

# *Electric Island Waiheke – An Introduction*

*Waiheke Island aims to be fossil-fuel-free by 2030*

## *Vision and Establishment*

Electric Island Waiheke (EIW) came together in October 2018, as a result of a concerned group of islanders wanting to accelerate the uptake of electric vehicles on the island, and assist action on climate change. The group was launched officially on 30 November 2018 with the stated goal of making Waiheke fossil-fuel-free by 2030. The aim is that all petrol and diesel powered vehicles and machinery will be converted to electricity, including hydrogen, within 12 years. EIW's plan to transform Waiheke Island into the world's first electric vehicle-only residential island in the world has been sparked into action.

Special guest at the launch was Christina Bu, the secretary general of the Norwegian Electric Vehicle Owners Association, who challenged Waiheke to follow in Norway's footsteps in the switch to electric vehicles.

## *Establishment Board*

Electric Island Waiheke is in the process of forming a charitable trust and includes the following establishment members:

**Chair Max Parkin** - Retired in November 2007. Max brings vast experience and a life-long involvement with the dairy industry to the board table. A former CEO of Southland Dairy Cooperative and General Manager of Kiwi Dairy Products Max was also the Group General Manager Manufacturing and Milk Supply for Fonterra. With numerous directorships including Hubbard Foods, Taura Ingredients Ltd, Combined Technologies, and New Image Group, Max was appointed a Distinguished Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Food Science in 2010. BSc, FNZIFST

**Secretary Doug Wilson** – Retired last year after 10 years as Chief Information Officer of the NZ Automobile Association. He has been on the island since 1999. In earlier times, he was the CEO of Wang and Public Sector Director at Microsoft.

### **Board Members**

**Vern Whitehead** – has lived on Waiheke for almost 30 years and is the publisher director of Auto Media Group which produces the authoritative electric vehicle magazine/website EVtalk for New Zealand and Australia. Vern is a former long-term president and life member of the Waiheke Island Rugby Club. Vern has been involved in charity fund-raising for the Waiheke Hospice.

**Darlene Tana** - Director of Ecycles NZ Ltd is a creative and entrepreneurial business professional who helps companies realise their power through the talents of their people. Experienced working in large organisations (15,000+) with lead responsibility

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for diverse domains spanning talent management and strategic change programs. Particularly skilled at getting buy-in across all stakeholder groups and driving work through to results.

**Mark Russell** – Moved from Ireland to New Zealand in 1999 and from Auckland out to Waiheke in 2013. He works as a change coach, helping software teams from various organisations to embrace change and work toward more inspiring goals. He was trained as Climate Reality Leader by Al Gore's Climate Reality Project in Pittsburgh, USA in 2017 and supports the Electric Island initiative for the positive contribution it will make to bringing about a carbon neutral Waiheke.

### *Initial Plan*

Electric Island Waiheke will start by running promotional campaigns promoting the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) on the island, dispelling the myths around EVs. With the rise in demand for EVs worldwide there will be a much greater supply and choice of new and used vehicle brands on the NZ market. In two years new EVs will be on a par in price with diesel and petrol vehicles. In the meantime, used imported EVs are ideal for the island's conditions, with a limited road network and the ability to charge overnight at home. EIW will be encouraging automotive retailers to facilitate easy purchase packages of EVs for Waiheke residents.

We will also work with local groups – including Piritahi Marae - and individuals to promote the use of EVs.

Public charging opportunities are also critical for informing, promoting and reassuring EV owners that the infrastructure is in place for the new technology. Daytime top-ups for local/visitor cars and commercial vehicles doing high mileage will be required. EIW is already identifying sites and partners for the establishment of fast charging stations.

### *International Exemplars – the future*

There are successful models for Waiheke around the world including the island of Hvaler in Norway, which in 2017 opened Norway's "first and only full-scale micro-grid" using solar and wind generation. This means that the power supply can go into 'island mode' if the local electricity grid goes down. It can run until the grid is back up again, at which point it will automatically switch back to grid-connected mode.

Christina Bu has introduced EIW to the people running the Hvaler project as she believes that Waiheke could be a testbed/example for the adoption of alternative power options in New Zealand.

In March, one or more members of EIW will be attending "Electric Planet Oslo", an international conference on innovative solutions for moving the world away from reliance on fossil fuels to new electric-powered alternatives. EIW will also bring back

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successful island solutions from places like Hvaler that may be trialled on Waiheke as an example for the rest of New Zealand.

