magnetic force to gather the camaraderie. Art has a way of uplifting our mood and inspiring us to see new perspectives. It prevents society from being boring and bland and shows beauty in all its many forms.

Art can be about history and history tells us that beautiful regions like

"Of all the arts, to me it is music that has the most visceral and immediate emotional impact. The first notes of a beautiful song can wash all thoughts from my mind, my response is always emotive, rather than intellectual."

Jamie Macphail

Hawke's Bay and Christchurch can overcome natural disasters and be a means of reinvention and innovation. I confess, I like to reimagine our new utopia with sculptures proud within the landscape that work with nature and represent our history. Some images are far-fetched but the process of dreaming big is part of the healing.

However, I wonder whether this rose-coloured ideology is too soon? I think it is ok to accept our current reality. If we expect the rebuild to be long and difficult then our hopes will be realistic. If we accept that people will have on-going struggles it might help us to remain empathetic. If we continue to have hope, then we can stay positive and pro-active ... even if it is periodic.

Our bridges need rebuilding and I see this as a metaphor for other things.... we don't want more destroyed. Besides all the big budget decisions that need to be made my hope is that our relationships are also valued as a means of navigating the future and that is why I think art is important in this big picture. I write this piece while the faint sound of music drifts from the village domain. It reminds me of normality and gives me hope.

JAMIE MACPHAIL

Impresario, Small Hall Sessions

The essence of the Small Hall Sessions is twofold; we bring original artists to small community halls, and in doing so we bring people together.

Of all the arts, to me it is music that has the most visceral and immediate emotional impact. The first notes of a beautiful song can wash all thoughts from my mind, my response is always emotive, rather than intellectual.

In sharing the experience of listening to music played live with others, especially in a small and intimate space, that response is enhanced, your reaction is still a singular one, but you're

part of a collective, united with others.

The differences in conversations within the halls as people arrive and greet one-another and during intermission or after the show are noticeable. At the beginning they tend to be more formal and restrained. But by intermission the discussions are far more animated, the laughter louder, the barriers appreciably broken down.

Both aspects are critical right now. Allowing ourselves to feel the emotions at the same time as being buoyed by those around us, is a significant experience.

Hawke's Bay has an abundance of talent in the musical sphere, from songwriters to opera singers and players in demand on the world stage. I decided that there would be no better time to bring them together, to uplift their spirits by giving them the opportunity to perform for their community. So, for May we are celebrating Hawke's Bay Music Month in sixteen community halls throughout the region, with a different, diverse collection of our local original musicians each night.

The challenge has been in combining commerce with culture, at a time when people have been severely impacted economically. I would love to do them for free. But thanks to the support of the three councils and the New Zealand Music Commission and the Ministry of Culture & Heritage, the Small Hall Sessions have received grants which do make them viable. And the need to rely on ticket sales alone, although still necessary, is no longer an essential. Seeing your audiences so uplifted at this time makes those grants clearly worthwhile.

MEGAN PEACOCK-COYLE

Arts & Culture Manager, HDC / Board Member, Creative New Zealand Advisory

The cyclone has impacted so many. It has certainly changed lives and made us realise how vulnerable we are to climate change. In the past 12 months there have also been many interruptions to events, both indoor and outdoor, around New Zealand, due to wet weather, cyclones and storms. But arts, events and creativity continue. We re-frame, we pivot, and we re-imagine. Many artists in Hawke's Bay were directly affected by

Gabrielle - they lost their studios, their tools, their incomes, and their homes.

Recently we took a trip to Christchurch to talk to practitioners, artists, organisations, and council about their arts recovery after the earthquake. We specifically asked about what they would do differently, how they looked after their people, and if their timing was right.

It was exceptionally interesting and a realisation of how raw that disaster was, and still is, for the people who lived through it, and stayed afterward. We heard amazing stories of projects which came out of the disaster, uplifting their communities; we heard about projects within organisations to ensure the well-being of their staff and families; and we heard about new businesses and organisations which started because of the need for arts recovery.

What they all said, though, was that we should talk to our communities who are directly affected about what they need. Do they want to leave their communities to experience arts and events? Do they want to have something to look forward to? What we came away with was to not assume we know what they want, to allow people to grieve at their own pace and be quick to respond once they are ready.

Obviously, this cyclone has created a deficit in many budgets, so getting local funds to focus on arts recovery is about appealing to the many generous donors out in our community and across New Zealand. We had a Creative New Zealand hui in Hastings several weeks ago, with the emphasis on discussing their current process of funding artists, practitioners, and organisations to deliver to their strategic vision. It was a productive meeting with a definite lean toward regional funding and self-determination. What comes out of this hui around the country will change the way funding is distributed to the arts, culture and creativity sector to ensure inclusiveness and equity for everyone.

At Toitōi - Hawke's Bay Arts and Events Centre and Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga - Hastings City Art Gallery, we will continue to provide opportunities for people to come together, meet, discuss, and enjoy arts experiences.

One particular and exciting event at Toitōi which did just that was *The Worm*, by acclaimed Auckland theatre company Nightsong, at the end of April. This free show was for 'adults aged seven years and over'. Nightsong and many of the donors and patrons, along

with PANNZ Tour Makers (Performing Arts Network of NZ) brought this mammoth production, with very well-known actors performing four free shows, to Hastings for our schools and our community. It did just what we feel the community needs - provide a chance for anyone who wants to take a break, to relax and enjoy some music and have a good laugh.

That's where Toitōi's cheeky comedy festival *Laugh Your A** Off* will be the perfect pick-me-up in July! This is Toitōi's annual boutique comedy and cabaret festival that features stand-up comedy, cabaret, circus, burlesque and guarantees some wild and wonderful interactive experiences. It runs for three days and even though we are mindful of keeping shows accessible and affordable we always focus on getting top comedians and performers.

ANNA PIERARD

Co-Founder, Prima Volta Charitable Trust and Festival Opera

"Since it is so likely that our children will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise, you are making their destiny not brighter, but darker."

C.S Lewis

In a world where each day can bring more challenge and uncertainty, the antidote isn't distraction. We are endlessly distractible, and certainly now more than ever, but there are no answers in following a course of temporary relief where we should be seeking permanent resolution. For those who know the value of the arts, who have been deeply affected, challenged, transported and uplifted, they recognise that distraction is the very least of the services that the arts can provide.

A week ago, a young woman described to me her love for attending live performance. She commented that she felt invigorated, inspired by the courage of actors and singers and dancers. It was truly touching to hear and I found myself wondering why.

Artists and those that engage with them and their performance understand the nourishment and vitality that sharing in a creative space can bring. It feels like renewal. But it's often a surprise to hear just how powerful the reach can be. At a time when "people

who have been affected by..." is always the start of a sad story, it's good to hear how being 'affected' by the arts can be an almost sacred experience.

A community that celebrates and invests in art and creativity, in good times and in bad, this is a community that recognises the restorative and unifying nature of 'entertainment'. This term I don't mind at all, though its origins are often underappreciated. It comes from the Old French 'entretenir' meaning to hold together, or support. Now isn't that something? Maybe we have forgotten that when we come together to be entertained we are held together. And when we're together, we're stronger.

Since we know that our children will feel pain, we need them to see and experience live art so that they can understand and heal both themselves and others.

We need to bring them to the stages and theatres where they can be inspired again and again by those seemingly heroic feats in themselves and others, and celebrate what makes us all gloriously human at times when acts of nature feel so inhumane.

"In the dark times, will there be singing? Yes, there will be singing about the dark times."

Bertolt Brecht

HAMISH SAXTON

CEO Hawke's Bay Tourism

Places that appeal to me most are places that generally have a strong leaning towards the arts.

Personally, I'm probably most interested in design, architecture, galleries and collections, and public art/sculpture. To me, these are elements that give a place heart, soul, character - a sense of place, confidence, celebration, and a sense of belonging. I wonder, if we were to cast an artistic or design lens across our region's activities and developments, whether our buildings and roads and suburbs and public spaces and communities would look or feel different to the way they do now.

I lived for a few years in Toronto, the world's most multicultural city, a city not known as a must-visit nor attractive metropolis, but it was a city with a strong arts culture. It has an active ethos of philanthropy - and therefore engagement, a regulatory requirement for public art in building



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Megan Peacock-Coyle, Anna Pierard, Kay McGarva, Hamish Saxton (Photo: Simon Cartwright).

“From a business point of view, we are putting more emphasis on marketing to those from outside the region while also preparing for the inevitable financial fallout from the cyclone on our local market.”

Kaye McGarva

or construction developments, and a profusion of access and involvement that ran the full gamut of what could be considered art. Toronto is also considered one of the most liveable cities in the world.

I think that communities with a strong sense of celebrating and encouraging artistic endeavour are likely to have a greater chance of being more interesting, authentic, with a clear and confident story relating to “place”. Know thyself.

Art, in its myriad forms, has the potential to tell a story of origin, of development, of struggles, and of belonging. Each work of public art, each practitioner, each patron, each venue, each gallery or performance has the ability to showcase, nurture, or build a regional kaupapa, spirit, community, following, culture and character.

I was told of a US study to ascertain the core indicators of a community that “thrives rather than dives”, that found as its number one indicator for a prosperous community “an active arts scene with a focus on jobs and development of the arts beyond just the necessary”.

Sounds like a great place to live. Sounds like a great place to visit. But does it, or could it, sound like Hawke’s Bay?

KAYE MCGARVA

Artist / Owner Muse Gallery

We have been working with several of our artists who have lost their studios in the cyclone, which has been both mentally and physically taxing for them and us.

In the beginning I was personally dealing with feelings of grief and shock but was stirred into action by seeing (photographer) Richard Brimer’s posts

on social media. He was delivering food made by Craggy Range kitchens to the evacuation centres and at the same time documenting the devastation with his camera. Richard really captured the magnitude of the disaster as well as the amazing spirit of those working on the frontline; something we as a community can be rightly proud of.

Inspired by this, we put together a fundraising show called ‘Down But Not Out’, which came together pretty quickly. It was great to see how many artists attended the opening and the spirit of camaraderie there. It definitely gave the artists a lift to see their work on display, not to mention the opportunity to sell it and at the same time support our community.

From a business point of view, we are putting more emphasis on marketing to those from outside the region while also preparing for the inevitable financial fallout from the cyclone on our local market. The rural sector is a big part of our economy and the wet cold summer as well as the cyclone have made it a difficult year for many. We are still not sure how it will manifest but as a precaution we have cut staff hours and are considering reducing the hours the gallery is open.

We have one artist, Susan Mabin, who lost her studio in the Waiohiki Arts Village when the cyclone hit. She lost what was essentially her life’s work, but by chance we had an installation of hers in the gallery, Winter Map Tūtaekuri 2021. This piece documents the flora on riverbanks by her studio, weaving indigenous species of flax with invasive species such as blackberry and couch grass.

This area will take many years to recover and when it does, is unlikely to be home to the same species of plants again. We think it will provide a beautiful and thought-provoking memorial to our waterways pre-cyclone and be a poignant and uplifting artwork for the public. We are currently in talks with the council to find the appropriate space and will then begin seeking a sponsor to showcase this very special tribute.

TONI MACKINNON

Art Curator, MTG Hawke’s Bay

One of the biggest revelations through the period of a state of emergency were perceptions of what we see as essential services.

Public libraries are there to support

vulnerable community members, such as new immigrants, visitors, people experiencing homelessness or mental illness. They are the main source for many of on and offline information.

Museums are vital knowledge centres for people reclaiming precious items damaged through flooding. MTG Museum for example engaged with local marae who were, and still are, working effectively towards recovery and rebuild. Museums are also places of social connection which is undoubtedly a big part of disaster recovery.

Museums and libraries have an opportunity to carve out a purposeful place and *be visible* as key players in difficult times. The challenge is ensuring local and central government grasp what it is these facilities do and how exactly cultural institutions add social value.

Reeling from Auckland Council’s proposed budget restructure, Aucklanders know what it is like to face potential funding cuts to arts and cultural events, cuts in local board funding with impacts on council facilities and community programmes and a \$15 million cut to visitor attractions and major events.

I wonder how the country can possibly afford to rebuild after what seems to be one disaster after another. We can shout to the roof tops the value of cultural institutions, but when push comes to shove public cultural facilities need to be proudly and loudly playing our part in recovery if they are to be a priority when local and central government budgets are stretched to cover rebuilds.

SANDRA HAZLEHURST

Hastings Mayor

In the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle, our communities are still suffering and feeling anxious about their future - it’s going to be a long journey to recovery for many. We are visiting different parts of our district several times each week to share information and support our communities to recover. It’s obvious that for the worst-affected their attention is still very much focused on getting through each day as they face the daunting task of rebuilding their lives.

The arts in all forms have an important role to play in helping people restore a sense of hope and uplift our devastated communities. Many who live in the urban parts of our community are walking in very different shoes to those in our lifestyle and rural areas, and as we continue with our recovery there are



LEFT TO RIGHT: Toni MacKinnon, Sandra Hazlehurst.

opportunities to include the arts and take the arts to our communities.

This is already happening with the likes of the Small Hall Sessions holding concerts in rural halls, an initiative that has recently received mayoral relief funding. We have some wonderful local arts and culture champions who will bring us together to provide a

forum for people to share their stories and their experiences.

Our Toitoti - Hawke's Bay Arts and Events Centre - is already playing its part. In April they presented a wonderful piece of free whānau theatre called *The Worm*, brought to us by National Theatre Company Nightsong and the Performing Arts Network of New Zealand, that has

already brought some humour and joy that's much needed right now.

While our community has been devastated by this event, we will build back stronger than ever. We are all in this together and our strong arts and cultural tradition that Heretaunga Hastings has always treasured will help us achieve this. ●

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Pacifica – Pasefika – Pasifika People of the Pacific



The vibrancy of the Pasifika community in Te Mātau-a-Māui is hard to miss. You might have noticed our flags adding colour to orchards or emblazoned on vehicles. We're in hi-vis, overalls, corporate, uniforms or church clothes and our youth stand strong on both stage and sports ground. You've definitely heard our laughter, song and music. There's no doubt about it, we are an integral part of the local community, as well as the workforce.

Story by Nafanua Purcell Kersel
Photos by Florence Charvin

Regionally, Gisborne/Hawke's Bay has the second-highest employment rate of Pasifika in the country, especially in the region's main industries of agriculture and manufacturing. While it's true that we've been here for generations, the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, now in its 16th year has brought both a dedicated workforce and higher visibility of Pasifika diversity. Hawke's Bay is now home to a number of different Pasifika ethnic groups, including more Ni-Vanuatu than any other region.

Collective care and service

We celebrate our diversity, but also acknowledge the common values that our Pasifika cultures share. "Collectivity and service are at the heart of Pacific cultures," says Dr Diane Mara (MNZM) of Hastings, a leading Pasifika educator and consultant.

Throughout her robust and successful career, Dr Mara has 'walked the talk', working at ministry and tertiary training levels for education, social wellbeing, healthcare, and disability.

LEFT: Nafanua Purcell Kersel

Over 30% of Pasifika women are employed in the healthcare, social assistance, education and training industries and the impact of Dr Mara's contribution in these areas supports Pasifika collectively.

It is no surprise then, that our local Pasifika community united through similar pathways. Co-ordinated by the Hawke's Bay DHB Pacific Health Manager Tofilau Talalelei Taufale, Pasifika community leaders, churches and professionals across all sectors came together through Covid 19. Health and social support hubs were set up across the community. "You can't fault us for result - we had ninety-nine per cent vaccination here for Pasifika, the highest in the country, because of our networks," says Dr Mara.

"Our cultures are based on collective support and connection with each other," echoes Caren Rangi (ONZM). These efforts and shared values saw Pasifika communities come together again through Cyclone Gabrielle. "There's so much learning to do from what Pacific communities did so easily and quickly in response to the cyclone, with very little resource ... we know how to handle big gatherings and not sweat the small stuff, we know that help will come."

Family values and valued families

"Our world, our matauranga, the whole thing is family. That's a good foundation in terms of [community] relationships," says Dr Mara. In Tamatea, three generations of Cook Islands Māori women, Berry Rangi, her daughter Caren Rangi and granddaughter Kaiata Kaitao, enjoy living with their families close by. "It's only six hundred steps from my house to their house," smiles Berry; "thirty-nine seconds on the scooter," Berry and Kaiata chirp in unison.

"I came to New Zealand on a scholarship to go to Napier Girl's High in 1962," says Berry. She was one of the first

"There are aunties everywhere. There's never been space for me to learn shame because it's been overpowered by [the] Pacific women in my life. They were living proof ... it was not a case of 'you are going to be successful despite being Pacific' but, 'you are going to be successful because you are Pacific'."

Kaiata Kaitao

ever students in the Cook Islands to sit and pass School Certificate. "I had the choice of New Plymouth, Masterton or Napier. I chose Napier because nobody I knew had been there before. I chose Napier because it's close to the sea and has a warmer climate."

By 1974, Berry had gained a teaching qualification, married, and started a family. Based in Ōtautahi Christchurch at the time, she and her husband Puna, a cartographer, decided to move their family north to be closer to extended family. She found herself again drawn to Napier, for the same reasons. "Well, when you're born on a beach, just about, the sea is important to you."

"When we moved here there was only one other Cook Islands family in Tamatea, hardly any Māori and Sāmoan." The Rangi family purchased an unfinished home in what was then a new subdivision, "We moved in, finished building and forty-eight years later, we're still here." While raising her family, Berry worked in various roles including Pasifika health. Today, she plays an essential daily role in her grandchildren's lives, is an active community volunteer and a skilled traditional artist. You'll spot her at community events by the beautiful *ei katu* (Cook Islands floral garlands) she makes and wears with pride.

Leadership and dedication

Like her mother before her, Caren was once faced with a choice - only this



Caren Rangī, her daughter Kaiata Kaitao and mother Berry Rangī

time it was between Fiji, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and the Cayman Islands, to assist with their financial management reform. “Fiji was in a coup, Kazakhstan was at war and Mongolia was too cold,” so she moved to the shores of the Cayman Islands and also worked for several years in Wellington as an auditor.

Caren has since crafted a 20-year career in facilitation, consultation, leadership and governance with an impressive board portfolio which currently includes Chair of the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, and board member for Radio New Zealand, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and the Hawke’s Bay Regional Economic Development Agency.

“Even though I spend a lot of time on the plane, living in Hawke’s Bay is a positive point of difference. To have regional voices in governance is important to me, I really like living here and this city’s been good to us.”

“I say to Pasifika, you’ve got a lot to celebrate, so start from there. There’s a big gap for you to fill.”

Caren Rangī

Looking back on her early years in governance, Caren muses, “I didn’t know anyone on boards full-time, none of my friends or anyone I knew.” A ground breaker and role model for Pasifika, she encourages others into leadership roles. “I say to Pasifika, you’ve got a lot to celebrate, so start from there. There’s a big gap for you to fill.”

When Dr Mara relocated from Wellington to Hastings to live closer to her son Henry, she connected with Berry and Caren. At the time, Dr Mara was the national president for PACIFICA INC, the allied Pasifika women’s organisation founded in the seventies by Eleitino Paddy Walker in response to a growing population of Pasifika families in Aotearoa. Together,

Berry, Caren and Dr Mara started a local chapter of PACIFICA INC called Tiare Ahuriri in 2008.

This coincided with a rise in the regional Pasifika population, due in some part to the launch of the RSE scheme. “We’d been such a small part of the community for a long, long time and then all of a sudden, the numbers started to boost up. Schools, health services, and social services were starting to see more Pacific people,” says Caren. “[Tiare Ahuriri] started a class through the polytech because there was a gap in knowledge locally about Pacific people, even that we come from very different islands.” Today, Tiare Ahuriri has grown to a group of 20 dedicated Pasifika women who support each other to lead their families and communities.

A grounding base for the future

When Caren, her husband McKenzie and their young children moved back to Hawke’s Bay in 2008, “I



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Dr Diane Mara

just assumed that we'd live here [in Tamatea] and the kids would go to the same schools I went to," she says.

"It's good to have a grounding base," says Caren's daughter, Kaiata. "I'm in a unique position where I have history here, but also strong connections to other places." She recounts feeling a "protective layer" when she started school and teachers already knew her family. A student at Tamatea High School, aspiring writer, and natural leader, Kaiata conveys an acute self-awareness and confidence. "I'm very outwardly proud of my culture ... I never had to be afraid to share who

I was. I don't take that for granted; I know it's not always been that way for everybody."

Brought up with the intergenerational support provided by her family, Cook Islands community, Tiare Ahuriri and PACIFICA INC, Kaiata says, "There are aunties everywhere. There's never been space for me to learn shame because it's been overpowered by [the] Pacific women in my life. They were living proof ... it was not a case of 'you are going to be successful despite being Pacific' but, 'you are going to be successful *because* you are Pacific'."

Kaiata represents a generation of

"You can't fault us for result – we had ninety-nine percent vaccination here for Pasifika, the highest in the country, because of our networks,"

Dr Diane Mara

Pasifika youth that former Minister for Pacific Peoples, Aupito William Sio dubbed as the '6B' generation – brown, beautiful, brainy, bilingual, bicultural and bold. In 2019, Dr Mara consulted on a local study undertaken by the Hawke's Bay DHB Pasifika Health Team - *Pasifika Youth: Health and Wellbeing*. Hawke's Bay Pasifika youth participants were very much aware of the level of cultural responsiveness they needed from social and health services, and in what ways that level was not reached. For the most part, the youth were well connected in family, school and community life and had positive outlooks on education, Pasifika identity and wellbeing. Dr Mara recalls "going through schools and meeting lovely, articulate young Pacific people [who were] connected and resilient." She adds that, "For the future, I feel hopeful because our people just get on with the work," and, "Our cultures are a wealth of guidance." ●

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Kel Dixon at Shed 530 Estate



LOSS, LEARNING AND LOOKING AHEAD

Photos by
Florence Charvin

It's a generalisation, but even before Cyclone Gabrielle hit Hawke's Bay, things out in the vineyards weren't fabulous.

The 2022 harvest was hobbled by Spring frosts and unsettled weather through flowering and fruit set, followed by a bunch of unseasonal rain events, while the summer of 2023 (if you could even call it a summer) began wet and murky and stayed that way. Uneven ripeness and disease pressure meant winegrowers already knew they'd have to apply every ounce of skill and craft into getting good 2023 wines into the bottle.

Then Gabrielle struck.

We all know what happened, we were there. We grieved for those lost and those who lost. We cried, we shovelled, we worried, we donated, we were grateful, we checked on our friends, we were frustrated, we were hopeful. We bought the t-shirt.

So where to from here? If you're reading this hoping for some hard statistics on the state of Hawke's Bay's post-cyclone wine industry, sorry, the numbers are still a silty work in progress. So let's forget about stats for a second and think about the stories.

"Welcome to the apocalypse!" is what Kel Dixon yelled at me when I rolled up 45 minutes late for our meeting at what was, Shed 530 Estate on Puketapu Road. I hate being late, but trying to anticipate the post-cyclone traffic on the Hastings-Napier expressway is never a good decision. Yet it was my only option. Couldn't take Swamp Road because no Puketapu Bridge. Couldn't drive via Waiohiki because no road.

Speaking of not good decisions, I

was also wearing sneakers. Surely six weeks after Shed 530 was flooded, the mud and silt would've dried up right?

Stepping out of my car, it's dry-ish, but the place is unrecognisable from the newly re-vamped cellar door, restaurant and winery that'd only opened last December. It looks like someone's just dropped a mud-bomb on it. There's no landscaping to speak of. Outdoor tables? Gone. Beanbags? I saw two lodged in a hedge behind what's left of the cellar door. And what's left of the cellar door isn't much. Walls are smashed in and the structure itself is buckled and on a severe lean.

"The bar in there was absolutely stunning," Kel muses. "I actually found part of it this morning over in a neighbour's orchard." Mud-splattered pictures of how the platters were supposed to look are still blu-tacked to a wall of what's left of the kitchen and a click-clack container of flour, a bag of cheese, cans of Selzer and half a jar of capers stick out of the mud beside the kitchen window.

Kel couldn't get 4wd access to Shed 530 to survey the true extent of the damage until 4 days after the cyclone, because even by Thursday 16th the water was still up to the wing-mirrors on his ute. "When I did finally make it out and stepped into the sludge, my boots got stuck. So I purposely bought new gumboots that were too small for me so they wouldn't get sucked off while I was trying to walk around." He looks sideways at my sneakers as we pick our way around the property.

"You've got to admire the force of nature. It's bloody unbelievable," he says as we pass what I thought was a horse float sticking out of the silt. "Nah, it's a coffee caravan," he says. The property is strewn with giant willow trees wrenched from the riverbank

nearby, and a 17m long power pole lies across what was the driveway, waiting to be collected by Unison. "The Unison guys have done an amazing job of replacing (the poles) because most of them disappeared."

The devastation is so confronting.

What's also confronting for Kel, is that he and his team were just about to launch into a brand new phase of life for the property (it used to be called Moana Park) with visitors flocking to sip their wines and eat hearty Hawke's Bay food under the shade of the historic oak trees whilst looking out over their neatly manicured vineyard. As Kel and I squelched our way around the wonky winery I couldn't help kicking myself for not visiting back then. I assumed I'd have loads of time to enjoy it and was hoping to book a romantic afternoon with my husband for our March 11th anniversary.

I wasn't the only one with love and affection on the brain. "The Friday before the cyclone I'd just had my shiny new effluent tanks installed," Kel's voice catches. Eyes mist. "This place was kitted out so beautifully, I am absolutely gutted. Everything was ready to go, everything was tickety boo. The new barrels were here, all I needed was some grapes and then nature said f**k off."

Inside the winery brand new barrels are piled like large, wooden cake sprinkles around a forklift glued to the ground by a metre of silt. There are some barrels full of wine from last year still sitting on wobbly racks, but Kel doubts he'll be able to bottle any of it.

To make things extra-awesome, Kel and his wife were buying a house at the time and were due to settle the day after the cyclone. But no power meant transactions didn't occur on time. "The lawyers were getting really



antsy but what could we do?” Kel had even bought a new fridge, a new washing machine, new wine fridge and a brand new table for the new house and stored them - you guessed it - at the winery. “I said to my wife, I’ve got a space at work babe, I’ll just leave everything here!”

Plans are being made to cut tracks through the silt to get to his large tanks which are undamaged, but have floated away into nearby gullies and fields. I can see them if I squint.

Kel then points out a 10.5 tonne container holding a commercial kitchen inside which has been turned upside down and pushed over 50 metres from the concrete pad it was sitting on. “It’s toast,” he shrugs. “Maybe we might be able to salvage something in it, but we won’t know ‘til we get it upright.” The water came through with such speed and force that a couple of Shed 530’s neighbours were lucky to escape with their lives thanks to the quick thinking of another neighbour who’d been monitoring the rising waters with a

drone. Kel showed me the footage on his phone and it’s mindblowing.

I asked what he was doing each day and he said mostly just waiting for insurance news but also keeping relatively busy with vineyard stuff. Sadly, of the four full-time employees, Kel had to restructure one out of a job. However another was redeployed to a different part of the business and another was fortunate to get work with another winemaker.

The vineyard, save for just nine strainer posts, has literally been washed away. Shed 530 does bring in fruit from other sites all across Hawke’s Bay, but without a winery they’ve had to use the *force majeure* clause on some of their contracts. Thankfully Kel’s been able to sell some grapes to other winemakers. “They’re taking fruit where it’s available and paying good money which has really helped us financially and we’re very grateful.”

Shed 530 is owned by the Global Endeavours Group and despite the ‘apocalypse’ they’re super-enthused

about rebuilding and are looking 50 years into the future. “We also have a bottling company and a distribution arm, so the support structure’s there to create something new and exciting,” Kel explains. And in twelve months time? “There’ll be a winery operating.”

Interview over, I congratulated myself on managing to keep my sneakers clean. Another not good decision. Taking my eyes off the ground to wave goodbye to Kel, I stepped forward and my left foot kept going. Through an inch-thick layer of silt and deep into a large, rotting pumpkin.

While washing my sludgy shoes and feet I wondered what we, as a region can do to help our wine folk get back on their feet and roar forward?

“There’s no simple answer to that,” shrugs Steve Smith when I asked him the following day over coffee at the Smith & Sheth offices in Havelock North. For a master of wine, his coffee skills that day were average, but I let it slide. “My first vintage in Hawke’s Bay was Cyclone Bola 34 years ago,”

he offers. “I’ve seen the impacts of severe cyclones on vineyards first hand.”

Steve sat on a NZ Winegrowers panel in Gabrielle’s immediate aftermath. The recommendation they came up with (which was quickly acted on) was for MPI to provide money for business advice. “A whole advisory team came in very quickly and met with people that had physical damage to vineyards and I believe MPI paid their bills.”

Some people have lost their assets entirely and may not be able to get them back and Steve believes for many, the hardest thing will be distancing themselves from rebuilding their baby because in some cases, the sad but sensible thing may be to not do that. “The question they need to ask themselves is, do I have a viable business after going back and reinstating everything? Is my land worthy of what I need it to do? Or am I too emotionally attached to this?”

Taking the emotion out of it is the tough part. “Winery or vineyard ownership is usually driven by passion and right now people are worrying about daily challenges and they’re also worrying about what the future looks like, which uses two different parts of your brain,” he adds. “What happens in times of stress, like we’re in now, is your brain can’t control which thing it’s thinking about. The psychology of fixing this comes from the army, where they have red and blue teams. The red team is the one that’s out there doing the damage that day, while the blue team’s planning. So they each don’t have to worry about the now and then stuff,” Steve explains.

Even small entities, like husband and wife businesses should try to find a way to set their red and blue teams. To try and separate the challenges. “People become exhausted doing both, and you can’t make proper decisions when you’re exhausted. Whatever decisions you need to make, take some time to make them and don’t try and make them on your own. Instead try to get really, really good advice,”

Steve believes our business community has an important role to play by getting in, helping out and not charging for their time. “The Chamber of Commerce should take the lead on that by encouraging their experienced members to stand up and help affected people move forward. To be that business professional that’s by their side, assisting them with future decisions.” Steve believes the banks should also step in because they have a

STORIES FROM THE GABRIELLE GRAPEVINE...

No story caused more gasps than the shocking damage unleashed on **Petane Wines** and **Zeelandt** brewery owned by Philip and Christopher Barber in Esk Valley. Christopher’s harrowing rooftop escape with his young family and the heartstoppingly emotional reunion with his brother Philip was front page news, as it should have been.

Then images washed across our screens in the days following the disaster, of the brothers chainsawing their way into winery buildings to rescue, wash and sell any surviving silt-crusted bottles, of them digging out treasured Kingswoods and VW Combis. Across the road, Chef Greg Millar from **Valley d’Vine** restaurant at **Linden Estate** gave harrowing Esk Valley updates during radio interviews when phone connections allowed. Linden’s beautifully upgraded site is now silt-clogged and Greg’s restaurant closed until further notice.

Ben Poulter, whose family bought the much-loved **Sacred Hill** business back in 2021, lost one of their most treasured vineyards. It sat right at the confluence of the Mangaone and Tutaekuri rivers, two usually pretty, tree-lined trickles that on Feb 14th roared down from the hills and became raging, metres-deep monsters. Nothing stood a chance at the point where they met, not even the bridge to the old cellar door. “It’s not a vineyard anymore, it’s essentially just a pile of sand and a pile of trees.”

Ben’s adamant they’ll rebuild “because that’s just what we do, but it’s going to be very expensive and a lot of work,” he said in an interview for the *Hastings Leader*. Their Rifleman’s vineyard, atop the famous White Cliffs (a New Zealand heritage vineyard site), was completely cut off. Ben believes they’ve lost around 20 hectares of vines and 200 tonnes of grapes.

Alchemy, one of Hawke’s Bay’s lesser-known wineries and best-kept secrets, is owned by winemaker Neal Cave. Since 2010 he’s been crafting chardonnay, rosé and merlot-based reds from vines which grow (grew) on Omarunui Road, near Puketapu.

“We’ve had extensive damage to our vineyard and home,” offered Neal in a recent email. “Probably not in a position to talk about much yet.” Like so many others, at the time of writing he was still waiting to hear from their insurers about their options to move forward. “Haven’t got much wine to sell at present either, as my clients have been on an ordering spree over the past month to support [me].” For Neal at least, that’s some positive news.

I went to order something online and the words “*The vineyard is blessed with the perfect site. A marriage of soil from an old river floodplain*” still sit, with heartbreaking irony, on Alchemy’s website.

Radburn Cellars in Bayview was badly flooded, with winemaker Kate Radburn making the decision to can the 2023 harvest and to try to find a new home for the winery. It would have been her 41st consecutive vintage. And if it weren’t for Cyclone Gabrielle wiping away any chance of harvesting grapes or making wine for John Hancock, of **Hancock & Sons**, he would have been launching into his 51st consecutive vintage. Now he’s not sure he’ll ever make wine again.

Followers of their active, post-cyclone, Instagram account will have witnessed Peter and Sharron Robertson and their team at **Brookfields** in Meeanee, working non-stop to rescue what bottles they could, and to repair the badly flooded winery to where it could process what fruit they might salvage come harvest. The first grapes (pinot gris) arrived on March 25th and they haven’t stopped. “The hardest thing for Mum and Dad was 19 days without power, that almost broke them,” said Rachael, their daughter. “It’s incredible how hard Dad’s been working for someone starting their 46th harvest.”

And there are silver linings. Peter’s apparently very happy with how the reds are looking and, by the time you read this, it’s hoped their cellar door and restaurant will be back in action after their kitchen was badly damaged.

Now that’ll be a good news story.



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huge responsibility. "They have access to excellent people in their networks who could be offering their time, professional services and experience to those in need," he urges. "And it might well be that some local customers take their insurance money and run, meaning the banks only get 70% of what the debt is, but so be it."

If the business community shared their knowledge with those in need *for free* and the banks helped lessen the financial stress, that's a great place for recovery to start.

"The other thing to understand, and this is sort of hard for people to reconcile," says Steve, "is it's best for everyone if the rest of Hawke's Bay is functioning really well. So it's important to dismiss survivors guilt - i.e. 'I can't be succeeding because my mate down the road is suffering'," he says. "You've gotta put that aside."

Steve also agrees that every local person should be encouraging their friends and family to visit Hawke's Bay. "Come and stay, get out and go shopping and spend some time amongst the restaurants, cafes, cellar doors and art galleries," he urges. "The rest of New Zealand needs to see that Hawke's Bay is still rocking, it's still here, and most of it's still in good nick."

So that means ramping up our enthusiasm, our ambassadorship and our business activities to get Hawke's Bay humming. Book those weddings, those family reunions, business meetings and conferences. "Giving nice donations to flood fundraisers, dinners, or charity events is fantastic, but the best thing is to actually come here," Steve says.

But what if this happens again? "Gabrielle happened because we're in the third year of a La Niña weather

"The Chamber of Commerce should take the lead on that by encouraging their experienced members to stand up and help affected people move forward. To be that business professional that's by their side, assisting them with future decisions."

Steve Smith

pattern (where severe storms can happen due to temperatures being warmer than normal in the South and cooler than normal in the North) which is really unusual and that made us predisposed to a significant storm event," he explains. "What climate change brings with it is the risk of them being a bit more intense and happening more often. But I think we'll soon be back to an El Niño system (where stronger, more frequent winds from the West come in summer and encourage dryness in eastern areas) and that risk will disappear for a while."

And, some more good news. There's no reason why, with the relatively dry March and April, that 2023 could not in fact, produce some really good red wines.

While every local winery was negatively impacted by the weather in 2022 and early 2023 (to different degrees), everybody wins if people buy Hawke's Bay wines. "Just buy the booze," says Kel. "I don't even care what they do with it!" he laughs. "That's what needs to happen."

So if you're out on the town and looking to choose a glass or a bottle, maybe make it one from Hawke's Bay instead of one from overseas. If everybody did that, it'd be excellent for the health and heart of our region. ●

Whats on Trend

KITCHEN | BATHROOM | LAUNDRY

At Holders Plumbing Plus, we love watching the market change and encouraging customers to do something a bit different with their spaces.

Plumblin help us to achieve this with our customers by producing items that have a bit of creative flare. For example, their new Stanza Curve combines delicate handcrafted curves with the inviting warmth of timber veneer, resulting in a visually striking piece. Available in a wide range of sizes, including left and right corner options for maximising space in smaller bathrooms, Stanza Curve is finished with a Spio solid surface top.

inviting spaces with a touch of personality

Further to this, the Galaxy mirror collection combines the best performing LED technology with the lowest possible energy consumption. The full perimeter of the mirror is LED backlit, producing natural ambient lighting for a calming bathroom environment, and the built-in mirror demister will keep your mirror condensation free.

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Rebuilding stronger: 4 pillars of resilience



To say that Hawke's Bay experienced a sudden and great change at the hands of Cyclone Gabrielle would be an understatement. Watching the carnage was and still is heartbreaking. It's impossible to imagine the true depths of the pain of those who literally had their homes, loved ones and livelihoods submerged or swept away. There are many stories of devastation and in the long tail of this storm the chequered journeys and labyrinths those most affected now walk through feels unfathomable.

Yet. The warm ray of hope from the outset has been the inspirational rising of community helping community. The compassion in action of a multitude of humble heroes with huge hearts, deep courage and true grit. There are so many stories of the remarkable spirit of individuals and community resilience shining through. A true testimony to the human spirit and the power of resilience in the face of adversity.

Resilience used to be thought of as the ability to 'bounce back'. But

the truth is that there is no going back. With each breath as humans, we change. The pain of catastrophic change brings irrevocable change.

That's where adaptive resilience steps in.

Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute defines Adaptive Resilience as, "The ability to recover from adversity, adapt and thrive. It builds the capacity to be productive, resourceful and creative within changing circumstance or adversity." Adaptive resilience or 'bouncing forward' is the crucial quality that helps individuals, communities and countries recover and rebuild after catastrophes. To get better not bitter.

There are many great, often complex models for building resilience. Towards the end of NZ resilience expert Bradley Hook's book *Resilience Mastery* there was an aside that made me smile. "It may sound cliché, but diet, exercise and sleep are the building blocks of resilience. We struggle to reach mastery without nailing these essentials first."

So, let's keep it simple and stick with some essentials. Practices that in their simplicity you might take for granted within these four basic pillars of resilience. Give yourself a resounding YES for each one you already do and find one in each category you could do more.

1. Mental resilience

Working on your mental resilience gives you increased mental focus, more discipline, determination and willpower. We know from the scientific research that willpower works like a muscle. It gets stronger the more you exercise it. Take up small challenges without giving up. Build concentration through regular meditation practice. Practice conscious mindful presence. Become the 'gatekeeper' of your mind and thoughts. Release what you can't control. Strengthen your ability to "reframe" challenges to look for learning. Keep learning - read a book, attend a course, ask for help. In short, mentally resilient folks stay challenged.

2. Physical resilience

Research also tells us that the number one thing you can do to boost your physical resilience is to move your body. In 2017 Dr Keith M. Diaz from Columbia University in New York City published his findings on what is now being called the "30-minute rule for longevity". The best advice from this study is to avoid long periods of sitting. Take time throughout the day to mindfully move and stretch. Walk, dance, garden, hang out the washing, take the stairs. In addition to this keep your body healthy through eating nutrient dense food and pure water. Limit alcohol ... it's a depressant. Prioritise sleep as the number one way to combat stress.

3. Social resilience

When you stay in touch with others you are being socially resilient. Hugs and handshakes stimulate the brain. Having a friend who you look forward to connecting with and taking the initiative to stay engaged builds social resilience. Random acts of kindness have been shown to make you happier for two weeks and make the other person happy for a whole day. Surround yourself with supportive people and reach out to help others in need. Seek out resilient role models and find out their secrets.

4. Emotional resilience

Emotional resilience allows us to find positive things even when circumstances stay grim. Emotional resilience is the ability to provoke powerful, positive emotions like gratitude and love. It is the ability to practice self-compassion; Invoking laughter through conversation; Evoking feelings of gratitude, love, freedom, or joy; Remembering your moments of triumph and how these felt; Being kind to yourself and interested in other people's lives; Engage in regular reflection on

things beautiful, fanciful, visionary. Emotional resilience exercises our capability to imagine, dream, plan and create.

These four pillars are irrevocably interconnected and just a drop in the ocean of the possibilities. Do you want to know the hardest part? Taking the time out to incorporate them into your daily life.

The author of *Resilience*, Elizabeth Edwards wrote, "She stood in the storm and when the wind did not blow her way, she adjusted her sails." Keep adjusting your sails treasures. Acknowledge the resilience that you have shown through all the storms that life has thrown you. You as living wisdom. Writing a road map for others to follow. Pick one thing you could do to make you stronger. The best of the best - exploring how to get better and better. ●

Suggested reading

- *The Choice*, by Edith Eger
- *Resilient Grieving*, by Dr Lucy Hone
- *Long Walk to Freedom*, the autobiography of Nelson Mandela

"Nothing is so painful to the human mind as a sudden and great change."

Mary Shelley, Author of *Frankenstein* (1818)

Kate McLeay is a mindfulness mentor, yoga teacher and retreat host based out at Cape South Country Estate and Wellness Retreat near Waimarama in Hawke's Bay.

www.katemcleay.com



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Hit the sauce

About twenty years ago the late, great Noel Crawford developed a range of sauces to sell at the Farmers' Market. Noel's sensitive palate, generous nature, and zealous passion were and still are evidenced in every bottle of Aromatics' sauce.

I worked for Noel, and learned that balancing the proportions of fifteen ingredients, cooking them in the right order for the right amount of time was a labour of love and aspiration to create a special moment for the purchaser. Here's to you Noel.

Whether it's a boat of gravy or skiff of sriracha we do love the lubrication and titillation of a good sauce. It brings flavour and texture to enhance and delight. Sauce is ever present, whether to add a nuance at a restaurant table to an expertly crafted dish or to disguise an over-barbecued-backyard-banger as the sun sets and the mozzies come out for dinner. Smear over a plate with the back of a spoon or slapped from a bottle with the palm of a hand, sauce just makes things better.

Something hot and acidic splashed on perfectly poached eggs. Something hot, thick, and full of tomatoes dolloped on the side of a plate of sausages. Something hot, aromatic, and oily spooned over fried rice. I have my favourites that I know will hit the spot but I do like to try something new. An interesting find in the big city or a pity purchase at a market.

A glance at our fridge and pantry is met with an arsenal of options for dipping, drizzling, pouring, spooning, and sloshing. A well-aged collection of staple favourites in front of impulse purchases, which often fail to draw us back for a second helping but are not offensive enough to throw away.

According to the Facegram we should all know how to make our own chilli oil and according to the great Carême (1784-1833) we should all know how to make the Mother sauces of French

A sauce envelopes and disguises a disappointing cooking attempt and turns a packet of cheap pasta into a filling feast.

cuisine. I agree, we should, in a Stepford Wives reimagining of our lives, make all of these things. If only to annoy our friends with blasé references to home-made velouté and nam jim.

Whether it's a cooking sauce, a finishing sauce, a condiment sauce, or a dipping sauce (surely a dipping sauce is a dip?) it is handy to know how to make a couple of options.

As an eighteen-year-old flattening, I created my first sauce-making memory, which was the catalyst for my mother to send me a recipe book. I was convinced that I'd seen her grating cheese into boiling milk to make mac and cheese. It doesn't work. So I learned, from the book, how to make a white sauce or bechamel. And yes, of course my mother was to blame (aren't they always?), for sending me into the world so poorly equipped to deal with feeding myself.

A sauce envelopes and disguises a disappointing cooking attempt and turns a packet of cheap pasta into a filling feast. Forty years on from the stringy cheese and milk episode and I make the best mac n cheese in town.

So what other tricks are good for your sauce bag? Here's a dozen suggestions. Recipes are easily had via books or the web. Bear in mind that often you can buy a sauce that's better than you can make at home. I avoid sauces that list water as the first or second ingredient and those that list lots of gums, thickeners, and numbers.

1. Whether it's a runny vinegar base or a sweet chilli version a good hot

sauce can make a piece of cardboard palatable.

2. Mayonnaise and its many variations.
3. Something developed from meat juices. A jus and/or gravy. Get yourself a roux whisk. I love mine.
4. A quick-fire tomato sauce for pasta. The puttanesca is the classic for the time poor.
5. Tom yum - The quintessential flavours of Thailand that can be sauce or soup.
6. Curry - Indian style made from freshly ground spices. As hot or not as you like gives you the ability to take any mixture of vegetables and optionally meat and give them a cohesive base.
7. Jerk - Hot Jamaican flavours of allspice and scotch bonnet. Keep it close to your bbq.
8. Salsa verde and chimichurri - These two share some ingredients and are also similar in that they require no cooking and are easy to make. They add some zing to bbq and roasts.
9. Romesco sauce - Another classic that requires no cooking. Pair this with chicken, vegetables, and eggs.
10. Shakshuka - North African spiced tomato and capsicum chunky sauce. Famously used to poach eggs.
11. Teriyaki - Dipping sauce or marinade, it's a bullet-proof favourite for most meats.
12. Peanut sauce - Dress salads and noodles or dip away. Another no-cook easy sauce.

May the sauce be with you. ●

Ian Thomas is a caterer and formerly free range egg farmer, cooking demonstrator, and manager of a commercial food production business. He specialises in cooking paella. paellaagogo.com





From outrage to understanding – books to open your mind

It seems that ‘these days,’ if many forms of media are to be believed, that someone is always angry about something; that we, as a society, can’t enter into a decent, well-mannered debate anymore. In the interest of free speech and tolerance, let’s look at novels that offer a glimpse into other people’s experiences, be it to deny the modern world, or rise to meet it.

Let’s start with *Darke* by Rick Gekoski (Canongate, \$24.99).

Writer, bookseller and former Booker Prize judge Rick can occasionally be seen wandering the streets of Hawke’s Bay, where he is a sometime resident. *Darke* is the first in a trilogy of novels featuring Dr James Darke, himself a writer and academic valiantly penning a biography of Dickens; it’s not going very well. Bereaved and bereft Darke has barricaded himself away from the world, accepting no correspondence, even from his dear daughter, Lucy. He is either a tragic, romantic soul, or a nasty old git. Perhaps both.

The novel is Darke’s diary and as such, we get the worst of him, his innermost thoughts that wouldn’t ordinarily make the light of day in polite society. His reflections on the world are mean, his snobbery eloquent, his attitudes toward certain minorities and community groups reprehensible. In finely honed prose, bibliophile Darke muses on originality of thought, on how to sabotage his neighbour’s dog, on who he is now that his wife is gone. He is old school, bewildered, belligerent and resistant to change and he doesn’t change.

I love that about this book. Darke is who he is, like it or not.

The Guardian describes *After Darke*, the final novel in the trilogy, as one its Best Books of 2022 ... “a riot of eloquent bigotry and bluster.” And it is. Beautifully observant, it will either

provoke mirthful, delighted outrage as it did in this reader, or nods of sympathetic agreement from those who rage against ‘wokeism’. Either way, it’s quite delightful.

From a curmudgeonly old man to a fresh young person.

Jamie by L.D. Lapinski (Hachette, \$19.99) relates the trials and tribulations of the eponymous hero who is just about to finish Year 6 at school and, as they live in the U.K, head straight for the exciting fresh hell that is High School. But there’s an unusual problem; Jamie is non-binary and the feeder schools are a Boys’ High and a Girls’ High.

For the last few years at Primary, Jamie has been accepted as another little human, and gender hasn’t been an issue. The toilets and changing rooms are unisex, their parents, peers and teachers are used to Jamie’s pronouns and all has ticked along uneventfully. The advent of High School changes everything and it looks as though Jamie will have to make a binary choice and live a lie - but they refuse to do so.

The story, aimed at younger readers of about 9 years and up, is a beautiful tale of young kids noodling around and being themselves, and then suddenly finding that the world is not set up for them. It explores identity, understanding, kindness and tolerance and serves as a fabulous educational tool for those who don’t really understand what people mean when they say they are ‘not a boy or a girl.’

The author is non-binary and through Jamie, provides a clear explanation of terms and experiences around gender. I defy anyone to read this and not have learned something, and, if not already sympathetic to gender diversity, not to be a little more understanding that some things are more complex than they seem.



Old man rails against the crude, modern world, child helps us to understand it, and now, a juvenile delinquent takes us into the depths of his murky brain.

Shy by Max Porter (Faber & Faber, \$27.99) describes Last Chance, a home for ‘very disturbed young men’, and Shy is determined to escape it. But what is he escaping? As we get to know this young man through Porter’s pared back prose, we enter a messed-up mind of warped perceptions capable of thirty seconds of joyous, cathartic violence followed by a lifetime of regret.

Structurally, the story is told in the chaotic style of Shy’s mind. One-line paragraphs depict waiting to escape; he’s jumpy, his rucksack heavy. A memory of a happier time that turned to dust is described in dense text, a rush of thought climaxing in ruin. A night-time encounter, a city boy in the real dark for the first time; ‘It’s a different density of night by the pond.’ Deeply beautiful lines that describe Shy’s intense experience.

Shy is the story of a mind outside itself, unable to function rationally, to order the body to conduct itself how it knows it should. The story doesn’t offer any quick fixes or happy endings, but there is hope and there are soul nourishing sentences penned by the hand of a master. It’s incredible, brutal, crude, sad and absolutely stunning.

Sometimes we read to escape, sometimes to be educated and sometimes to give our worldview a nudge. These books will do that nicely. ●



Cyclone Gabrielle recovery

Following the response to the immediate devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle, the focus has now turned to recovery. Alongside rebuilding the transport network, disposing of silt, cleaning up parks and reserves and an ongoing programme of building inspections and assessments, planning for the future is underway.

Local and regional councils and central government are working closely with communities to ensure their needs and priorities are reflected in the region's recovery planning.

SILT

Hastings District Council and Hawke's Bay Regional Council have formed a Silt Recovery Taskforce to deal with the estimated five million cubic metres of silt on orchards, farms, roads, and properties.

The taskforce is looking at a range of options for storing and using silt in the future, and working closely with other councils, industry, and landowners to develop solutions for the region.

There's about 850 truck movements happening each day to collect silt, a job that's expected to take many months to complete.

Find out more: www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/cyclone-gabrielle/silt-collection

ROADS AND BRIDGES

Restoring access to the transport network has been an ongoing priority since the cyclone, which destroyed 16 bridges and damaged many hundreds of kilometres of roads. Within two months of the event, 280 bridges had been assessed, two new bridges built, with others in design or construction.

Many rural roads are still in a fragile state and are only open for essential travel and emergency access.

FINANCIAL AND HEALTH SUPPORT

A wide range of support continues to be available for individuals, whānau, farmers and businesses, iwi Māori and affected communities.

Go to www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/cyclone-gabrielle/financial-support for more information on financial support available.

Te Whatu Ora is providing psychosocial support through its 1737 Need to Talk phonenumber and has deployed additional psychologists, psychiatrists and mental health workers to affected regions.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Working alongside our community and Government, teams across Council continue to prioritise connecting communities and sharing information with residents. Reaching those in badly impacted areas remains a challenge – we encourage those wanting information to sign up to our database or reach out to our customer service team. Residents can sign up here www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/cyclone-gabrielle/community-hubs#updates

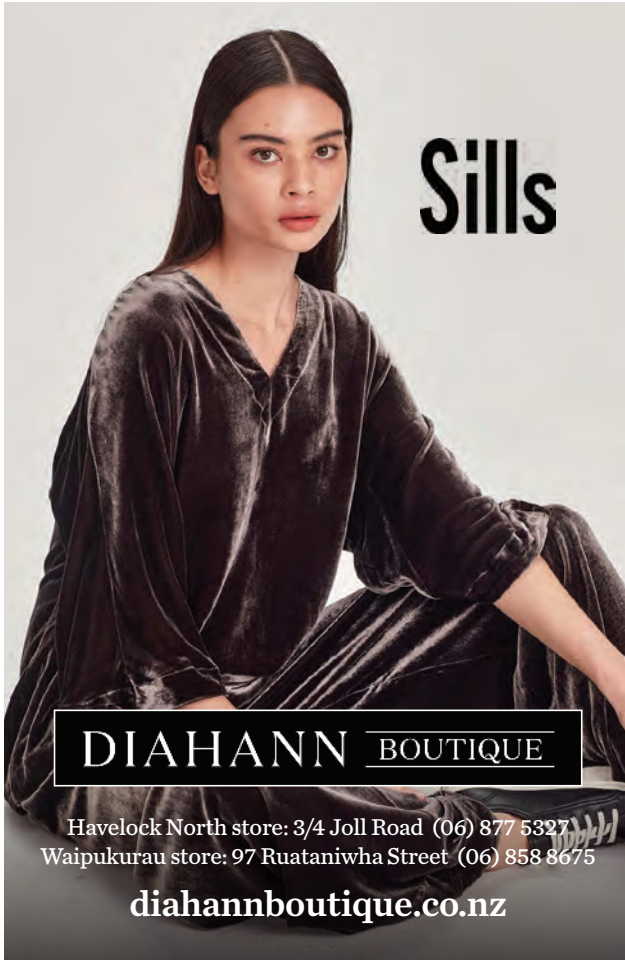
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The Ellis-Wallace low-level crossing.
Photo: Quality Pumping



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Zzzzzzz...

Everyone in Hawke's Bay needs a lie down. From crabby ranting on Facebook to aggressive beeping on the expressway, we're all behaving like toddlers who've missed nap-time.

For some it's bona fide cognitive overload. For others it's blown out survivor's guilt. Whichever, too many nights staying up 'til 2am wrestling with an overworked cerebrum is a one-way ticket to Planet Insomnia.

Tossing and turning because the insurance guy needs more photos? Up all night second guessing second mortgage options? Worried sick by silt? Burning the midnight oil in search of a light-bulb solution to a problem you're too tired to even articulate? What you need is a good night's sleep. But how?

I'm too zonked to think up answers myself so I put it to a panel of professionals to give us some hints on the best ways to get forty winks.

First, I ask my lawyer. She says she finds it hard to sleep at night. I try to look surprised. She used to take drugs ... sleeping pills every night for years. She's recently moved to herbal alternatives. She does suggest the 3-2-1-Sleep Method: no food three hours before bed, no work two hours before, no screens an hour before. She says she's all talk and rarely does it.

Next, I email the vicar. She tells me she made a new discovery after the cyclone when it was hard to switch off. She switched on a podcast ... mellifluous tones reassuringly saying, "You have done enough for today". Such a good way to catch some zzz's ... bedtime stories for adults. The vicar assures me they are not *those kind* of adult stories. Disappointing.

My accountant also sleeps poorly. Her gold-dipped tip is to have a routine. Go to bed at the same time every day. Put eating well and exercising in the credits column and a lack of routine in the debits column. Tuck away 15% extra sleep every week to make sure you can pay for a big night out on the weekend.

"The best bridge between despair and hope is a good night's sleep."

MATTHEW WALKER

A GP friend says sleeplessness is different for everyone but his cure is to get out of bed after 30 mins of trying to fall asleep, meditate for 15 minutes, then try again.

My counsellor is interested in getting to the crux of *why* sleep evades us just when it's the one thing we really need. What's in the brain is trying to get out and that stops you getting rest. "Train your brain to steer away from all your worried, anxious, frustrating thoughts by naming random things. Begin with A, then B, next C and so on until you drift off." This tricks the amygdala into thinking it's safe to sleep. Random words reassure your mind. "We're not alert and focused on something specific so it's ok to let our guard down and rest".

My yoga teacher is interested in the *why* too, from an Ayurvedic and personal perspective. She says the reason for not sleeping is the mind is still actively 'digesting' something - an impression from the day, an important thought - and there is residual agitation or stress in the system. She tells me it's important to slowly wind down as the night comes. She suggests avoiding screens or after-work work or late-night nibbles or important conversations or "mind-aggravating activities", replacing them with meditation, gentle yoga, a bath, a foot massage, reading, soft music ... I'm drifting off already.

Some people are natural night owls and work best when it's dark. I speak to an artist who disobeys the 'no screens' rule nightly, is a world champ at midnight 'mind-aggravating activities', snacks like a Gremlin in the wee-hours. She says her secret is only going to bed if she's ready to sleep. If she hangs out in bed too long, waiting for the sleepy dust to drop she gets uncomfortable

and can't sleep at all.

Writers are renowned for staying up late poised for the muse to strike. One I know tells me she has to physically move during the day in order to sleep during the night. "If I'm too sedentary my mind goes hyperactive and I'm ruminating all night." Then she says: "Sex is a really good way to go to sleep ... I'm like a bloke, I roll over and BAM I'm out like a light."

A mate who's a DJ tells me if you can't sleep "you've gotta change the track". "Get your head in a different space and your thinking will change too." He says when that fails, he has herbal tea and reads Proust. That sends him to sleep pretty quickly.

A musician friend who burns the candle at all ends with a cocktail of teaching, jamming, composing, rehearsing, travelling, recording and performing says he too reads to go to sleep. "I am lucky enough to own the classic, complete and unabridged, *Bill English Speaks* ... transcriptions of every speech Bill English ever gave." He also admits he frequently resorts to an alcoholic beverage or two.

Sleep eludes all. The best advice is find a professional to help, preferably one who's an insomniac too. Call them at 2am to check in. Whether it's a vicar, a lawyer, a DJ or a doctor they'll be up ... overthinking, drinking, playing podcasts, reading Proust. Offer to join them. You might not sleep, but it'll be one hell of a party. ●

The vicar recommends www.nothingmuchhappens.com

The GP recommends *Why We Sleep* by Matthew Walker

The DJ recommends

Swann's Way by Marcel Proust

The musician recommends whiskey.

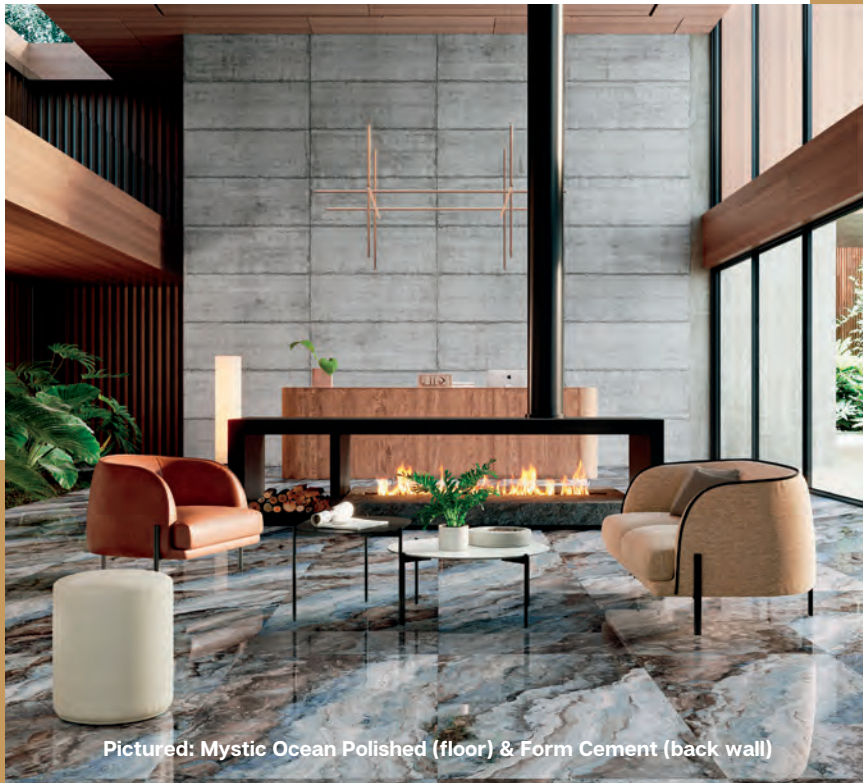


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Pictured: Mystic Ocean Polished (floor) & Form Cement (back wall)

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