

Board Report
September-October 2017

Kia ora koutou,

Some interesting things happening on the island in the last couple of months.

Auckland Transport have been very busy on the island, and I'd just like to acknowledge them for all those roads that have made it through the tar seal process. It's expensive and it's hard to find the budget within the system for sealing roads that do not have a high level of use in comparison to the mainland side.

There's also been lots of communication between Auckland Transport and Healthy Waters around appropriate drainage for road and addressing issues around stormwater damage. This has led to the work in Moa and Trig Hill Road.

There was a consultation around the footpath and parking at Putiki Road and AT are now going back to see if any changes can be made to the plans. This has delayed the work. Hopefully, we'll see the work underway after Easter next year (to accommodate the businesses).

Most exciting is that Waiheke will be undergoing a bus route review. The consultation on the proposed routes will start early next year. It's really important that as many existing and potential bus users get involved – more about that nearer the time.

In the ecological restoration space, a lot of work has been done to identify priority areas for restoration. There is now an island-wide plan to use Council funds most effectively across contractors, community organisations and volunteers. There is quite a comprehensive review in the last local board agenda of what species will be targeted, where and how the work will be undertaken http://infocouncil.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/Open/2017/09/WHK_2017_0928_AGN_7556_AT_WEB.htm It is an interesting read and I'd like to acknowledge the huge amount of work that's gone into this.

The Walking Festival is coming up in November and I urge you to sign up – particularly for those new walks or to go into areas that are on private land and not usually accessible to the public. The Te Matuku walkway has already had a few people through it and goes through some really interesting bush.
<https://www.waihekewalkingfestival.org/>

The super duper walking access to Onetangi Beach is now open. It's really great to have something that is centrally located and provides wheelchair access and a solid ramp for people getting from the road to the beach.

The Kennedy Point Marina application has now gone through a mediation process and will now appear before the Environment Court in February. The hikoi was very successful and saw a good turnout from the Waiheke Community in spite of the terrible weather. The Board resolved that the application does not provide for the island's social, economic, cultural or environmental wellbeing but does not have a formal role in the proceedings beyond that. If people are interested in what is happening, you can find out more from <http://skp.org.nz/> or on facebook.

I'm very excited about the Waiheke Housing Trust Initiative which is working towards providing affordable housing on the island. It's great to see community coming together to solve some of the issues that central government has shown a lack of initiative in solving. It was lovely to see the sleepout that was built with lots of aroha and also to see the Waiheke Artworks courtyard transformed as a fundraiser. Find out more about the Housing Trust initiatives, get involved or donate here: <https://www.wcht.org.nz/> or on Facebook.

The proposed bed tax is frankly a slippery eel and it's hard to work out what the focus is and how it affects Waiheke. There is some thought nationally of the IRD cracking into Airbnb. Personally, I have mixed thoughts on Arbnb. While they provide cheaper accommodation, they also destabilise the local economy by making it more attractive to have person to person services. We do not yet understand what the knock on effect of this is. In Barcelona, Airbnb have exacerbated the housing crisis and the potential is there for the same to happen on Waiheke which already has a fair share of accommodation issues caused by tourism. Meanwhile our accommodation providers are dependent on the Summer market and it's important that additional taxes do not negatively affect these providers.

It was very exciting for me to be invited to judge a youth film competition organised by the Hau Ora on responses to methamphetamine P. The 10 films were excellent and illustrated the challenges and thoughts of our young people to this issue. For more information on being a methfree island contact the Hau Ora on 372 0022 or join the facebook page methfree waiheke <https://www.facebook.com/methfreewaiheke/>

Look out for the artworks consultation which will be launching soon. This will include an online survey and a couple of public meetings as well as interviews with key arts practitioners and people involved in the arts. It's really important that we get a snapshot of our current and future needs, as well as how the different kinds of arts provision on the island fit together. This is an open process and we're hoping to target all arts activities and demographics. This work is starting in November and will be advertised online and through the papers.

Nga mihi nui
Shirin