

kumeu

Courier

FREE monthly community magazine for Kumeu & districts

**EVENTS AND UPDATES
THE COSTS OF GROWTH**

- Safer communities
- Food & beverage
- Home & garden
- Property market report

GREAT GRAPE HARVEST

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April 2022



Greetings

I hope everyone has got through the Omicron storm okay.

Lack of staff due to illness may have been the final straw for some businesses, and a fair few were still reeling from the impact of last year's August 31 flooding.

Among the latter is Carriages Café, now permanently closed, which was one of my favourite places.

I turned to some other cafes around West Auckland and found many of them struggling to stay open because of staff shortages.

Then the petrol price went sky high so I've tried to limit outings (apart from where I can take my electric bike), so my café visits have taken a hit anyway.

So much for me trying to support local businesses!

Seems like this year is going to be no easier or better than the last one or two.

Roading and transport issues like those outlined in the March Kumeu Courier appear no closer to being resolved, although Kumeu Community Action (aka the Kumeu-Huapai Residents and Ratepayers Association) continues fighting hard on the area's behalf.

I was shocked on a visit to my Huapai dentist last month to see from the first-floor surgery window the amount of housing now in the area, especially where there had once been green fields – and still very little infrastructure.

Don't get them started on the issue unless you want to spend more time in the surgery!

As I mentioned to them, it may be quicker to cycle (or even walk) around parts of the area soon with further proposed speed restrictions likely – which may coincidentally improve the petrol situation as lower speeds usually mean less gas used.

Last month I talked about rain arriving in the nick of time to top up our water tanks after a dry spell. We're back in the same situation again after another dry time and stock compounding the problem by breaking a trough hose link and also causing a water trough to overflow.

Time for the stock to go perhaps?

Geoff Dobson, editor



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COVER PHOTO: Kumeu River Wines - Jack Alesich and Melba Brajkovich

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People & Places

Great grape harvest

Kumeu River Wines is celebrating another good grape harvest - it's fourth in a row.

"Another fantastic vintage after a long, dry summer," says winemaker Michael Brajkovich of his 41st vintage with the last load of chardonnay now in.

He says the lead-in to spring last year was quite wet, "so we had a great deal of early vegetative growth to deal with, but once into the New Year 2022 things did dry out quite a bit".

Flowering was very good, and crop levels quite reasonable, Michael adds.

"The rain (about 60mm) and subsequent humidity around Waitangi Weekend were of concern and made for an awkward start to the harvest in mid-February, but after a week or so the fruit coming in was magnificent."

Michael says that during the harvest period there was no rain, "which is quite unusual and very welcome".

"The single-vineyard wines from Hunting Hill, Coddington and Mate's Vineyard are looking wonderful, and we have some terrific local chardonnay for the Kumeu River Estate Chardonnay blend."

Michael says Kumeu River Wines has been very fortunate to have enjoyed four good seasons in a row. "Only 2018 was a bit tricky because of prolonged rain in January that year."

Kumeu River Wines' two octogenarians pictured with some of the 2022 vintage chardonnay grapes are long-time employee Jack Alesich, left, and proprietor Melba Brajkovich.

Melba's late husband Mate set out to make great chardonnay, and during March some of the chardonnay grapes were handpicked from Maté's Vineyard - named in his honour, marking the 30th vintage from the special site.

With all the wines tucked away in the barrel, Kumeu River Wines' Cellar Door can re-open and welcomes customers.

Kumeu Community Centre commemorates 41 years

Following several years of fundraising and decision-making by a local committee who saw the need to provide a facility for community activities, the Kumeu Community Centre was opened in February 1981 by then Prime Minister Sir Robert Muldoon.

It was a major achievement by many committed people and a sense of satisfaction by all involved to see how well used the centre quickly became.

For the entire 41 years of its existence, the centre has been managed by an annually elected local management committee. This committee comprises community-minded local people as well as representatives from organisations that regularly use the centre.

Many people are surprised when they learn that, unlike similar facilities in Auckland, the Auckland Council plays no part in the Centre's management as the facility is owned by the residents of the



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People & Places

Huapai-Kumeu district.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has affected income from hire this year, increasing popularity and use by a variety of groups ensures the annual income covers maintenance and improvements.

Significant expenditure over recent years has enabled the replacement of the asbestos roofing, the fitting of LED lighting, painting the particle board interior, a kitchen upgrade and the provision of portable sports equipment.

The Kumeu Community Centre annual general meeting will be held on Wednesday May 18 at 7pm at the Access Road centre.

Anyone interested in being involved in helping in the management of the centre is encouraged to attend.

The current Management Committee Chairperson is Ian Blackwell who can be contacted at 027 437 925.

Backyard trapping key to pest removal

Pest trapping in your own backyard is key to keeping a lid on predators like rats, mustelids, possums and other vermin.

Backyard trapping (or poisoning where applicable) is essential in ensuring pests don't spread back to public areas like the Kumeu River banks, about 20 people were told at the Pest Free Kumeu-Huapai inaugural meeting at the Kumeu Showgrounds offices.

Organiser Jeremy Dean, pictured with Pest Free volunteers Boyd Steel and Shona Oliver, says he started looking around his own property for rats and other pests and quickly realised a local group needed to be established to liaise with other similar nearby groups like those in Waitakere, Muriwai, and Coatesville.

All have the aim of reaching New Zealand's Predator Free 2050 goal to help bring back native birds and other species.

Most homes and properties have rats - even if you don't see them - Jeremy and Muriwai Beach pest free co-ordinator Boyd Steel explaining some of the traps and techniques used on a variety of pests.

Descriptions of trapping tools and suppliers were available to those at the meeting, along with a free practical guide to trapping.



Attendees were able to buy traps in wood boxes cheap, which prevent pets getting ensnared.

Sponsorship is sought for Pest Free Kumeu-Huapai, with members able to make traps at upcoming workshops.

The Predator Free 2050 Ltd project was announced by Sir John Key while Prime Minister and Helensville MP in 2016 as a charity to direct Crown investment into the goal of eliminating stoats, rats and possums in forests and other areas by 2050.

Key said at the time: "While once the greatest threat to our native wildlife was poaching and deforestation it is now introduced predators.

"Rats, possums and stoats kill 25 million of our native birds every year, and prey on other native species such as lizards and, along with the rest of our environment, we must do more to protect them."

Key explained these introduced pests also threaten our economy and primary sector, with their economic cost estimated at around \$3.3 billion annually.

Jeremy points to the "Miramar model" in Wellington where a volunteer community group, Predator Free Miramar, set out to rid the Miramar Peninsular of rats and mustelids and encourage native birds back, about one in five households there now having rat traps.

He says Miramar's project document is used as a template for many other areas.

Boyd urged trappers to identify each trap and record results.

He suggests peanut butter as a good rat bait, also spreading some around the trap entrance to encourage them. Traps have to be regularly monitored and should be moved to a "run" or somewhere near predators once an area is trapped out or if the trap is unsuccessful.

Boyd says he "scuffed" a pathway to one trap to encourage predators to enter it, while he also wears gloves while handling traps to prevent any human smell deterring predators, especially stoats and ferrets.

Pest Free Kumeu-Huapai may also include groups for dealing with pest plants and other species, while Jeremy says a website, logo, community trust and sponsorship will also be investigated.

Lions, Men's Shed groups and schools may be asked to help too.

Trapline walks, competitions, prize winning activities and "five-minute bird counts" are considered, Boyd pointing out that rats such as the ship rat can devastate piwakawaka or New Zealand fantails.

He says other rat species include the Norway rat and kiore and that it's good to identify the species caught.

Rats can rapidly reproduce and Boyd suggests a combination of trapping and poisoning for them as they can become trap or poison shy.

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People & Places

Further meetings, trap making workshops and other activities are planned.

Says Jeremy: "The Pest Free Kumeu-Huapai group intends to meet every two months and from April will start a Community Trapper competition to inspire action from young to old and every competitive person in between."

Email jeremy@jeremydean.com or search for Pest Free Kumeu-Huapai on Facebook for further information.

Northwest wants flood warning system urgently after storm

Kumeu-Huapai needs early warning systems to prevent a repeat of the destructive August 31 floods, Kumeu Community Action (aka Kumeu-Huapai Residents and Ratepayers Association) chair Guy Wishart says.



He wants to see early warnings installed before winter and says a neighbour is prototyping a cellphone alert which would be vital.

Guy had to get out of his Kumeu home during the August event - which he's just about finished having repaired - but reckons the area "dodged a bullet" after getting heavy rain early on March 21.

Kumeu Community Action had already advised residents to move any stock and expensive machinery to higher ground but the rain had stopped by mid-morning the same day.

"It was a warning shot," says Guy of the March fast-moving storm.

"Kumeu Community Action warned people they could get surface flooding but that didn't happen, which we're all grateful for."

Guy says while flooding can't generally be stopped, the area needs an early warning system to give people time to prepare.

"We also need to see if the rain and flooding is getting worse each year, particularly with climate change as we're likely to get more tropical type downpours."

He says people need time to move items out or to higher sites, plug any holes, get in sandbags and take any other preventative measures.

Guy says it's the amount of rain within a few hours which causes the problems.

He joined those like Rodney Local Board chair Phelan Pirrie advocating for early flood warning systems to be introduced to the area.

Phelan was worried when the rain arrived on March 21 that the area would be heading for a repeat of August 31's flooding, especially after learning Northland and parts of Auckland had been hit with flash floods during the deluge.

He has been in discussions with both Healthy Waters (Auckland Council's stormwater division) and Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) about an early warning system and a Community Response Plan for the area.

Healthy Waters is still investigating whether an early warning system would be possible.

AEM has indicated it can provide the 'front end' alerting system using text messages as this is already used elsewhere in Auckland.

However, the data needs to come from Healthy Waters and Watercare as they manage the monitoring stations, Phelan explains. The other option being investigated is using weather data to create warnings.

While progress has been slow on an effective early warning system, Phelan says the good news is AEM and the Rodney Local Board will be working together with the community and relevant agencies to develop a Community Response Plan to provide residents and businesses with information about risks and what to do in a range of emergencies, not just flooding.

Shop local

You can't buy happiness but you can "Shop Local", and that's kind of the same thing, says North West Country Business Association chair Mark Dennis.

"During the next few weeks you will see billboards popping up around the North West featuring the hashtag #WeMissYou alongside a social media campaign, promoting locals to get out, spend local, and show their support to all the small businesses that have been struggling lately.



"While supermarkets and large online retailers have been doing amazing business, our small local businesses have been reporting empty shops and low foot traffic around their towns."

Government support is great and needed, says Mark. "But what

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People & Places

small café, eateries, restaurants, and independently owned stores need are customers, and they do truly miss you. And need you." Mark explains that with all the restrictions imposed on everyone over the past two years, consumer confidence has been driven down.

"Getting people to leave their homes and go shopping in person or enjoy a meal is really difficult as people have been encouraged to stay home and shop online. While 'Stay home and stay safe' was the right message at the time we now need people to 'Get out and shop local,'" he adds.

Auckland's Omicron cases have peaked and as they come down the other side of the curve businesses need to support their customers to come back into stores, remind them that their visits are valued and eating out is safe again.

Petrol prices are breaking record highs, and this is just another reason to shop and eat local, Mark reckons.

"So this weekend I would love to encourage everyone in the North West to skip the Sunday drive out of town, save some money on petrol and support where you live, go for a walk, explore some local shops you haven't seen in a while, meet up with some old friends and enjoy a local meal.

"As this goes to print we are expecting the Government to be announcing more easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, including dropping some rules around vaccine passes. This can't come soon enough as retail and hospitality generally experience high down turns heading into winter and it is vital that restrictions are dramatically eased before then to ensure these businesses can survive."

If your business has experienced a downturn remember there is Government support available including three rounds of COVID Support payments of up to \$25,000, interest free Small Business Cashflow loans and flexibility on tax repayment timings. See www.covid19.govt.nz for more details.

Helensville solar farm proposal

Helensville could house a 100-hectare solar farm. It's proposed by HES Aotearoa - a new joint venture formed by Hive Energy, Ethical Power and Solar South West to develop solar assets across New Zealand - which wants nearly 350MW of utility scale PV solar



assets across the country.

HES Aotearoa has applied to the Auckland Council for resource consent to install 82,000 solar panels at Rogan Avenue, to generate sufficient renewable electricity to power 14,000 Auckland homes.

It promises to help provide a secure electricity supply and more stable electricity prices, and the resource consent application describes visual effects as minor for most nearby residents.

The panels are designed to reflect 2% of incoming light, reportedly producing less glare than crops, grass or water.

Riparian planting is expected to screen the solar panels from view and to offset any impacts on waterways such as the nearby Mangakura Stream and Kaipara River.

Gaps would be left between each panel row for crops or sheep grazing.

The company says it selected the best of sites from what it assessed across New Zealand, taking into account solar hours, topography and nearness to electricity demand and infrastructure.

HES Aotearoa seeks resource consent for the project for 35 years, with construction expected to take nine months.

The company explained its proposal in letters to nearby properties at the end of December.

The Auckland Council says the resource consent application is in the early stages of being assessed.

Opponents are meanwhile planning a campaign against the proposed solar farm.

However, others think it has merit.

Former Rodney Local Board member and community stalwart Brenda Steele lives nearby in Wharepapa, Woodhill, and says the land is being leased for the solar farm which she believes could make Helensville one of the first rural New Zealand towns to produce solar power and run on it.

While the solar farm would be in a flood plain, the panels will be raised above ground and probably track the sun's path.

Brenda says local iwi are involved in discussions around the solar farm project which she agrees has brought some criticism, mainly around location and possible reflection.

Many other sites around the country are being considered for various solar power ventures, including one at Kowhai Park, Christchurch Airport, expected to produce 150MW in seven years, enough to power 30,000 homes.

Five solar farms in the upper North Island are planned by Lodestone Energy, which hopes all will be ready by the end of summer 2023/2024.



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The \$300m project is expected to provide about 1% of the country's electricity supply, producing about 400GWh annually which could power 55,000 homes.

The costs of growth

The Government's National Policy Statement (NPS) on Urban Development requires the Auckland Council to intensify housing around Auckland.



The council has signalled that in April 2022 it will produce a document showing the proposed locations for that increased density. The final plan will be notified by August 20, 2022.

The NPS requires intensification within the city centre, 10 specific metropolitan centres, and walkable catchments within 800-metres of metropolitan centres and the rapid transit network.

The Government's directive mandates developments of at least six storeys within these residential areas.

Submissions on the NPS will be heard by an 'independent hearing panel' (IHP) with recommendations being made to the Auckland Council. If the council accepts the recommendations then there are no appeal rights. If the council does not accept the decisions, then the Minister for the Environment makes the final decision.

Kumeu will hopefully not be caught up in this new directive, but new 'Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS)' will have a significant change.

These are changes agreed last year under a deal between National and Labour through amendments to the Resource Management Act which allow nearly all residential sites to have up to three dwellings three storeys high as a permitted activity with no density limits.

Kumeu, like Warkworth and other residential areas, will be subject to increased density as of right under the MDRS. That will dramatically change the character of residential areas.

These changes, along with the proposed removal of the Resource Management Act, means that 'making room for growth' will be very different in the future.

What is clear is that public ability to be involved with decision-making about urban development will be very limited.

The Government has not included inadequate or absent infrastructure as a matter limiting urban development in the NPS, so growth is not tied to infrastructure constraints. That means an

increase in buildings and dwellings without infrastructure being provided.

These changes have their own momentum now and are unlikely to change.

So huge growth and development is likely in areas with current amenity values and no decent infrastructure, such as Kumeu. This is an unbelievable set of changes that appear irreversible!

By Pete Sinton, Kumeu Community Action (aka the Kumeu-Huapai Residents and Ratepayers Association).

More road speed limit changes

Many Northwest roads are included in proposed Auckland speed limit drops with feedback closing April 3. About 1646 roads are in the Auckland Transport review with many in suburban and more central Auckland areas proposed for speed limit reductions to 30km/h. Changes proposed from 100kmh to 60kmh are in line for all of Annandale Road, Awa Road, Cuthbert Road, Dysart Lane, Hunter Road, Joseph Dunstan Drive, Long Road, Pioneer Lane, Pomona Road, Stoney Creek Road, Taha Road, and Tawa Road. Speed reductions are also suggested for part of Access Road, Amreins Road, Annett Road, Arrowsmith Road, Anzac Valley Road, Barrett Road, Bethells Road, Boord Crescent, Brigham Creek, Bristol Road, Cable Road, Caton Road, Coster Road, Dale Road, Duffy Road, Edward Jonkers Drive, Falls Road, Farrand Road, Fletcher Road, Fork Road, Foster Road, Gregory Road, Hamilton Road, Hanham Road, Henwood Road, Hinau Road, Horsman Road, James Paige Lane, Jonkers Road, Kauri Crescent, Kauri Road, Kennedys Road, Lloyd Road, Mahana Road, Mamari Road, Matatea Road, Mckean Road, Motu Road, Muriwai Road, Muriwai Valley Road, Nelson Road, Nixon Road, Puke Road, School Road, Station Road, Taiaipa Road, Township Road, Trigg Road, Trotting Course Drive, Valley Road, Wairere Road, Waitakere Road, Worrall Road. Visit www.at.govt.nz for more information.



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Parakai Springs welcomes visitors



Parakai Springs has been part of Auckland's history and open for family's for as long as many can remember.

Originally a council-built pool in the late 1960s, it was soon after sold off as a cost saving measure by the council and has been in private hands ever since.

Pool complexes have incredibly high running costs, due to the physically large size, chemical and filtration equipment needed to keep the water at a high quality and the large amount of staff required to operate them.

This is the same reason why councils are not fond of building or funding them.

Geothermal pools have their own special requirements on them too, which can mean running them is an even more complex venture and is why nearly every geothermal pool in New Zealand is privately owned.

The closure of Waiwera Thermal Resort was a good example of how difficult it is to run a competitive and efficient pool operation without direct council or government funding.

Parakai Springs is now one of the only large geothermal pools open in the Auckland region. But rather than failing it is holding

strong, even through the global COVID-19 pandemic, Parakai Springs was able to keep all its staff and remain open between lockdowns.

The key to the success of Parakai Springs during COVID-19 has been having the right people involved and having a strong connection to the local community.

While visitors come from all over Auckland it is the local communities in the North West which are the back-bone of Parakai Springs. Having a strong sponsorship model and being involved with local community events, sports teams and schools means Parakai Springs understands what locals need and how they can be supported. Businesses can't stay open alone, they need support from their customer base, and this is reflected in return.

During the outbreak Parakai Springs was fortunate to have passionate directors who understood that the survival of the business had to come before profit and a strong management team which have been quick on their feet to react during the fluid situation which COVID-19 created.

Working through the confusing regulations, different levels, traffic lights, phases, and restrictions has been very difficult, and every business would have felt this. Understanding what is required and keeping the staff on board was key during this confusing time, working through Government subsidies meant that during lockdowns they were still able to support staff.

The introduction of the traffic light system saw the opportunity for the pools to start operating more or less as normal with some restrictions in place.

Fortunately, the large size of the pool complex meant capacity wasn't an issue and social distancing was easy to apply, mask wearing was only required by staff, and customers when being served, and QR codes needed to be scanned on arrival which has become second-nature for most customers.

Looking forward it is paramount that customers and staff continue to be protected and Government restrictions have played an important part in this, but there is a fine line between protecting an individual's health and being able to keep staff employed and financially supported.

With the ongoing support of local communities Parakai Springs will continue to have a bright future.

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Safer Communities



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to turn around, especially if you have a long / steep driveway.

Keep trees near your powerlines trimmed to avoid contact during high winds and heavy rain. When a powerline touches a tree it can result in arching and may cause the tree to catch fire.

To reduce the risk of wildfire endangering your home, ensure you have created a safety zone around your house, this is

also known as a defensible space. This is the area around your home, where vegetation can be modified, reduced or cleared to create a barrier and slow the spread of fire toward your home. A safety zone also allows space for firefighters to fight the fire safely.

For more information, check the Rural Property Checklist at www.fireandemergency.nz.

Advice for Rock Fishers Be smart around rocks

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Wear a lifejacket and correct clothing

Light clothing, sturdy footwear such as sneakers and a correctly fitted lifejacket are essential.

Beware of waves and swells

Always face the sea, never turn your back. Have a clear escape path to safe ground and don't get caught by an incoming tide or large swell.



For 17 years, Drowning Prevention Auckland has provided a rock fishing advisor initiative with Auckland Council and Surf Life Saving Northern Region which seeks to reduce rock-based fishing fatalities and promote a safe culture among this high-risk group. The implementation of safety advisors who educate fishers through face-to-face contact has largely succeeded in reducing fisher drownings in West Coast beaches. To find out more about the West Coast Rock-based Fisher Safety Project and review the 2021 Rock Fishing report, visit <https://www.dpanz.org.nz/research/rock-fishing/>

DPANZ.ORG.NZ | info@dpanz.org.nz

Community News

Poppy Day

Poppy Day will be Friday 22nd April, our collectors will be out in force, Omicron permitting. Poppies will also be available at the KMRSA, 49 Commercial Road, Helensville and the usual retail outlets before the 22nd, so you can make a donation and take a poppy, all proceeds go to the Veterans Welfare fund. Alternatively you can make an on-line donation to the KMRSA Welfare account-12-3139-0003621-04, reference Poppy Donation.

Lions roar back with Book Fair

Huapai-Kumeu Lions are running another Book Fair on May 28 and 29 in the Kumeu Community Centre.

This time Lions are working in partnership with the Riverhead Scout Group which will share in the profit from this popular fundraising project.

Donations of unwanted books (not magazines) from the public are welcome and many people find the Book Fair a good opportunity to cull their bookshelves and then obtain new titles at a good price - \$2 per book.

As Lions have no place for storing books in advance, they are only able to receive donated books in the fortnight before the fair. Starting on May 15 and continuing on subsequent days until the fair on May 28, Lions will be on hand to deal with donated books left outside the Lions door located to the side of the Kumeu Community Centre main entrance.

Going by past fairs, the generosity of people donating books will be magnificent and along with attendance during the weekend fair this



family fundraising event is again expected to be a success. Contact Gary Moss on 09 412 7752 for more information.

Kumeu Arts

Discover the beauty of 'Multiples' this April through our latest exhibition at Kumeu Arts. Spanning both galleries the exhibition includes nine artists who have created a series of works connected in theme, scale and media. In a time of isolation - showcasing unity and how a collective artwork highlights the individuality in each piece. Alongside them Fiona Campbell will display her work 'Members Only' which is an artwork "based on the beauty and individuality of penises." A portion of her collection of penis prints will be on display guaranteed to start a conversation and crack a smile. Inspire your own creativity with a fun half day experimental workshop run by Coral Noel Yang. Play with different mediums to make abstract collage multiples on Saturday April 23rd 10am-12pm for only \$10. Discover our workshops and classes on our website and social media. Register at www.kumeuarts.org.



Gently Loved Markets

GentlyLovedMarkets are going from strength to strength at the Kumeu Community Centre each month. Do you know they allow upcycled items to be sold each month too? The Gently Loved Markets ethos is to stop as many items as possible ending up in landfill and are doing this by having a wide range of preloved stall holders each month.

The 2022 event dates are April 23rd, May 21st, June 18th, July 16th, August 20th, September 17th, October 15th, November 19th and a Xmas market on December 17th. All held on a Saturday, 10am - 2pm.

With 30+ stalls selling preloved, vintage, retro and upcycled clothing, accessories and homewares for all ages. Grab a coffee, your favourite fabric bag and come have a preloved treasure hunt with us.



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www.kumeuarts.org

Community News

All stalls are within the hall, the event will go ahead no matter the weather and the market are able to run in Red and Orange traffic light. Keep an eye on their Facebook page for updates @gentlylovedmarketsnz. To inquire about a stall contact gentlylovedmarkets@gmail.com.

Historic Kaukapakapa Library

Sunday 17th April 9am to 1pm
- We Will Remember Them.

Print out one of the poppy designs on the Kaukapakapa Library's Facebook page, colour it in and bring it along to the Kaukapakapa Village Market for display and exchange it for some 'Flanders Red' Corn Poppy seeds. If you can't print them, make up your own design and help us to remember those that served. This design is free courtesy of Koukou Creations, check out their website for their other beautiful mahi, truly talented! The Kaukapakapa Library is open in conjunction with the Kaukapakapa Village Market.



For more info contact Megan Paterson, threehorsee@xtra.co.nz or 021 959 017.

Anzac Day vs Omicron

Under the current NZ Law, Rules and Mandates, the Kaipara Memorial RSA is unable to hold outdoor ANZAC Services in 2022, as we have done in previous years. Even if the country is in GREEN under the Traffic Light System, mainly because the RSA is unable to check Vaccine Certificates outdoors and being limited to 100 people, therefore parades cannot take place.

With these rules in mind, the KM RSA ANZAC services will be held in the clubrooms at 1100 hours, with a limit of 100 people with Vaccine Certificates. (Defies logic, we know).

However, 10 weeks ago we hadn't even heard of Omicron and with ANZAC Day still 5 weeks away, everything could change.

With this in mind, the RSA committee has applied to the Auckland Council for all the permits, the Traffic Management Plan, a Parade Health and Safety Plan, a Covid Health and Safety Plan, the Security Plan, the Crowded Places Assessment, the Waste Minimisation Plan and anything else the bureaucrats could throw at us, so if the vaccine mandates and the TLS are abolished, we are ready to go

back to Plan "A", with some tweaks.

Follow us on Facebook or www.kaipararsa.co.nz for the latest news on ANZAC Day 2022.

Looking for quality childcare?

Kumeu Childcare has recently celebrated its first anniversary; previously it was a part of the Lollipop group for 10 years. Kumeu Childcare offers a rich curriculum that supports community engagement.



The centre celebrates the rich diversity of languages and cultural experiences that we bring to our centre. Our highly-regarded programme supports children to become active participants in their own learning.

The highly qualified teaching team follows a free play philosophy that supports tamariki to become leaders in their own learning, playing alongside other children is one of the core values at Kumeu Childcare. Teachers provide tamariki with natural play materials to foster their creativity and imagination. Tamariki are encouraged to move freely and supported to extend their strengths and interests. Teacher's support children to challenge themselves while exploring, this supports children to feel confident to take risks and become resilient.

Kumeu Childcare also offers a comprehensive transition to school programme that supports our five year olds to transition to school, as confident leaders of their own learning. Our fees are very competitive, we offer 20- hours free ECE programme and WINZ subsidies.

Contact the Centre Manager on 021 094 333 for more information on this initiative and to book a tour.

April school holidays at Te Manawa

Come join us at Te Manawa during the April school holidays as we explore going Over Under and Upside-down.



Pick up a free activity and reading log booklet to earn badges to go into the prize draw. During the holidays at Te Manawa there will be our popular scavenger hunt - featuring over, under &

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Community News

upside-down animals.

More events and craft activities will be revealed soon. Keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages to find out details. Spaces will be limited, and registrations will be required. Te Manawa 11 Kohuhu Lane Westgate.

The Green Grocer Kumeu

With Easter almost upon us, come and visit The Green Grocer in the Kumeu Village for a delicious, toasted hot cross bun with butter melting on it and a lovely take away coffee. Catering to gluten-free and paleo dietary requirements, Steph is stocking the amazingly-tasty Thoroughbread-branded hot cross buns in packs. As always, a range of healthy and flavoursome salads, quiches, slices, filled rolls and much more are available and made fresh each day with only the best, quality ingredients.



Also available are Rebecca's fresh, locally-grown and spray-free flowers under her brand 'The Dahlia Project'. While Rebecca's dahlia field is in full bloom she is delivering fresh bouquets daily in a range of colours.

Stop by, say hello to Steph and Kim and pick up a scrumptious, fresh hot cross bun, a delectable lunch, coffee and bouquet of flowers! The Green Grocer, 80c Main Road, Kumeu.

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday 17th April (9.00am to 3.00pm). We're holding our annual Easter Egg Hunt again so time to load up the kids and head to Kaipara Coast Sculpture Gardens this coming Easter Sunday. You may want to just pop out for an hour or you're more than welcome to stay all day.

If you want to come along in your bunny suit or other seasonal dress you won't be alone.



Apart from the kids play ground and petanque areas you will also be able to stroll around the beautiful 1.2km sculpture trail which has over 40 marvellous new sculptures created for our 2022 exhibition by local and international artists.

There is also now an additional 2.3km nature trail which meanders around farmland and native forest, has a beautiful new lookout point of the Kaipara Harbour and forms an important part of the Kaipara Coast Plant Centre conservation and restoration programme.*

Eggs will be replenished as the event progresses (i.e. between 9.00 am and 3.00pm) to ensure no one is disappointed. PLEASE NOTE; due to the popularity of the event **BOOKING YOUR ENTRY TIME IS ESSENTIAL**. We also have our cute little coffee shop on site plus of course the plant centre.

A wonderful way to spend Easter Sunday and we're only a few minutes' drive North of Kaukapakapa (and around 35 minutes from downtown Auckland). Our knowledgeable and friendly staff will also be on hand to help with any garden related questions. *Trail not suitable for wheelchairs or walking frames.

All relevant Covid safety processes will be in place. Kaipara Coast Highway (SH16). Entry: \$15 per person or \$35 per family. Contact: info@kaiparacoast.co.nz or 09 420 5655.

Cookie Smash Choc Cross Buns

Countdown and Cookie Time team up to bring a new flavour to the table this Easter: Cookie Smash Choc Cross Buns



Countdown and Cookie Time have teamed-up to put a twist on a traditional Easter treat with a brand new, limited-edition flavour of hot cross buns: Cookie Smash Choc Cross Buns.

Michael Whorskey, Countdown's Bakery Merchandise Manager, says Countdown is really excited to have collaborated with Cookie Time to put a delicious new spin on an Easter classic that he's sure Kiwis will love.

"Our top bakers have been working hard behind the scenes with the Cookie Time team for months and, while we've been baking hot cross buns at Countdown for quite a few years now, we reckon this is the flavour to beat them all!

"The Cookie Smash Choc Cross Bun has the classic, soft dough that we all know and love, but instead of raisins it has delicious Cookie Time chocolate chunks and cookie pieces throughout, a cocoa cross on top and a mini Cookie Time Chocolate Chip cookie nestled into the top of the bun."

Lincoln Booth, Cookie Time General Manager, says it's been a great

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collaborative project, leveraging the expertise of each business.
 "We're delighted to have the opportunity to bring Cookie Time into the Easter occasion, and to work with the Countdown bakers to create the most delicious hot cross bun in the land this season."
 Freshly baked Cookie Smash Choc Cross Buns are available exclusively in Countdown stores throughout Aotearoa now. Each pack is \$8.00 and contains six buns.

Seniornet

We had a few stops and starts during March when the RSA closed for a time but things are looking better for this month and we are looking forward to having an open meeting on the 19th April starting at 10am this is held in the Poppy Restaurant within the Henderson RSA all are welcome we will have a guest speaker and tea and coffee served after. Entry is by a \$2 Raffle ticket.



Our Help Days are on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 10 - 11am upstairs in the Henderson RSA , 66-70 RAILSIDE AVENUE, HENDERSON. Vaccine passes must be shown and masks worn please. We can help with questions on both Apple and Android tablets, phones and laptops. There is a \$5 charge if we are able to help you.

Please check on our web page for any changes or cancellations or ring our office phone 09 837 7600. Please leave a message as our office is not attended every day we will get back to you.

Family orchard with infinite potential

For the first time in 76 years, 677 State Highway 16 in Huapai is now available to purchase exclusively with JLL by way of Deadline Private Treaty closing at 4pm Wednesday 23 March, unless sold prior.

The property has been owned and operated as a working orchard by the same family since 1946, growing anything and everything to supply the city markets and a roadside store, formerly known as Sunny View.

Improvements over the years include some implement sheds, water well, and a commercial building with built-in chiller, while the original two-bedroom homestead provides some additional holding income.

The property offers over ten hectares of Rural Mixed zone land which gently slopes up from State Highway 16. Surrounded by boutique wineries, eateries, the Kumeu/Huapai commercial hub, and rolling green hills all within a 25-minute drive from Auckland CBD.

All enquiries for 677 State Highway 16 can be made with the sole agents. Ashton Young - Phone 022 541 0601, Email: Ashton.Young@ap.jll.com.

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SCAVENGER Easter HUNT

OUTDOOR WALKING EVENT ON RAIN or SHINE!

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You Will Need: Sensible Walking Shoes * Sun or Rain Protection
A Responsible Adult * Map Reading Skills * A Water Bottle
A Phone with Google Capabilities (Optional)

Before you Go, Read all the Instructions so you Don't Miss any Little Tips!

Proudly Sponsored by: **Waitakere Residents & Ratepayers Association**

In Brief

A fitting gift for special needs

Sometimes it can be challenging to find a fitting gift that is suitable for someone with special needs and is appropriate for their age and abilities.



When you are looking for a product or gift for someone elderly who needs extra support due to Alzheimer's disease, dementia or other age-related issues, it's helpful to find something that encourages conversation and connection with friends and family.

Products that support independence and individual choices help maintain self-esteem and encourage feelings of success.

For ease of use and to assist carers in their roles it's desirable to have products available that are easy to set-up, easy to use and easy to tidy away.

Mindjig offers resources for those who need a little extra support to stay connected, uplifted and as independent as practicable. Visit our website: www.mindjig.co.nz. Feel free to get in touch with Jonathan or Julie via email at info@mindjig.co.nz or call 09 600 3251 or Mobile 022 480 3022.

Scouts update

The Scouts have been busy over the last couple of months.

The long summer evenings have been ideal for groups to get outdoors and enjoy the fresh air, it also gets the youth off their devices for a few hours. We have seen groups kayaking on local rivers, playing Frisbee golf, going on walks through the Riverhead Forest, overnight camps, building structures with ropes and poles, completing night walks in the local area and much more.



It's been wonderful to see the youth not only in person but to see them having lots of fun, and pretty sure all the leaders are much happier with face-to-face Scouting.

For once the Covid-19 dilemma has worked in our favour, as the policies we follow have stated for us to make the most of fresh air and there's no better way than getting outdoors.

One of the Waitoru Zones groups took their Cubs sections up to Muriwai Beach to help clean up the beach and surrounding area of litter (a few sandcastles were built along the way). This is all part of the conversation work that we do, not only to help and protect our environment, but to make it safe for everyone. Sadly a number of bottles were collected from the beach, so if you are visiting beaches etc, please take your rubbish home or use the collection points if available so we can all enjoy the beauty of West Auckland.

The Waitoru zone covers the North/West Auckland area including Henderson, Te Atatu South, Te Atatu Peninsula, Hobsonville, Whenuapai, Riverhead, Massey, Waimauku and all the way up to Kaukapakapa. If you are interested in knowing more about Scouting in these areas, please don't hesitate to drop me an email, or head to www.Scouts.nz to find out more

Craig Paltridge, Waitoru Zone Leader. Email me at: zl.waitoru@zone.scouts.nz.

Nature's Explorers bear hunt

Today Nature's Explorers went on their very own bear hunt. We went through the long wavy grass. Swishy, swashy, swishy, swashy!

We pretended to go through a deep cold river. Splash, splosh, splash, splosh, splash, splosh!

We plodded through some dry, thick, oozy mud. Squelch, squerch, squelch, squerch, squelch, squerch!

We explored a big dark forest. Stumble trip, stumble trip, stumble trip!

We went through a swirling whirling snowstorm. Hoooo, woooo, hoooo, woooo, hoooo, woooo!

Uh-uh! A cave, a narrow gloomy cave. Tiptoe, tiptoe, tiptoe.... what's that?

It's a BEAR, quick let's hide!

Oh no it found us! Back through the snowstorm, hoooo, woooo. Back through the forest stumble trip. Through the mud squelch, squerch and through the grass swishy swashy. Back to the safety of our pretend house, where we finished the bear hunt.

Through this experience we are nurturing children's love for reading, as one of their favourite stories are brought to life in their very own personal experience.

A love for reading opens the door to adventurers, learning new things and a variety of key language skills such as speech development and vocabulary building. It fosters their imagination, creativity




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In Brief

and critical thinking skills. Therefore, here at Nature's Explores, we provide experiences for our tamariki to gain a basic foundation in literacy, as well as providing awe inspiring experiences that they absolutely love.

To enquire about joining our Nature's Explorers whānau please call 09 412 8800 or send us an email at office.kindergarten@xtra.co.nz.

Kaukapakapa Village Market

Sunday 17 April 8.30am to 1pm. A great way to spend a relaxing Sunday morning. Pick up something unique from our local crafters, artists and authors or grab a bargain from the car boot area. With a tempting selection of handmade gifts and crafts including soap, skin care, knitting, crochet, jewellery plus plants, preserves and fresh locally grown fruit & vegetables, books and more - there's something for everyone.



Plus enjoy a coffee and a delicious snack. All relevant Covid safety protocols will be in place so that we can all feel welcome and safe.

For more information contact Sarah 027 483 1542 or email sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz.

Box Me Up

We are two women passionate about health and wellness and feeling our best. Annelies is a qualified nutritionist and has over 10 years' experience in the health and fitness industry. With a big passion for educating and helping people make small changes to their everyday lives that will in turn provide massive benefits to their overall health. Amelia is a mother of two, school teacher and passionate about health and fitness. Prioritising inner health and wellbeing is hugely important to us both and we believe your health is the best investment you can make. We created



Box Me Up as an easy way to treat yourself or someone you love with the gift of health. Our boxes have been specially created with top quality, NZ made, nutritionist-recommended products and supplements. We have four ready-made boxes which focus on gut

health, exercise recovery, energy enhancing and an indulge box. Our newest addition to Box Me Up is a mystery monthly box called 'nourish me' which is full of healthy goodies focusing on nourishing the mind, body and soul. Our goal is to make healthy living easy, one box at a time. Visit boxmeup.nz and check out our Instagram [boxmeup_nz](https://www.instagram.com/boxmeup_nz).

Kumeu Library

April brings school holidays, and here at Kumeu Library we are ready to help you keep the kids both entertained and learning over the holiday break. The theme this time is "Over, Under, Upside-down", and although Covid-19 restrictions



may mean we can't hold in-person activities at the library, we still have some really fun, free activities planned. We will have a new take-home craft pack with full instructions in print and on video on Facebook each week, plus extra take-home puzzles and colouring sheets to pick up at the Library, and the return of our ever-popular scavenger hunt. Can't come inside the Library? Just ask at the door and we will bring craft packs and activity sheets out to you. And we're having a special "Over, Under, Upside-Down" Kahoot! quiz online on Friday 29 April at 10.30am - email us at kumeu.library@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz to register to get the link for this fun event (you will need two internet-linked devices, one to connect to the session and one to play the game on!)

Auckland Libraries' Over Under Upside-Down Beanstack reading challenge is a great way to keep the tamariki reading over the school holidays. Download the Beanstack app and register for the challenge, then complete fun reading-linked activities at home and read every day to earn activity and reading badges. Log your completed reading and activities online by 1st May to be in to win great prizes. Or ask us to record your reading and activities. There is also a printed booklet to pick up from the Library to help keep track of your progress. We would love to see your crafts either in person or email us photos.

Kumeu Library is proud to be a display place for the Whale Tails Art Trail, an Auckland-wide art trail of 80 decorated tails telling 80 tales, running until 18 April 2022. We are displaying a tail decorated by students at Huapai District School and sponsored by Kumeu New World - come in and admire this beautiful piece of art.

Keep up with all Kumeu Library's news and events on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/kumeulibrary).








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Property

Property market report

Listing numbers up, sales numbers down, Auction results low, New House Prices high, Money hard to get.

In short we are experiencing a market that is crazy strange.

Buyers are having a greater number of options presented to them, with a greater volume of properties on market than we have seen in the last two years. Caused by a traditional listing surge of February and March sellers and a hang-over of properties caused by changes by Government and the Reserve Bank to heavily restrict the lending ability of banks and mortgage providers.

The tough measures imposed on banks by the Reserve Banks Loan to Income, Loan to Deposit and Loan to Debit Ratios making it difficult for Banks to operate and add to that the Governments new responsible lenders legislation called the CCCFA which makes lending money to first home buyers and Investors extremely challenging.

Auction results through Rodney and Waitakere wards have been very poor with only one result out of five put to Auction. This result is a direct result of the tightening financial restrictions that banks are working too which has seen a significant retraction in pre-approvals in the market and banks requiring more confidence in the lender and the asset.

New house prices continue to escalate due to supply chain disruption and soaring building material prices which in many instances have seen sunset clauses used by the seller not the buyer to terminate new builds that have become non-viable to sell at contracted rates or deemed undesirable with the contract below current market values. The creep in New Home pricing is one key factor that continues to keep the second hand homes value reasonably firm.

As we move through Covid version Omicron, the CCCFA rework, Interest rate increases and the shuffling caused by inflation and supply chain issues we see a convoluted market that does favour the sale of homes that are presented and marketed at their best.

Let's look at the sales from last month:

Coatesville	\$2,780,000 to \$6,850,000
Helensville	\$635,000 to \$2,145,000
Huapai	\$855,000 to \$3,600,000
Kumeu	\$900,000 to \$1,470,000
Muriwai	\$1,250,000 to \$2,190,000
Riverhead	\$1,340,000 to \$2,110,000
Swanson	\$1,035,000 to \$2,350,000
Waitakere	\$1,485,000 to \$1,645,000
Whenuapai	\$1,555,000

Graham McIntyre phone 027 632 0421 email graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com - Mike Pero Real Estate Ltd Licensed REAA (2008).

KiwiSaver- back to basics

By ClearStone Legal (Yolandie Rivas, Legal Executive)

So, you finally saved up that big deposit for your first home, but most of the funds are in your KiwiSaver. How do you go about getting these funds released? Good news is your lawyer will help you to withdraw your KiwiSaver. There are however a few basic requirements you should be aware of:

1. You need to have a signed Sale and Purchase Agreement to apply for your KiwiSaver. This makes it tricky if you consider buying at an auction, because you need to pay in the deposit on auction day. There are however ways and means to get around this and we can assist with this.
2. You need to be a member for KiwiSaver for at least three years and need to contribute to KiwiSaver on a regular basis.
3. You need to live in the property that you purchase. In other words, you need to buy it in your own name and you cannot rent it out for at least six months.
4. You need to get a withdrawal application form from your KiwiSaver provider, complete it and sign the statutory declaration in front of your solicitor or a Justice of Peace.
5. Your lawyer who helps you with your purchase will submit the application for you (you don't send it yourself) because the KiwiSaver funds are paid into your lawyer's trust account.

Most KiwiSaver providers can take up to 10 working days to process your withdrawal application, or even up to 15 working days if you worked overseas while being a KiwiSaver member. You can only use your KiwiSaver once when you purchase your first home and if you have another property or just a small shareholding in a property you will not be eligible to take out your KiwiSaver.

You can use your KiwiSaver to pay the initial deposit (usually payable when you satisfy your conditions in the beginning of the agreement) or you can use the funds when you settle on the property and become the owner. You are allowed to use all your KiwiSaver funds except for \$1,000 government kickstart that will remain in your KiwiSaver account, or you can indicate on your form if you want a partial withdrawal.

ClearStone Legal with offices in Huapai and Te Atatu can assist you in buying your first home. Telephone 09 973 5102 if you have any questions about buying property or using your Kiwisaver.





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Property

Friends with benefits has its disadvantages

Couples who are planning to move in together, or already live together, now more than ever need to understand the implications this has for separate property rights.

A recent Court of Appeal of appeal case Sutton v Bell [2021] NZCA 645 has clarified that if a couple is even "in contemplation" of a de facto relationship, a court has the ability to set aside a disposition of property (e.g. to a trust) when the person knew it would defeat a partner's claim or rights.

In this case, a property was put in a family trust for the purposes of asset protection about eight months after the partner moved in as a flat mate. The Court said that even though the couple didn't yet qualify as a "defacto couple", the court could nevertheless set aside the transfer to the trust because they were "in contemplation" of a de facto relationship.

A couple is presumed to be "in contemplation" of a de facto relationship when they mutually contemplate living together "as a couple." Moving in together is one of a number of indicators a Court will look at in deciding whether a couple is "living together as a couple". So flat mates who are also in a sexual relationship ("friends with benefits") may not be living together "as a couple."

Interestingly, despite living together, the Court in this case held the couple were not in a de facto relationship until later when there were additional indicators of a mutual commitment to a shared future - in this case a holiday together and conceiving their first child.

However importantly, the law is now clear that it is not a requirement to be in a de facto relationship to receive protection for, or be subject to claims against, dispositions of land. If you think you may be affected and would like more clarity than this couple had, speak to a relationship property lawyer at Henderson Reeves: Taina Henderson 027 537 9222 www.hendersonreeves.co.nz.

Home loans: Rules changing again

It seems the rules regarding lending which came into place in December are being changed again. You may have seen articles on new deposit requirements, debt-to-income ratios, the amended Credit Contract and Consumer Finance Act (CCCFA), and now the review of the CCCFA amendment....

The review has just come in - and it looks good, hopefully lending is going to get a bit easier again, but we don't yet know how and when

changes will be implemented. The reality is some rules, regulations, and rates are changing fast, and others seem to take forever.

What should you do? How do you keep up to speed with it all? My suggestion is leave it to someone else (unless it's a particular hobby of yours). Find a professional you trust and let them work out what it means for your situation at the time that's right for you. The best thing you can do right now is focus on getting yourself in the best position to borrow, regardless of what happens.

This could include:

- To show you can meet lending requirements; don't impulsively cancel Netflix or go into caffeine withdrawal. Instead create a sensible budget you could stick to if you got the loan, and start living to it now.
- Show you're good at managing your money; avoid any failed payments or unarranged overdrafts from going over account limits, this goes for all your bills - not just the bank. (If you're unsure about your credit history - you can request a free copy of your credit report)
- Minimise short term debt and pay off those credit cards before they charge you interest.
- Get an expert on your side to help make a plan that works for you.

If you'd like to talk about your lending - I'm available free of charge, and if you want to meet in person, the coffee is on me.

Scott Wombwell, Managing Director & Financial Advisor, Better Borrowing, phone 020 4009 8944, email scott@betterborrowing.co.nz or visit www.betterborrowing.co.nz.

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25 Orahua Road, Kumeu



Area Property Stats

Every month Mike Pero Real Estate 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 kumeu@mikepero.com. This service is free from cost.

SUBURB	CV \$	LAND AREA	FLOOR AREA	SALE PRICE \$	SUBURB	CV \$	LAND AREA	FLOOR AREA	SALE PRICE \$
COATESVILLE	2,275,000	1.81HA	249M2	3,000,000		990,000	830M2	96M2	1,290,000
	2,650,000	3.51HA	197M2	3,560,000	MURIWAI	1,200,000	1.34HA	70M2	1,800,000
	2,825,000	1.27HA	410M2	2,780,000		1,700,000	1.08HA	259M2	2,190,000
	5,850,000	5.16HA	608M2	6,850,000		1,100,000	3073M2	215M2	2,000,000
HELENSVILLE	860,000	816M2	89M2	789,000		1,150,000	1811M2	93M2	1,250,000
	1,130,000	601M2	203M2	1,190,000	RIVERHEAD	1,750,000	677M2	319M2	1,890,000
	1,500,000	1HA	265M2	1,950,000		1,225,000	586M2	201M2	1,810,000
	1,050,000	1HA	115M2	1,570,000		1,775,000	829M2	281M2	2,110,000
	72,000	1HA	228M2	635,000		1,450,000	613M2	203M2	1,670,000
	1,050,000	596M2	176M2	1,000,000		1,150,000	414M2	149M2	1,435,000
	1,525,000	2.55HA	300M2	1,750,000		1,305,000	844M2	120M2	1,340,000
	1,850,000	5HA	265M2	2,145,000	SWANSON	1,940,000	1012M2	140M2	2,225,000
	820,000	1260M2	95M2	1,050,000		1,075,000	761M2	210M2	1,300,000
HUAPAI	2,940,000	8595M2	190M2	3,600,000		1,205,000	423M2	170M2	1,340,000
	840,000	714M2	85M2	1,298,000		1,895,000	6432M2	283M2	2,350,000
	1,475,000	661M2	212M2	1,470,000		960,000	519M2	130M2	1,035,000
	1,300,000	698M2	174M2	1,420,000	TAUPAKI	2,650,000	10.26HA	174M2	3,560,000
	1,575,000	606m2	272M2	1,635,000		1,825,000	1.96HA	219M2	2,300,000
	1,375,000	694M2	192M2	1,545,000		2,615,000	4.1HA	260M2	1,500,000
	800,000	0M2	108M2	855,000		3,765,000	5.82HA	507M2	5,550,000
KUMEU	1,075,000	345M2	144M2	1,180,000	WAITAKERE	1,375,000	2082M2	202M2	1,485,000
	1,325,000	543M2	199M2	1,470,000		1,400,000	4HA	160M2	1,645,000
	850,000	182M2	92M2	900,000	WHENUAPAI	1,480,000	334M2	282M2	1,555,000
	1,250,000	525M2	149M2	1,315,000					

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.

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HENDERSON



AS NEW - DESIGNER TOWNHOUSE IN HOBSONVILLE POINT

3 1 2

By Negotiation

5 Eyton Kay Road, Hobsonville
By Negotiation

A spectacular 2018, modern, townhouse with simple white and grey tones providing the best of lock-up-and leave and easy care, with schools, restaurants and transport around the corner. With an eye for clean lines and simple colour palette, this 168sqm three bedroom attached townhouse offers the very best of modern living with the extras that come with a home that has been invested in, meticulously cared for and made for living. Over three levels the home offers garaging and laundry leading to outside courtyard downstairs, with open plan living/dining on the first level and bedrooms upstairs. Heat pumps and upgrades make this townhouse stand out from the crowd and certainly worth investigating.

www.mikepero.com/RX3070268



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09 412 9602

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BUSINESS - TOWN CENTRE ZONE - HUAPAI

3 1 1

By Negotiation

8 Oraha Road, Huapai
By Negotiation

Nestled to the Eastern boundary of the Huapai Business Zoned area is this generous 869sqm parcel of land offering a flat section which shoulders the carparking and the Police Station at Huapai. A stately three bedroom bungalow with open plan kitchen, dining and living room leading onto westerly decking. A large shed and carport offers storage options while the yard is full of mature fruit trees. Fully fenced, flat section with services in the street. A short distance to parks, schools and convenient transport links. Invest today for options tomorrow.

www.mikepero.com/RX3226379



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Boundaries are indicative only



IEWS, NORTH FACING, HOME WITH INCOME OPTIONS

5 10 3

By Negotiation

14 Peters Lane, Taupaki
By Negotiation

Big home, with a little home, double garaging on both buildings and four-bay shed with high stud. So much on offer here that will make you excited about the prospect of a very large five bedroom, two living area, three bathroom home. Also delivering an office and extra-large rumpus/ games room with extensive alfresco to patio and decking facing North to get the most sunshine and ambient light. An elegant horseshoe drive with oversized double garage ensures you'll never need to reverse your car again. Extensive easy care garden and shrubbery delivers the perfect backdrop for privacy, and peacefulness. A separate two bedroom home with open plan kitchen/dining and living with double garaging also North facing with generous decking is located to the West.

www.mikepero.com/RX3042415



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AS NEW - WITH DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS - MIXED URBAN

4 1 1

By Negotiation

29 Hewlett Road, Massey
By Negotiation

Beautifully presented to a high (as new) standard offering exceptional buying with four bedrooms and large open plan entertainment living, linking to expansive private decking ensuring you have the best of indoor and outdoor living this summer. Hard to find, this home represents a high standard of finishing and hardware found in a new build and with the development option extended under the mixed urban classification which this property sits. Three bedrooms, bathroom and laundry with open plan entertainers kitchen, dining and lounge upstairs and bedroom with walk-in or nursery downstairs, all linking to decking and stepping down to lawn and single garage and workshop. Fully fenced with electric, sensor gate.

www.mikepero.com/RX3074419



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027 632 0421
09 412 9602

graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com



ABSOLUTE WATERFRONT - ELEVATED TO WATCH THE SUNRISE

2 1

By Negotiation

51 Ferry Parade, Herald Island
By Negotiation

809 square meter section on the elevated eastern coastline of favoured and highly sought-after Herald Island. A historic settlement that enjoys a strong and caring community, Herald Island is a family paradise integrating water-sports and beach-side community living. On offer, this cute as button, practical two bedroom batch with open plan alfresco living that integrates into its coastal environment framed by Pohutukawa trees on the waters edge. This elevated property, provides the perfect option to buy, live-in and design and build the forever-home. Close to Schools, Parks, Community Wharf, Beach, boat-ramp and convenience shopping. Simply, one of the best communities in Auckland, Herald Island is quite enough for relaxed peaceful living, yet minutes to the motorways.

www.mikepero.com/RX3182289



Graham McIntyre
027 632 0421
09 412 9602

graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com



READY FOR SUMMER BBQ'S - WEST HARBOUR

3 1 1

By Negotiation

100 Moire Road, West Harbour
By Negotiation

A sizzling hot option for you to have a great BBQ area, and a relaxed option to buy and move right in, no fuss, no bother. If you've been searching for a smart and simple three bedroom home in West Harbour this property may top your list. A genuine standalone home on 354 square meters of land (approx) with established gardens and secure fencing. The landscaping is contrasting and modern which integrates with the home through north facing decking and generous slider. An open plan lounge, dining and kitchen with central hall to three good sized bedrooms and bathroom. Downstairs has storage, double garage and laundry. Built to last with Palisade weatherboard system and decromastic tile roofing.

www.mikepero.com/RX3136972



Graham McIntyre
027 632 0421
09 412 9602

graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com



IDYLIC PARK LIKE SETTING - CHARACTER ESTATE

4 2 2

By Negotiation

216A Fordyce Road, Helensville
By Negotiation

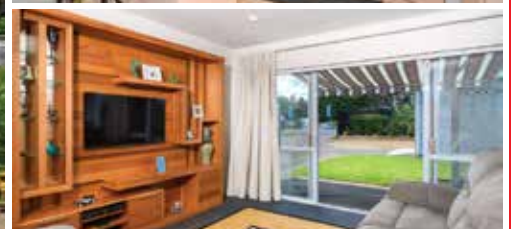
Often sort, but seldom found, this is an absolutely private glade, offering uncompromised peace, an abundance of tranquillity and a home that delivers unequalled character. A short drive from Parakai and Helensville, this is a park-like setting offering an established grassy outlook framed by mature exotics. The home sits a-top this glade enjoying commanding views through the lawn and northward toward the kaipara harbour. An interesting and colourful entertainers home, this five plus room, home offers multiple bedrooms, bathrooms and lounges which allows the purchaser to apply your own interpretation to the home, hosting generous proportions and exciting dimensions which must be seen to be enjoyed to its full potential.

www.mikepero.com/RX3160359



Graham McIntyre
027 632 0421
09 412 9602

graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com



BIG ON VALUE - SMALL ON PRICE

3 1 1

By Negotiation

369A Hobsonville Road, Hobsonville
By Negotiation

A home that makes the most of its 392sqm section (more or less) with generous parking, single garage and wrap-around lawn peppered with shrubs and hedging. Bigger than it looks, this three room home delivers more than many others with open plan kitchen, dining and lounge and direct access into the roof loft for storage. Located in the heart of Hobsonville, a short walk for groceries and convenience shopping, with access to schools, parks and the inner harbour close by. Fee simple freehold title and an honest pedigree, take a look today.

www.mikepero.com/RX3197566



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Hot Property



Idyllic park like setting – character estate

Some of the best real estate buying is hidden away from the limelight, settled in its own pocket of tranquility and you seldom get the chance to truly enjoy its character, its ambience and true privacy. But when you do, and its around your budget, not far from town, and takes your breath away, be prepared to pounce. Often sought, but seldom found, this is an absolutely private glade,

offering uncompromised peace, an abundance of tranquility and a home that delivers unequalled character. A short drive from Parakai and Helensville, this is a park-like setting offering an established grassy outlook framed by mature exotics. The home sits a-top this glade enjoying commanding views through the lawn and northward toward the Kaipara Harbour.

An interesting and colourful entertainers' home, this five plus room home offers multiple bedroom options, bathrooms and lounges which allows the purchaser to apply their own interpretation to the home, hosting generous proportions and exciting dimensions which must be seen to be enjoyed to its full potential. Options to create

Hot Property



spaces for extended family while retaining a central entertainer's kitchen/ dining hub. Integrated garaging and laundry on offer to tick your wish list, and a large parking courtyard for the boat, caravan and motorhome is in place. A short distance to school, parks, inner Harbour boat ramp and convenience shopping. A real hidden treasure you'll be pleased to find. So take some time out of your crowded day full of background clutter and be in the moment, and in a slice of paradise. For more information on this property or a discussion on your next property change, call Graham McIntyre on 027 632 0421 or 0800 900 700 or graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com - Mike Pero Real Estate Ltd Licensed REAA (2008).

Central's Tips

April 2022



Take out the spent summer vegetables and dig in compost. Plant lettuces and brassicas and sow peas and broad beans. Harvest pumpkins and store for winter.



Give the garden a good clean-up and apply fertilizer around shrubs. It's Nature's best planting time so dig in new shrubs trees and perennials. Sow lawn seed and plant spring flowering bulbs.

In the veggie patch

- **Directly sow broad beans and peas**, ensuring there's room for them to climb
- **Plant out seedlings of silver beet, cauliflower and hardy lettuce** such as Cos and Iceberg
- **Cut back globe artichokes** to fresh growth at the base of the plant. They can also be divided now
- **Remove cucumber, tomato or zucchini plants** that are no longer producing and dig compost through the soil where they've been to add back organic matter before the next crops go in
- **Apply Morgánicos**, an organic certified granular fertiliser, across the vegetable beds ahead of rain
- Watch for **self-seeded herbs** such that can provide you with free crops over winter. Liquid feed the young seedlings.
- **Harvest pumpkins** and store in a dry area for use in winter soups, roasts and salads
- **Harvest apples and pears.** Pears should be placed on newspaper in the laundry or garage for a fortnight to ripen
- **Sow calendula** for its crop of orange flowers in winter which brighten the vegetable bed. The flowers are good in winter salads too

The rest of the garden

- **Garden flowers for an early spring display.** Sow cornflower, dianthus, nigella seeds and sweet peas
- **Plant a hedge of sasanqua camellias** - these early-flowering varieties avoid the petal blight that turns late season flowers brown
- **Garden clean-up**, weed garden beds and pick up any diseased leaves. To encourage strong growth ahead of winter, apply our Prolawn All-Purpose Garden and Lawn fertilizer
- **Planting time for all** - ideal soil temperatures to get plants big and small into the ground. Use compost or Garden Mix and mulch well. If the soil is dry, water well around the roots
- **Plant tulips, narcissi and hyacinths** in pots for some spring colour. Place in semi-shaded areas until the bulbs shoot, then they can be moved into more light
- **Sow lawns.** There's a grass seed blend for all Auckland soil types and this is the season to get a great lawn at your place
- **Remove dead foliage of perennials** such as dahlias and daisies, and give tired lavender bushes a prune. Cut and dry hydrangeas with beautiful autumn colour that will last indoors

Project for April

New and exclusive to Central Landscapes

Start your lawn on its organic journey with our new range of fertilisers. Lawnganics is designed to aid plant and soil health and bring back healthy soil biology that can be lost with the use of traditional chemical fertilizers. Applied with a sprayer or watering can, Lawnganics ROOTS will promote strong, healthy grass for autumn.

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Our Kumeu store also specialises in the stock and supply of lifestyle block and farm supplies including a comprehensive range of portable electric fencing systems with leading brands such as Strainrite and Gallagher. We carry wooden and galvanised farm gates in a range of sizes and stock a complete range of fencing and gate hardware.

All our timber yards carry an extensive range of timber products including framing, retaining, posts, poles and fencing timber. We can supply just a few lengths for a small project or in bulk to greater commercial operations.

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3 Auckland Stores

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Planting advice

It is planting season with many plants heading out the gates at Awa Nursery to our customers' gardens. We thought it might be an opportune moment to pop in some planting advice in order to achieve the best results for your plants and trees.



- Soak the root ball by putting the tree in a bucket of water until the air bubbles stop, or pour a bucket of water over it.
- Dig a hole twice the size as the root ball if possible.
- Put plant food tablets in the hole to encourage the roots to grow out and provide anchorage for the plant. This will get the plant off to the best possible start.
- Take the tree out of the bag and put in the hole making sure that the trunk is straight, and the tree is slightly higher than ground level. Use a good garden mix to fill the hole and compact the soil around the roots.
- Water well
- Mulch, making sure the mulch does not go higher on the trunk than the original soil level.
- In clay soils, drainage is vital. Fork the edges of the hole to help the drainage and replace with good garden mix.
- Stake tall trees if they are being planted in a windy site. Make sure the stake is away from the root ball. Use a tree tie that will break down over time to prevent the tree from being ring barked.
- Feed with balanced fertiliser spring and autumn and top up mulch to help conserve water and discourage weed growth.
- Water trees regularly until established. Give big trees a good

bucket full of water every second or third day during summer until established. Light hosing and showers will only encourage the roots to the surface and delay the growth of anchoring roots.

Pop along to Awa Nursery and get your next gardening project underway.

Kumeu Community Garden

The first summer season has flown by at Kumeu Community Garden and with it has come great joy. Two years ago I looked at an empty lot, today I look at a space full of life, colour and food. Creating this community garden has been the work of many who are passionate about our community. Auckland Council, local residents and businesses have provided the support needed to establish the Garden and for that we are grateful.

Last year we welcomed our new Garden Manager, Rebecca. You will see her most Sunday mornings working up a sweat.

The Garden looks fabulous and everything you see has a purpose. Earlier this month, we held the first Working Bee since July last year and it was great to see new faces coming along to work and learn. One of our current projects is getting the shed in shape. Dulux has provided free advice and donated the paint needed, Waimauku Scouts will be painting in the upcoming months.

Rebecca is there most Sunday mornings and welcomes anyone who is interested to come along and join in.

Follow us on Facebook for updates and support us through our Givealittle page www.givealittle.co.nz/cause/Kumeu-community-garden.



Waimauku Garden Club

Writing in mid-March with the end of summer and very, very dry



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Home & Garden

gardens, most of us are hoping for rain. We are also hoping that the Omicron virus will peak and fade away somewhat to allow us to resume some semblance of previous normality. As it is, the Waimauku Garden Club has held off on our usual garden visit for March and our April trip is still uncertain due to the virus.

We have, however, a number of plans for day outings throughout the year which include a trip to Matakana and another to Whangarei, a visit to gardens in Clevedon and a spring day out to Cornwall Park and environs. During winter we will have more of an indoor theme including a mid-year lunch, a movie and a Weta Workshop visit.

In the meantime, we are preparing for autumn in our gardens, gathering in the figs and feijoas and seeing the end of the fruits and their preserving. The grape harvests are over and we see the leaves on the vines of the local vineyards turning to their autumn colours. Once we have some rain our thoughts will turn to improving our soils and planting bulbs and seeds of winter flowers, amongst the myriad of constant demands from our gardens. At least Covid has not affected our gardens and has instead kept many of us busy during lockdowns.

The Garden Club welcomes new members and we encourage you to join us on our outings. We have a Facebook page which you can view and if you have any queries please feel free to contact any of the committee members as listed below.

Ann 021 035 7406, Diana 027 478 8928, Moira 027 498 9154, Donna 021 233 0974.

Autumn for your lawn

I do bang on a bit about it but autumn is the perfect time to begin increasing the mowing height of your lawn, especially in sheltered and shaded regions of your garden. You ought to be leaving at least 50mm (5cm) of leaf on your lawn, even up to 60 - 70mm (6-7cm) in substantial shade. To be specific this offers a greater leaf surface zone for your lawns for photosynthesis, allowing the grass to create essential sugars which are key for its general wellbeing. Keeping

that additional length will also be valuable when winter arrives, as the grass leaves have a tendency to end up less frost affected with just the very tips dying off, leaving green growth underneath and a stronger spring recovery.

Getting the soil pH correct

And to be a bit more technical, pre-winter is a good time to check your soil pH. Out of balance pH levels not only affect the way your lawn looks, but will also reduce the impact of fertilising your lawns. The ideal lawn pH level is 6.5, which is a bit acidic. If you do need to adjust a low soil pH, you can use Sulfate of Ammonia, which will work to correct alkaline soils.

Improve your lawn before winter

You should always apply a decent fertiliser to your lawn before winter arrives. This is probably the most important feed you will give your grass all year, and Easter Weekend is usually a good time to schedule it. Give your grass a decent feed with a NPK fertiliser, so that your grass has the capacity to create that sound matt of leaf development I often talk about, it'll help keep out those winter weeds, and build the solid roots to battle the winter coolness.

Gary Turton - Jim's Mowing phone 0800 454 654.

Top tips for saving power

1. Appliances - Not using it? Switch it off at the wall. If the wall switch is on, you're still using a bit of power.

2. Lighting - LED lights are slightly more expensive to buy, but they last 10 to 20 years - and use far less electricity.

3. Hot water - Make sure your hot water cylinder is the right

temperature. Too high and it'll cost you more to heat, too low and bacteria may breed. We recommend a temperature of 60 degrees Celsius or higher to prevent the growth of Legionella bacteria

4. Washing Machines - Put your washing on a cold setting. It cleans just as well, and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) says it saves up to 10 times the power.

5. Timers and sensors - Timers and sensors are a cheap and cheerful way of turning off things that aren't being used.

Group your appliances (for example the TV, gaming console and decoder), with one timer. It'll sense when the primary load, such as the television, is switched off - and turn off all the rest. Clever, and cheaper.

6. Heating - Good insulation and efficient heating make it easier and cheaper to heat your home to healthy and comfortable temperatures.



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Home & Garden

If you'd like to discuss some of these tips further and hear about how we can help you save money get in touch with Blackout Electric today. Phone: 022 500 5856, Email: info@blackoutelectric.co.nz.

Unlock the value of your property

Do you love where you live, but not the house you're living in? Or perhaps your home is on a larger site and you've been thinking of subdividing and building a new home - whether it's to sell or rent out for extra income. Signature Homes makes it easy with their Subdividing Services and Knock-Down & Rebuild process.



Signature's team of in-house experts know the Auckland Unitary Plan like the back of their hands, and their new home consultants and architectural designers will work closely alongside you to bring your vision to life. Signature Homes is a one-stop, full-service solution for your new home project, no matter how big or small.

Right from your initial site appraisal to the handing over of your keys on settlement day, you'll have your own Signature team beside you to guide you through your journey and ensure your home is exactly what you envisioned. There's plenty of pre-designed plans

to choose from, or the team can work with you to design something bespoke to your needs and lifestyle.

A range of minor dwelling plans are also available, all below 65m2. These plans allow you to bypass the council's subdividing process and are great if you have a smaller site or just need some extra room for the kids or extended family.

For an obligation-free consultation and site appraisal, contact Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland on 0800 020 600 or visit signature.co.nz.

Lawn Mowing 4U

Lawn Mowing 4U is a local family owned and operated business committed to providing a high standard of lawn care in the West Auckland area.

Our service includes lawn care, hedge trimming, weed spraying, gardening and general yard care. We take pride in our work and aim for our customers to be 100% satisfied. We have been servicing the West Auckland area for over three years now.

Lawn Mowing 4U are helping property owners whether it is residential or commercial to have a perfect lawn.



Knock Down & Rebuild



Love where you live, but not your home?

Then replace it with a new one! The possibilities are endless with our Knock Down & Rebuild Service. Signature Homes are your Auckland Unitary Plan experts. We take care of all aspects of the process, including architectural design, removal of the existing building, consents, and the build. We are with you every step of the way, and provide the best industry-leading guarantees in New Zealand. **Contact Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland today**

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Home & Garden

Lawn Mowing 4U is your first choice if you need regular maintenance for your lawn or a one-off job. If you are thinking about selling your property and want top \$\$ our team will help to present your lawn and backyard to amazing looks. If you are moving house or want to tidy up your section for an end of tenancy, call Lawn Mowing 4U to help. Contact us on 021 071 4610 Alawnmowed4u@gmail.com Facebook: -@nzlawnmowing4u.

Moth plant

Pretty white and pink star-shaped flowers on a twisty vine with slim heart-shaped leaves - this sounds like a lovely garden plant. But if it's moth plant (*Araujia hortorum*) it is far from lovely and should be number one on your list of weeds to get rid of this summer, whether in your own garden or when out and about. It is flowering and forming pods at the moment, so is easy to spot. The pods are often mistaken for the edible choko, but they are really full of ammunition to help this enemy plant wage war on our native bush.



Each of the large pods contains between 250-1000 seeds, which are dispersed by wind and can travel for kilometres, even to our offshore islands. Once landed, the seeds can survive in the ground for seven years. Moth plant is native to South America and has become a noxious weed in many countries, not just our own. Here, it attacks our native plants by climbing quickly up taller plants and trees, then spreading out, weighing the treetop down and smothering it. Moth plant also dangerous to insects which get stuck on the sticky flowers, and people too - the white sap is a skin irritant and can stain clothing.

This plant likes poor soil and something to grow up, so is often

spotted along fence lines and near building sites. It can hide under other plants and even grow from under your deck, so check carefully.

If you find a moth plant, and it is small enough to pull out completely by the roots, that is a simple solution. Wear gloves! Larger plants need cutting close to the base and pasting with a herbicide gel such as Cut'n'Paste MetGel. Pods should be placed in a plastic bag and put in your rubbish bin, not composted. Fresh stems can re-grow if left on the ground so hang them over a tree or fence to dry out.

For more information look at weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/weed-list. To get involved in the effort to eradicate this nasty pest plant, check out the S.T.A.M.P Society Totally Against Moth Plant: facebook.com/groups/234572443294360, or find a conservation group near you.

Rabbits, rabbits, rabbits

The summer has passed and the days are shorter, and all of a sudden, we notice rabbits everywhere. What seemed like one or two has now changed to 20. Experts say for every one rabbit you see above ground there are 10 underground.



Rabbits are destructive in gardens as well as in pasture and breed all year round in our warm climate. Culling rabbits in autumn is a good idea as you can see them easier at dawn and dusk, and it keeps the population down heading into next spring. NZ Biosecurity Services can help you with your rabbit culling, give us a call any time and speak to one of our animal control experts. 09 447 1998. Source: Auckland Council www.tiakitamakimakaurau.nz.

City Botanics

City Botanics, who specialise in creating stunning gardens and plantscapes for people living in smaller homes and offices, are holding an open garden in Hobsonville on Saturday April 9th, 10am - 2 pm. We know that gardening in small spaces can present many challenges. Even though our garden is only 50sqm, we managed to fit in multiple seating zones, a water feature, two trees and plenty of seasonal colours to keep the garden interesting.



If you're thinking about landscaping, or know someone else that



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Home & Garden

is, we invite you to visit the garden and take the opportunity to chat with our experts about what it takes to create a functional and aesthetically pleasing garden in a small space.

While entry is FREE, this is a ticketed event to balance out the crowd numbers on the day. Please visit www.citybotanics.co.nz/events to book a time-slot to come and see us.

Tile and grout cleaning and re-colouring

Are you tired of looking at your lovely tiled floor and walls only to be disappointed by the dirty stained grout lines? Traditional cleaning methods actually leave your grout dirtier and more bacteria laden than before you started.

Grout is porous, and dirt, grime and bacteria soak into the surface leaving it unsightly, unhealthy and practically impossible to clean using normal cleaners. Give GroutPro a call, we deep clean (vacuum extraction) and re-colour your grout to look like new again.

Colourseal is a highly durable coloured coating that adheres to the surface of the grout creating a water and stain proof barrier that will keep the grout looking like new.

We can replace the porous cement grout with an epoxy grout



which too is stain resistant and waterproof. We offer shower glass restoration and apply a durable protective coating afterwards.

We can also apply relative sealing to your tiles, both interior and exterior.

Another service we offer is a high-quality Belgian garage carpet (suitable for office spaces and rumpuses, etc.)

I've been a franchisee of The Pro Group for 5+ years and we're well established with proven results. Contact me for a free quote: Mark Bowers 027 477 2231 - Email mark.b@theprogroup.co.nz.

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Our services include; Vacuum loading/ suction, septic tank emptying and servicing, cesspit cleaning, pump chambers, grease trap cleaning, hydro excavation, pile holes, drain unblocking & root cutting, CCTV locating and fault finding and drain repairs and maintenance. Phone: 0800 4 NINJA (64652), email: admin@drainninjas.co.nz or visit www.drainninjas.co.nz.



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Pets

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 Donations: info@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz.

Midnight marauders

As New Zealand works its way slowly towards becoming predator free by 2050, there's an elephant (well, actually a pussycat) in the room. Rats, possums, ferrets and stoats are, most of us would agree, not welcome in our environment and should be humanely eradicated, so that our native birds and other wildlife can thrive.



But what about a 'pest' that's also one of our favourite pets? How much of a problem are cats, and what can we do? One estimate is that there could be 2.5 million feral and stray cats roaming around New Zealand. Most of them survive by hunting whatever they can find, and while they do catch mice, rabbits and rats, they also happily eat wētā, native lizards, native bats, and of course our precious native birds.

There's a tricky balancing act to pest management, because in any area, removing cats may mean other pests such as rats increase in number and do more damage. If rats and mice are removed, feral cats may eat more native species.

The good news is there's now a National Cat Management Strategy Group working on this issue. Their draft plan states that their long-term strategic vision is for all cats in New Zealand to be responsibly owned and valued. They plan to work towards that vision in collaboration with pet owners, vets, the RNZSPCA, the Department of Conservation, and others.

Another of the group's goals is that there is no adverse effect of cats on native species in New Zealand. There is already proof of the difference this would make. On some of our offshore islands in the Hauraki Gulf, removal of feral cats has had immense benefit, including allowing tuatara to be introduced safely on Motuihe, and a kokako and tieke (saddleback) breeding programme to be established on Hauturu (Little Barrier).

Meanwhile, if you own a cat (and 44% of NZ households do), you can do your part to help. Making sure they are micro-chipped and de-sexed, are well-fed and played with, kept in at night, and looked after if you go away can prevent your cat from being a midnight marauder, or worse, running away and becoming a stray.

K9 Heaven

If you own a dog and you're wondering where to send your best friend for daycare, boarding or grooming, K9 Heaven (The Country Club for Dogs) may just be what you're looking for. Their 10 acre fully fenced property with farmland and pond for your dog is conveniently located just 6 minutes from the Massey off-ramp on the North-western motorway, or 7 minutes from Westgate.



The focus of new owners, Tanya Arnesen and Ollie Such, and their dogs Merc and Cleo, is to bring love, care, and fun to your dogs ... and a great experience for you.

Whether it's:

1. Socialisation for your best friend for a full-day or half-day stay.
2. An overnight, long weekend or multi-day get-away for you, knowing your dog is loved and specially cared for.
3. A grooming to get them sparkling and fresh.
4. Or even a birthday celebration and treat for them on their special



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Check conditions
This includes swell, weather, and tide forecasts as well as advice on safety signs.

Wear a lifejacket and correct clothing
Light clothing, sturdy footwear such as sneakers and a correctly fitted lifejacket are essential.

Beware of waves and swells
Always face the sea, never turn your back. Have a clear escape path to safe ground and don't get caught by an incoming tide or large swell.



For 17 years, Drowning Prevention Auckland has provided a rock fishing advisor initiative with Auckland Council and Surf Life Saving Northern Region which seeks to reduce rock-based fishing fatalities and promote a safe culture among this high-risk group. The implementation of safety advisors who educate fishers through face-to-face contact has largely succeeded in reducing fisher drownings in West Coast beaches. To find out more about the West Coast Rock-based Fisher Safety Project and review the 2021 Rock Fishing report, visit <https://www.dpanz.org.nz/research/rock-fishing/>

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Pets

day.

Your dog(s) will be in caring hands with a marvellous team who are all passionate about dogs and giving them a great experience.

As Tanya says: "If you're anything like us, you treat your dogs as though they're your children, after all, they're part of the family. What's most important is that whoever you entrust your furry friend with for the day treats them the same way. That's exactly why we make sure everyone on the K9 Heaven team is just as passionate about dogs as you are."

Dogs are separated by size and temperament, so no matter whether they are small, medium, or large they'll be with their own kind to make sure their day (or days) are fun, interesting and a great experience. Including a pack-run on the farm, a swim in the pond, or even a snooze when they're worn out after all that activity.

It seems many of their regular dogs enjoy it so much they can't wait to get back again. As Ollie notes: "The dogs who have been coming for a while are often chomping at the bit to get out of the car when they arrive."

Tanya, Ollie, and the K9 Heaven team run a "trial-day" so you and your dog can see and experience what K9 Heaven (The Country Club for Dogs) has to offer. Check them out on Facebook or Instagram - K9 Heaven.

Sunny's request – stop and smell the roses tree stump

Sunny would often stop on a walk and just take it all in. Now Vicki has a greater understanding of how exquisite this sensation-immersion is for her. She truly is a connoisseur of life. She notices the details and wants time to revel in the multi-sensory delights.

Sunny by name and personality. She is a dearly loved family member, who's humans wanted to check in on a few behavioural changes as she aged and find out if there was anything they could do to improve her life. One of the first things Sunny wanted to share was how much she enjoys pausing and taking in the smells, sights and sensations of the natural world.

She communicated this with a mind movie of her explaining in great detail what she experienced standing by a rotten tree stump. 'This



smells wonderful' she said, with so much to pick up on - the complex earthiness and animals that have visited. She then expanded the vision to her paws enjoying the cool, soft, giving texture of decomposing wood fibers and the sunlight dancing through breeze tickled leaves and sparkling on a body of water with dark shapes moving languidly below the surface.

What a lovely invitation for us to get to know our beloved animals even more deeply by opening ourselves to experiencing their world as best we can.

Stopping to sniff the post at the entrance to the forest is a must for our dog Marby - we call it reading the newspaper. Our hurried human agendas don't tend to prioritise total immersion in an experience, absorbing every last detail. Yet when we do its glorious how life reveal itself.

Got the feeling your animal is trying to tell you something? All Animal Communications are done remotely, via a photo and insights are shared via a recorded Zoom call so you can re-listen as often as you wish. Please contact Suze Kenington at facebook.com/AnimalsInYourHeart or AnimalsInYourHeart.com.

Why do cat eyes glow red at night?

Good question. Your cat's large, round eyes are designed to operate better in low light conditions and in the dark than our eyes. Cats can see as well in pitch black as we can see in full moonlight. Two reasons cats' eyes glow in the dark.



1. Their pupils are elliptical in shape. In lamplight, the pupils are narrow slits because they are protecting the sensitive retinas from damage. Turn the lamp off and notice the pupils dilate to accommodate the lower lighting. In very dim light, the pupils will fill her eyes, making them look almost completely black.
2. That red glow, is caused by light reflected from a layer of tissue called the "tapetum lucidum," which lines the back of the eyeball behind the retina. The result is an eerie glow as your cat's eyes catch a beam of light in a dark room. This term, tapetum lucidum, is a Latin phrase that means "bright carpet."

Interestingly, blue eyes, which Siamese cats have, glow red, while golden and green eyes cast green glows. Kanika Park Cat Retreat - phone 027 550 1406, email info@kanikapark.nz.



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Food & Beverage

Hallertau

When our new Chef, Logan Coath, joined the Hallertau family in August 2021, he wasn't expecting his first task to be all about creating people-pleasing takeaways during a lockdown. Based on the number of Haloumi Burgers and Fish 'n' Chips you guys got your sandwich grabbers on during that time, it's safe to say he nailed the brief and pleased the people.



A longtime Westie, Logan shares our passion for this community. When Logan first sat down with Hayley and Steve, the thing they chatted most about was the abundance of delicious, local produce accessible to each Hallertau venue. It was then we knew we'd found a kindred spirit for the kitchen and our next Hallertau hero.

Logan is determined to create menus that harmonise with the Hallertau beer list and feels familiar.

He states that "Putting a menu together is a bit like a journey. It's about looking at your surroundings and letting those surroundings inspire you. I'd like to get the team to visit the farms where our produce comes from too. Those relationships are good to develop. After all, our local farmers are also our local beer drinkers."

Vintage 2022 - that's a wrap

After a wonderful summer, with loads of sunshine to ripen the berries (that's what grapes are - did you know?), our awesome wine-making team and their merry band of helpers have finished hand-picking, and can now enjoy sleeping in past 4am. Let the magic begin! Check out the photo - what will this be, when it grows up? This vintage marks Westbrook's 87th year of wine-making in NZ. It's been a rough ride out there for hospitality businesses like us, so a BIG thank you to you, our amazing local community, for continuing to support us by bringing your family and friends here to dine, or buying wine directly from us at Cellar Door prices. As the temperature drops, the leaves on the vines and trees are changing their wardrobe out for autumn colours. Autumn in the Ararimu Valley is truly beautiful.



Come and visit us - there's plenty of space to sit and enjoy the park-like surroundings while you try some of our award-winning wines and delicious pizzas and platters made for sharing. Bookings are highly recommended for all visits but especially so for weekends and public holidays. Book online at www.westbrook.co.nz/book-now or call the friendly Cellar Door team on 09 411 9924.

The Bistro at Soljans

Ever wondered what it looks like after the grapes have been picked? Well, with rows of golden leaves and the sky holding on to the last bit of warmth, autumn is a great time to come visit The Bistro at Soljans to find out. Explore our new menu from Executive Chef Rob Baxter, taste the tail end of summer and come support local at Soljans Estate Winery, we would love to see you again.



So come, sip and enjoy!

Call the Bistro on 09 412 5858 or book with instant confirmation online at www.soljans.co.nz.

Make Your Own Herb Salt

Herb salts are a great way to add delicious flavours to your cooking. You can create any number of herbal combinations to suit your taste. Use the below recipe for either fresh or dried herbs. If using fresh herbs, the ratio of herbs to salt will be less and the flavour not as strong as using dried herbs.

You can also grind some, all or none of your finished herb salt, depending on whether you prefer a chunky texture or a more powdered texture.



Herb Salt Recipe

Ingredients: ½ cup pink salt or sea salt, ½ cup of the main herb of choice e.g. rosemary/basil/mint/sage, ¼ cup chives, ¼ cup garlic granules. (For additional flavour and interest, you can also add 1-2 teaspoons of fennel seeds to the rosemary version or 1-2 tablespoons of chive flowers to the other versions)

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Food & Beverage

Dry Herb Method: You can use either purchased dried herbs or dry your own finely-chopped fresh herbs in a dehydrator at 50C for approximately 3 hours or an oven on its lowest setting for approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. Ensure the herbs are very dry. Combine all ingredients together in a bowl and mix well. Grind or leave chunky and store in an airtight jar for up to 12 months.

Fresh Herb Method: Finely chop your herbs and add together with the garlic and salt. Mix well and dry in a dehydrator at 50C for approximately 3 hours or in your oven as described above. Stir every 30 minutes and break up any clumps. Once completely dried, either grind or leave chunky and store as above.

Herb salts are delicious on roasted vegetables and meat, add to scrambled eggs and egg dishes, sprinkle on savoury scones and over steamed vegetables with a little fresh lemon juice.

Recipe by New Zealand Herbal Brew. We offer a range of Certified Organic herbal teas via our online store. Visit our website: www.NewZealandHerbalBrew.co.nz.

Jesters Westgate

We're spicing things up at Jesters Westgate. Our new pie for autumn is the Chilli Cheese Fiesta. Spice up your taste buds with NZ prime beef mince in a Mexican inspired chilli, topped with creamy cheese sauce. It's fiesta time! Available in store and from our mobile pie vans.

Peko Peko

It has been a tough time for everyone to get through this pandemic, and we really appreciate your ongoing support. We have been in ups and downs with the traffic light system, however, takeaway is always available with our best quality. If you haven't tried our food yet, please come along. We are the only Japanese-owned Japanese restaurant in the neighbourhood. We only use rice bran oil, free range chicken and eggs, homemade sauces and we pride ourselves on serving fresh and honest food. You can find us on 102c Hobsonville Rd, check our FB and Instagram @pekopekonz or visit our website



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Āhuru Coffee Co.

As coffee lovers, moving to Scott Point, Hobsonville 3 months ago made us realise the distance people had to travel to find a coffee shop that was serving good coffee.



This sparked the idea of bringing something local but also unique to Scott Point, that could bring the community down to grab their daily brew on their morning stroll. The name āhuru was inspired by the atmosphere we aimed to create - warm and cosy, right here on our beautiful little beach. As well as coffee, we also sell artisanal Italian baked goods, such as almond croissants, Danishes and bomboloni (Italian doughnuts) that are baked daily for you to enjoy with your brew. Our operating hours are Wednesday - Friday 7am- 11am. Saturday, Sunday 8am- 11am.

Don Buck Honey

For Don Buck Honey and residents of Henderson-Massey, this is as local as honey can get.



This wee batch was made by bees that live in my backyard in Massey. Everything else my bees produce comes from forests or the farms, but this batch was foraged from the parks, gardens and gullies of our neighbourhood. I call it Neighbourhood Honey.

It is a very runny, bright, and clear honey compared with what my other hives produce, and likely contains nectar from at least a few of the following: Clover, lotus, pohutukawa, bottlebrush, penny royal, tea tree, borage, lavender, dandelion, cosmos, mint, rosemary, and anything else growing within a few kilometres of my back garden.

\$12.00 - 370g Limit of one per order. Very limited reserve - get one quick. Discounts for mix-and-match purchases. Order via online store - pickup option available at checkout for Auckland-based customers. Chris Northcott. www.donbuckhoney.co.nz.

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Health & Beauty

Mango Melt

Take a moment to Nurture You with our new Mango Infusion by Pure Fiji.

Take time for you, relax with a warm nourishing foot soak in our stunning copper bowl to start. Pure Fiji Bath soak infuses into the skin to hydrate and nourish while added cane sugar and exotic oils hydrate to bring back a glow to tired feet.

Mango Pure Fiji lotion is finally applied for soft supple feet that smell delicious.

Then - Shoulder and lower back tension is eased in our warm treatment bed as warm exotic Mango Pure Fiji Oil is slowly applied to your back, neck and shoulders. Relaxing Swedish massage techniques will leave you drifting away for a beautiful peaceful moment in your day.

Finally - A traditional Fijian coconut bowl is used to slowly drizzle warmed exotic nut oils that are then massaged gently into the scalp and neck restoring balance and leaving hair shiny and healthy.

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Keep your teeth healthy through Easter

With Easter fast approaching, there will be lots of chocolate treats filled with sugar all around us. Everybody knows sugar can damage your teeth but here are a few helpful tips from Kumeu Dental to help your teeth survive Easter.

- Drink lots of water after eating chocolate to help dilute the active sugars, slowing down the acid buildup and tooth decay process

- Avoid brushing teeth for at least 30 mins after eating
- Try sugar free chocolate & chewing gum



- Avoid adding extra stress to your teeth with carbonated drinks
- Eat all the chocolate in one sitting rather than slowly over a few hours
- Finish with some cheese to balance the ph in the mouth

I hope these tips help you maintain your gorgeous teeth through the holidays.

Remember to keep up with your regular dental exams, to catch any dental problems as soon as they develop to keep costs lower & teeth happier & healthier. To book in now call Kumeu Dental on 09 412 9507.

Nutrition medicine approach to COVID wellness

With the high prevalence of the Omicron variant, I thought it was time to share my ideas about the Nutrition Medicine strategies that can reduce the likelihood of a serious COVID infection. There is a lot of evidence about nutritional remedies that can support a healthy immune system and lessen the risk of getting very sick from COVID. I have included a summary here and have written about it in more detail on my website www.NutritionMedicine.nz.

Vitamins: A, C, D and E are all important to improve the function of key immune cells like lymphocytes, as well as antimicrobial peptides. By enhancing these immune cells, you are less likely to be infected, and more importantly you are less likely to get a serious bout of COVID. Have you wondered why one person in a household can get a COVID infection and other people in the house sometimes don't get infected? Surely it must have something to do with the immune system of the house mates.

Minerals: Zinc is the immune hero amongst the minerals. It has direct immune modulating activity working through T-lymphocytes and Natural Killer Lymphocytes. As well as making your immune system stronger it may also have direct anti-viral properties. It is critical for mobilising vitamin A stores too. Iodine, iron, and selenium should also be considered to support a healthy immune system.

Herbs: I have lots of faith in the anti-viral effects of herbs like echinacea, Pau D'Arco and Andrographis. Elderberry is one of my favourites for COVID. These herbs may help stop viral replication and prevent viruses from entering cells.

NAC: N-Acetylcysteine (NAC) has been shown to inhibit many of the pathways that the COVID virus relies on to grow or replicate. This includes inhibiting the NFKB pathway and Mpro (main protease). NAC can also inhibit the production of inflammatory cytokines and thereby lessen the cytokine storm that causes severe and long-lasting COVID infections.

For more information on these nutrients and whether they are right

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We look forward to seeing you at Hobsonville Optometrists 413A Hobsonville Road, phone 09 416 3937 for an appointment for an eye exam.



Pharmacists urge Kiwis with asthma to use preventative medication daily

Pharmacists are urging thousands of Kiwis living with asthma to use preventative medication for the chronic disease every day - prior to exposure to COVID.

The call comes following analysis of discussions with hundreds of COVID positive patients, which found a number of those with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) are struggling with the impact of contracting Omicron.

New Zealand has a high prevalence of asthma, with one in eight (12%) adults having been prescribed asthma medication. Up to 15% of the population are believed to be affected by COPD. NZ also has one of the highest hospital admission rates for asthma of all OECD countries.

Adherence to prescription medicine is also a significant issue for the country with research finding a third (33%) of Kiwis have had a



doctor's prescription which they have not filled.

Din Redzepagic, pharmacist at Zoom Pharmacy, says his team have interviewed hundreds of COVID positive patients as part of a new DHB programme to deliver free medicines to those isolating.

He says the trend is particularly noticeable in areas with traditionally poor access to health care services but higher concentrations of COVID positive patients - such as South and West Auckland.

"What we may be seeing at the moment is a combination of two aspects of healthcare which are relatively unique to New Zealand - our unusually high prevalence of asthma and high rates of Maori and Pasifika with pre-existing respiratory diseases who are also testing positive for COVID".

Cracked heels

Stressed and worried about your cracked skin on your heels? Constantly getting dry, hard, thickened skin on the same spot in your feet? We can help you.

Dry, hard, thickened skin is called callus. Callus develops from repetitive loading on one area and a lack of moisture in the skin. Skin hydration can be affected by some medical conditions such as diabetes, eczema, hypothyroidism and athlete's foot. Skin starts to crack when the callus gets thick and dries out. The skin of our feet does not have sebaceous glands, so the dry skin builds up easily with friction and pressure.

If you leave cracked skin on your feet untreated, not only does it become sore, it can easily become infected & lead to serious skin conditions such as cellulitis.

There are simple treatments you can do at home: exfoliating using a foot scrub or foot rasp, followed by moisturising your feet daily



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with foot cream. Also, drinking plenty of water to stay hydrated and wearing enclosed shoes. If you have tried the above and are still struggling to treat your cracked heels at home, get in touch with us at Hobsonville Podiatry on 09 39 04184 and one of our friendly team will be happy to help get rid of the cracks and suggest other changes to help prevent the cracks coming back.

Constipation

A 2019 UK report showed that 1 in 7 adults and 1 in 3 children have constipation. Between 2017 and 2108, 196 people a day were admitted to hospital with constipation. Yet in another study that interviewed 2352 adults with constipation, over half of them said they managed constipation themselves and didn't consider it a big deal.

Why is it that we think minor digestive problems are not a big deal?



Constipation occurs when the food waste that is left travels down into the large intestine where it would be normally fermented by the gut bacteria and then removed when we poo. If it doesn't travel on and out then the longer it stays the more water gets reabsorbed and the drier and harder it gets and the more difficult it is to pass it out.

Constipation can look like:

- Chronic straining and hard to pass
- Feeling like you haven't fully evacuated,
- Hard, lumpy ball like 'Maltesers' or long and lumpy stools,
- Fewer than 3 stools/week.

There are lots of reasons why you might get constipated and sometimes taking a laxative isn't always the answer.

It's really important to find the cause of the constipation.

My tips if you have constipation are:

1. Look at whether you need to increase your fibre or pull back a little for the time being.
2. Look at whether you need to increase your water intake to 1.5 - 2L/day.
3. Ask your GP or health practitioner whether it could be the medicines or supplements that are causing your constipation.
4. See a women's health physio to assess your pelvic floor function or osteopath or chiropractic to check for structural reasons.
5. Get checked for underlying causes (oestrogen, progesterone

or thyroid imbalances, bacterial overgrowth or even physical blockages). If you have blood in your stools, unexplained weight loss and persistent tiredness alongside the constipation you MUST go to your GP.

6. Come and join my 'Reduce the Reactivity Reset' to test for food intolerances (6-8 week programme where we remove the food you might be reacting to and then test them).

7. Try magnesium oxide or citrate 500-2000mg 2 hours before bedtime and away from food - start slowly and work your way up until it works. You can also try a warm glass of water on waking that you 'chew' add a squirt of lemon juice or a lemon slice to improve bile flow which can work as a natural laxative. 'Phloe' can also be helpful or 2 kiwifruit/day.

8. Make an appointment with a naturopath, nutritionist or ME and we can come up with an individualised plan to get you pooping again.

9. Don't wait - chronic constipation can lead to haemorrhoids, bowel incontinence, damage to the gut lining, diverticulitis and some other nasty conditions. There is also an increased risk of asthma. This is your body's way of telling you something is wrong - please listen to it. Go to www.sarahbrenchleynaturopathy.com/links/ to connect to Sarah.

Working from home?

With a large portion of Kiwis still working from home we are using computers and digital devices more than ever before, and all of that screen time can be hard on our eyes. Dry eyes, eye fatigue and headaches are just a few of the symptoms you



can experience following extended periods of screen use. Talk to the team at Westgate Optometrists about a pair of blue-light-blocking computer lenses specifically designed to optimise your eyesight while viewing your computer screen or digital device. These lenses give you a wide, clear field of vision without forcing your eyes to continually refocus (or excessively focus) and reduce the amount of work your eyes have to do to keep objects at various distances in focus. The blue-light-blocking coating is a key part in not only reducing glare and unwanted reflections, but also controlling the amount of blue-light exposure, which has been linked to being an accelerant to age-related macular degeneration, as well as causing poor and interrupted sleep at night.

All of this contributes to significantly affect your overall well-being throughout the day, and the addressing of which has been shown to significantly increase productivity. So, are you experiencing some of the symptoms of digital eye fatigue? Phone the friendly team at

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What is a dental emergency?

Wondering if you have a dental emergency and whether you should seek help? If in doubt - reach out.

If you're not sure if you have a dental emergency, we always recommend getting in touch with us. Sometimes it's very obvious, such as a knocked out or chipped tooth. But other times you might have a niggle or pain and wonder if it needs treatment. Unfortunately, problems in your mouth can escalate quickly which is why it's always wise to get professional advice.

Problems in your mouth could include pain, breaks or chips, broken or lost fillings, swelling in the mouth, jaw pain, red gums or ulcers, broken orthodontic appliances, broken dentures, painful wisdom

teeth or bleeding in the mouth. Problems virtually never resolve on their own, and very often early intervention can save significant pain, stress and even cost due to less extensive treatment being required.

The friendly Fraser Dental team at 1 Wiseley Road, Hobsonville is open 6 days per week, including some early mornings and late nights. Please phone us on 09 416 5050 if you have any dental concerns - we're here to help.

To eat well is the greatest fortune

Food nourishes our bodies but consider how food enriches all five of our senses. We hear the chopping board and clanking pots. We see the colours piled high on each other. We smell the hot aroma from a steaming plate. We touch the food with our hands to convey the morsels lovingly into our eager mouths. And last but not least, the taste!

This ecstasy of emotions and feelings helps us enjoy the food in front of us but also transports us back to another time and place as our minds and memories fill with the thoughts of "just like Grandma and Mama used to make!"

An empty nester asked me recently how to draw her children back home to her. I asked her to remember the recipes her mother and grandmother taught her and cook those for her children to come back to savour.

Better still, invite them home and teach them how to cook it so that Grandmother lives on in those family recipes, full of goodness and love. My great grandmother's last words to me were: "To eat well is a great fortune." Indeed, a fortune worth passing on.

Dr Frederick Goh - Royal Heights Doctors. Royal Heights Shopping Centre, Shop 12, 138 Royal Road Massey. Phone 09 393 6313 www.rhdoctors.nz.

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New Zealand Operational Service Medal (NZOSM)

The KMRSA President Rex Keane was heartened to hear that some Veterans have applied for the NZ Operational Service Medal or Campaign Medals, some Medals having been earned 50 years ago and that their medals had arrived "in the mail". Whilst we are pleased the Veterans have finally been recognised, the KMRSA thinks receiving "medals in the mail" is appalling and we would like to hear from any Veterans or their families, who have recently received their medals, so we can organise a ceremony, where the medals can be presented in person, acknowledging the service these Veterans have made for their country.

Email kaipararsa@xtra.co.nz, phone Rex 027 293 2768, or call into the RSA on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday between 1600 and 1930 hours and tell us your military story. (All RSA's welcome members of the community, not just Ex-Service personnel).

Chris Penk – MP

If there's one area the government has performed in strongly, it's their ability to put forward a message that they want Kiwis to hear. Two years on from the onset of the pandemic, we're now one of the most highly vaccinated countries in the world at over 95% of the eligible population. Despite the ongoing requirements for social distancing, mask-wearing and scanning in, the government's \$55 million-dollar public interest journalism fund has effectively increased the fear we feel.

I'm not downplaying the potential effects of Covid-19 as an element of the health challenges we face but with all the safety measures we now have in place including vaccination, masks and scanning, it's time to move on from a place of fear and into a place of hope. We've been told repeatedly by official sources that the hospital

system is ready.

The government has focused on Covid-19 to the exclusion of other key health priorities. Meanwhile, other pressing and critical issues that are unrelated to Covid-19, such as housing, infrastructure, cost of living, inflation and education – to name just a few – continue to worsen.

In other words, we need to keep Covid-19 in perspective so that we don't lose sight of the other challenges in front of us that remain in desperate need of action. Let's hope that in the second half 2022 our great little country can do that once more.

Have you been victim of bullying?

Many of us have experienced bullying at some stage in our lives, whether it been at work, school, social media, church, kingdom hall or even at home, it can happen anywhere and by anyone.

The pain and destruction of been bullied can have lingering effects. It can cause low self-esteem, suicidal thoughts, thoughts of worthlessness and helplessness.

These thoughts and feelings can last for a lifetime unless you choose to take your power back and break the cycle.

As a victim of bullying myself, I understand what it's like, I feel your pain, I see your tears, I hear your voice. As hard as it maybe, we can overcome this. It won't happen overnight, but it will happen and you will have your power back.

You owe it to yourself to take a stand against being a victim and stop the cycle. It is time to say STOP. It is time for you to take CONTROL back. It is time for you to hold your HEAD UP HIGH. You are WORTHY to be your true self. You DO NOT need to HIDE. You are WORTH it and can BREAK that cycle.

I realised that those who bullied me had the problem, not me. I had to find my self-worth and I had to learn and really believe, that I did not deserve to be bullied and you will too.

Hypnosis and Reiki are wonderful tools that are available to help overcome the aspect of been a victim of bullying. Using hypnosis, we can take the pains, the hurts and put everything and everyone who has hurt you into a bag and let it go. as they no longer serve us any good. Using the Universal Life Force energy of Reiki, we can use this to heal our mental and emotional scars. We can send love to those bullies and cut the ties so they can never hurt us again and



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Behaviour danger

At Country Bears we are very aware of how vulnerable children are. We promote respectful and reciprocal relationships with our children and whanau. Through these relationships, we can provide guidance and support to our teachers, children and families.

We are all aware of "Stranger Danger", but this concept is now being discredited, as harm to children is likely to come from people who are known to the child. Behaviour danger could include unwanted or inappropriate behaviour that can make children feel uncomfortable, unfamiliar, scared or unsafe.



Country Bears is all about keeping our children safe, so to extend on this, we host the "Keep Safe Programme" which is facilitated by a private organisation called "Help". This five-week programme is delivered to 20 of our eldest children and their whanau. It covered concepts of personal safety and sexual safety which can seem daunting and maybe even inappropriate. However, the amazing facilitator (who has over 20 years' experience in delivering this programme), delivered the content in an age-appropriate way.

Research tells us that all children, regardless of ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and age, are at risk of being sexually abused. This programme gives the child and family the tools to make this less likely to happen. The programme helps give the child language to talk about their own personal safety with confidence, to seek help (and to know how and who to seek help from), and also helps adults to respond to a child's disclosure.

The five week sessions are broken down into 45 minute fun, interactive sessions with the children, families and teachers. They cover aspects such as: Body Awareness, Touches & Feelings, Telling, Keeping Safe, and Story Telling. Resources are also given each week to explain to the whanau the content of the day's sessions, a workbook and an information book which have all the songs that are used to promote keeping safe.

We believe that keeping our children safe should be a community-wide approach. Children need to feel confident and comfortable to talk to a trusted adult about anything that may be causing concern to them. The Keep Safe Programme reinforces to the child that if anything doesn't feel right to them, then it probably isn't right, and



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to seek help from a trusted adult. They also explain to the children, that if the person that they disclose to doesn't believe them, to go to someone else and to keep telling until somebody does listen.

As well as reinforcing safety to our children, the teachers and whanau are also given tools to detect anything suspicious (emotional or physical) and to know where to go for support and guidance. We would encourage that all preschools take the opportunity to provide this programme at their centre so that all parents and children can have access to this information.

If you would like any further information about the Keep Safe programmes, you can call them on 09 377 9898 or visit their website www.helpauckland.org.nz/. If you have concerns that a child is being abused, you can call the 24-hour number 0800 623 1700.

If you would like to visit our wonderful Centre, designed to provide the children space and time to develop at their own individual time, give us a call on 09 412 8055 to arrange a suitable time. In the meantime, check out our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/cbearsecc or website www.countrybears.co.nz.

Easing the pressure

I know people are feeling it at the pump. With international oil prices soaring, the effects are felt worldwide. We have been and are working on ways to relieve increasing cost of living pressures, that is why the Government has cut 25c a litre off the fuel excise and cut public transport fares by 50% over the next three months as well as releasing details of a cost of living relief package effective from the beginning of April.

As the Prime Minister said, "We cannot control the war in Ukraine nor the continued volatility of fuel prices but we can take steps to reduce the impact on New Zealand families. Just as it was our job to get New Zealand through the Covid-19 health crisis it's also our job to put in place a plan to get us through the global energy crisis too."

I know that there's no silver bullet that will fix the cost of living, but the Government has a plan and is implementing a range of measures that together will help to make a difference.

The global energy crisis has quickly become acute which is why the Government cut fuel duty and to make it cheaper for those who catch a bus or a train. This means that we need to build greater resilience into our transport system so we are less vulnerable to spikes in the price of petrol, but for now halving the cost public transport will provide some families with an alternative to filling up the tank.

I know that the extraordinary increases we've seen in recent weeks impact on everything - from the ability of people to get to and from work, to the cost of supplying goods and services, and so we must act to support New Zealanders to get through which is why on April 1 a suite of permanent increases to household incomes will see 60 percent of families earning more from Working for Families, as well as increases to superannuation and benefits. On May 1, one million New Zealanders will also start receiving the Winter Energy Payment which will provide \$30 a week extra to many.

Marja Lubeck.

Understanding renting rights

Navigating the maze of renting issues is only a listening ear away for volunteers at Citizens Advice Bureau Helensville.

Some regular problems from clients include the importance of having a written tenancy agreement, understanding the difference between a periodic and fixed-term tenancy and dealing with rent increases.

Secretary Rani Timoti of Muriwai says lots of renting problems occur because people don't know their rights and responsibilities as tenants (or landlords).

There are a few key things to remember, especially the legal requirement to have a written tenancy agreement.

"The agreement is your 'go-to' if you have any disputes. It sets out the terms that you agreed to with your landlord."

Keeping a record noting any changes to the agreement, such as adding or removing any co-tenants, is also advised.

If you have any problems, the best thing to do is raise them with your landlord as soon as possible. "It's good to put any issues in writing, so that you have a record of this communication," says Rani.

But if you can't reach an agreement or your landlord doesn't sort things out within a reasonable time frame, there are some other options.

"A polite follow-up discussion or email can sometimes result in action, but if this doesn't work the tenant can send the landlord a 14-day notice to remedy" says Rani.

This is a letter warning the landlord that they have 14 days to fix



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Authorised by Marja Lubeck, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

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house value.

The latest figures reflect the estimated price a property would have sold for on June 1 last year compared to the last council valuation in 2017.

Valuations were meant to take place in 2020, but were delayed because of COVID.

Rodney recorded an average increase of 37 percent, which is above the 34 percent average, indicating the average rates increase for Rodney households will be higher than many other areas of Auckland.

The proposed new climate change tax will raise another \$574 million over the next 10 years from ratepayer's pockets. Auckland Council already has a current budget of \$152 million dedicated for climate change mitigation. The \$574 million is primarily intended to be spent on electrifying ferries and city buses, building more cycleways in the CBD, and planting trees in South Auckland.

Dealing with the effects of climate change is important.

Locally we have the need to combat sea rise, protect Kumeu against future flooding, better protection of river banks from erosion, upgrading storm water pipes to deal with increasingly severe weather events, stop gravel from the unsealed roads washing into our harbours, sourcing reliable fresh water supplies for households reliant upon tank water during droughts, building intended public trail networks as alternatives to driving, and permanently fix the Kumeu/Huapai roading congestion issue which is causing increased carbon emissions from idling cars and more idling buses.

Spending of the climate action tax on local needs is important. I will continue to fight for our fair share to fully and properly address the effects of climate change locally.

The proposed increases in Council fees and charges highlights the increasing level of dissatisfaction from ratepayers regarding Auckland Council's planning processes.

Primary concerns are the time it takes to get a resource consent and the cost in Council fees. These come from across the board, whether people are adding a veranda, building a simple shed or planning

multi-million dollar developments.

Question. Has it now reached a point where an independent commissioner should be appointed to fix Auckland Council's internal processes?

Such an extreme intervention would have to be initiated by the Government.

This isn't just a Rodney problem, but is happening across the whole of Auckland. Many people state that Auckland's processes are too pedantic compared to that of other councils.

Compounding the problem is experienced staff are leaving for lucrative government salaries with Kainga Ora (Housing New Zealand), but the internal council processes have not adapted to cope. Inexperienced staff are left under enormous pressure.

At the same time, resource applications are skyrocketing due to housing demand. Also Government legislative changes, which require a response from Council staff, are further draining the already diminished staff resources.

Local Board update – Beth Houlbrooke

More and more often we receive complaints from members of the public who have witnessed poor behaviour on our beaches, reserves, and from small construction sites. They tell us they ring the Council but get no action, even where these are clear breaches of bylaw, or other central government legislation that the council has authority to enforce, such as the containment of construction waste and sediment run-off.

About 18 months ago I discovered myself, while trying to report an issue with vehicles illegally parked on a reserve, that three of my usual go-to Compliance Team personnel had all left the organisation, and had not been replaced. Turned out that Covid-related budget cuts had taken a knife to this front-line department, to the point that the nearest Compliance Officer was now domiciled in Henderson. Not a single Compliance Team member remained in Rodney.

That, together with political pressure to cut staff costs, is keenly felt by the local board and residents in these situations.

As if getting compliance enforcement wasn't already difficult enough, it was now impossible. Added to that, Council continues to review and strengthen existing bylaws, without providing the additional staffing resources to enforce them. Most people don't need a stick over them to act responsibly, however there are always a few that spoil it for others – ignoring signage requesting they keep out of bird nesting areas, allowing dogs to run off-leash, allowing their building waste and construction site run-off to litter and pollute waterways, parking inconsiderately and commandeering large areas

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Area Columnists

of public land for unacceptably long periods of time, disrespecting rahui tapu, and the like.

For this reason, the local board is funding two full time Compliance Wardens, who although they won't have the power to issue infringements, will be patrolling our busy beaches, parks and housing construction areas, taking a proactive, educational approach to improving public safety and environmental outcomes. The idea is that more often than not, they will prevent bylaw breaches before they occur. When a family pulls up in the car next to a protected shorebird area and proceeds to let the dog out, and unload cricket gear for instance, our Compliance Wardens will be able to give them a friendly pointer that there may be other more appropriate parts of the beach for them to enjoy those activities. They may see a motorhome pull into the reserve where there are already the maximum number of campers present, and be able to show them a map of some alternative sites. They will also be able to approach contractors on building sites and request they rectify any waste and run-off issues. Obviously, where they witness wilful breaches, they will have quick access to the nearest Compliance Officer who can then attend and deal with it.

We plan to run this as a pilot for one year, the outcome being increased awareness and fewer complaints. If the pilot proves 'successful', in that there is a clear need for increased staffing levels in Auckland Council's Compliance department, we will be able to use the data gathered to advocate for that.

Beth Houlbrooke, Deputy Chair. Rodney Local Board. Beth.houlbrooke@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

Why you need to object to your Rating Value

Every four years Council works with Quotable Value over the RV (Rating Value previously called Capital Value) on your land and your improvements.

Although not an exact science and shrouded in secrecy Auckland Council use the land value as the primary number in which to base the allocation of annual rating charges. You may notice in the latest round of RV adjustments that the land value has gone up and the improvement value has come down which increases the rates charge but diminishes the value attached to your assets being your home and landscaping improvements.

As a home owner you will be wanting to protect the value that resides in your improvement value (ie the value in your home and landscape) that is determined within the RV data. To do this, and to ensure you have an accurate value attached to your property you will need to object to the value proposed by Auckland Council.

You can source information via this website: www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/property-rates-valuations/our-valuation-of-your-property/Pages/default.aspx

[govt.nz/property-rates-valuations/our-valuation-of-your-property/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/property-rates-valuations/our-valuation-of-your-property/Pages/default.aspx)

The reason that you object to your RV data is that it is not an accurate reflection in the value that you see in the improvement value and the combined RV data. You would like to seek an independent value submitted by Quotable Value that is accurate. It is important due to the following factors: This objection can only be lodged up to a month after the RV data is released, Your objection will not be a cost to you, An increased improvement value will have an impact on what buyers perceive of your value, Web sites like oneroof.co.nz and homes.co.nz use the RV data as a key figure to base the sale price estimate on your home, By objecting to your RV data and seeking an independent value you will have a higher value than many of your neighboring properties and higher buyer confidence in the future. This protects your Asset value.

Object to your Rating Value here: www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/property-rates-valuations/our-valuation-of-your-property/object-property-valuation/Pages/default.aspx

If you have any questions about buyer perception of Rating Values, or the way that the computer analytics manipulate this data to provide estimated selling prices and the opportunity for you to safeguard the value in your improvements, don't hesitate to call me Graham McIntyre on 0800 900 700, text me on 027 632 0421 or email me at graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com. This and other information can be found at www.property-hub.nz.

Craigweil House

With the ongoing effects of COVID19 in the community, things have been touch-and-go at Craigweil House. Visitations and non-essential services providers at times have seen restricted access. This has meant that it has been even more important to speak with loved ones over the phone or through video chat.

Craigweil House's in-house events and entertainment have again been at the heart of keeping the facility moving forward. This month we have had regular games of Bingo, Trivia afternoons, arts and crafts, board games, movies, karaoke, a high tea in honour of St Patrick's Day Celebration and more.

If you would like to enquire about Craigweil House for your loved one, please get in touch. We are a boutique rural facility with personalised compassionate support and care for rest home, hospital, and secure dementia levels of care - 09 420 8277.





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