

Dec/Jan 2026

FREE monthly community magazine for Kumeu
& surrounding townships

Kumeu

Courier

- Safer communities
- Home & garden
- Health & beauty
- Property market report

Kumeu Hot Rod Show
January 16-18th



Greetings

Season's greetings

Christmas is coming. The goose is getting fat. Please put a penny in the old man's hat.

This song by Bill Monroe in 1951 - and later covered by others - still has some relevance today - although the "penny" reference could be adjusted to New Zealand dollars and allow for inflation and "old man's hat" could instead apply to the homeless and beggars around Auckland.

I also prefer chicken and other meats to "goose" for Christmas.

The cost-of-living crisis hasn't quite gone away for us but should improve soon - perhaps making this Christmas more bearable.

It seems every time we look to get on top another cost issue arises, which I suspect is the same for many of you.

I've been invited by the Auckland Council to make a submission on proposed plan change 120 by December 19, 5pm.

It's the council's response to a government requirement to enable more housing and development opportunities, mainly through rezoning to allow increases in building heights in many city parts, especially close to commercial centres, train and busway stations, and along some main bus routes.

That may allow building up to 15 storeys in some places.

All while ensuring Auckland unitary plan rules are strengthened in areas prone to natural hazards (flood plains and some coastal areas like Muriwai).

That means a "restrictive residential zone" may apply to some areas.

It makes sense for flood risk places like much of Kumeu and seems to back Future Kumeu's push to get the town centre and other development moved to higher ground.

The Auckland Council reckons all Aucklanders may be affected by the proposed plan change - check www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/planchanges for more information.

The website mentions the City Rail Link - due to open in early 2026 - and other public transport improvements.

I guess raising flood levels about 1.2 metres will impact many building alteration requests to the Auckland Council.

How this affects Kumeu may be better explained in our early issues for 2026.

Watch this space!
Editor , Geoff Dobson



Circulation is 10,000 print copies. Advertising starts at only \$100 + gst which includes a business card, editorial and an image.
Get in touch with Gabrielle today
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What's inside

- 3 People & Places
- 9 Community News
- 15 Food & Beverage
- 17 Property Hub
- 19 Property News
- 24 Property Statistics
- 28 Property Market
- 41 Home & Garden
- 49 Young Learners
- 51 Aged Care
- 54 Health & Beauty
- 57 Area Columnists

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Huapai-Kumeū Lions: Christmas Gifts and Thanks



A huge thank you to everyone who donated and bought books at our November Book Fair! Once again, the community turned up in force – donating and buying arms full of books with smiles all round. Every dollar raised goes straight back into local community projects, so your love of reading really does make a difference. The Lions couldn't do it without you, and we're deeply grateful for your ongoing support.

Now, with Christmas just around the corner, it's time for another local favourite – Lions Christmas Cakes! You can pick yours up from The Vintage Shop, 35 Access Road, Kumeū. Full un-iced cakes are \$25, and quarter-sized iced cakes are just \$10 – perfect for gifts or a luxury afternoon treat. Orders can also be made by emailing sales.hklions@gmail.com. Be quick – they sell out faster than Santa's mince pies!

Looking for a unique Christmas gift steeped in local history? Where Have All the Apples Gone, by Chris Smellie, tells the fascinating story of our local and national orchard heritage. It's a great read with lots of stories of our local orcharding families. Copies are available at The Vintage Shop and Kumeū Arts, 300 Main Road. Online orders can be made by email to sales.hklions@gmail.com. Again, all funds raised go to supporting our community.



And if you're heading to the local Christmas Parade, keep an eye out for our Huapai-Kumeū Lions vintage apple truck, proudly promoting Chris Smellie's book. Give us a wave – we have apples to give away.

Finally, from all of us at Huapai-Kumeu Lions, a heartfelt thanks to our amazing community for your support throughout the past year. Wishing you a joyful summer break filled with family, friends, sunshine, and maybe a few extra slices of cake.

Made an insurance claim after extreme weather? Your experience matters

Take our anonymous survey (15-30 minutes) and be in to win 1 of 5 \$100 Prezzy Cards. If you claimed for house or land damage after Cyclone Gabrielle, the Auckland Anniversary floods, or other recent severe weather events, we want to hear from you.

Your experience, good or bad, can make a difference.

Researchers at ResOrgs (resorgs.org.nz) want to understand how homeowners navigated the insurance claim and repair process. What worked well? What didn't? Your insights will directly inform recommendations to insurance companies, government agencies, and disaster recovery groups—helping them better support Kiwis after future events.

Take the survey by scanning the QR code below or by visiting: bit.ly/Res_Orgs

This independent research is funded by the Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake and the Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ), conducted independently by ResOrgs.

Scan the QR code to start the survey now.

For more information: info@resorgs.org.nz



Cathy's Christmas



Cathy McBride of Waimauku embodies the true spirit of Christmas. Not only does Cathy take the over 65s walking group every Tuesday but all those who can't walk now come for coffee after the walkers have finished their walk. She has also invited up to 50 people to bring their dogs to Glasgow Park for exercise and play two days a week. It's not just at Christmas the 78-year-old is active – but all year too. Cathy provides toys for children visiting a nearby park – and paints rocks with positive messages for them to find. She says she often gets children's bikes and toys from the roadside or free on a social media marketplace – partner Victor usually ensuring they are safe to use

Amidst all this Cathy helps keep the Muriwai Surf Club gardens tidy. Victor (83) mows the various places they go and helps out too. Cathy says she retired from her job at NZ Post after about 40 years and has been running the various events about 10 years now. "I was wondering what to do in my retirement," she explains. A trip to Christchurch and Blenheim helped her formulate her dog walking plan. Cathy says the dogs all join in the fun and rarely fight.

We gather one Saturday late afternoon in the Glasgow Park equestrian area (no horses allowed during the dog walks) and all introduce themselves, especially any newcomers. Then we're off for about an hour's walk with nearly 30 dogs – fitter ones taking trails up a nearby hill, many dogs enjoying a swim on their return.

An equestrian hurdle makes an ideal seat for those on the lower walks, the group regathering for the return journey. Most are regulars and chat to each other. Cathy often takes her Jack Russell "Tui" on the walks, the little dog now preferring to ride in a backpack some of the way.

She talks newcomers into letting a few of their dogs off

their leads to mingle with others and everyone has a good time out on a beautiful day. Many people turn up in all weather, Cathy says. Photos of the walks are sometimes posted on local social media. Cathy used to invite people to her Waimauku home for a cuppa and scones but says that's since been replaced with cafe visits. She enjoys meeting people and helping her local community.

A Christmas surprise



Local Blacksmith, Chris Ellwood, is busy getting koru ready for an Advent Art Exhibition but it is a bit of a mystery as to what he is creating. The only certainty is that it will be big.

Come along and see what his creation at St. Martins Church, 912 SH16, Waimauku. The exhibition runs from 6th-21st December, kicking off with a market from 8.30am-1pm on the 6th.

Fabulous stalls with amazing Christmas gifts and much, much more...

Chris says of the koru and Christmas:

At Christmas we are invited to new beginnings. A koru is a symbol of a fresh start. During Advent as we lead up to a celebration of the birth of Jesus, take some time to consider the challenges in your life.

Ask the question, "Can I change this thing in my life?" If the answer is no, ask the question, "Can I change the way I see this obstacle?" Then, "Is there a fresh beginning for me in the midst of this?"

The message of the Christian Gospel is of new beginnings, and that is very good news for us all. Take some time this Advent season to visit a church and explore a new start.

The Advent Art Exhibition is open Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 9-1, so pop in after the school run...Open Wednesdays during op-shop opening hours of 10.30-4.30

PROPERTY DAMAGED BY EXTREME WEATHER?

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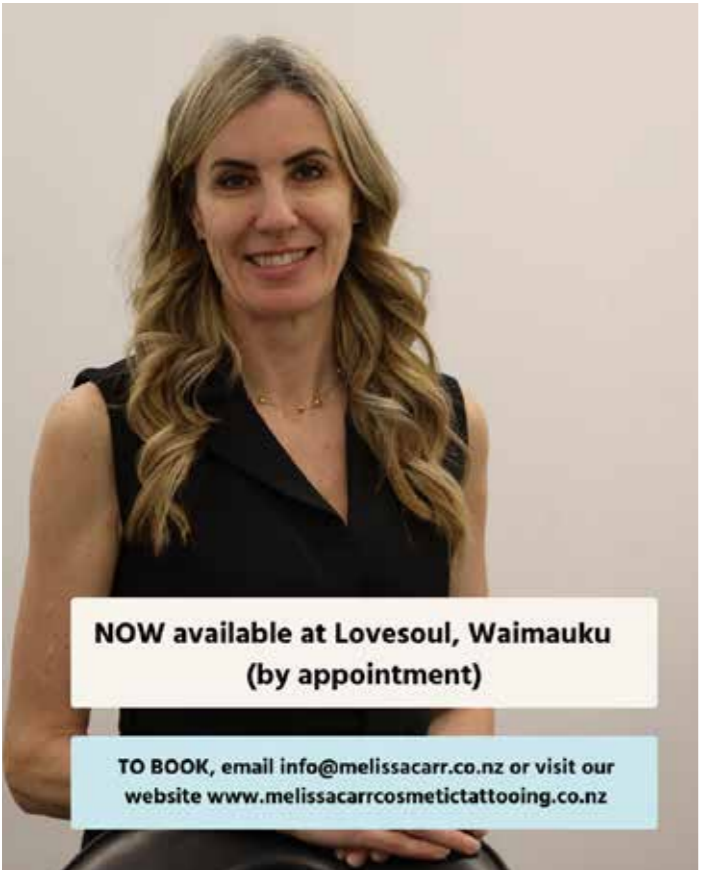
Share your story (whether good or bad) and help make a difference for Kiwis in the future
bit.ly/Res_Orgs



Wake up with confidence – Brows that stay all summer

Following November’s feature on lip blush tattooing, local Cosmetic & Medical Tattooing Specialist Melissa Carr is back to talk about another treatment her clients are loving – natural, long-lasting brows. “Brows are everything,” Melissa says. “They frame your face, define your features, and can completely change your expression – yet most of us spend time each morning trying to get them even!” Melissa specialises in feather-touch and powder brow tattooing, designed to create soft, realistic results that enhance rather than overpower. Each set of brows is custom-mapped to suit your unique face shape, colouring, and lifestyle – so the result looks natural and effortless. The treatment is ideal for anyone with sparse or uneven brows, or for those wanting a timesaving, smudge-proof solution that lasts through beach days and busy mornings alike. “It’s such a confidence boost,” Melissa explains. “You wake up ready to go – no pencils, no smudging, and no worrying about your brows disappearing after a swim.”

Melissa’s calm, private clinics in Waimauku and Albany provide a relaxed environment where clients feel comfortable and cared for from consultation to aftercare. She focuses on subtle, face-flattering results that give clients freedom from daily makeup routines and a renewed sense of confidence. With December appointments filling fast, now’s the perfect time to book before the summer break and start the New Year with brows you’ll love waking up to. Cosmetic & Medical Tattooing by Melissa Carr. Brows |



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Lovesoul beauty & spa

As we approach the festive season and the close of another year, the team at lovesoul beauty & spa studio would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our wonderful clients for your continued support throughout 2025. It’s been such a pleasure helping you rest, restore, and care for your skin and wellbeing this year. The studio will be closed from Tuesday 24 December and will reopen on Tuesday 14 January, allowing our team a little time to recharge before the new year begins. With only a limited number of appointments remaining before Christmas, we encourage you to book soon if you’d like to enjoy some calm before the celebrations. As summer arrives, remember to protect and nourish your skin daily. We stock a beautiful range of mineral and broad-spectrum sun protection from Coola and Skinnies – perfect for lightweight, skin-loving defence against the New Zealand sun. While the Courier takes a short publishing break in January, we invite you to begin the new year with gentle intention. Create small rituals of renewal that restore balance – a mindful moment outdoors, a few deep breaths, or a consistent skincare ritual that helps you feel grounded and refreshed. From all of us at lovesoul, thank you for sharing your year with us. Wishing you a peaceful Christmas, a restful summer, and a beautifully calm start to 2026. – Lisa & the lovesoul team



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“Cheers without the tears”– managing heartburn and reflux when the bubbles flow

The festive season is a wonderful time of year. It brings warm days, backyard BBQ’s, celebratory bubbles, and long summer evenings with friends and whānau. But for many New Zealanders, this period can also bring unwelcome discomfort in the form of heartburn and reflux. Reflux occurs when stomach acid travels back up into the oesophagus, causing that familiar burning sensation in the chest and throat. Symptoms often worsen over summer as we indulge in richer foods, enjoy a few extra drinks, and stay up later than usual.

Alcohol, particularly sparkling wine, beer, and cider, can relax the valve at the base of the oesophagus, often causing reflux. Paired with seasonal favourites like sausages, seafood, pavlova, and spicy marinades, it’s easily understood why heartburn becomes a frequent problem. Fortunately, a few simple strategies can help you raise a glass without the burn:

- Enjoy alcoholic beverages in moderation and consider alternating with water.
- Smaller, more frequent meals can reduce pressure on the stomach, while minimising triggers such as citrus and tomato-based dishes.
- Avoid caffeine after midday – it relaxes the valve too.
- After eating, avoid reclining straight away, opt for a relaxed stroll or summer swim instead.

If heartburn becomes persistent, interferes with sleep, or affects your quality of life, it’s worth investigating further. A Gastroscopy is a minimally invasive, safe procedure that allows us to examine the oesophagus and stomach using a thin tube with a camera. It is used to identify what’s causing your symptoms and help guide the best treatment for you. At Waitematā Endoscopy, we aim to make taking a proactive approach to your gut health easy. We accept GP, specialist, and self-referrals via our website. Our experienced specialists can perform most Colonoscopy or Gastroscopy procedures for you within 7 days of receiving the referral, when you let us match you with the availability of our 19 Gastroenterologists and Surgeons. This summer, enjoy the bubbles without the burn. With a few simple steps and timely care when you need it, you can embrace the summer months in comfort. Cheers to sunshine, good food, and celebrations without the reflux. Dr John Perry Gastroenterologist & Endoscopist Waitematā Endoscopy



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Santa will be popping in to see us
sly festive December markets. Our
ture plenty of Christmas gift ideas
music from Emilie, entertainment
s Dancers, free hair plaiting & face
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pick up those last minute Christmas
your pantry as well as enjoying
om the fabulous Cougar Chorus,
e & ice cream and much more.
to seeing you all again for our first
ay 18th January. Wishing everyone
s and a Happy New Year. No dogs
ception of assistance dogs. Gold
king - proceeds to the Helensville/
and St John youth. **For more info**
sidecrafts.co.nz

A photograph of a vast field of sunflowers in full bloom, their golden heads and dark centers creating a rhythmic pattern across the landscape. The sky above is a dramatic mix of orange, pink, and purple, indicating a sunset or sunrise. In the far distance, a line of trees and some buildings are visible against the horizon.

A very happy Christmas to you all from us at St Chad's,
Huapai

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Experience the best of Normandy & Brittany



Boutique Tours France, June 2026

Step beyond the guidebooks and into the real France with Boutique Tours France’s 14-day small-group journey from Normandy to Brittany, departing 13–26 June 2026. Designed for travellers who

value comfort, culture and connection, this exclusive experience blends famous highlights with hidden gems – all led by two passionate Kiwi guides who know France like locals.

With a maximum of just eight guests, this boutique tour offers the perfect balance of structure and spontaneity. From the opulent Palace of Versailles and Monet’s iconic gardens at Giverny to the moving Normandy landing beaches, the medieval wonder of Mont Saint-Michel, and Brittany’s coastal treasures like Saint-Malo, Dinard and the Pink Granite Coast, every day reveals another layer of northern France’s beauty. Guests stay in hand-picked boutique hotels, enjoy authentic regional cuisine, and have time to explore at a relaxed pace – no rushing, no crowds, just real experiences.

Meet Your Guides – Patsy, founder of Boutique Tours France, brings her signature Kiwi warmth and love of French life to every tour. A fluent French speaker and experienced host, she ensures everything runs smoothly – with her trademark mix of professionalism and good humour.

Catherine, originally from Brittany, adds local insight and connections that transform each visit into a truly personal experience. Together, Patsy and Catherine create a welcoming, friendly atmosphere where guests feel more like travelling companions than tourists.

Why Book Now – Only 3 places are available – this boutique tour sells out quickly. June offers long days, gentle weather and fewer crowds. The price includes 13 nights’ boutique accommodation, transport, breakfasts, most dinners, and entrance fees to key sites such as Versailles, Monet’s Gardens and Mont Saint-Michel. Guests enjoy special local experiences, coastal cruises,

Catherine Flot
021 025 37338

Patsy Sackx
027 490 4321

and insider access arranged by the guides. Past travellers rave about the care and warmth Patsy and Catherine bring to every journey: “The attention and care from Patsy and Catherine made the trip unforgettable – beyond all expectations.”

Tour Dates: 13–26 June 2026 – Bookings –

boutiquetoursfrance.co.nz, info@boutiquetoursfrance.co.nz

Healing anxiety from the inside out



By Dr Fiona Mead, Director | Veterinarian, 111 Vet Clinic Kumeu

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), anxiety, timidity, and fear aren’t just emotional states – they’re signs of Blood Deficiency. We’re not talking anaemia here.

When the body’s vital “Blood” energy is low, the mind loses its anchor. The result? Restlessness, poor sleep, nervousness – in both people and pets.

You might see it in a timid dog that startles easily, or a person whose mind races even when life seems fine. Western medicine might reach for sedatives or supplements; TCM instead seeks to nourish the root, rebuilding calm from within.

Herbs such as Dang Gui (Angelica sinensis), Bai Shao (White Peony), and He Shou Wu are used to enrich the blood, restore vitality, and calm the spirit (“Shen”). These same principles apply to animals – with the right veterinary guidance.

True healing requires more than symptom control. It’s leadership, nourishment, and calm energy, consistently offered. As we move into the festive rush, remember this simple grounding ritual:

- 1- Stop. Feel your feet on the earth.
- 2- Breathe in through the nose for 4 seconds.
- 3 – Hold 2 seconds.
- 4- Exhale for 6 seconds softly through a slightly open mouth.

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5- Smile softly – even if forced – it resets your parasympathetic nervous system.

Do this three times a day. You’ll notice your animals becoming calmer too – as they sync to your heartbeat.

At 111 Vet Clinic, we blend modern medicine with TCM wisdom to treat not just the body, but the energy that fuels it. Because healing isn’t just about fixing problems – it’s about restoring peace.

Fiona and the 111 Vet Clinic Team would like to thank the wonderful people in the community who have supported our clinic in its first year of being open.

We all wish you and your (2 & 4 legged) family members a safe and happy summer season.

Remember we are open 24/7 and through all the public holidays coming up, to support you and your pets.

Visit 48 Main Road Kumeu or call 09 86 96 111 / (OW TOWN 111) to speak with our experienced team.

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“Heading away for the holidays? here’s something worth knowing”

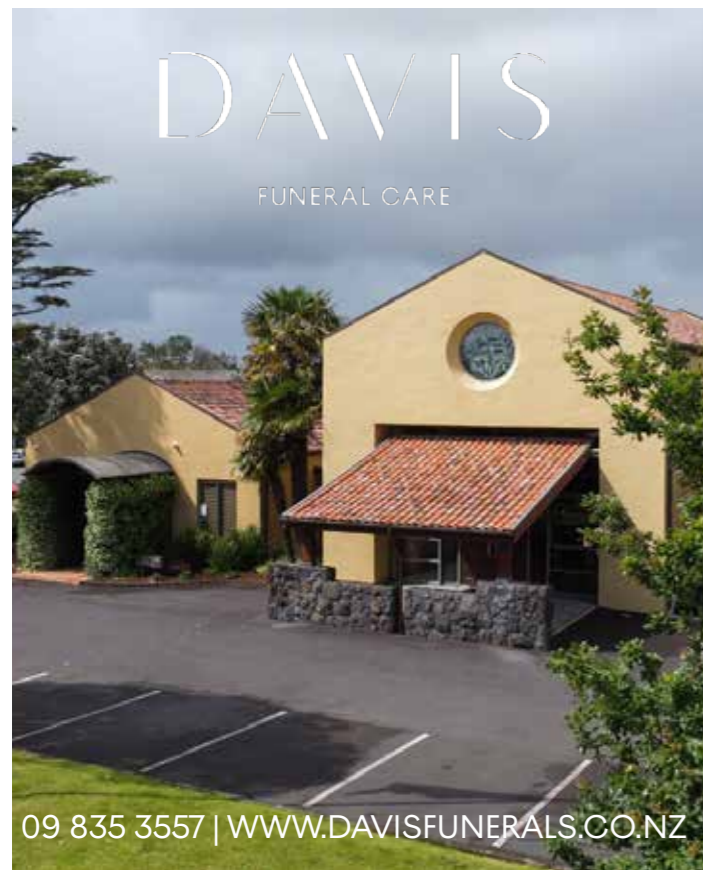


And so the holiday season is just about upon us. For many it represents the opportunity to enjoy a summer's break free of work and in the company of friends and family.

For many it is a chance to ditch the Christmas celebrations and get away camping; better still jumping on a plane and getting out of the country for a family break. The thrill and excitement of getting away invariably does not include thoughts of "what do I do if a family member was to die either back in New Zealand in your absence or abroad".

The purpose of providing this information is not to dampen the excitement of a holiday, but instead, with some simple planning and prior thought, allow the family to enjoy that well-earned getaway with peace of mind.

I can recall situations where a family either visiting New Zealand or on holiday abroad have experienced a sudden and totally unexpected death of a loved one, says Michael Powell, General Manager, Davis Funerals. The shock associated with a sudden death is hard enough to comprehend, let alone when it happens in a foreign environment, far from friends and familiar faces,



and seemingly in an environment where a total paucity of information or support exists. We also experience situations where the family has gone away, and an elderly parent in care dies, says Powell.

There are a few things that can help under such situations, not limited to but including:

- In the event of a sudden death abroad, local Police and authorities will take control of the situation, for the purposes of establishing a presumed cause of death and issuing a death certificate. Our advice at this stage is to slow down, take things one step at a time, and contact the local NZ Consulate offices to seek support. This is particularly important if you are visiting a non-English speaking country.

- In our experience as a specialist provider of repatriation services, we recommend contacting a funeral home here in New Zealand who can also offer support. Your funeral director can further assist in helping identify a suitable provider in the country where the death has occurred. This is required to ensure the dignified handling of the deceased and their travel and departure requirements are completed. Here at Davis Funeral Care, we regularly coordinate these activities.

- If you are traveling abroad, whilst many credit cards may offer a level of travel insurance if used for the booking of flights and accommodation, it is important to understand the cover provided, says Powell. Our experience is that cover linked to a credit card is typically limited to compensation for lost baggage, flight cancellations, and modest levels of medical and hospitalisation cover. Many such card-linked covers do not make any provision for repatriation costs. Travel insurance can be arranged online or through a travel agent and provides very cost-effective mitigation of the risk of not being sufficiently covered.

- If you are going away and receive notification of an elderly relative passing, make sure you have a plan in place to enable the engagement of your chosen funeral director. All it takes is a single phone call, and the necessary activities associated with the transfer and looking after of your loved one can happen, in turn slowing things down and allowing family time to travel back to organise plans for a funeral or farewell.



Auckland Folk Festival at Kumeu January 23-26



The Auckland Folk Festival returns to the Kumeu Showgrounds in 2026. A massive programme is offered showcasing local and international acts across the musical

spectrum. The three-day event includes marquees, onsite camping and food and market stalls.

Five stages (including a dedicated kids' stage) run all weekend while food trucks feature, alongside flax weaving, pottery, music and dance workshops. Headlining the 2026 festival is multi award- winning indie-folk favourite Mel Parsons. The New Zealand singer and songwriter will delight folk festival visitors with her voice, wit and deft hand. Her captivating live shows and music has won her a fan base across six records and countless national and international tours. Mel was also a 2025 Taite Music Prize finalist and a finalist in the 2025 Aotearoa Music Awards Album of the Year and Best Folk Artist categories.

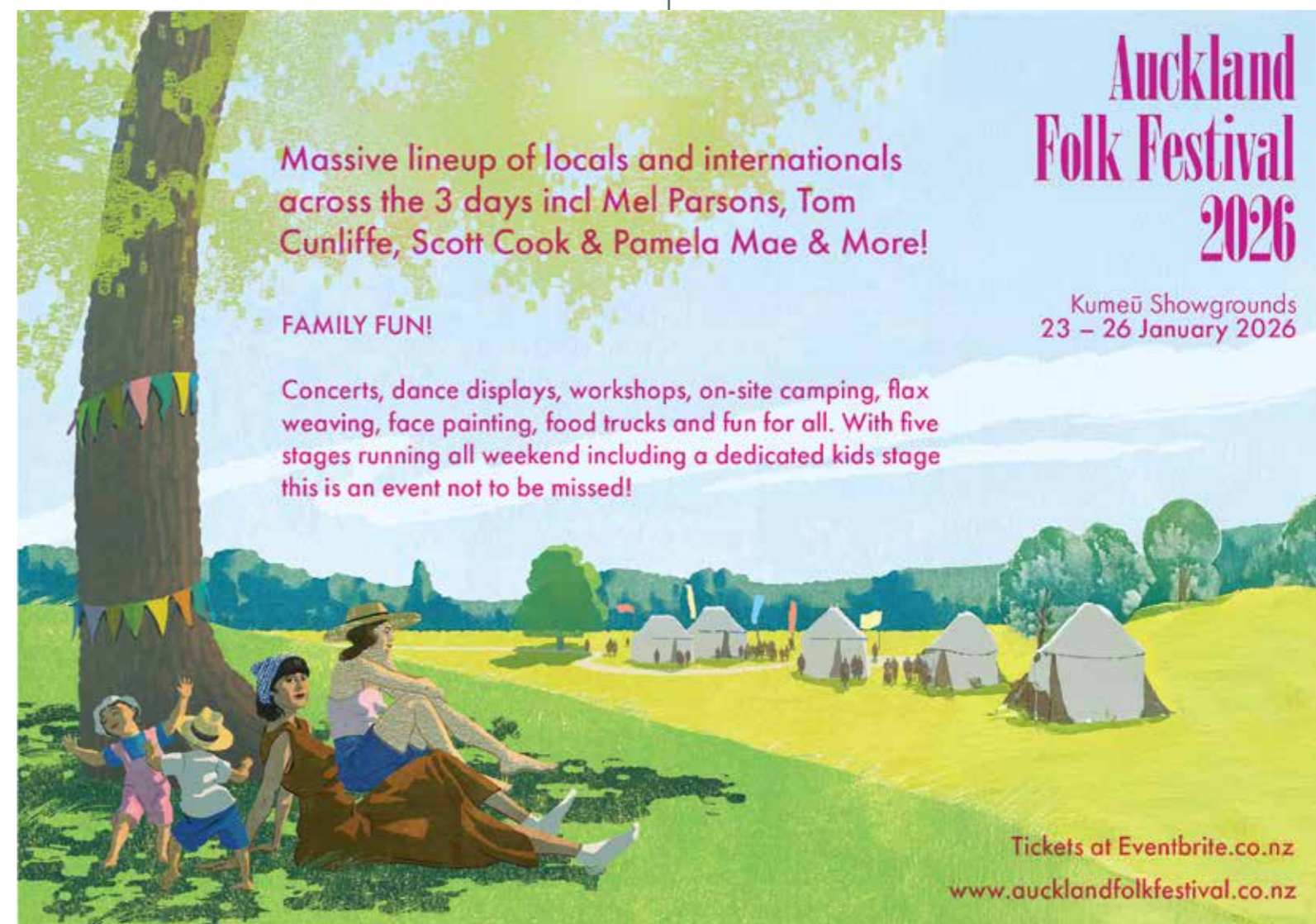
Two-time Juno award winning Old Man Luedecke joins the lineup, one of Canada's most intriguing roots singer-songwriters, known for his banjo playing and narrative-driven songs which are a mix of folk, bluegrass and pop. He is joined by Cassie and Maggie, an award-winning sibling folk duo from Nova Scotia. The sisters' musicianship is a blend of fiddle, piano, guitar, sibling harmonies in both English and Gaelic, and percussive step dance.

Multi-award winning Canadian troubadours Scott Cook and Pamela Mae tour for the first time as a duo. Dragkroka and Marine/Simonson/Wiskari are two Nordic groups bridging both hemispheres and traditions. Marine/Simonson/Wiskari will be joined by Maori anthropologist, taonga pūoro musician, and award-winning composer Rob Thorne (Ngāti Tumutumu, Tainui).

British Folk-Punk Ballad singer Jennifer Reid returns after her successful New Zealand tour, alongside singing trio Culverake, rounding out the international lineup.

Turkey the Bird and Hot Diggity are set to bring sparkle. Bazurka, a seven-piece band from Wellington, reimagine Balkan and Greek traditions through a contemporary lens.

Waiata workshops will be running throughout the weekend under Hinekoia Tomlinson, blending voice training and vocal science with waiata's beauty and power. Butter Wouldn't Melt, Tom Cunliffe, Mice on Stilts, and Miriam McCombe provide a snapshot of the New Zealand folk scene.



The Kids Stage has Simon Stanley and Parrot in the Pocket as featured guests. Guitar workshops help hone your skills, and educational workshops run all weekend. International tutors will bring their knowledge.

Early bird tickets close December 31. Tickets available from Eventbrite. Visit www.aucklandfolkfestival.co.nz or check Facebook for more information.

ventured down a new road. Travel shapes our everyday lives in quiet but meaningful ways. It reminds us how connected we all are to places, people, and the stories we gather along the way. We hope you take a moment this season to reflect on your own walks and journeys: where they led you & what they revealed about the world and yourself. As summer settles in, may your days be filled with family gatherings, backyard barbecues, and some well earned moments of rest. Our team is off to Waiheke Island for a weekend escape - with Secret Santa gifts inspired by countries drawn from a hat! We'll raise a glass at Man O' War Vineyard, celebrate our wins, reflect on the lessons and & the growth that came with them, share stories of the experiences we've helped create, and remind ourselves why we do what we do:- to share



Cruise Centre: 144 Hobsonville Point Road | 09 941 3330

"Always one for a bit of drama, Billy was pleased that he contributed an exciting and heart-string-pulling final chapter to the book, while I am still recovering my emotional equilibrium." Jo is keen to get the book into as many young hands as possible and also hopes for a good turnout at the book launch.



And now, there's something new to fizz about - introducing Clover Spritz, a naturally sparkling fermented drink made with the same probiotic goodness in a refreshing, drinkable format. Available in Turmeric (ginger and lemon zest) and Beetroot (bright, earthy, and rich in prebiotics), it's the perfect alcohol-



Come say hello and try our new Spritz at the Kumeu Christmas Market on Sunday, 21st December.





Food & Beverage

Snowballs



Ingredients-

- ½ cups blanched almonds or macadamias or a mixture of the two
- 2½ cups shredded coconut or coconut thread

- ½ cup dried apricots
- 8 medjool dates pitted
- salt good pinch of
- 2-3 tablespoons honey
- lemon zest of 1
- orange zest of 1
- lemon juice of 1 use zested one above

Instructions-

Place 1½ cups of coconut (reserve the remaining 1 cup for coating the balls) and all remaining ingredients in a food processor and blitz until the mixture is well combined and comes together like a big clump of dough mixture. This will probably take about 2-3 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the food processor as necessary to make sure everything is well blended together.

Roll tablespoons of the mixture into balls then roll in the reserved coconut, coating the balls well. Store in an airtight container in the fridge until ready to eat, or offer as a gift. They are best eaten within a few days, but will keep for up to a week. They can also be frozen.

Notes- The snowballs can be made in bulk quantities, so you can make enough gifts for everyone in no time! They make the perfect little gift packaged up in a little box with ribbon tied around. They are so yummy and moreish, but they're gluten-free, refined sugar-free and dairy-free, so you don't even have to feel guilty about treating yourself! If you wanted to do something extra-special, you could also make these hazelnut chocolate truffles and give people a mixture of each!

Credit to Nadia Lim

Ginger Apple Fizz Mocktail



Ingredients-

- Thyme - 4 sprigs
- Fresh ginger (peeled & halved) - 3 cm
- Apple juice - 100 ml
- Ginger beer - 100 ml
- Soda water - 200 ml

Method-

- Muddle together ginger and 2 sprigs of thyme.
- Add apple juice and muddle again.
- Strain the muddled mixture over ice into 2 glasses.
- Add ginger beer and top with soda water.
- Garnish with a sprig of thyme.

credit to Woolworths

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19
24
28
41

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Property News

19

Christmas laws & legal laughs: From Aotearoa to the North Pole



Christmas is all about joy, but even the season of goodwill has its legal quirks. From pohutukawa-lined beaches to snowy rooftops, here's a look at the strangest holiday laws and stories—some close

to home, others from far-flung corners of the globe.

Deck the Halls... But check the law first

- Santa Claus banned – Tajikistan. Since 2013, Tajikistan outlawed Santa and Christmas trees. Definitely no “Ho Ho Ho” there.

- Snowball fights illegal – Colorado, USA. In Fort Collins, tossing snowballs can technically break local rules against throwing projectiles. Stick to snow angels!

- Puritans outlawed Christmas – England & Colonial America. Back in the 1600s, Puritans banned Christmas celebrations entirely, calling them sinful excess.

- Kiwi twist: Santa costume rules. In New Zealand, there's no law against donning the red suit in public—but if you're joining a Christmas parade or official event, you'll need to leave the Santa act to the designated star. Most parades enforce a “one Santa only” rule to keep the magic alive. Outside of events? Go ahead and spread the cheer—just don't block traffic with your sleigh.

- Holiday Pay rules – New Zealand. Under the Holidays Act, employees working on Christmas Day earn time-and-a-half plus a day in lieu. A gift that keeps on giving.

Quirky legal stories that'll make you jingle

- Santa Claus goes to court. An Ohio man legally changed his name to Santa Claus and fought charges of using a fake ID. Verdict? He was the real deal.

- Jingle Bells' lawsuit. A Manhattan lawyer sued their neighbour because a plastic reindeer played “Jingle Bells” nonstop. The court agreed: peace matters.

- Inmates vs. Christmas music. Arizona prisoners claimed nonstop holiday tunes were cruel punishment. The judge disagreed—joy is mandatory.

- Christmas pudding waivers

A London restaurant made diners sign waivers before eating pudding stuffed with silver charms. Liability never tasted so sweet.

- Kiwi Christmas party misconduct. Several NZ law firms faced disciplinary action after wild Christmas parties—reminding us that festive cheer doesn't excuse bad behaviour.

If Santa needed a lawyer in NZ... Does his sleigh need a WOF?, Is chimney entry trespass?, Does Rudolph need resource consent for flying over Auckland or a parking permit?, Does the Consumer Guarantees Act apply?

The verdict. Whether you're singing carols under the pohutukawa or firing up the Christmas barbie, these stories prove even the silly season has its legal side. So as you unwrap the pavlova debate this year, remember: Santa might need a Kiwi lawyer too. **The team at ClearStone Legal would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in 2026**

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When choosing the right partners for your real estate journey, make sure Brendon Hodge and Graham McIntyre are at the top of your list. With a combined 35 years of industry experience and a proven record of high performance, they bring a powerful blend of knowledge, energy, and dedication to every campaign. Supported by a skilled team, they deliver exceptional service with thoughtful, well-considered

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Auckland rental property report

The Auckland rental market is characterised by a softening, with an oversupply of properties and slower demand leading to higher vacancy rates and more competitive pricing from landlords.

With an increase in rental properties available year on year, and a corresponding reduction in demand due to migration and cost of living pressure, Landlords are facing increased competition to attract tenants, leading to price reductions and improved presentation. Let's review some of these factors:

Oversupply of rentals

- Platforms like Trade Me and realestate.co.nz show a significant increase in rental listings compared to 2023/4. The housing market is challenging, so unsold properties are moving into the rental pool.
- Properties are sitting on the market longer, with more viewings required to secure tenants.

Prices under pressure

- Rent is down 2% - 4% in some areas, landlords have to reduce rent by more than this, or offer incentives to attract tenants.
- Competition between landlords is driving prices down rents

Reduced rental demand

- YOY net migration is down in data just released last week from Stats NZ - March 2024 = 100,400 and March 2025 = 26,400, a decrease of 74%.
- Cost-of-living pressures and high interest rates mean tenants are staying longer in existing rentals.
- Fewer students and young professionals are moving around, limiting the demand for inner-city accommodation.

Higher landlord compliance costs

- High interest rates have increased mortgage repayments.
- Ongoing compliance requirements with the Healthy Homes Standards and other regulations continue to add cost and complexities.
- Insurance premiums and maintenance costs have risen.

It all adds to a challenging environment of finding the best possible long term tenant for the best possible yield for the landlord. This is an environment where the team at West Auckland Property Management thrive in providing accurate and timely advice to Property Owners wanting an easy and seamless Property Management solution.

For more information please call Graham McIntyre on 0276320421 or email graham@wapm.co.nz

Capital Gains Tax a headache or a headline

Capital gains on investment properties have been top of mind for some investors since Labour announced its capital gains tax plan.

While many will argue over the merits of the plan, it raises a fundamental issue regarding investment property - in order to tax capital gains there has to actually be capital gains to tax, and that's something that can no longer be taken for granted.

Looking at the residential property market, capital losses more likely have been a feature of the market since Grant Robertson tinkered with the lending caveats.

Residential property investors tend to buy properties at the cheaper end of the market because they usually provide better returns than more expensive properties. Most investors seek to gain a return in the 6 to 7% area.

To get an idea of the capital gains facing investors, the good folk at interest.co.nz tracked the changes to the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand's lower quartile selling price back to 2004.

In September this year, the REINZ's lower quartile price was \$590,000.

That's the price point at which 75% of sales are above and 25% are below, so it's a proxy for the most affordable, and for investors potentially the most lucrative, end of the market

A year earlier in September 2024 it was \$594,000. So a property purchased for the lower quartile price in September last year and resold at the lower quartile price in September this year would have suffered a capital loss of \$4000 (-0.7% of the original purchase price).

Going back two years to September 2023 the lower quartile price was \$590,000, the same as September this year, so no capital gain there but no loss either.

If you go back three years to September 2022, the lower quartile price was \$610,000, which would give a capital loss if it was sold now of \$20,000 (-3.3%).

Go back four years to September 2021 and the capital loss would be \$12,500 (-2.1%).

It's not until the property had been held for five years that it would make a capital gain and it's a reasonable one at \$90,000 (18%).

If the property had been held for six years the capital gain would be \$170,000, seven years and it would be \$210,000, eight years \$240,000, nine years \$255,000 and 10 years \$281,000 and so on.

These figures reinforce the old adage that property investment is a long-term game and should be considered as a part of a balanced investment portfolio.

At Raine and Horne we have the knowledge and capability to seek out and negotiate on the purchase of good long term investment property and to properly manage the investment with a low 6.5% property management fee.

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Team Terry Jones: Knowledge is Power

‘Strive to provide you with an outstanding personal service throughout NZ and internationally’

With over 45 years of combined experience in the real estate industry, Terry and Janet Jones form a highly motivated, skilled, and experienced team dedicated to delivering exceptional personal service. Their extensive local knowledge and unwavering commitment have established them as well-recognised faces in many areas, particularly in North West Auckland, Hobsonville, West Harbour, Whenuapai, and Kumeu.

For more than a decade, Team Terry Jones has built a reputation for achieving outstanding results that consistently exceed their clients’ expectations. Their success is rooted in a deep understanding of the property market, superior negotiation skills, and a genuine passion for helping people realise their real estate goals. They take the time to understand each client’s unique needs and aspirations, offering tailored advice and support throughout every stage of the buying or selling process.

Why Choose Team Terry Jones?

- Trustworthy Professionals: Your property is a significant asset. Terry and Janet approach every transaction with the utmost integrity and respect, ensuring your interests are always their top priority.
- Strong Negotiators: Their expert negotiation skills are key to securing premium results, whether you’re buying your dream home or selling for maximum value.
- Deep Local Expertise: Years of living and working in the area ensure they provide up-to-date market knowledge and strategic advice.
- Outstanding Service: Known for going above and beyond, Team Terry Jones delivers a seamless and stress-free journey in your real estate experience.
- Choosing the right real estate agent is one of the most important decisions you’ll make regarding your property.

Terry and Janet chose NZ Sotheby’s International Realty for their values, professionalism, and point of difference.

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Brendon Hodge

A well-known presence in the Northwest community, Brendon Hodge has lived locally for 27 years and brings over 13 years of real estate expertise to the region. His strong market knowledge, steady approach, and commitment to high-quality service have earned him the trust of buyers and sellers alike.

Brendon is now working full-time from the Raine & Horne office at 327 Main Road, Kumeu, continuing to serve the community he knows exceptionally well.

“I’m level-headed, meticulous, and always working hard to deliver the best outcomes for my clients,” says Brendon. “Real estate is about people as much as property, and I take great pride in providing proactive, high-quality service every step of the way.”

Backed by the trusted Raine & Horne brand, Brendon remains dedicated to guiding clients through the property market with confidence and clarity.

“I value the trust my clients place in me and am committed to delivering a smooth, successful experience.”

Brendon Hodge – 021 608 234
brendon.hodge@kumeu.rh.co.nz

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Brendon Hodge

Licensed Sales Person

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Make sure to do your due diligence when buying a property

When buying a property, it is recommended to have a due diligence clause in your agreement. This will allow you a period of time to conduct inspections, surveys, and assessments on the property. You can also engage professionals such as building inspectors, surveyors, and lawyers to scrutinise the property’s condition, title, permits, and any other relevant documentation.

The purpose of these investigations is to uncover any potential issues or hidden problems that may affect the value or desirability of the property. This may include whether the property is in a flood zone and whether buildings on the property are properly consented. If you discover any significant concerns, you have the option to renegotiate the terms of the purchase with the vendor or withdraw from the agreement altogether.

It is advisable to consult with a lawyer before signing an agreement to purchase a property to draft a comprehensive due diligence clause tailored to your specific needs and circumstances. For any assistance with this or any other legal issue you can contact Kemp Barristers & Solicitors at info@kempsolicitors.co.nz or 412-6000..

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Area Property Stats

PROPERTY-HUB.NZ

Every month Raine & Horne Kumeu assembles a comprehensive spreadsheet of all the recent sales in the area that reviews the full range of Residential and Lifestyle transactions that have occurred. To receive the full summary simply email the word “full statistics” to office@kumeu.rh.co.nz. This service is free from cost.

SUBURB	STREET	CV	BED	FLOOR AREA m2	LAND AREA m2	SALE PRICE
Coatesville						
	Ridge Road	\$1,500,000	0	0	10700	\$1340000
Helensville						
	Taylor Road	\$1730000	0	0	10400	\$1707000
	Kaipara Crescent	\$840000	3	140	736	\$870000
	Rongomai Street	\$770000	3	0	304	\$788000
Herald Island						
	The Terrace	\$1,750,000	4	170	908	\$1,750,000
Hobsonville						
	Hobsonville Pt Rd	\$660000	2	83	0	\$620000
	Clark Road	\$910000	3	120	170	\$930000
	Harbourside Parade	\$650000	0	0	255	\$688888
	Joshua Carder Dr	\$1125000	3	116	212	\$1080000
	Sioux Road	\$1125000	3	0	196	\$1227000
	Kota Lane	\$1375000	5	227	311	\$1425088
	Mapou Road	\$1075000	3	0	245	\$1120000
	Autumn Blaze Stt	\$1375000	4	200	247	\$1260000
	Saltmarsh Rd	\$1045000	2	110	170	\$860000
	Onekiritea Rd	\$710000	2	76	0	\$665000
	Desalt Drive	\$1025000	3	146	180	\$1050000
	Onekiritea Road	\$710000	3	175	248	\$1260000
	Wiseley Road	\$1600000	4	0	1012	\$1460000
	Sidney Wallingford Way	\$960000	3	0	0	\$1030000
	Hobsonville Pt Rd	\$600000	1	60	0	\$575000
	Aviation Drive	\$1525000	4	0	385	\$1500000
	Waita Lane	\$1200000	3	162	362	\$1319000
	Station Street	\$1125000	3	196	208	\$1205000
	Toanui Road	\$1500000	4	0	385	\$1640000
	Onekiritea Road	\$630000	1	66	63	\$609500
Huapai						
	Paihere Street	\$690000	0	0	0	\$1490000
	Malbec Place	\$1275000	5	0	871	\$1370000
	Merlot Heights	\$1275000	3	0	610	\$1074500
	Remana Crescent	\$1250000	4	204	600	\$1480000
Kumeu						
	Fred White Drive	\$1325000	4	212	606	\$1275000
	Moemoea Avenue	\$1075000	4	0	358	\$1020000
	Konoba Avenue	\$1000000	4	0	215	\$969000
	Barrels Close	\$1075000	4	161	432	\$1090000
Massey						
	Don Buck Road	\$840	4	160	523	\$830000
	Arlette Place	\$950000	3	0	771	\$915000
	Moire Road	\$1125000	5	180	951	\$1225000
	Allington Road	\$990000	3	133	607	\$980000
	Loughanure Place	\$780000	3	92	379	\$765000
	Sarajevo Place	\$740000	3	0	0	\$550000
	Triangle Road	\$890000	3	0	532	\$836000
	Don Buck Road	\$740000	4	180	517	\$708000
	Aldern Road	\$910000	3	80	897	\$794000
	Halloran Place	\$740000	3	80	367	\$695000
	Red Hills Road	\$1950000	4	495	5384	\$2390000
	Triangle Road	\$720000	3	0	375	\$738000
	Paretao Street	\$380000	4	0	156	\$945000
	Bellringer Road	\$830000	3	0	506	\$760000
	Reynella Drive	\$910000	5	0	761	\$960000
	Rehia Road	\$1060000	3	0	809	\$910000
	Makora Road	\$1025000	3	179	1156	\$1150000
	Lilburn Crescent	\$730000	4	170	675	\$890000
	Karika Place	\$1130000	4	168	564	\$1100000
	Triangle Road	\$780000	3	0	455	\$794000
	Woodside Road	\$850000	3	130	1669	\$880000

SUBURB	STREET	CV	BED	FLOOR AREA m2	LAND AREA m2	SALE PRICE
	Claverdon Drive	\$970000	4	100	607	\$822565
	Puhikawa Street	\$380000	3	0	134	\$840000
	Glenfinn Place	\$750000	3	0	561	\$750000
	Royal Road	\$1225000	3	240	837	\$1165000
Riverhead						
	Princes Street	\$1350000	4	0	810	\$1381000
	Canoe Lane	\$1650000	4	0	800	\$1835000
	Barrett Road	\$2675000	5	0	10900	\$1872000
	Mill Flat Road	\$2075000	0	0	15300	\$2780000
Taupaki						
	Amreins Road	\$1225000	0	0	21500	\$1370000
Waimauku						
	Rosella Grove	\$990000	4	128	1131	\$1150000
Waitakere						
	Mcentee Road	\$875000	2	71	875000	\$882,500
	Te Aute Ridge Road	\$900000	3	0	50000	
West Harbour						
	Crosby Road	\$1250000	3	90	849	\$1062500
	Elizabeth Drive	\$1250000	3	92	647	\$908000
	Hogarth Rise	\$1255000	5	270	832	\$1300000
	Bridgehead Cove	\$1070000	4	220	450	\$1057500
	Woodhouse Place	\$1150000	4	0	0	\$1150000
	Cherub Place	\$1055000	3	180	0	\$849000
	Lagoon Way	\$965000	3	120	0	\$940000
	Vermeer Place	\$1525000	4	249	709	\$1690000
Westgate						
	Mairehau St	\$540000	0	0	224	\$376000
	Tarapuka Road	\$900000	3	0	0	\$820000
	Waekahu Road	\$980000	3	161	208	\$960000
	Neinei St	\$540000	0	0	0	\$420000
	Kiekie St	\$780000	3	100	156	\$860000
	Greenbrier Street	\$530000	4	0	153	\$920000
	Greenbrier Street	\$890000	4	125	153	\$920000
	Westgate Drive	\$1100000	3	180	210	\$987000
	Cinnabar Place	\$1050000	3	171	500	\$980000
Whanuapai						
	Whenuapai Drive	\$1300000	3	212	379	\$1310000
	Kauri Road	\$1175000	3	103	1452	\$1235000
	Totara Road	\$1075000	4	211	166	\$1045000

DISCLAIMER: These sales figures have been provided by a third party and although all care is taken to ensure the information is accurate some figures could have been mis-interpreted on compilation. Furthermore these figures are recent sales over the past 30 days from all agents in the area.

Graham McIntyre on 027 632 0421

Brendon Hodge on 021 608 234

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November 2025 market wrap

The New Zealand property market is beginning to show signs of stabilisation. The latest Cotality Home Value Index recorded a 0.2% rise in national median values in October, following a 0.1% lift in September. These may be small movements, but they mark the first consecutive increases after months of decline - a signal that mortgage rates and improving buyer confidence is starting to influence the market.

Regionally, the picture remains mixed. Auckland saw a slight fall of 0.2%, Hamilton held steady, while Tauranga and Wellington edged up 0.2%. Christchurch rose 0.4%, and Dunedin led the main centres with a 0.7% increase. Several provincial centres - including Nelson, Queenstown, and Invercargill, posted gains above 1%, while areas such as Palmerston North, New Plymouth, and Whangārei experienced modest declines.

With shifting house prices and changing economic conditions - even the smallest movement in interest rates can have a big impact on your repayments and long-term interest costs.

This is why refixing, restructuring and refinancing your lending strategically and at the right time can be a game-changer.

Over the past month, we've seen standout bank offers and competitive incentives, and with the recent OCR announcement, new windows of opportunity have opened. First-home buyers may find conditions more favourable, and existing homeowners may be able to reassess their lending structure to ensure their mortgage is aligned with their goals heading into 2026.

As we approach the new year, it's the perfect time to review your strategy and check your mortgage is working for you. If you haven't already done so - Get in touch for a free, zero-obligation chat!

I'm here to help you secure the best rates and terms, improve cashflow, reduce interest and plan your next financial steps with confidence.

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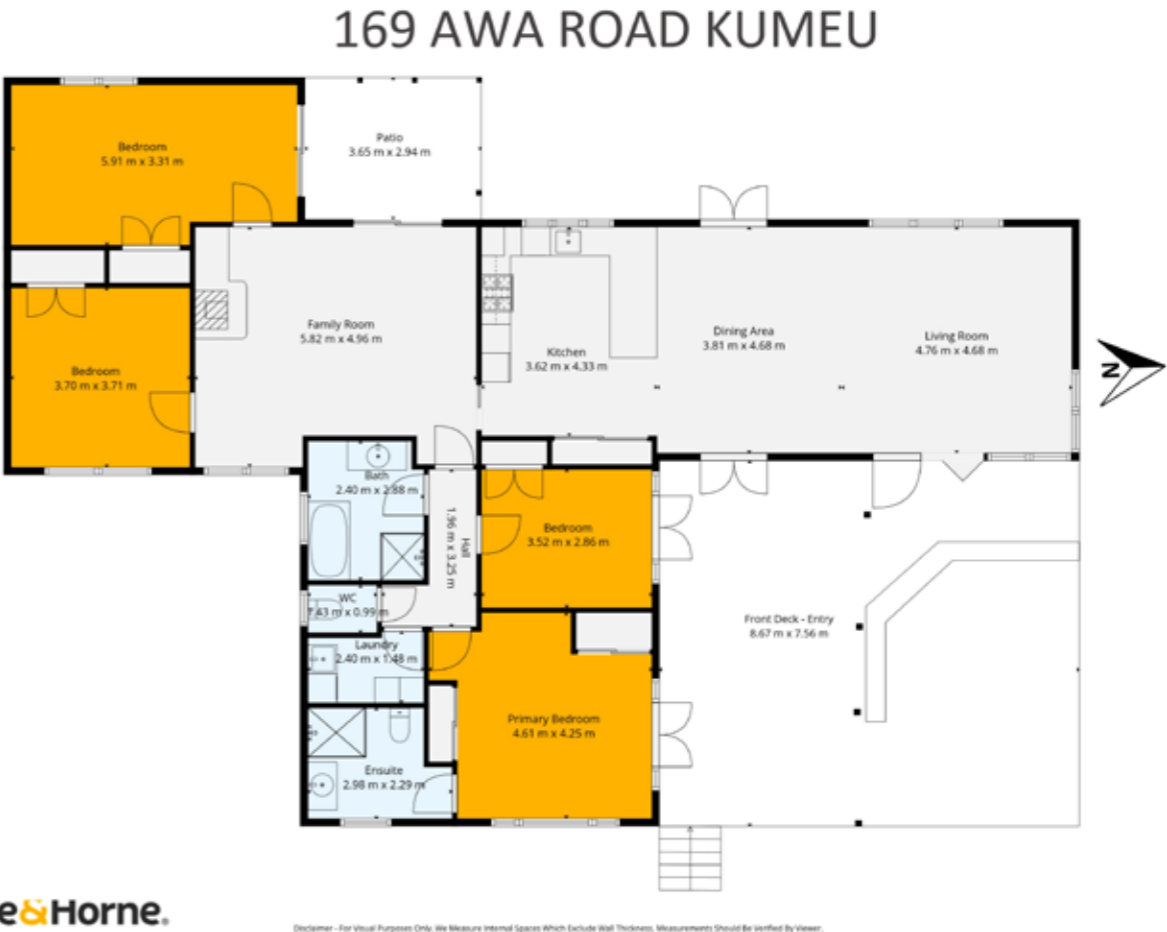
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drive, a stand alone home offering three bedrooms, one lounge, one bathroom 86smq being a home or an income. Independent appraisal range is around \$700 per week for this.

The landscaping is impressive, stepping you down to a mixture of accessory buildings and converted stables now transformed into the ultimate lifestyle zone, complete with a home gym, bar area, and chill-out space for entertaining or unwinding.



Featuring:

- 7 bedrooms
- 3 bathroom
- 2 living
- 3 garage
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- Floor area 275 sqm
- Lifestyle Property
- Two houses
- Man cave



For more information on this property call:
Graham McIntyre on 027 632 0421
or email: graham.mcintyre@kumeu.rh.co.nz

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- Hobsonville. Licensed REAA (2008).



Be In For Christmas Affordable Three Bedroom

1 Neta Grove, Henderson Auckland

First home buyers, downsizers, investors or families this 116m2 approx freehold 1 level townhouse on a 292m2 approx section is available for immediate possession and is priced to meet the market for a quick sale. The dwelling has been refreshed inside with new carpets and newly painted inside and out and is now ready and waiting for new owners. The current rate-able value is \$790,000 however the owners do not want this lovely home hanging around on the market too long and are looking to sell in the low to mid \$700's., of course open to all genuine offers for serious consideration. There is a nice open

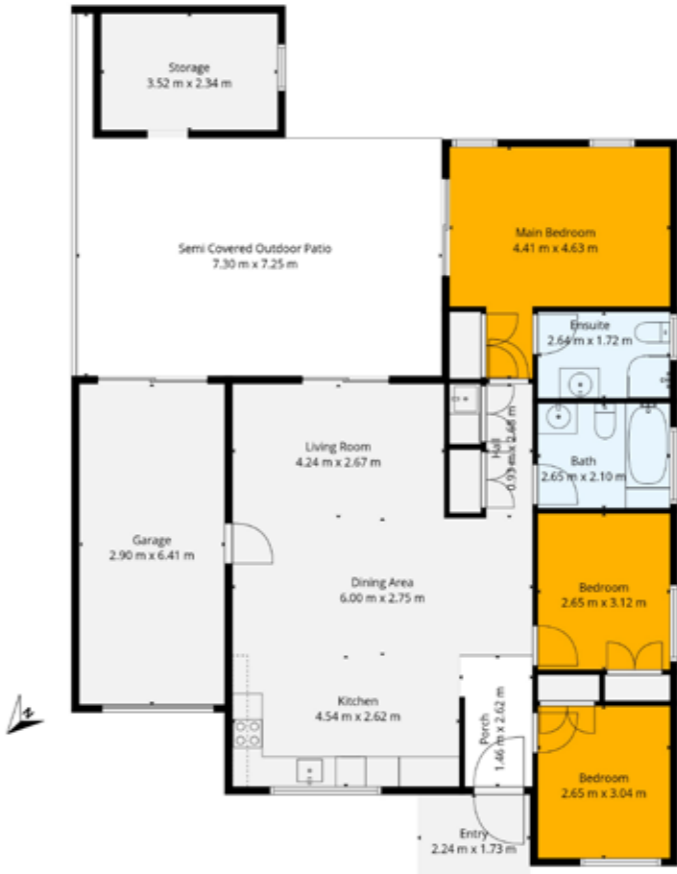
field park across the road to enjoy and a bonus of only having the Sturges Road train station only three minutes walk away. Summerland Primary, Henderson Intermediate and Waitakere College are zoned nearby plus other schools are also available. view. Access to West City and Northwest Mall are only a short driver away.

Brendon Hodge on **021 608 234**
or email: **Brendon.Hodge@kumeu.rh.co.nz**
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1 Neta Grove Henderson



Raine & Horne

Disclaimer - For Visual Purposes Only. We Measure Internal Spaces Which Exclude Wall Thickness. Measurements Should Be Verified By Viewer.



Featuring:

- 3 Bedroom
- 1 bathrooms
- 1 Toilets, 1 living, 1 ensuite
- Land area 292 sqm approx
- Floor area 116 sqm approx
- 1 Garage
- Townhouse
- Freehold



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14 Malbec Pl, Huapai

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Get the sun-sail up, and the portable pool in place, this is a suntrap for all ages, with north west patio and boundary plantings that pop colour and contrast.

This modern near new weatherboard home is presented to a high standard offering generous living spaces, uncompromised alfresco off central lounge and separate snug off the kitchen. One primary level with a step up to the passageway.

For more information on this property call:

Graham McIntyre on 027 632 0421 or email:

Graham.mcintyre@kumeu.rh.co.nz

Country Living Realty Limited T/A Raine and Horne Kumeu - Hobsonville. Licensed REAA (2008).



Featuring:

- 3 bedroom
- 2 bathroom
- Land area 698 sqm
- Floor area 174 sqm
- 1 ensuite, 2 living, 1 dining, 2 toilet
- 2 garage
- Close to shops, library, cafes, schools, parks
- Situated in Huapai and off Matua Road



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Nouveau

Market Umbrella 4.5m Double Stone



SKU: 2054104 **\$369**

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Market Umbrella 2.7m Olive



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Nouveau

Market Umbrella 3m Black



SKU: 2054117 **\$99⁹⁹**

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Home & Garden

Field Homes: Your partner for the New Year

As we approach the end of the year, all of us at Field Homes wish you a joyful holiday season and a Merry Christmas. We look forward to the promise of a Happy New Year and the new beginnings it brings. This festive season coincides with an exciting shift in the property market. With interest rates softening, we are seeing revived activity and renewed confidence. For those who have been considering a project, now is an opportune time to explore your options. As an award-winning Registered Master Builder, we are perfectly positioned to help you navigate this revitalised landscape. Whether you are looking to unlock the potential of your existing section or are ready to build your dream home, our expertise turns vision into reality. Subdividing and

building is a powerful way to maximise your investment.

For a firsthand feel of our quality and workmanship, we invite you to see our current project at 36-46 Moire West, Massey—a 7-lot subdivision with a mix of duplex and standalone homes. Let's build a brighter future together. From our family to yours, we wish you a wonderful holiday and a prosperous start to the New Year.

Mastercraft Kitchens



by The Kitchen People offers custom cabinetry with over 30 years of expertise. Riverhead owners Mark and Leanne Gallagher ensure a streamlined experience for new builds and renovations. A recent project highlight

is a breathtaking luxury kitchen completed at a Kumeu country estate, featuring dramatic natural stone. We are full-service, crafting solutions for every room. Visit our Design Centre at 177 Millwater Parkway, Silverdale, or view our portfolio at www.kitchenpeople.co.nz



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Drain Ninjas



To any New Zealand homeowner with a septic system, its upkeep is as important as any other home maintenance task. Whether you've just purchased a property or lived with a septic tank for years, understanding how it works prevents costly repairs and environmental hazards. Neglect can cause foul odours, soggy lawns, and even full system failure. Regular maintenance keeps everything running smoothly and saves money long-term.

In this guide, we'll cover septic tank maintenance, warning signs, and landscaping tips to protect your system.

Regular septic tank inspections and cleanings

Septic tanks should be inspected every 6-18 months and pumped every 2-3 years, depending on usage and size. Routine checks catch small issues early and extend the life of your system.

Recognising the signs of septic tank issues

Watch for foul smells, slow drains, greener grass near the

tank or drain field, and pooling water. These are signs of possible failure and should be addressed immediately to avoid costly repairs.

Maintaining a healthy bacterial balance

A healthy septic system depends on good bacteria breaking down waste. Harsh cleaning chemicals can upset this balance. Use septic-safe cleaners and avoid pouring grease, coffee grounds, or non-degradable items down the drain.

Proper disposal of waste and household chemicals

Only biodegradable waste should go down your drains. Non-biodegradable materials and strong chemicals harm bacteria and clog pipes. Limit waste disposal use and never flush oils, medications, or chemical cleaners.

Landscaping and property management practices Plant grass or shallow-rooted plants above your system; tree or shrub roots can damage pipes. Avoid driving or parking on your septic area to prevent soil compaction and structural damage.

Regular maintenance + next steps

With consistent care, proper use, and mindful landscaping, your septic system will last for decades. A little proactive maintenance prevents major problems and protects both your investment and the environment.

Transforming backyards with Narellan Pools Auckland West



There's nothing quite like the joy of a backyard pool, a place where families come together, children create lifelong memories, and weekends feel like holidays at home.

Richard Pook, owner and pool builder of Narellan Pools Auckland West, is passionate about helping local families bring that dream to life. Proudly servicing the Auckland West community, Richard and his team design and install premium fibreglass swimming pools, all made right here in New Zealand. Every in-ground pool comes with a Lifetime Structural Warranty, giving families peace of mind for years to come.

As a locally owned and operated business, Narellan Pools Auckland West takes pride in creating outdoor spaces that suit each family's lifestyle. From compact courtyards to large backyards, Richard works closely with clients to design a pool that complements their home, with a wide range of modern shapes, colours, and features to choose from.

To find out more or book a free consultation, visit narellanpools.co.nz or contact the team at Narellan Pools Auckland West today 027 786 3970.

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Whenuapai Floral & Garden Circle

On a damp afternoon, more than thirty members were present at the last formal meeting of 2025. After plans for next year were discussed and usual business dealt with, member Marilyn Page was once again called upon to demonstrate the art of making simple yet elegant Christmas decorations for the home. First a wreath for the door with astelea curls, ribbon, conifer leaves and artificial flowers.

Next a table display including stems of alstroemeria, and succulents held in place with the aid of toothpicks, then a floral frothy concoction with bright red berries in a tall glass, and lastly some cones on a branch were prettied up with shades of red and green, with accents of silver and white, to adorn an empty fireplace. Excellent results and she made it all seem so easy.

If you would like to know more about our Club, and wish to join us next year, please phone Judy Garrity on 8335592. Meetings are held at 1 p.m. at 41 Waimarie Road, Whenuapai Village, on the second Thursday of the month with trips usually on the fourth Thursday. Entry fee is \$4 with another dollar per raffle ticket. Until next time, Happy Gardening and Happy Holidays from Mary Anne Clark

Waimauku Garden Club



It was another awesome day out in October to visit Highwic House in Epsom where we were welcomed with a lovely morning tea served on vintage china.

We heard the fascinating history of the early NZ gothic mansion and gardens which were established over 150 years ago. The house was originally built in 1862 for Alfred Buckland, a wealthy colonial settler and landowner. It had a few extensions as the family grew which included 21 children. We got to explore all the rooms which were furnished in that period. Highwic houses a major collection of early Auckland landscape paintings. The gardens were lush and pretty. We travelled to Bastion Point to enjoy the panoramic view over Auckland Harbour at the Michael Joseph Savage memorial gardens which were stunning. We had lunch at a choice of cafes along Mission Bay. On our journey back we visited the tranquil Fukuoka Garden at Western Springs featuring traditional Japanese elements such as a waterfall, pond, stone arrangements and bonsai trees. A peaceful retreat to sit and reflect.

Feel free to contact any of us: Ann(0210357406), Gail(021344070), Maree(0274963006), Moira (027498154), Sandi (0273184514).

Summer stench? It might be your septic tank

Summer in New Zealand is all about long days, BBQs, and visitors – but if there’s a mysterious pong drifting across your section, it’s not the sausages burning. Chances are, your septic tank is trying to tell you something.

Hot weather and extra guests are a recipe for septic overload. When a tank is already near capacity, a few more showers, extra laundry, and extra flushes can push it over the edge. The result? Bad smells, slow drains, gurgling pipes, or even wastewater backing up into your home or yard.

Here’s what could be happening:

Built-up sludge: Solids naturally settle in your septic tank over time, taking up space. If the tank isn’t emptied regularly, there’s less room for new wastewater. In a tank with a soakage field, excess solids can escape into the outlet and clog pipes or the soakage system. In a holding tank, the wastewater simply fills up, and once it’s full, it can back up or overflow – and that’s when the smells appear.

Blocked filters or outlets: Heat and heavy use can stir things up inside the tank, creating blockages that slow down how wastewater leaves the tank (if it has a soakage field).

Overloaded soakage fields: For tanks connected to soakage systems, saturated or compacted ground



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- Septic tank inspections, empties and cleans
- Wastewater system maintenance and disposal
- Grease trap cleaning

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can prevent effluent from draining away, causing surface pooling or odours.

The fix? HydroVac can empty your tank, clear blockages, and inspect your system – whether it’s a traditional septic or a holding tank – to make sure it’s summer-ready. Regular emptying (every three to five years for most homes, depending on size and use) keeps your system working properly and odour-free.

If you’re hosting guests over summer or heading away on holiday, now’s the perfect time to book a service. You’ll avoid unpleasant smells, prevent backups, and reduce the risk of costly repairs.

Our teams cover Auckland, making the process quick, tidy, and hassle-free. So if your summer breeze isn’t smelling quite as fresh as it should, give HydroVac a call – we’ll make sure you can get back to enjoying the sunshine without holding your nose.

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A quintessential Kiwi Christmas in your outdoor living space

There's something truly special about a Kiwi Christmas – long sunny days, the smell of the barbecue, and family and friends gathered outdoors sharing in good food and laughter. As the year winds down, it's time to make the most of your outdoor living area and turn it into the heart of your festive celebrations.

Start by setting the scene. Comfortable outdoor furniture, a shady umbrella or pergola, and a welcoming table are the foundations of relaxed summer entertaining. Add a few touches of Christmas cheer – twinkling lights, vibrant cushions, and lush greenery – to create that perfect festive atmosphere. Keep things simple and stylish with natural tones and pops of red or gold that nod to the season without overpowering the laid-back Kiwi vibe.

No Christmas feast is complete without great food hot off the grill. Fire up a quality barbecue, stock the chilly bin, and let the aromas of sizzling seafood, steak, and seasonal veggies set the mood. If you're feeling creative, try a pizza oven or smoker for something a little different this year.

And when the sun sets, keep the celebration going with outdoor heaters or a fire pit – the perfect way to stay cosy while sharing dessert and stories under the stars.

Everything you need to create your dream outdoor Christmas – from furniture and décor to barbecues, lighting, and plants – can be found at Mitre 10 MEGA Westgate and Henderson. Their friendly team can help you bring your vision to life, whether you're refreshing your deck, upgrading your grill, or simply adding some festive sparkle.

Make this Christmas one to remember – relaxed, joyful, and beautifully Kiwi, right in your own backyard.



Grant Castle

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M 027 299 7054 | E castlepanelbeating@orcon.net.nz

Summer's Here – Time to Protect Your Home



With summer finally here, it's a great time to give your home some TLC after a long, wet winter. Auckland's sun, wind, and rain can be tough on paintwork, leaving peeling paint or soft, rotting timber. Taking action now can save you from more expensive repairs down the track.

At Focus On Painting, we've got over ten years' experience helping Kiwi homeowners restore and protect their homes. Whether it's a full exterior repaint or just a few touch-ups, Brad and his team know how to prep surfaces properly and use paints designed to handle New Zealand's unique weather.

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Choosing the right ride-on mower - with STIHL SHOP Kumeu



Maintaining your lifestyle block or large property requires the right tools, and choosing the perfect ride-on lawnmower is key to getting the job done efficiently. Whether you're dealing

with rolling hills, large lawns, or tricky landscaping, the right mower will make taking care of your property a breeze. Three top brands to consider are Cub Cadet, Hustler, and Walker, each offering distinct features suited to different needs.

Cub Cadet mowers are known for their versatility, offering durable, powerful models ideal for smaller to mid-sized properties. They handle uneven terrain well and provide a smooth, reliable cut.

Hustler mowers are designed for larger properties, with Zero Turn technology that ensures quick, agile manoeuvrability around obstacles. Their powerful engines and wide cutting decks make them perfect for extensive lawns that require fast, efficient mowing.

Walker mowers excel in precision, making them ideal for properties with complex landscaping or narrow spaces. Their compact design and excellent grass collection system leave your lawn looking neat and well-maintained.

Choosing the right mower for your property can be tricky, which is where our expert, Craig comes in. With years of experience, Craig will visit your property to assess your lawn size, terrain, and specific needs. He'll provide expert advice and help you select the ideal mower, ensuring maximum performance, longevity and efficiency for your lifestyle block (and budget!)

Contact Craig today to schedule your FREE on-site appraisal and get the right mower for your needs. Or call in and see our team at STIHL SHOP Kumeu!

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Young Learners

The spirit of Christmas

The spirit of Christmas often shines brightest in the simplest of gifts, those made by hand with time, thought, and love. There's something special about receiving a plate of freshly baked treats or a hand-painted ornament, especially when it's been crafted by little hands.

When children make gifts, they're not just creating something to give, they're learning the deeper meaning of giving itself. Whether it's stirring the mixture for Christmas baking, decorating a pinecone found on a walk, or gluing buttons and pom poms onto a homemade photo frame or card, each small act becomes a lesson in love, patience, and generosity.

Here at Gumboots ELC, that spirit is easy to see. Walk around the classrooms at this time of year and you'll find tamariki painting, baking, and creating. Tables (and

sometimes themselves) are covered in paper, paint, and glitter, the smell of baking drifts from the kitchen, and the sound of laughter and Christmas music fills the centre. Kaiako and parents who've been part of our Gumboots whānau for many years can still remember and treasure the things their children made here long ago. Those small, handmade crafts and gifts have become cherished reminders of love, time, and childhood creativity.

The spirit of giving also reaches beyond our classrooms. Extra kai from our gardens often finds its way to local community food stands, teaching tamariki that generosity is not only for family but for everyone around us. Sharing in this way reminds us that giving can take many forms, both big and small, and that the heart of Christmas is about thinking of others.

If you're looking for ways to continue this spirit at home, try creating simple gifts together. Decorate a small pot and gift it with seeds to plant together, a living





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present that grows with care. Gather pinecones and turn them into decorations with paint, pompoms, and glue. Mix up a batch of salt dough to make handprint ornaments, or spend an afternoon baking to share with friends, neighbours, or whānau. These small projects invite children to slow down, create, and give from the heart, keeping the true spirit of Christmas alive in every thoughtful gesture.



Family fun 14th December

The sun is shining and our Summer Series is back. Join us for an afternoon of getting to know your neighbours whilst having fun at beautiful Whenuapai Park, 36 Whenuapai Drive. The event is free and all are welcome. Please remember plenty of sunblock and water. We look forward to seeing you there.

Scott Point School & Trees for Survival

Trees for Survival is an Environmental Education programme to grow and plant native trees to restore our local environment. The Trees for Survival Charitable Trust has partnered with Scott Point School to support the school in planting natives and caring for them till they are strong enough to be planted in an area where they are needed most – protecting and restoring habitat in waterways and on vulnerable land.

Recently, students from the School's Get Wise Champions group helped to pot nearly 2000 native plant seedlings with help from Deb from Trees for Survival. Our Scott Point School students worked incredibly hard to get all these seedlings ready to grow big and strong in our special nursery system set up at school. Over the next year, the children will care for these plants and in the winter of 2026, a group of Get Wise Champions will travel to an area being restored to plant them.



Aged care

Melbourne Cup Fun Leads into a Festive Season at Craigweil House

Before the tinsel and fairy lights took over, Craigweil House got swept up in Melbourne Cup fever this November! Residents and staff had an absolute blast getting ready for the big event, complete with fancy hats, colourful outfits, and a good dose of friendly competition.

In the lead-up to race day, residents got crafty and created their very own "horses" using pool noodles, socks, googly eyes, and all sorts of fun materials. There were some real masterpieces – from sleek racehorses to quirky ponies with personality!


When race day arrived, the fun really began. The staff took on the role of "horses," galloping and laughing their way down the track while residents placed their bets and

cheered them on. Later, residents joined in too, taking part in a hilarious "toilet paper race," where paper horses were rolled in toward the finish line – first one to the end was crowned the winner!

Now that Christmas is just around the corner, the festive spirit has filled the home. The decorations are up, the carols are playing, and there's excitement in the air.

From all of us at Craigweil House – residents, staff, and our wider family – we're sending warm Christmas wishes to you and your loved ones. If you're nearby, pop in and share a bit of festive cheer with us. The kettle's on, and there might just be a cup of tea waiting for you! PH 094208277

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Aged Care

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Every day at Kumeu Village and The Ladybug is filled with moments that show what genuine care looks like – care you can see in a smile, feel in a gentle touch, and trust in the warm, familiar connection between residents and our team.

Our homes are full of everyday joys and gentle moments, residents sharing ice creams, enjoying sunshine walks, playing skittles on the lawn, chatting outdoors, admiring the horses over the fence, relaxing on the deck, listening to music, or simply spending time with people who make them feel safe and valued.

There are also the quieter moments that mean just as much – a held hand, a reassuring chat, a resident gently supported to stand or dance, or a team member kneeling beside someone simply to bring comfort. These moments define who we are, and why families trust us.

As we move toward Christmas, the first signs of the festive season are beginning to appear. In the coming weeks, residents and staff will enjoy baking days, sunshine outings, garden chats, music afternoons, carols, gentle dancing, creative activities, family visits, and beautifully decorated living spaces created together by residents and our team. Our homes will soon be brighter, warmer, and filled with the joy that makes this season so special.

We're also delighted to share that Kumeu Village has opened two new rooms, thoughtfully furnished to offer comfort, peace, and a true sense of home. These rooms are ideal for respite, long-term care, 24-hour support, or care at a delicate stage of life.

Both homes warmly welcome you for a private, no-obligation visit. Bring your loved one, bring the family, and

experience the warmth, connection, and compassionate care that define our homes.

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"He Tangata – it is people" is at the heart of everything we do. As a family-owned and operated business, we take the time to truly understand your needs. Our director, Graeme, brings over 30 years of experience in the rehabilitation industry, having worked with people of all ages and abilities – from those recovering from injury to those navigating the golden years.

We're here to make everyday life easier. Our range includes everything from pressure-relieving cushions and mobility scooters to daily living aids, wheelchairs, and so much more. And if we don't have what you're looking for, we'll work with our trusted suppliers to find a solution that's right for you. We also offer expert servicing and repairs to keep you moving – whether it's a flat tyre on your wheelchair, a broken scooter headlight, or a bit of routine maintenance, our team will get you back up and running quickly and safely.

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Friendship goals realised for Keith Park Village's 'Golden Girls'



The companionship, camaraderie and commonality they've found with each other has surprised these three residents of Ryman Healthcare's Keith Park Village in Hobsonville. Three serviced apartment residents have been affectionately dubbed 'The Golden Girls' by fellow residents and team members due to the firm friendship they have formed. Anne, Nola and Bette say they 'just clicked' and have now become inseparable since settling into the village.

Anne shifted to Hobsonville to be near her daughter. "Coming here I was so anxious because I didn't know anyone," she says. Nola moved in shortly afterwards. "She sat opposite me at lunch and I thought to myself, 'I hope she's nice...'" Anne needn't have worried! "We just clicked. We have been through similar experiences in life."

Three months after Anne and Nola met, Bette moved into the village and the three immediately gelled. Says Bette: "My daughter had brought me in and along the corridor came Nola who said hello and introduced herself.

"She said, 'We'll look after you', and she did, from the minute I came."

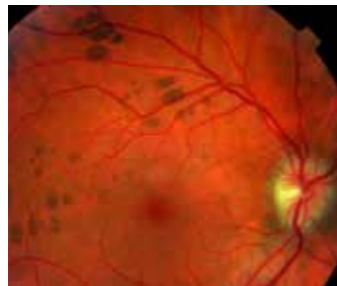
"She's the mother hen, and we're her chicks," laughs Anne. It didn't take long for the 'Golden Girls' nickname to be attached to them, inspired by the much-loved American sitcom of the same name.

There are plenty of activities that they enjoy doing together, including craft on Monday, exercises on Tuesday, then Monopoly and bingo on Wednesday and an outing on Thursday. Fellow residents often join them and all of them have grown very attached to Activities Coordinator Jess, who will join in for a game of pool or a walk around the village gardens. Bette sums it up: "Everyone notices how happy we are, our families, they're so happy for us. It takes the worry off them. They know I'm here and are so happy."



Health & Beauty

Make tracks to For Eyes



For our last case study for the year, here's a retinal finding that's a bit of fun. You've heard of tracking bears in the wild—but did you know you can find "bear tracks" inside your eyes?

In the world of optometry, bear tracking isn't nearly as dangerous as it sounds.

It's a fascinating retinal phenomenon where small, pigmented spots appear in a honeycomb or footprint-like pattern on the back of the eye. These markings occur in around 1% of the population and are usually harmless and simply part of your eye's unique landscape. This patient was unaware of its presence, and it was discovered at a routine examination as is often the case with bear tracking. Like any retinal pigment, it should be monitored for change over time but is low risk.

Bear tracking can be differentiated from choroidal nevi (discussed in earlier articles) due to the specific wavelengths of light our Optomap scanner uses. The choroid is imaged by red light, so choroidal nevi disappear in the red-free view. The pigment causing bear tracking is within the retina, imaged by green light, and therefore clearly visible in the red-free view.

While "bear tracks" might sound adventurous, the real adventure is keeping your eyes healthy and your vision sharp. Regular eye exams can reveal not only quirky patterns like these but also early signs of conditions

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that need attention long before symptoms appear. Holiday hours at For Eyes: We'll be open until 5pm on Friday, 19th December, then closed for the Christmas break. We'll reopen at 9am on Tuesday, 6th January to welcome you into a clear, colourful new year. From all of us at For Eyes, have a joyful Christmas and a brilliant New Year. Book online at www.foreyes.co.nz or 09 412 8172

Get your feet ready for summer



Healthy feet, confident steps, and a great local gift idea.

As the weather warms up, it's time to swap boots for sandals and let your feet breathe again. But after months of being tucked away, you might notice

a few things that need attention: thick nails, fungal infections, or dry rough skin that's built up over winter.

That's where the team at Norwest Podiatry in Huapai can help. Their Medical Pedicures are the perfect way to get your feet looking and feeling great again, safely and professionally.

Treatments are carried out by qualified Podiatrists using sterile, medical-grade instruments. They focus on comfort and health first, gently removing dry or cracked skin, tidying thick nails, and finishing with nourishing hydration. The result? Smooth, refreshed feet that are ready to show off this summer. Many locals book a

STEP INTO SUMMER WITH HEALTHY FEET

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Health & Beauty

Medical Pedicure every couple of months as part of their regular self-care routine, it's a relaxing way to look after your feet and keep them in good condition year-round.

If you're looking for a thoughtful gift idea, Norwest Podiatry also offers Gift Cards that can be used for any treatment, including Medical Pedicures. They make an ideal Christmas or thank-you present for someone who deserves a bit of pampering, with the bonus of being practical too.

So, before you slip into your summer shoes, treat your feet (or someone else's) to some podiatry care you can trust. You'll find Norwest Podiatry opposite McDonald's in Huapai, or visit www.norwestpodiatry.co.nz to book online. Norwest Podiatry – proudly supporting the Kumeu and Waimauku community. Keeping our community moving, one step at a time.

Ask Dr. Heather



Should I have Botox® and fillers before or after cosmetic tattooing? Anon, Riverhead

If you're planning both injectables and cosmetic tattooing, timing matters more than most people realise. If you're thinking about lip tattooing and also want lip filler, do the filler at least 6

weeks beforehand. Filler changes the shape of your lips, which is what the tattoo artist uses as their guide. If you want eyebrow tattooing, it's best to have Botox® worn off first as Botox® can affect eyebrow position. As a rule of thumb, allow at least 3-4 months after your last Botox® treatment before tattooing. Once the tattoo has healed, you can resume Botox® treatments as normal.

If you already have microblading and want a more refined look with cosmetic tattooing, you will need laser removal first. Removing the old pigment gives a clean canvas for your artist to create the ideal shape. It usually takes a few laser sessions spaced several weeks apart, but the result is worth the patience.

I have personally had cosmetic tattooing done by Jeni Hart from Brows and Beyond in Kumeu (browsandbeyond.co.nz). I highly recommend Jeni as she is not only skilled with brows and lips, but she also has a laser, so can remove previous pigment. Jeni also works in reconstructive tattooing, creating realistic nipples for women after breast cancer surgery and restoring

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features for people with facial deformities. Her attention to symmetry and balance is exceptional, which sets her apart from the rest. Dr. Heather Anderson is a Cosmetic Medicine and Emergency Doctor who practises in her own clinic at ALLOR Cosmetic Medicine in Whenuapai and features in the All or Nothing Podcast (available on Spotify, Youtube and iHeartRadio). If you have a question for Dr. Heather you would like answered anonymously, please email askdrheather@allor.co.nz

Welcome to Zash Hair – 2026



Welcome to a brand-new year at Zash Hair, where beauty, confidence, and creativity come together. As we step into 2026, we're thrilled to announce that our books are officially open and we are now welcoming new clients into our salon family. Whether you're seeking a fresh look, a transformative colour, or simply a space where you feel cared for and understood, we're excited to begin that journey with you.

At Zash Hair, we believe every client deserves a personalised experience. From the moment you walk through our doors, our focus is on listening, understanding your goals, and working collaboratively to bring your vision to life. Our stylist/director Carla is committed to providing exceptional service, using high-quality products, and staying up-to-date with the latest trends, techniques, and education. Your hair is an extension of your identity, and we're honoured to be part of helping you express it.

Whether you're a long-time admirer of our work or discovering us for the first time, we're here to make your experience relaxing, uplifting, and unforgettable. We pride ourselves on creating a welcoming atmosphere for everyone—where you can unwind, enjoy yourself, and walk out feeling refreshed and radiant.

Thank you for considering Zash Hair as your salon of choice. We cannot wait to meet you, connect with you, and help you achieve your 2026 hair goals. Bookings are now open, and we look forward to welcoming you into the Zash Hair family. Here's to an amazing year of beauty, creativity, and confidence!

Zash Hair

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Sun Protection: lets help you get it right this summer



By Dr Cherie, Restore Cosmed

As we head into the sunny months, it's the perfect time to check how well you're really protecting your skin. Most people apply far less sunscreen than the amount needed to get the SPF rating on the bottle (studies suggest most people use half or less). And that means much less protection than you think you are getting.

To achieve the labelled SPF, you need around 2mg of sunscreen per cm² of skin. In practical terms, that's about ¼ teaspoon for the face and neck, or the length of two fingers. If you're only using half that amount, you're getting roughly half the listed SPF protection. That's why we always recommend starting with an SPF 50, so even if you fall short, you'll still be closer to adequate coverage.

Sunscreen should be applied 20 minutes before sun exposure to allow it to form a proper protective layer, and be reapplied every two hours (or more often after swimming or sweating). Don't forget frequently missed spots like ears, tops of feet, and the back of the neck.

Sun protection is a whole-family habit. Childhood sunburns are strongly linked to a greater lifetime risk of skin cancer, making it vital to establish good routines early. For children, daily use of broad-spectrum SPF 50, hats, and protective clothing builds lifelong habits that reduce their lifetime risk of skin cancer. This is even more important if you have a first degree relative with a history of melanoma, as your baseline risk is automatically doubled.

At Restore Cosmed, we've curated an online collection of effective, easy-to-wear sunscreens for the whole family chosen by doctors for their comfort, protection, and skin-friendly formulations. You can explore our favourites via our website at www.restorecosmed.co.nz/store/spf

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Your summer skin health guide



By Sarah Tumulty – Your Skin Nutritionist
Functional Skincare Practitioner & Nutritionist

As the sun shines brighter and the days grow longer, summer brings warmth, joy, and more time outdoors – but it can also challenge your skin's natural balance. Sun, salt, and heat can dehydrate and irritate the skin barrier, leaving it feeling tight or flushed.

1. Protect your barrier: Start with a gentle, non-foaming cleanser and follow with a serum such as Osmosis Rescue or Replenish to calm redness and strengthen the barrier. A healthy barrier locks in moisture and defends against irritation, keeping your skin soft, smooth, and radiant.

2. Smart sun protection: Daily SPF is essential. I'm excited to now offer Earth's Kitchen Natural Sunscreen – winner of 16 global awards, proudly New Zealand-made, 100% natural, reef-safe, and gentle enough for sensitive skin and even babies. Crafted with zinc oxide and nourishing native plant oils, it melts beautifully into the skin while providing broad-spectrum UV protection and antioxidant care. Reapply regularly when outdoors.

3. Hydrate and balance from within: Begin your mornings with lemon water or electrolytes, eat water-rich foods like cucumber and berries, and enjoy herbal teas such as dandelion or peppermint to support natural detoxification. Deep breathing, gentle movement, and time in nature also help regulate stress and enhance skin clarity.

4. Cool, restore & renew: After sunny days, cleanse gently, apply a hydrating mask, and unwind with LED light therapy or magnesium tea to restore calm overnight. Osmosis Vitamin A (Retinaldehyde) can also be safely used throughout summer – it's pregnancy-safe and works to boost collagen, refine texture, smooth fine lines, and brighten dull skin for a healthy, even glow.

Your SWAN Summer Ritual: Cleanse • Hydrate • Protect • Restore. Book your Summer Skin Health Facial or Functional Skin Consultation this month and receive a complimentary LED session for added

- Skin & Digestive Consultations
- Skin & Nutrition Plan with Guidance
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- Reflexology Facials
- Holistic Skin Mapping
- Hair Testing: Food Sensitivity & Nutrition
- Practitioner Grade Products
- Teen Skin Advice
- Swedish Relaxing Massage

Sarah Tumulty - Your Skin Nutritionist
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Area Columnists

End of year check-in: What's your body telling you?



As the year winds down, it's natural to reflect – on goals, relationships, and routines. But how often do we check in with our bodies?

The lead-up to summer can be busy and emotional. Between wrapping up work, family events, and holiday prep, it's easy to overlook the subtle signals your body sends: lingering stiffness, disrupted sleep, or that nagging ache you've been ignoring.

Now is the perfect time to pause and ask, "How am I really feeling?" A physiotherapy check-in doesn't have to mean injury; it can be a proactive way to support your wellbeing. Whether it's addressing tension, improving posture, or simply learning how to move more comfortably, small adjustments now can set you up for a healthier start to the new year.

Your body holds the story of your year – every stress, every triumph, every moment of stillness or strain. Tuning in now allows you to release what's no longer serving you and create space for what's ahead. It's not about perfection, it's about presence. And presence is powerful.

We believe that Freedom in Movement starts with awareness. When you tune in to your body's needs, you create space for healing, energy, and ease. It's a gift you can give yourself, one that lasts far beyond the holiday season.

From all of us at Riverhead Physiotherapy & Pilates: if you're taking a break this summer, we hope it's restorative, joyful, and filled with the people who make you feel your best. Here's to a season of reflection, connection, and moving forward with intention.

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Cat lovers, we need your help



The NZ Cat Foundation has a sanctuary based in Huapai which houses over 150 cats. We offer safe sanctuary for older, disadvantaged and un-homeable rescue cats where they can live out their lives in

safety and comfort. We need regular volunteers to help with routine chores so our cats can enjoy happy, healthy, safe lives. We are looking for volunteers who are mature, have a sense of responsibility, are good team players and dedicated animal lovers. Helping at the sanctuary is a popular way to fulfil community service hours for Duke of Edinburgh, St John's, Scouts, Guides, church, university, animal sciences studies, etc. We are happy to sign off on your hours and provide any needed verification of your service. We rely heavily on volunteers on a daily basis and desperately need more.

Financial and food donations are also urgently needed to cover vet and other costs associated with our sanctuary. The NZ Cat Foundation also supports community Trap-Neuter-Return programmes and helps feed and care for many cats living in the community. Please visit our website for more information on volunteering and how to donate at www.thenzcatfoundation.org.nz. You can also email – volunteers: volunteer@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz. nz donations: info@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz.

Kumeu Justice of the Peace

Availability over Christmas and New Year period
Our last day for the Justice of the Peace Kumeu service desk at the Kumeu library will be Saturday December 20th 10 to 12 noon. We will resume on Saturday January 16 10 till 12 noon. If you require the services of a J.P. during the closure the following Justices are available at their homes. Please phone to make an appointment-Jim Coward J.P. 0274474822

Chris Penk

MP for Kaipara ki Mahurangi

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National
Authorised by Chris Penk, 134 Main Road, Huapai.

Mick and Tyrone



Two strangers became father and son after Mick King entered a mentoring programme in 2010.

Tyrone developed from a 10-year-old showing Mick his toys when they first met, to co-owning a business, creating homes next to one another, and helping share care of the next generation, Tyrone never knew his biological dad. He was a promising young football player when he was matched as a Little Buddy to Mick through the Big Buddy mentoring programme.

After a thorough vetting process, Big Buddy Mick, who lost his own father when Mick was 13, was matched with Little Buddy Tyrone. "The connection was instant," Mick recalls. "He took me to show me his toys. It was a meagre collection. So, the first thing we did was go to The Warehouse to look at more. We looked around for hours and just picked up a couple of tiny things but Ty was happy."

A trip to Rangitoto Island was their first day out together.

Mick took a keen interest in Ty's football, taking him to training twice a week and following his games. As goalkeeper, Ty played premier grades for Westlake Boys, East Coast Bays and multiple representative age groups. He became part of the West Ham United Oceania academy, his skills taking him overseas to Australia, the UK and China – supported by Mick who was born in Tottenham, London, and lived in Norfolk before moving to New Zealand in January 2005.

Mick has three grown-up girls in the UK, including a stepdaughter. "As far as I'm concerned, Ty is my son," he says. The pair have enjoyed countless adventures, citing fishing trips, U2 concerts, a Big Buddy-run 'Ferrari Day Out' and riding in a Maserati at Pukekohe among the most memorable.

A builder, Mick supported Ty when he embarked on a building apprenticeship after school. Mick started his own construction company Miro in 2009, the year before meeting Ty, and retired in 2021 for barely a fortnight.

"Then he suggested starting a company together," says Ty. By the next day I was designing a logo and we were doing it." Mick and Ty are both Co-Directors of Stak Construction (a mesh of their surnames) and they have plenty of projects planned..

Ty had been living with his girlfriend (now his fiancée) in Huapai and Mick was ready to move from Torbay after more than 20 years there. They got a place in

Kaukapakapa with two houses about 100 metres apart in April last year and began renovating..

The family welcomed a new daughter and granddaughter Lilly (two this summer). Between them they have a boxer dog and a British bulldog, cats, turtles, and are considering grazing animals. Mick has a wedding on their property to help organise, a business to run, dogs to walk, 1.6 hectares to help mind and a son, daughter-in-law, and grandchild to enjoy. Says Mick: "Yes, I've got lots to do."

Visit www.bigbuddy.org.nz/buddy-up/become-a-big-buddy/ for more information.

Responding to your feedback on your power supply



A few months ago, a team from Vector met with members of the community in Waimauku to hear their concerns about power outages during severe weather events like Cyclone Tam. There were questions about what Vector is doing to improve the power supply in

and around Waimauku.

The answer is, lots of things, and we're happy to share them here. We also want to reassure you that our teams and crews turn up every day to keep the power flowing to the communities we serve. We absolutely understand the importance of a reliable local power supply.

There are inherent challenges in more rural parts of our network such as Waimauku, with one of the most significant being the impact of trees during windy weather. We've been asking central government for a change in regulations for more than a decade, to allow increased, and more cost-effective, tree trimming to reduce the impact on the power supply across Auckland. During storms, 70% of all power outages are a result of trees hitting power lines.

Each year, we spend hundreds of millions of dollars across Auckland to make the power supply more reliable, and prepare for the future, and we do this as cost effectively as we can. As we move towards cleaner energy and build resilience against climate change, we'll keep investing in the Auckland network, and we'll do this in the most efficient way possible because we know keeping power affordable matters. When we're working near you, we do our best to finish quickly and keep any disruption to a minimum. We have strict traffic management protocols to comply with and these are set by Auckland Transport. Anytime we need to turn the power off temporarily so our crews can work safely, we'll let you know in advance so you can plan ahead. If you've heard from us recently or seen our crews working, thank you for your patience and understanding. Supplied by Vector



Powering you and your community – an update from Vector



We know power outages caused by severe weather events in your area have been extremely challenging. Here are some of the things we've been busy working on in your area.



We're refurbishing the overhead power lines along Trigg Road, Motu Road, Matua Road, and Vintners Close.



We're doing some future proofing work while NZTA Waka Kotahi's SH16 Brigham Creek to Waimauku project is underway (we're putting cable ducts in the ground now, while roadworks are already happening, so it's much easier to install a new cable when it's needed in future).



We're trimming trees back from power lines across more than 50 sites along Kauri Crescent East and West, Foster Road, and Awa Road.



We're doing routine checks on electrical switches to make sure they're in good condition and ready to be used when they're needed.



We did an aerial inspection of the power lines by helicopter earlier this year and will be coming back in a year or two to do another one using drones. We use artificial intelligence to help us speed up the analysis of these inspections.



We've been working along Kauri Crescent and Foster Road to complete lots of smaller jobs like replacing cross arms or poles, and making sure lines are hanging correctly. We're planning to come back in March and do the same along Awa Road.



We're keeping an eye on the growth of electric vehicles (EVs) since they increase electricity usage. About 500 EVs are added to the city's roads each month, and the growth rate of EVs in Waimauku is similar to Auckland overall.

Vector's role in the energy system is as your electricity distribution business – or local lines company. The power goes from the generators to Transpower, then to us and we deliver the energy to your home or business.

Get in touch with us

The easiest and fastest way to report or check outages is online at vector.co.nz.

You can also call us on 0508 832 867. We can receive and respond to reports of power outages 24/7, but response times may vary depending on crew availability.

If you or someone in your household is medically dependent on electricity, please register this directly with your electricity retailer and have an emergency response plan ready.

Why plantation island is perfect for your family This school holiday



School holidays are the ideal time to unwind, reconnect, and make lasting memories. If you're dreaming of a destination that blends fun, relaxation, and value, look no further than Fiji's Plantation Island Resort.

This family-friendly paradise offers stunning beaches, warm Fijian hospitality, and activities for all ages. From kayaking, golf, tennis, volleyball, and snorkelling to four pools and a water park, every day is packed with choice. Kids will love the Coconut Kids Club and Lairo Club for teens, while cultural experiences like cooking lessons, coconut-leaf weaving, and native medicine workshops offer meaningful ways to connect with local traditions.

Planning ahead is key—school holiday dates fill fast. Booking early secures the best rooms, best value, and peace of mind. A week-long stay lets families enjoy the perfect balance of activity and downtime, with space to relax at your own pace.

Families love the “kids stay, play & eat free” offer, making the trip even more affordable. Accommodation ranges from Garden Rooms to upgraded options, with packages starting at \$8396 for a family of four, taking Sunday flights 27 Sep to 04 Oct.

Your holiday includes return “Works” Air NZ flights from Auckland, private car transfers with time to shop in Denarau, and Malolo Cat launch transfers. You'll also receive professional travel support, packaged travel documents, and access to the Trip Plans app for a seamless experience.

Please get in touch

Tanya Franklin – The Travel Brokers
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Is your dog itching mad?



Itching—also known as pruritus—is one of the most common reasons dogs visit the vet, and it can drive both pets and owners a little mad. While the occasional scratch is normal, persistent itching is a sign that something more is going on beneath

the surface.

Dogs itch for many reasons, but the most common culprits fall into a few key categories. Allergies are at the top of the list and may include environmental triggers like pollen, dust mites, or grasses; food sensitivities; or contact reactions. Parasites such as fleas, mites, or ticks can also cause intense itchiness, even if you don't see them. Skin infections—either bacterial or fungal—often develop secondary to scratching, creating a cycle that worsens over time. Some dogs also suffer from dry skin, poor coat health, or underlying hormonal conditions.

Recognising the type of itch helps guide treatment. Localised irritation, paw chewing, ear scratching, or tummy rashes can indicate allergies, while sudden intense itching may suggest fleas or mites.

There are a few gentle home remedies that may help mild cases: regular bathing with pinetarsol or oatmeal or veterinary-approved shampoo, regular brushing to remove allergens and loose hair, and ensuring your dog is on a high-quality diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Keeping up with year-round flea control is also essential.

For more persistent or severe itching, your veterinarian can offer targeted treatment options such as prescription anti-itch medications, allergy management plans, skin infection treatments, and diagnostic testing to identify the underlying cause.

If your dog is scratching more than usual, don't wait—early intervention can make all the difference in keeping them comfortable, healthy, and happy.

Gary Duggal

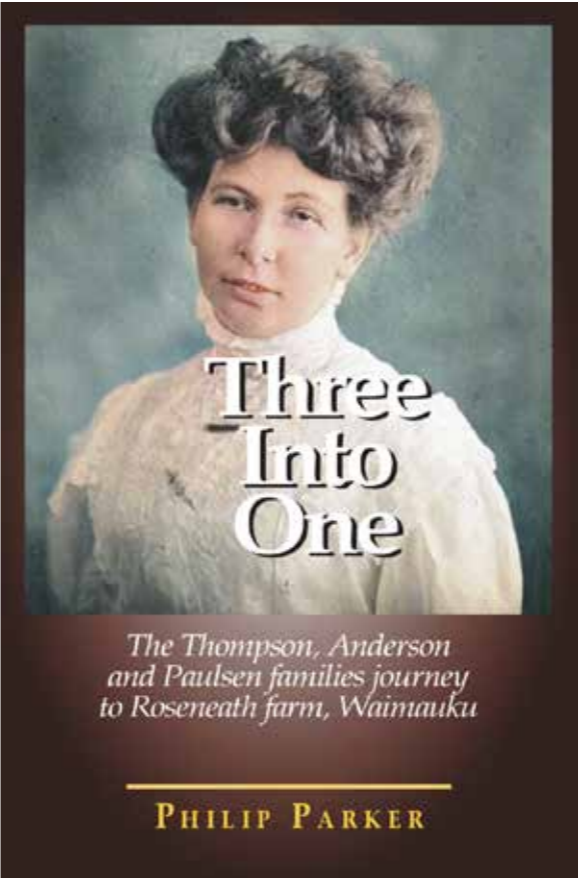
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Tracing the true story of our Land: a new book preserves Waimauku's legal and family history



A new locally connected publication is drawing attention to the importance of preserving the true legal and family history of the Waimauku and Helensville districts. Three Into One, written by researcher Philip Parker, follows the documented movements, land transfers, and family decisions that shaped the region across several generations. Parker grew up locally, attending Huapai School and Kristin School, before moving overseas. He

now divides his time between New Zealand and Europe, where he is undertaking doctoral studies alongside commercial research. Despite living abroad, his roots remain strong, including his role as Deputy Chairman of the Northwest Heritage Society. Rather than relying on memory or oral tradition alone, Three Into One examines original land titles, legal transfers, succession papers, estate files, and early survey maps, comparing them with family accounts to present a truthful and balanced picture of what actually occurred.

“In small communities, land carries memory,” Parker says. “Legal transactions tell the truth – they show what really happened, who owned what, and how families built their lives here. I felt a responsibility to record it accurately.”

The cover photograph features Alice Mary, the author's Great-Grandmother, symbolizing the personal and generational connection to the district's history. The book also acknowledges the values that supported early families – faith, endurance, fairness, and community-mindedness. Readers have praised Three Into One for its clarity, honesty, and careful research.

The book is available locally at Huapai Copy & Print, Paper Plus Helensville, and through Resource Books (online and in Waimauku).

MTF Finance



Last month we officially opened our new office at 49 Main Road. We're proud to continue serving our community from this fresh new space.

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Sayers Says it



By Rodney Councillor Greg Sayers

Under current law, rates are based on either a property’s capital value (CV) or land value (LV). In Auckland CVs apply. This means your rates depend on your property’s value relative to others across the city. This is how the rating system has worked for years. This year thousands of CBD properties saw their CVs fall, but areas like Rodney – where CVs held steady, dropped less, or even rose – were left carrying a greater share of the total rates bill.


Rates remain a form of wealth tax in disguise: they are based on what your home is worth, not on the services you actually use.

To rein in rate increases Mayor Wayne Brown has cut \$418 million of “fat” out of Council over the last three years. Also the coalition Government has introduced the Local Government Amendment Bill. It redefines the purpose of councils and refocuses them on core services such as roads, water, waste management, public transport, civil defence, and community facilities. It removes Labour’s requirement for councils to spend rates on the “four well-beings” – social, economic, environmental, and cultural.

The Government has also hinted that future tools – including a cap or “rate peg” – may follow.

Auckland’s financial pressures are however, ongoing, driven primarily by historic under-investment, the need to build for ongoing population growth, and rising construction costs. Rather than rate increases, options such as a regional accommodation levy, congestion charging, GST back from the rates paid, and increasing the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) should be considered.

Finally, I have also called for an Independent Service and Performance Auditor to be appointed to Auckland Council. This “independent watchdog” would protect ratepayers’ interests with the authority to investigate, and publicly report on, Council performance at any level of the organisation.



Got council issues? ...

Say it to Sayers

Online video, over the phone, or one-on-one bookings available

Greg Sayers - Rodney COUNCILLOR

P: 021 285 9900 | www.gregsayers.co.nz

Kumeu Library

Here at Kumeu Library, Christmas is our favourite time of the year. There’s food, gifts and fun times with friends and family, and then rest and relaxation over the summer holidays.

Kumeu Library staff will be walking in the Kumeu Christmas Parade on Friday 5 December – give us a wave. We’ll have Christmas Storytimes for preschoolers at 10.30am on Saturday 13 December, Monday 15 December, Saturday 20 December and Monday 22 December, with Christmas stories, songs, rhymes and craft activities.

Whether you are planning a spectacular Christmas celebration or trying to make things as easy and relaxed as possible, Kumeu Library has inspiration for cooking, decorating and gifting on our shelves. For those long, lazy summer holiday breaks, we have a wide selection of reading material, with books, eBooks, audio books, eAudio books, DVDs and magazines in all genres. And of course our eCollections are available wherever you might be – any place, any time. Kumeu Library is a great place to bring the family over the school holidays. Raumati Reads is a free, fun summer reading challenge for primary school aged children that will help them maintain their reading levels over the summer break. It’s a must-do for the school holidays offering free events and activities at local libraries across Tāmaki Makaurau, with great prizes to be won. Tamariki and their whānau can register from Saturday 6 December at Kumeu Library to begin the challenge, which runs until Sunday 1 February. We will also have activities for school-aged children every day during the summer holidays – keep an eye on our Facebook page for full details. Rhymetime (Fridays 9.30am) and Storytime (10.30am on Mondays and Saturdays) both continue throughout the holidays.

Please note that Kumeu Library will be closed on the public holidays for Christmas and New Year – from 5pm on Wednesday 24 December until 9am on Saturday 27 December, and from 5pm on Wednesday 31 December until 9am on Saturday 3 January 2026.

Follow us on Facebook to keep up with all our news and events: www.facebook.com/kumeulibrary.

Responsibilities of Justices of the Peace

Justice are available at Kumeu Library Saturday morning between 10 am and noon

Whilst J.P.s are not legal advisers ,there are some legal processes that a J.P. can assist with and save people having to visit lawyers. A J.P. can witness signatures on documents and certify copies of documents as true copies of the originals or images/texts viewable on a computer or smartphone screen. They also take declarations for documents requiring a Statutory Declaration and oaths or affirmations on court related documents requiring an affidavit. They can also officiate at Citizenship ceremonies. Some of the documents

commonly presented requiring Statutory Declarations relate to immigration matters such as sponsorship, bank documents, change of name, KiwiSaver withdrawals, insurance claims, rate rebates applications, etc certification of photos as being a true likeness are common as is certifying that people receiving overseas pensions are still alive

There are some things people needing a J.P. need to note. If they want a printed copy of an original to be certified they must bring the original with them. Or be able to show it on their smartphone screen .For Affidavits or Statutory Declaration. The person making the declaration must be present. You cannot do this for someone else. Bring your Driver Licence or passport with you so the J.P. can confirm you are the person making the declaration. Do NOT SIGN the form before you come as you must do this in front of the J.P.

There is a Justice of the Peace service at the Kumeu Library between 10 am and 12 noon every Saturday There is no charge nor appointments needed for this service.

The Kumeū Singers – end of year concert

If you’ve had your interest piqued recently by the publicity around the feel-good factor that comes from singing in a choir (think The Big Sing, Tinā, The Choir Games ...), you may not be aware that a community choir exists in Kumeū. We call ourselves the Kumeū Singers (formerly Kumeū Blend) and we meet every Monday evening, 7.30 – 9pm, in St Chads church (cnr Matua and Oraha Rds).

We are a group of people who get a great deal of pleasure out of singing, especially in harmonies. We are ably led by Adele and cover music that ranges from modern pop to choral and everything in-between.

We’ve been practicing for our end-of-year concert that will take place Sunday Dec 14th at 7pm in St Chads (door donation). We’d love to see you there. Come and hear what we’ve been singing then join in with some Christmas songs followed by a light supper.

If you like what you hear and would be interested in joining us, we’ll be resuming in the new year around mid-February. So if you are a tenor, alto, bass or soprano, or if you’re not sure, do come along and give us a try. Being able to read music helps but is not essential.

We’d love to see some new faces. You, too, can experience the uplift that comes from joining others in song.

Kumeu hot rod show ready

More than 25,000 people are expected at the 32nd Repco Kumeu Classic Car and Hot Rod Festival on January 16-18 at the Kumeu Showgrounds. About 3500 cars will be



displayed indoor and out, with Todd and Tash Collins’ 1971 C10 Chevrolet pickup (ute) winning the People’s Choice and Best Commercial awards last time and featuring on the poster for the coming festival.

Other awards included Best Ford and Best Hot Rod – won by Kendell and

Rachel Smith for their 1934 Ford Coupe, Best Chev – won by Michael Crawley for his 1981 Camaro, Best Presentation – won by Dave Howard for his Volkswagen beach buggy, Best Street Machine and Best Other – Ian Nairy’s 1968 Plymouth, Best Vintage – Keith and Donna Wilson’s 1928 Model A Tudor, Best Muscle Car – Dave and Delwyn Levien’s 1964 Plymouth Fury 254, and Best Australian – Mike Kitsen’s 1969 Ford Falcon GT.

Co-Director Desma Galvin of Kumeu says the 31st festival was great with The Very Vintage Day Out event also very successful. Palmerston North’s Daniel David is back providing rides in a Monster Truck after debuting at the 30th show – the event popular with patrons. He is bringing Kiwi Thunder, Cadillac Monster Truck and Reaper (one of the original Monster Trucks in New Zealand).

Desma says swap sites are booked and did a roaring trade last time, while trade stands were slightly down on the previous show but were also busy with more expected this time. Plenty of entertainment is again planned with actor Shane Cortese on stage with the 8 Track Band at the Saturday night party on January 17 from 8.30pm – with tickets sold separately for the event starting at 7pm when New Zealand band THE AFTER!! perform, fresh off an Asia Pacific tour. Ken and Desma Galvin are already looking ahead to the 33rd Repco Kumeu Classic Car and Hot Rod Festival next year.



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