

# The Rangitoto Observer

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 69 - October 29, 2021

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

High schools grapple with return to class... p2

Takapuna central drags chain on first jobs... p4

Castor Bay residents fed up with broken footpaths... p7

## Shore density to surge under government plan

Population density will explode on the North Shore following the government decision to allow three homes of three storeys on sites across Auckland.

Intensification is already moving rapidly across the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area, with record numbers of building consents

lodged in the last 12 months (as reported in the Observer of 15 October).

Multi-unit developments are already underway or in the planning and consenting stage from Sunnynook south.

But this will only accelerate and the areas affected expand under a bill – backed by both

the government and the National Party Opposition – aimed at enabling greater housing supply.

The moves announced last week mean sites in the Single House and Mixed Housing Suburban zones in Hauraki, Takapuna and Milford have effectively been rezoned – opening up thousands of sites for development. **To page 5**

## Cowboy operation goes West at the beach



**Howdy pardner... Ten-year-old Charlie Grey and his compliant steed were among the stars when a group of young film-makers brought a version of the Wild West to Takapuna Beach. Story, p14-15.**

Visit [earhealth.co.nz](http://earhealth.co.nz)



**EAR HEALTH**  
PROFESSIONAL EAR CARE



Microsuction | Audiology | Hearing Tests | Hearing Aids - Love Them in 30 Days or Your Money Back

# Principal says time to rethink external exams

End-of-year external NCEA school examinations would be a thing of the past if Carmel College principal Christine Allen had her way.

The snapshot judgment is “no longer fit for purpose”, she told the Observer.

It was an opinion Allen said she held before the Government’s decision last week to race senior students back to class from Tuesday this week – ahead of national exams set to start from November 18.

Many in the education sector were blindsided by the sudden decision, made at a time when the Delta outbreak is growing in Auckland. Some had been advocating exams be moved online.

Takapuna Grammar School opted to keep its doors closed this week, with students doing their mock online exams from home as planned.

Westlake Girls High School has made in-person attendance optional. On Monday it made Tuesday a teacher only day. Year 11, 12 and 13s coming to school were told to attend on staggered days from Wednesday onwards. The school cited dealing with the speed of changes as its reason.

Rosmini College headmaster Nixon Cooper said the school normally held its mock exams at the start of Term 4, but when term start was delayed in early October teachers had instead used this time to gather specific evidence for grades to deal with whatever unfolded.

“The announcement of a return to school on Tuesday was a complete surprise,” he said.

Other schools were also gearing up to do more work on internal assessments, while playing wait and see over NCEA.

Carmel’s Allen said she had spent “considerable time” trying to address parents’ very real concerns about reopening. A parent survey had indicated a full turn-out was unlikely.

Until the announcement, schools were

## School staff vaccinations tracking well

North Shore high schools appear well on the way to meeting government requirements for teachers and support staff to be fully vaccinated.

“At this stage, it appears the overwhelming majority of staff are double or single vaccinated,” said Westlake Girls High principal Jane Stanley. She was confident of full compliance to meet the January 1 deadline and did not envisage retention issues.

Rosmini College was “completely confident” it would comply with the requirement

in time, said headmaster Nixon Cooper.

Westlake Boy High School preferred not to get into specifics at this stage.

Carmel is still gathering vaccination data, but says vaccination uptake rates to date were very positive. Principal Christine Allen said: “I don’t think this will have any real impact on retention or recruitment.”

Asked about collating detail of student vaccination as has been signalled ahead, Allen said: “We are yet to begin this mammoth task.”

only open to young students who had no one to supervise them at home, she said. “Then, suddenly, large numbers of seniors are allowed and all the bubbles of 10 requirements and no mixing are all removed.”

With NCEA being a flexible system there was a range of ways to gather evidence learning, including issuing Unexpected Event grades. This came without the need to sit external exams in person. Like other principals, Allen says the uncertainties of this interrupted year have put added stress on students. They have been studying from home for a cumulative two months plus, first in February, then again from 17 August onward.

“We’ve really focused on our Y13 students and their ability to make sure that they have the best results that they can achieve to undertake the next stages in their careers.”

Once the dust settles, Allen believes a national educational review is needed into whether timed, external assessments are a fair and valid form of assessing students’ learning and understanding of content.

“I think that external exams are no longer a fit in this more modern learning environment.”

Westlake Girls High School cancelled its mock exams early, at the end of Term 3. Principal Jane Stanley said the delayed start to Term 4 had not been unexpected, although it was disappointing for girls missing friends and teachers.

“We are well prepared as a school for any outcome that may transpire over the next few weeks – including NCEA exam preparation, or collection of alternative evidence if exams do not proceed,” she said before news of schools’ resumption.

Westlake Boys High School, principal David Ferguson said: “We’re looking forward to returning to school as and when we are able to.”

Stanley said most students had taken the disruptions in their stride. Parents had helped keep their children engaged. Those who were struggling were given extra help.

The school had been waiting for government mandates around reopening, she said.

“The wellbeing of our students is obviously our top priority and we will do whatever is needed to ensure our staff and students are kept safe.”

## Sea ‘rescue’ in choppy seas off Milford set nerves on edge

Rescue training exercises off Milford Beach had residents fearing they were seeing a real life emergency last weekend.

The Auckland Westpac Rescue Helicopter was doing winch training in blustery conditions early on Saturday afternoon. This sparked concern in the community, including a number of people posting online on local pages that they feared they might be witnessing a

boat having got into trouble with potential loss of life.

Observer enquiries established that what had occurred was known as “wets and decks” training.

A rescue helicopter spokesman said this training involved both the helicopter and other emergency personnel aboard the Coastguard Lion Foundation rescue boat.

The Rangitoto  
**Observer**

---

**Delivered to 10,000 homes**

---

**Devonport Publishing Ltd** Level 1, 6-8 Milford Road  
Telephone: 09 445 0060  
Email: sales@rangitoto-observer.co.nz  
news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz  
Website: www.rangitoto-observer.co.nz

---

**MANAGING EDITOR:** Rob Drent  
**PUBLISHER:** Peter Wilson  
**CHIEF REPORTER:** Janetta Mackay  
**SENIOR REPORTER:** Christina Persico

---

Information in the Rangitoto Observer is copyright and cannot be published or broadcast without the permission of Devonport Publishing Ltd.

---

**NEXT ISSUE:** November 12  
**ADVERTISING DEADLINE:** November 5



# Anne Maree Court

## Rest Home & Hospital

**Become part of the Anne Maree Court family - with rooms now available**

**COVID SAFE CARE**

**17 Fraser Avenue, Northcote**

**Ph: 09 418 3118 | Manager: Siloata Tuato**

**amc.manager@annemaree.co.nz**

**www.annemareeresthome.co.nz**



**High five... Rosara Davis and Issy Riley give a socially distanced salute during kayak practice on Takapuna Beach**

## Paddling against the tide of being inside

Forrest Hill 11-year-old Lucas Gilberd relished the chance to kayak off Takapuna Beach last week. He was one of a group of local children enjoying getting outdoors for a different kind of lesson during lockdown.

“I just play basketball at my house and do school work,” he told the Observer.

Issy Riley, aged 10, from Stanley Bay, said she too was enjoying a change in routine. “It’s nice to be out on the water.”

Rosara Davis, a 13-year-old student at Belmont Intermediate, agreed that it was “pretty good to be doing something”.

Rosara’s father was along as a parent helper supervising out on the water, at the lesson coached by another father, Scott Orman, just out from the Takapuna Boating Club.

Under Alert Level 3 regulations, competent individuals or small organised groups that maintain social distancing are allowed on the water, to kayak, canoe, row, surf, wind-surf or paddle board, near to shore.

Making the most of Takapuna Beach as a safe venue for this, several groups from outside the area were also on the beach last week, including swimmers from West Auckland and members of the Piha Surf Lifesaving Club, who regularly train in the calmer eastern waters.

Beach patrols started at some beaches last Saturday, 23 October.



**Poised for action... Lucas Gilberd was eager to hit the water for a fresh challenge**

## Uncertainty a killer for business

Businesses are crying out for more certainty and for more people to get their second vaccines, says Takapuna’s business leader Terence Harpur.

Retail figures for the September quarter, showed overall spending in Takapuna was just a fifth of what it was in the 2020 quarter.

“This is no surprise as we have few essential services in Takapuna, no office workers and the majority of businesses are closed,” said Harpur, chief executive of the Takapuna Beach Business Association. “For business heavily affected, the issues are cash flow, spiralling debt and lack of a plan of how long this will go on for. It’s a matter of how deep in debt do you go before calling it quits and closing the business.”

Grim retail spend figures were set to continue, he said, despite the too long complacent Government having finally come up

with a pathway away from lockdown. This offered some light at the end of the tunnel, but without a reopening date it was difficult for businesses to plan financially and for their employees wellbeing.

“We need everyone double dose vaccinated ASAP if we want our town centres and local businesses to survive.”

Harpur welcomed increased frequency in resurgence support payments, but wanted this and the wage subsidy to run for longer.

Auckland Council could also do more to help hospitality businesses, he said. Cutting compliance fees that might be \$3000 or more for a small cafe would help.

He acknowledged that the council had cut shop fees for outdoor eating, but he said this should be extended for the whole of summer and to those dining with alcohol.

This would help make summer shine.

## Simon Watts MP for North Shore

National Party Spokesperson for ACC,  
Associate Health & Associate Revenue

**Your local MP,  
supporting you and  
our community**

1 Earnoch Avenue, Takapuna  
northshore@parliament.govt.nz  
09 486 0005

📞 📧 simonwattsmpp



Authorised by Simon Watts MP,  
Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.



## Briefs

**Bowlers get extension**

The Takapuna Services and Social Bowling Club has been given an extension for vacating its leased council land by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board. A lease renewal for the site at 2 Mary Poynton Cres was earlier declined, and the club and its assets required to be moved out by 28 October. It asked that the vacating date be at least one month after level 2 lockdown. Toni van Tonder voted against the extension.

**Works to move crossing**

Moving a pedestrian crossing on East Coast Rd will require roadworks until early November. Traffic queues have been common either side of the roadworks, between Kenmure Rd and Aberdeen Rd, during the day, with a one-lane stop/go system in place. The works include a raised speed table, relocating the bus shelter, street lighting, line marking, footpath work and high-friction surfacing. Auckland Transport said last week its current date for completion is 7 November, but that is weather dependent.

**Jenny Kirk remembered**

Former North Shore politician Jenny Kirk, who died last month after a short illness, has been remembered by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board. Kirk died in Whangarei on 30 September. Member George Wood acknowledged her contribution to the area, particularly around transport. Kirk was Labour MP for Birkenhead from 1987 to 1990 and later a North Shore City councillor. She brokered a meeting with then Transport Minister Mark Gosche which helped pave the way for the Northern Busway, Wood, a former North Shore Mayor and busway advocate, told the Observer.

**Takapuna has lowest first-vax rate**

Central Takapuna remains the suburb with the lowest rate of first-dose Covid vaccination in the wider Devonport-Takapuna area, according to figures issued late last week.

Takapuna was on 88.6 per cent, while most lower North Shore suburbs had passed 90 per cent of the eligible population having had their first dose.

Sunnynook North, Forrest Hill North, Forrest Hill East and Stanley Point are in front, with 95 per cent uptake.

Cheltenham has the highest number of second doses at 83.1 per cent, but with one of the smaller populations.

There were still local locations of interest visited by Covid-positive people earlier this week, including Milford New World (14 October) and Takapuna Countdown (16 October).

Several trips on bus 901 to and from Smales Farm on 16 and 18 October were also of interest. New World Devonport was still on the list from 8 October.

Health advice is on the Ministry of Health website.

Seven Covid cases were in North Shore Hospital earlier this week, of 35 being treated across Auckland.

**Jabs by suburb**

**Sunnynook North** eligible population: 2334 people. First dose 95% uptake; second dose 77.7%.

**Sunnynook South** from 2104 people. First dose 93.8%; second dose 75.9%.

**Castor Bay** 4054 people. First dose 93.1%; second dose 78.1%.

**Forrest Hill North** 1971. First dose 95%; second dose 80.4%.

**Forrest Hill East** 2906 people. First dose 95%; second dose 80.7%.

**Forrest Hill West** 3502 people. First dose: 94%; second dose 79%.

**Milford Central** 1830 people. First dose 92.6%; second dose 80.7%.

**Milford West** 2627 people. First dose 91.7%; second dose 78.6%.

**Westlake** 2519 people. First dose 94.2%; second dose 79.8%.

**Takapuna Central** 2367 people. First dose 88.6%; second dose 77.1%.

**Takapuna West** 4025 people. First dose 93.1%; second dose 78%.

**Takapuna South** 1358 people. First dose 92.1%; second dose 79.2%

**Tree-poisoning culprits still unknown**

No progress appears to have been made in tracking down the people responsible for vandalising trees on the Takapuna beachfront.

Auckland Council told the Observer it had no update on the chopping-down and poisoning of native trees in Sacred Grove / Te Uru Tapu reserve in front of apartments at the northern end of the beach.

Arborists discovered the damage to 14 trees and additional shrubs, with most chopped down, including a tree around 5 metres tall. Drill holes indicated four of the trees had likely been poisoned.

An update on the fate of the grove may be provided to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board at its November meeting.

Auckland Council officials have recommended that the reserve, closed for boardwalk maintenance several years ago, remain closed. They cited tree fragility, safety, cost and cultural factors. Around 1500 people petitioned for its reopening, with the boardwalk having formerly functioned as a high-tide access along the beach. The board wanted to hear more options, including the views of mana whenua, but with lockdown this has not yet taken place.

**Hell Pizza****HELL**  
☠**TAKAPUNA****OPEN FOR  
CONTACTLESS DELIVERY  
WHEN AT ALERT LEVEL 3.****PH 09 445 6660 - Eat in. Takeaway. Delivery.  
447A Lake Road, Takapuna, Auckland 0622****WE ARE  
HIRING!****Drivers, Kitchen staff,  
Front counter, Duty manager****Call Chaman 021-495-363  
for more information.**

# Intensification moves infuriate local politicians

From page 1

The single-house zone is mostly confined to the coastal strip from Clifton Rd to Castor Bay, around Lake Pupuke, with a small patch of homes in Prospect Terrace, Milford.

Large swathes of Hauraki, Milford, Forrester Hill and Sunnynook are Mixed Housing Suburban.

Combined with the National Policy Statement on Urban Development released earlier this year, the government has effectively directed city councils to increase density in all urban areas, especially around major transport nodes.

In Takapuna this means multi-storeyed apartment blocks will be allowed between the commercial area and Smales Farm – which has already been rezoned for high-rise tower apartments.

Under the latest government announcement, housing will be allowed to be 11m high, with

a building site coverage of up to 50 per cent.

The intensification policy – which is expected to become law by August 2023 – has been rammed through without any government commitment to help fund extra infrastructure or public transport, something which has infuriated local politicians, who felt broadsided by the announcement.

Heritage, natural hazards and open space provided for public use are included in mitigating factors where development can be limited. But the government said this does “not necessarily prohibit development”. Councils can “reduce the amount of development allowed so the feature is managed appropriately”.

North Shore councillor Chris Darby, who chairs Auckland Council’s planning committee, said the government announcement was ill-considered. “It’s a desktop exercise in a vacuum in Wellington... they have made significant amendments to the Unitary Plan and planning rules in Auckland without the

expertise to do so,” he said.

Auckland Council had become aware that the government “was working something up”, Darby said, but had been rebuffed when it was asked to be included.

“It’s disappointing when you have been sitting around the table with ministers and officers taking part in working through the issues and then one party does it in isolation.”

Darby said on a national scale the development fast-tracking would not add that many more homes. Auckland was already processing record consents.

The wider problem was funding the infrastructure and public transport to support the growth, he said. Other issues included the cost of building materials and the shortage of tradespeople to do the work.

Initially it was believed the changes were to be made by “edict”, Darby said. But council had at least been given a few weeks to provide feedback.

## Land banking predicted by valuer

Land banking and developers targeting large residential sites around the North Shore are likely as the implications of the new government intensification strategy sink in, says a property valuer.

Murray Pelham of NH Valuers said the government’s announcement last week was a surprise for the property industry and it would take a while to “consider the ramifications”.

The two zones primarily affected appeared to be the Single House Zone and Mixed Housing Suburban Zone, he said.

In the Mixed Housing Suburban Zone, buildings are usually one or two storey, mainly stand-alone, and are set back from site boundaries with landscaped gardens.

In the government’s plan three homes of three storeys are allowed on a site.

Pelham said this would effectively spell the end of the mixed suburban zone and had more in common with the urban zone, which allows

three or four homes on a 700 sqm site.

Land bankers were already “knocking on doors” trying to buy three or four houses in a street, he said.

This made it hard to value individual properties, he added. A house may have a value to a private purchaser, but for a developer it all hinged on what could be built on the site, or in some cases several combined sites.

“It depends on the land value content.”

If developers managed to buy a number of sites together, more intensified development was possible, he said.

Pelham expected substantial push-back from Auckland Council on the government bill, especially given the years of work to create the Auckland Unitary Plan.

Another valuer told the Observer much of the finer detail needed to be worked through, such as whether each home would be sold as an individual title.

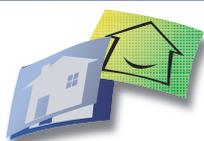
## Residents’ groups speak out on news

The Milford Residents Association says a “centralised knee-jerk reaction” to solve a housing shortfall puts neighbourhoods at risk. “It appears that the Medium Density Residential Standards are more about boxes in the air and not about well-being and a quality environment,” it said.

The Sunnynook Community Association says it will discuss the new rules at its next meeting. Having seen significant building in its suburb, it had pre-lockdown been considering a design hui to advocate for better builds.

The Castor Bay Ratepayers’ and Residents’ Association wants any solution to balance the need for quality housing with the need for parks, tree canopy, and open space. These were what made Castor Bay such a great place to live.

Takapuna Beach Business Association wants growth kept manageable, by focusing it near transport nodes and metropolitan centres.



PEACE  
OF MIND

WAVESHADES | UMBRELLAS  
EXTERIOR LOUVRES | INSECT SCREENS  
DESIGNER SCREEN DOORS

• Screens & Shade •



Act now to be ready for Summer by phoning 09 571 3060 today for a consultation  
[www.pomssuckland.co.nz](http://www.pomssuckland.co.nz) | [sales@pomss.co.nz](mailto:sales@pomss.co.nz) | [facebook.com/pomssauk](https://facebook.com/pomssauk)

## Dual-naming for parks takes next step

Nineteen locations across the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area will soon be divided among iwi to be given te reo names to accompany the English version.

Under Auckland Council's Te Kete Rukuruku programme, a hui will be held to determine which iwi names each site, with sites to be allocated by December.

Naming research will then begin, a process likely to take at least two to three months.

The board, which has allocated \$20,000 to the process, heard in a progress report that its suggestions would soon go to mana whenua, including the idea of combining the Milford Beachfront Reserve and Milford Reserve under one name.

Kennedy Park was a notable exclusion, but board chair Ruth Jackson said it was already also known as Rahopara Pa, so did not need a further name.

One site, yet to be determined, will get full bilingual signage, an interactive panel explaining the background of the name, and a QR code to scan to hear pronunciation of the name.

Other parks will not automatically have new signs as part of the change, the report to board members said. "With a view to spending Aucklanders' money wisely, existing signs will be reskinned, unless the signage is damaged or worn and needs to be replaced."

## Spare council cash to be shared about after Sunnynook project under budget

Cash left over from upgrades at Sunnynook Park has been reallocated towards other community projects, including a BMX/pump track at the park and work on a dilapidated skate park in Devonport.

Just over \$200,000 of Auckland Council renewals-budget money and \$100,000 of Locally Driven Initiatives funding was left unspent when the playground and public space upgrade, finished behind the community centre in July, came in under budget.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board last week approved staff recommendations for redirecting the surplus money. These included: spending \$100,000 developing a wheel-sports plan in Sunnynook Park; \$100,000 for work on Devonport's Ngataranga Park skate facility; and \$20,000 to the Takapuna Library and Service Centre to

renew its guttering and downpipes.

Board members were told the library work would ensure the building was watertight.

The Sunnynook work includes bringing forward design of the BMX/pump track, along with providing paths, signs, bollards, seating and planting at Sunnynook Square.

A \$120,000 donation from Takapuna locals Chris and Jackie Reeve meant funding towards renewals at Gould Reserve at Takapuna Beach was also surplus, leaving an unexcepted \$80,830 unspent there. (The Reeves were key funders and driving forces behind the playground at the reserve and planned disabled toilet facilities)

Auckland Council policy analyst Roma Leota was asked by the board to look at any other projects that needed extra cash.

## Submissions open on skate park and BMX plans

Public submissions are open on the new skate park proposed in Sunnynook Square, near the basketball court, on Sunnynook Rd.

It will replace an old and isolated skate bowl in Sunnynook Park. A design was developed by Auckland Council officials after consultation with community representatives that dates back to 2016.

A BMX bike pump track may be installed in the park, south of the existing skate bowl, near

exercise equipment. But council officials told the Local Board several months ago that there was not enough funding yet for both facilities, with the skate park to be first to get rolling.

The council wants to hear from residents on the skate bowl concept design and on the proposed location of the BMX track. Submissions are open until 12 November, with information available at [akhaveyoursay.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/](http://akhaveyoursay.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/)



# Weathermaster®

## Interior and Exterior Window Solutions



**BLINDS | AWNINGS | SHUTTERS | UMBRELLAS**

PHONE 021 274 7447 | [sales@weathermasterak.co.nz](mailto:sales@weathermasterak.co.nz) | [www.weathermasterak.co.nz](http://www.weathermasterak.co.nz)

# Castor Bay residents irked by trees and footpaths

Castor Bay residents are fed up with their suburb's broken footpaths and overgrown pohutukawa trees.

The Castor Bay Ratepayers' and Residents' Associations's frustrations about these and other issues were raised by Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member George Wood at the board's last meeting.

"It's an appalling situation that those footpaths are like they are," Wood said. "Auckland Transport haven't come to the party."

"I certainly believe that other suburbs are getting a far better deal than Castor Bay."

The pedestrian crossing at the corner of Beach Rd and Castor Bay Rd was another concern, he said.

Board member Jan O'Connor said she did not think the footpaths had been much changed in Castor Bay since the 1950s.

A walk along Beach Rd reveals multiple cracks and several uneven spots.

Chair Ruth Jackson suggested the board lobby Auckland Transport about the crossing and footpath safety in the area.

Another local issue was pohutukawa trees blocking people's views and a slip on the Kennedy Park clifftop, said Wood.

The slip had been there since 2017. It slip was now about 40 metres down the cliff face.

"Community Facilities are of the view that the pohutukawa trees sitting behind are probably enough to keep them safe for the present time."

During the America's Cup racing early this year, a resident asked why the council had left the pohutukawa trees to grow so



**Tracking down... Pohutukawa on the Kennedy Park clifftop**

views out to the Hauraki Gulf were lost.

Wood had been told pohutukawa were sacrosanct in that area and staff wouldn't be touching them.

Senior board adviser Tristan Coulson said pohutukawa and their roots were anchors for the coastline, and staff were hesitant to undertake any maintenance or pruning to improve people's views.

O'Connor: "They have been talking about those trees ever since they were planted 25 years ago."



**Cracking up... a Castor Bay footpath**

# Bruce Mason renovations to be completed next year



**Staged project... Work is under way at the Bruce Mason Centre, to add a convention space with views**

Renovations at the Bruce Mason Centre in Takapuna are set to be finished by mid-2022, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board has been told.

Construction at the centre resumed under Level-3 lockdown.

"We're hoping to be able to extend the convention space above the offices to give a new space, with picture windows over Takapuna, which will seat 200-300 people," Robbie Macrae of Auckland Unlimited, which now operates the building, told a board meeting this month.

Board member Aidan Bennett said it was good that money was being spent on the centre. "It's an important facility for Takapuna."

He asked whether the revenue from the carpark went to Auckland Unlimited or Auckland Transport. Macrae confirmed it went to Auckland Unlimited.

"There's a school of thought that there's not a lot of car parking in Takapuna but that's a carpark that's very much under-utilised," Bennett said. "And I think some work needs to be done... to make the public

aware of how accessible that is to [central] Takapuna. That's a very convenient place to park."

The Toka Puia car park was "brilliant" but Bennett said he could see parking at the other end working just as well. He suggested spending money promoting the Bruce Mason car park, "particularly obviously with the change coming up on the main Takapuna car park site".

This will be closed for good when Panuku commences town-square development on the site.

## ADVERTISEMENT

# WELCOMING SCOTT AND DELL TO WILLIAM SANDERS

There are two new faces at Ryman Healthcare's William Sanders Retirement Village.

Sales Advisors Scott Bremner and Dell Smythe are the latest members to join the Devonport village's team with both bringing a wealth of local knowledge and relevant experience to their roles.

Scott has lived in Devonport for 40 years and raised three children along with his wife Nicole, making him a familiar face at various sausage sizzles, school fundraisers and sporting sidelines.

Many locals may recognise him either from walking his dog Daisy or seeing him head down to the beach on a mission to catch some snapper.

"I'm the guy that always goes fishing in shorts," laughs Scott, who lives across Lake Road from the village in Narrow Neck.

"I've got a little tin boat that I take out. I know all the snapper spots and if I'm not in my boat I'll often fish off my kayak too."

Dell lives in Belmont and while she originally hails from Christchurch, Auckland has been her home for 15 years - the last 7 of those spent living on the North Shore.



## Sales advisors Scott and Dell

"You very quickly become part of that tapestry, the people of the peninsula," says Dell, who has been doing plenty of beach walks during lockdown.

"I'm a stone's throw from the mangroves on one side and the beach on the other side and it becomes a lifestyle and a way of being - my 14-year-old step-daughter goes to Takapuna Grammar and they're always getting the kayaks out."

Both Scott and Dell say they love people and are excited at the prospect of doing something that can bring such positive changes to a person's life.

Having worked as Inflight Manager on international 777s for Air New Zealand for many years plus a stint in real estate, Scott saw the Ryman role as the

perfect way to use his sales knowledge from real estate and his customer service, safety and compliance skills from aviation.

"I have always felt my role was assisting people on a journey from one place to another.

"I just want to help people really, I get satisfaction from that."

Dell has worked for many years in sales and hospitality, but it was the formative experience of her first ever job working in a care home when she was a teenager that made this new role leap out to her.

"I forged the most amazing friendships with the most amazing individuals and just hearing their stories, which were so unique from anything I had ever experienced, it made me appreciate people from all walks of life

- and made me realise I am definitely a people person!"

Scott says he had always appreciated what a great asset the retirement village was for Devonport right from the start, especially with the range of comprehensive living and care options available.

"Having that security of knowing you will be looked after if your health needs change is huge, not just for the residents themselves but it provides peace of mind for their families too, knowing that if mum's in the village and something happens that she's going to be looked after."

And he should know. "One of my aunties lives at Ryman's Edmund Hillary Village, and she just loves it.

"She's so busy I had to make an appointment to call her the other day!"

Dell has an equally inspiring relative - her grandfather Don Smythe is a country singer in the South Island who has a well known hit called 'A Night Alone with You'.

"He is one of my favourite humans! And he just goes to show that you should never underestimate and never assume what great things

people are capable of at any time in their life!"

Scott and Dell, who both share a passion for plants and gardening, cooking and reading, have been overwhelmed with the warm and friendly welcome they've received from their new colleagues and potential future residents, even if it has all been online so far!

"I've had to get the tie on again for Zoom conversations which is the first time I've worn one in a long time," laughs Scott.



**Apartments available now.**

Call Scott on **0800 555 104** or Dell on **0800 555 106** to find out more.

**WILLIAM SANDERS VILLAGE**

7 Ngataringa Road, Devonport

**rymanhealthcare.co.nz**





**KINGDOM**  
DECORATORS

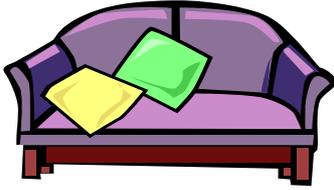
**WE GUARANTEE  
OUR WORKMANSHIP**

Backed by over 35 years' experience of quality preparation and painting

Ph Ross Kingdom  
**021 723 413**

**REGISTERED  
PROFESSIONAL PAINTERS**

**RECOVER YOUR  
LOUNGE SUITE**



*Call us for a free quotation and put the life back into that favourite chair or lounge suite*

**AWARD FURNITURE**

Phone COLIN on 480 5864



**RENE GARDENING**  
a garden specialist

Tree Pruning  
Hedge trimming  
Garden maintenance  
Landscaping

Contact Rene on  
021 134 5604  
info@renegardening.co.nz




**EYE FOR DETAIL**

North Shore based renovations, new builds, design & project management since 1985.

Trustworthy licensed builders specialising in residential alterations/extensions, kitchens, bathrooms, tiling, re-cladding.

Contact Alex Carey on  
0274 660 666, or visit our website  
[www.efd.kiwi](http://www.efd.kiwi)



**Tony Gasperini**  
Qualified Local Arborist

Tree & Tall Hedge Specialist  
**027 770-0099**  
Devonport, Auckland  
tony.gasperini@gmail.com



**FENCE BROTHERS**

- FENCES
- PERGOLAS
- DECKS
- PROPERTY MAINTENANCE
- RETAINING WALLS

**www.fencebros.co.nz**

CONTACT US FOR A FREE QUOTE  
**0800 336 232**

The Rangitoto  
**Observer**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**SERVICES OFFERED**

**FixIT Handyman** - excellent work, practical budget, most jobs welcome, interior/exterior free quote. Josh 021 261 8322.

**WANTED**

**Cars Wanted.** Cars Vans 4x4s Utes Trucks 24/7 Cash paid 0800 203 060.

**CARS WANTED**

- Cars • Vans
- 4x4s • Utes • Trucks

**24/7**

**CASH PAID** 

**0800 203 060**

**BOOKKEEPING SERVICES**

Xero, MYOB, GST, Payroll

[www.ljbass.co.nz](http://www.ljbass.co.nz)  
info@ljbass.co.nz  
**027 331 3164**




**LJ BASS**  
Bookkeeping & Secretarial Services

**Support your paper for the price of a cup of coffee.**

Go to [rangitoto-observer.co.nz](http://rangitoto-observer.co.nz) and click on 'Become a supporter' at the top of the page.



## Save the Shore from this intensification disaster

The Rangitoto Observer article (15 October) outlining the massive housing growth in Milford and the rest of the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area is frightening, particularly the over-dominance of multi-unit developments and the huge apartment complexes planned at Smales Farm and Esmonde Rd.

An editorial leader in the *Ponsonby News* says it all – John Elliott: Over-Intensification of Auckland Will Kill It.

“After thrashing out the Auckland Council’s Unitary Plan, the government is apparently pushing Auckland to further intensify the inner city, way beyond the provisions of the Unitary Plan.”

The Observer notes that the National Policy Statement on Urban Housing allows major additional intensification within 1500 metres of transport hubs and Metropolitan Centres like Takapuna. A quarter of current consents are in this zone and could no doubt be reviewed. New developments will add massively to the population and congestion in that central area, already stressed.

The statement also allows the overriding of the heritage-protection zones of the Plan – so

important on the North Shore.

Margot McRae, Devonport Heritage chair, says that Devonport, along with all Auckland’s old kauri housing areas, is facing the biggest threat to its heritage ever.

These have protection in place under the Unitary Plan, as Special Character Areas (SCAs) where all pre-1940 houses require planning consent for demolition or major alteration to maintain the overall heritage and environmental ambience of the area.

The council is now allocating each house in SCAs an individual heritage assessment which could lead to apartment blocks being built between two Victorian villas, a heritage and community-character nonsense.

Compounding this is the council review of the rating of specific heritage buildings, with many downgrades.

The Devonport peninsula and Takapuna/Milford is a unique and special place, from historic, heritage, environmental, geographic, and logistical viewpoints

The Takapuna metropolitan centre, as the hub, is logistically restricted by the coast and Lake Pupuke. Both the Devonport peninsula

and the hilly northern coastal strip have unusual geographic and logistical restraints. It is not suited for a number of reasons for major intensification.

It should have an special exemption from the requirements of the new government imposition.

Councillor Chris Darby, chair of council planning, says holding the line on design provisions is a challenge: “The government is interested in quantities. Aucklanders, too, but they will not like it if they just get quantity outcomes and not quality outcomes that will last for ever.”

He is dead right and I urge him and councillor Richard Hills to provide a strong lead in saving the North Shore from this potential irreversible disaster, and get the exemption.

Council has told the government that the Three Waters proposal is not on and needs change – the same approach should happen with the National Urban Housing policy in our special place.

Time for a strong community push-back.

**Bill Rayner**

**Devonport Grey Power president**

## Rubbish effort by bin contractors on coastal strip

As a local resident who walks the strip between Black Rock, Thorne Bay and Takapuna on a daily basis, I am alarmed to see the rubbish bins on this strip overflowing day after day – unserviced by the council contractor. (I have been advised by the council that these should be serviced at least daily.

The problem is also exacerbated by people just piling their rubbish, bags of dog poo, pizza boxes and empty beer bottles on top of and all around already overflowing bins.

These bins at Minnehaha Ave and the Black Rock Pump Station are the only two servicing this strip of walkway.

Come on, people! Come on, council! This area is a jewel in our North Shore crown and deserves better.

If the bins are full, take your rubbish with you – yes, YOUR rubbish.

Summer is here, picnics are encouraged, beaches are heaving from early morning to night.

Rubbish volumes are up. We need action now, please.

I’ve been down there this morning, done a clean-up and added extra bags – I’m not just a squeaky wheel.

I have also emailed council three times in a week, including photographs, and still no action.

**Lynden Shanahan**

(See council response at right.)



**Be a tidy Kiwi... These rubbish bins on the Takapuna-Milford Coastal Track have been left unemptied and overflowing**

### Prompts from unimpressed residents get results

The overflowing rubbish bins on the coastal track were finally emptied on Thursday last week, with Auckland Council acknowledging they had been overlooked.

“We are working with a new operator, and they were not aware of these bins,” said council manager for area operations Sarah Jones.

The collection contract did not specify a schedule to empty the bins, she said. It

was outcome based, requiring bins not to be overflowing, meaning the number of collections was based on levels of use. This meant more collections were made in summer when more people used beaches and parks.

Under Step 1 of Alert Level 3, beach activity had picked up to near summer rates. Bins at Takapuna Beach, for example, were currently being emptied six times a day.

## Write to the Observer

We welcome letters. Please limit to 300 words on local topics.

Nom de plumes or submissions without a name will not be printed.

Email [news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz](mailto:news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz) or write to Letters, PO Box 32 275, Devonport.

# BAYLEYS

**NEW LISTING**



## Hauraki 73 Jutland Road

### Family, friends, future

Prime real estate directly across the road from Hauraki Primary School, this four-bedroom, two-bathroom home offers families the perfect start to their kids' schooling life, provides friends with a north-facing back garden for year-round entertaining and fun in the sun, and will give astute buyers confidence that the level 759sqm site zoned 'suburban' is the perfect land holding for future development, as evidenced on the identical sized neighbouring site.

Hauraki lovers, your search is over.

[bayleys.co.nz/1451349](http://bayleys.co.nz/1451349)

4 1 2 2

**Auction (unless sold prior)**

1.30pm, Thu 4 Nov 2021

28 Northcroft Street, Takapuna

**View** by appointment

**Kathryn Robertson** 021 490 480

[kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz](mailto:kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz)

BAYLEYS REAL ESTATE LTD, TAKAPUNA,  
LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008

# Engineer to the stars has ears out for new talent

After working with top musicians in New Zealand and the US, Neil Baldock is sharing his skills and experience at Depot Sound on the Shore. He tells Helen Vause about his journey in sound.

Kiwi sound engineer Neil Baldock had it pretty good in the music industry in Los Angeles, mixing with big-time artists and more or less living the dream – while still entertaining his own dreams of home.

But when Covid struck LA early last year, the big studios shut down overnight and suddenly his work began to run out. Sitting on the sofa, he saw Devonport's Depot Artspace back in his home town of Auckland was looking for an audio engineer to manage its studios.

To Baldock this was a piece of luck in the face of a tough situation. For the Depot Sound studio it was a fortuitous hire for the future of a small operation known for helping make big things happen.

"Family and love were the two things drawing me back and I had been planning to return anyway," says Baldock. "But this job was the lifeline at that moment."

A year into the job, he's loving it – even if lockdown has got in the way again and left the studio silent for now, with Baldock scrambling around trying to figure out what he can get back on track in such uncertain days.

The studio calendar had been packed for these weeks and the place should have been humming with the many musicians booked in to record. Young talent among them.

Earlier in the year Baldock had reached out to the teenage talent on the Shore by launching a singing-songwriting contest through secondary schools.

"I really had no idea what response we would get and I was surprised and delighted at the high number of entries we got from kids at 17 schools. It was great."

It was also the start of what he hopes will be an ongoing relationship with schools. The winners got free recording time in a step on their musical journeys.

Baldock's own journey and the ups and downs of an industry he loves date back decades. For three years in a row he was up for New Zealand Music Awards, taking the Best Engineer title in 2012.

He recalls he was probably set on his career path as a kid in the 80s, glued for hours to the family television set. Shows like *Star Trek* opened up a whole world of production and technical possibilities. And then there was homegrown music show *Ready to Roll*.

"Those shows," recalls Baldock with a nostalgic grin, "they just had it all going on. Those consoles, and lights and the wow of just getting it all happening. For my brother and me it was the highlight of the week and we'd be recreating our own version in the living room as we went along in awe of it all. I was totally rapt in it all. It was what I wanted to do."

The route to the top studios wasn't quite clear for an Auckland schoolboy at that point, even if he was burning with a passion for it.

First, before he could get his hands on consoles and levers and all things tech, he had



**Sound advice... Neil Baldock is out to capture "those magic moments"**

to escape from his own near-miss with the bright lights.

At high school he'd been a more than competent piano and guitar player. His skill in composition and performance won him a place on stage in the end-of-year school concerts. But, he says: "I've never been a performance kind of guy."

As a school leaver studying sound engineering, young Baldock regularly called the recording studios of the day around Auckland, offering to work for free. Eventually one of those calls opened a door.

He found himself on reception, running errands, picking up lunches, doing invoices and making himself as useful as he could, while also looking for a step up when his studies were done. Over time, his skills grew, often through unpaid work and backed by parental support.

"I was living for free at home, and Mum came to pick me up from the studio night after night and sometimes at three in the morning. Because of course there was no way I could get back home on my own.

"I really wanted to get in and I chased it hard," he recalls.

Proper studio jobs and then travel followed. A decade ago he was at the forefront of engineering in New Zealand, heading up Neil Finn's Roundhead Studios as chief producer and chief engineer.

He had a long list of acclaimed-record credits to his name, having recorded many of the country's top musicians, including Finn, Crowded House, The Phoenix Foundation, Shihad, Dave Dobbyn and Bic Runga.

Going to Los Angeles, at first on a job and then to break into freelance engineering, was a change of gear. In a hotly competitive city where, Baldock points out, many freelance engineers are in reality earning most of their living as Uber drivers, he started out well in

a house with a studio in the garden and with good contacts.

In six years in the city he worked with Grammy Award winning producers, top recording artists such as Billy Ray Cyrus and Joe Satriani, and worked in half a dozen of the world's greatest studios. There were, he says, more than a few 'pinch myself' moments when various superstars wandered in.

The Devonport Depot studio couldn't be further from the bright lights and action of the Los Angeles scene but, says Baldock, it's been an important niche facility from where many musicians and singers have launched onto much bigger things.

"It's a perfect little space. It's community based and it's here to provide a very valuable service. The Depot has such a rich history and it's still going strong.

"There is incredible talent that comes out of this community and from further afield. We have a responsibility to nurture that talent. I'm really enjoying being here."

The schools contest, bringing in the students to record, was a highlight. It was an intimidating experience for many of them but for him another enjoyable challenge beyond capturing a great sound. Like making the talent feel at ease and coaxing the best out of them. As he puts it, "getting those magic moments". He plans for the songwriting contest to be an annual gig that expands and develops.

To while away various lockdowns, Baldock has been indulging in a bit of redecorating of the blank walls of his functional studios.

He has opted to introduce a bit of bling and music business memorabilia.

After lots of searching on Trade Me he came up with the dozens of shiny record covers that paper the walls, and he threaded multi-coloured fairy lights through the montage.

"Yeah, everyone seems to like it," he grins.



## WHAT'S ON @ Takapuna Library

Wondering what ebooks the Takapuna Library staff are reading during lockdown?

Check out their latest picks below:

### The Appeal

by Janice Hallett

There is a mystery to solve in the sleepy town of Lower Lockwood, starting with the arrival of two secretive newcomers, and ending with a tragic death. Throughout the amateur dramatics society's disastrous staging of All My Sons and the shady charity appeal for a little girl's medical treatment, the murderer hid in plain sight.

### Dune Song

by Anissa M. Bouziane

After witnessing the collapse of the World Trade Center, Jeehan Nathaar leaves her New York life with her sense of identity fractured and her American dream destroyed. She returns to Morocco to make her home with a family that's not her own. Healed by their kindness but caught up in their troubles, Jeehan struggles to move beyond the pain and confusion of September 11.

### God's bankers: a history of money and power at the Vatican

by Gerald Posner

A fast-paced expose of the money and the cardinals-turned-financiers at the heart of the Vatican - the world's biggest, most powerful religious institution.

### Bella: My Life in Food

by Annabel Langbein

Annabel Langbein, New Zealand's most popular cookbook author, writes about her remarkable life and how food has shaped it, highlighting some of the recipes that have resonated most strongly with her over the years.

New to ebooks?

Go to [aucklandlibraries.govt.nz](http://aucklandlibraries.govt.nz) and click on eCollections for easy to follow instructions.

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

**Kathryn Robertson**

Residential Sales  
021 490 480

**BAYLEYS**

E: [kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz](mailto:kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz)

W: [kathrynrobertson.bayleys.co.nz](http://kathrynrobertson.bayleys.co.nz)

LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008

# Student film-makers from local

Several Takapuna students have made the top 15 in the local leg of an international silent-film competition.

The International Youth Silent Film Festival (IYSFF) is a global competition for filmmakers aged 20 and under to create a three-minute silent film, set to one of 10 musical scores composed for the festival.

AGE School in Takapuna produced three films which made the top 15 in the New Zealand

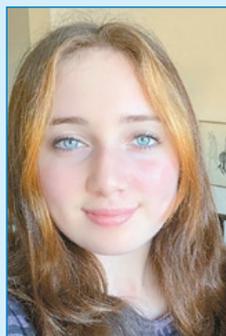
competition, run from Tauranga. On one, *Operation Sparrow*, they had help from Westlake Girls student Emma Wagner who volunteered as camera operator on a film directed by AGE student Timothy Chen. "The actors did a great job and altogether it was a really organised and well-thought out film," said Emma.

Timothy said he really liked planning the film, being creative, writing the story and finding props. The production itself had more time constraints, requiring focus and problem solving, rather than so much creativity. He learned a lot.

AGE film-maker Sveta Hackett, who directed *The Good, the Bad and the Dolly*, said she enjoyed picking and choosing ideas that would work within three minutes. "My favourite part of the production has to be the beach scenes where the three kids end up becoming cowboys/cowgirl and running around Takapuna Beach on their hobby horses.

"We actually had to teach one of our actors how to gallop, but he could not get the hang of it. We kept trying but in the end he just decided to wiggle from side to side. I remember thinking at the time, 'Well, that's not going to work like I wanted it to'. But we went back and edited it, and now it's pretty much the best shot we have. Everyone laughs when they watch it."

But there were setbacks, including Covid interruptions. "We had an actor pull out the day before we went to shoot. We had an actor who knocked his teeth out, so we were out of action. We also had an actor leaving the school, so it was a rush to finish everything before he



Emma Wagner

left. Then of course, this big Delta lockdown.

"I had no hope that we would be able to enter this year. I was so gutted; I thought that was it and there was nothing to be done. But with the power of very good editing and great minds, we pulled through and produced something that, I would say, is absolutely epic."

Sveta said she could possibly take filming into her career one day. "I do have plans to be a

journalist and I'd love to be a TV presenter. I've always been the one in front of the camera or on the stage. So this was a different experience this time around as I had to pull back and let the kids work their magic."

The eight-year-old director of *Reach Out... 'n' I'll Be There*, Ben Baker, said he enjoyed taking ideas and making them a reality. "The filmmaking process is really creative. I especially love combining visual images with sound effects to create something really cool.

"I loved being able to combine two of my favourite things - skateboarding and filmmaking. And it was even better doing that with my friends." Ben said he would continue to do filmmaking as a hobby but he wanted to be a pilot or an astronaut.

AGE School teacher Sherry Wagner said the filmmaking process - from planning through to editing - taught the students many skills, from communication to problem-solving, on top of the technical learning.

"The fact that it's a silent film festival allows students to really focus on visual storytelling. You can't rely on the subtitles or rely on dialogue."

It was great that there were primary and intermediate students competing, she said, giving work the chance to be seen beyond school.

Emma said she hoped to be in the film industry one day, either in front of or behind the camera. She had already done quite a few acting jobs. on TV shows and commercials.

• The festival finals will be streamed on 11 November. The top two Kiwi films will go to the IYSFF Global Awards 2022, held in Portland, Oregon, in the United States.



Action... Timothy Chen (centre) and Pearce Christian plot a film scene with Ben Baker (right) waiting for his chance to skate into shot



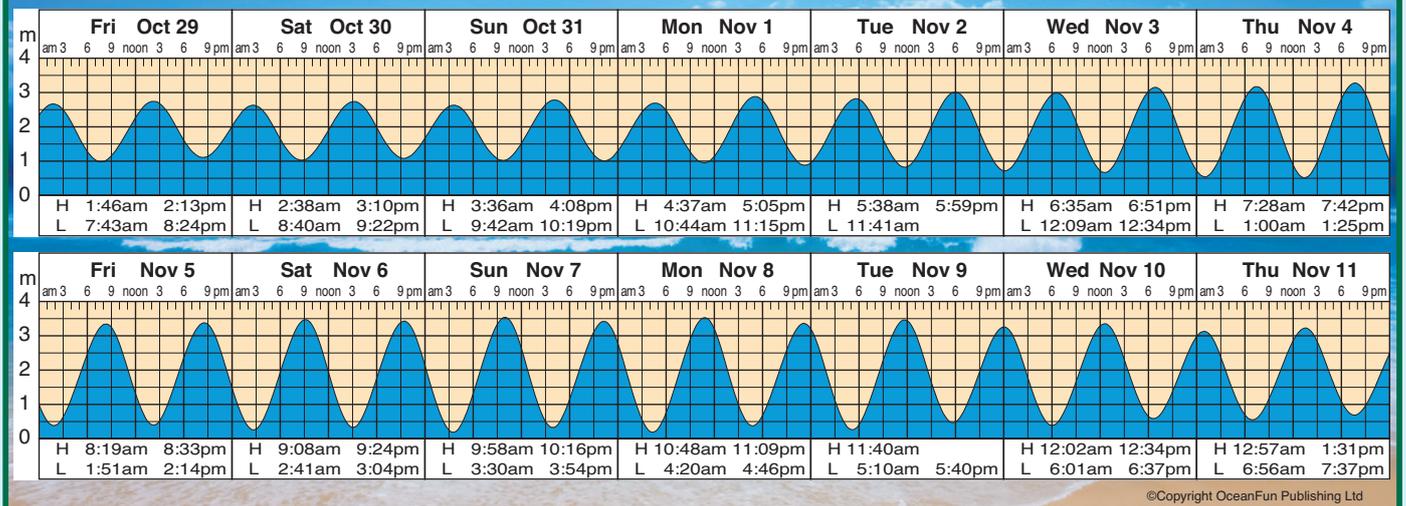
# schools make silent flick competition finals



It's a wrap... The AGE school team after filming ended (from left) teacher Sherry Wagner and students Amelia Barnes-Hogan, Sveta Hackett, Charlie Grey, Oscar Cornes and Timothy Chen. Below: On location at Takapuna Beach during a stand-off in the shoot for *The Good, the Bad and the Dolly* cast members (from left) Grey, Barnes-Hogan and Cornes show their acting chops.



## Milford / Takapuna Tides



# PREMIUM<sup>®</sup>



Check out latest listing at [Premium.co.nz/eBook](https://Premium.co.nz/eBook)

At Premium we're here to help you make buying and selling your home as easy as possible. We have a fine selection of quality homes, apartments and lifestyle properties ready for you to view now!



**CASTOR BAY**  
49B SEAVIEW ROAD

Easy to live in low maintenance and immaculate presentation with 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 living areas with great separation and flow to both private terrace and sunny outdoor patio.

JELENA FREEMAN 021 65 65 63

**SOLD**



**GREENHITHE**  
1 ALMOND GROVE

Swim throughout the day and night enjoying the spectacular pool area providing you and your family with your very own piece of paradise. Featuring 4 bedrooms, 2 living areas, designer kitchen. Fully fenced 1,211sqm site.

LEWIS GUY 021 867 355

**SOLD**



**GREENHITHE**  
19 KINGFISHER GROVE

Located in sought after Kingfisher Grove and in a delightful village community with highly regarded Decile 10 local schooling and Kristen school nearby. Featuring 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 car garaging.

ALISON PARKER 021 983 533  
COREY KNAPP 021 241 0081

**SOLD**



**LONG BAY**  
17 BEARING PARADE

Set on an elevated 626sqm (approx) site, this stunning new home features 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms (incl four ensuites) plus two wc's. Multiple relaxation zones provides tranquility flowing through the open plan living.

ROBERT MILNE 022 011 24 94  
RICHARD MILNE 021 770 611

**SOLD**



**TAKAPUNA**  
1D/6 TOSCANA

This impressive 140sqm (plus decks), 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, one level apartment is all you could dream of, for an easy lifestyle. An inviting open plan living area with a study nook opening to the north west facing generous deck

ALISON PARKER 021 983 533

**SOLD**



**TAKAPUNA**  
505/3 THE SENTINEL

This 80sqm apartment with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and city, bridge and water views allows personal space with lock-up and leave ease and will have you feeling like you're on a hotel holiday!

ALISON PARKER 021 983 533

**SOLD**