

The Rangitoto Observer

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 82 - May 27, 2022

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

Local neighbourhoods
not so leafy... p2

Residents group asked to
look beyond car park... p5

Sir Roger Hall introduces
new play in Takapuna... p15

Coastal walkway access likely to be saved

Public access over part of the landmark Takapuna-Milford walkway which detours through private land is likely to be guaranteed.

After a wooden bridge near Black Rock collapsed in 2011, Paul Firth, then owner of the property at 9 Kitchener Rd, allowed walkers to pass through his garden to con-

tinue around the coast.

Long-running discussions over the possibility of Auckland Council acquiring the property remained unresolved when Firth died last year.

But with negotiations underway between council and those who have inherited the property, it is believed public access will be ensured.

The property is now owned by six beneficiaries of Firth's will and two others who were left a half-share by his late sister, Ann.

Firth's will lays out his wishes for the land but adds it is up to the beneficiaries to decide what happens to it.

To page 2

Teens hit the beach for clean-up



Hands-on helpers... North Shore Youth MP Ivy Mitchell (left) rounded up students from Westlake Boys and Girls high schools for a rubbish clean-up at Takapuna Beach to mark Youth Week this month. Among those joining Ivy, who is head girl at Westlake Girls, were Michael Wassell (right), who is head boy at Westlake Boys' and Brady Sylvester. All three are in Year 13.



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Briefs

Bono goes walkabout

A cheeky thief who is presumably a U2 fan has made off with a photograph of the band's singer, Bono, from a Takapuna shopfront. The image was swiped from a Lake Rd showroom soon after the Music, Concerts and Performances exhibition began this month. It has since been replaced. Thirty photographs of musicians, drawn from entries in last year's Aotearoa Music Photography Awards, are brightening empty shop windows until 2 August.

Messy tree for chop

Falling pinecones from a street tree in Forrest Hill have created such a nuisance it must be removed, according to Auckland Council. It has lodged a resource consent to fell a sizeable mature stone pine outside 4 Arosa Place. A more suitable tree will be planted there.

Local board meets police

A meeting between police area commander Stefan Sagar and the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board was a success, board chair Ruth Jackson says, though she was unwilling to reveal much of what it covered. The 13 May meeting followed the expressions of concern from the board over the lack of police presence locally, limited station opening hours and the rise of crimes such as burglaries. Jackson said it was a "positive talk" but did not want to reveal private information. "We certainly shared our concerns about crime in the area and there were some positive responses to that."

Dinners delayed

Plans to extend free community dinners to Takapuna have been delayed by caution about Covid cases. The Kai 4 Communities charity, which has run Kaitahi dinners in Bayswater-Belmont for several years, planned to use the Takapuna Methodist Church as a venue last week, but has put its plans on hold.

Local tree coverage worst on North Shore

The lowest tree coverage on the North Shore is in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board (DTLB) area, according to an Auckland Council report.

Trees cover just 16 per cent of the DTLB zone, compared with 30.3 per cent coverage in the Kaipātiki Local Board area, 27.3 per cent for Upper Harbour and 25.2 per cent for the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area.

Half of DTLB has what is rated as 'low' tree coverage – 10 to 15 per cent – while the other half has 'moderate' coverage, of 15 to 20 per cent

The number of parks, sports grounds, open spaces and golf courses in the DTLB area could possibly be a contributing factor to the low tree coverage.

Across the entire Auckland region, DTLB stands ninth of the 21 local boards on tree coverage.

Auckland Council is proposing to raise

\$574 million from a targeted climate-change rate over the next 10 years to fund a climate package, which includes investing in public transport and urban tree cover aimed at offsetting temperature rises.

In a submission to council, the DTLB supported using the climate rate for tree-planting and looking at new rules to give council more power to protect trees.

The council goal is for Auckland to have 30 per cent tree coverage by 2050.

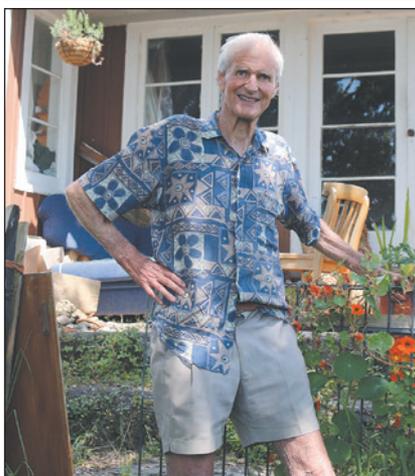
One of the barriers to achieving that goal is that trees are being felled on private land to make way for development, the DTLB said.

The climate rate was supported by 66 per cent of public submitters from Devonport-Takapuna who gave feedback on council's 2022-23 budget.

The board also wanted to make public transport more attractive to encourage people out of private cars.

Council expected to acquire access

From page 1



Access allowed... the late Paul Firth let walkers cross part of his Kitchener Rd property

"At this point it is my hope that the Black Rock property will function as a writers' residence, or some other purpose relevant to it being in past times a gathering point for writers and artists," Firth said in his will, dated September 2015.

A lawyer for one group of beneficiaries, Takapuna-based Alex Witten-Hannah, said negotiations with the council over the property were at an early stage.

However, "the executor of Paul's estate is confident that the public access across the front of the property will be acquired by Auckland Council," Witten-Hannah told the Observer.

It is understood any moves for the council to buy the whole property would be hampered by its lack of money following pandemic-related budget reductions.

In his will Firth said: "I appreciate that there are many practicalities to be considered including the role (if any) of Auckland Council in recognising my wishes and those of my late sister Ann."



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AI fresco art pops up in Takapuna



Hurstmere Green was transformed into an artists' gallery last weekend for the Tipua Sculpture Exhibition. Andrew Turner (above) from Leigh set up his colourful work in support of the Lake House Arts Centre's event in central Takapuna. He combines traditional, cultural wood carving with abstract art. "If you want to do it, the inspiration will take you. You've got no choice after that," he quips. More public art, see page 14.

Wood eyes council, undecided on board

George Wood, who has entered the race for a seat on Auckland Council, says he is yet to decide if he will also stand for a third term on the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

Wood, a former three-term Mayor of North Shore City, has teamed up with Kaipatiki Local Board deputy chair Danielle Grant, on the Communities and Residents ticket, saying he wants the North Shore to get a better deal. Resourcing and reliable public transport were key issues.

They are standing against sitting councillors Chris Darby and Richard Hills for the two North Shore ward seats. Nominations for local body elections in October close in mid-August.

Wood served on Auckland Council from 2010-2016, before opting for the local board.

WorkSafe probe

WorkSafe is making enquiries after scaffolding collapsed at the Sentinel in Takapuna last weekend, closing eateries, including Mamak, below for several days.

It is understood the scaffolding came off the swimming pool deck near the base of the tower during heavy winds overnight on Friday. Fire and Emergency New Zealand attended on Saturday morning. The courtyard area between Northcroft and Huron Sts was still cordoned off early this week.

WorkSafe said it had been notified of the incident and was making initial enquiries.

Need for speed: Split local board opposes 30kmh plan

Trimming speed limits in central Takapuna to 30kmh has been opposed by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board, which voted in a split decision for a reduction to 40kmh instead.

Auckland Transport (AT) has proposed a limit cut to 30kmh on multiple streets across central Takapuna, as part of a Safe Speeds programme.

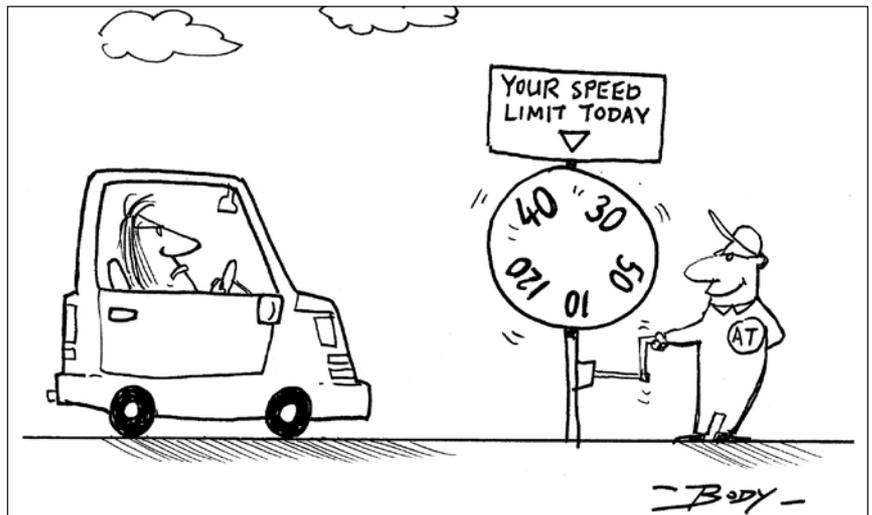
All of Byron Ave, Blomfield Spa, Huron St, Northcroft St, The Strand, The Promenade and The Terrace would be affected, along with parts of Hurstmere Rd, Killarney St, and Lake Rd, from Anzac St to 25 metres south of Blomfield Spa.

At a meeting last week to decide the board's feedback, member George Wood questioned AT's response to the rising road toll. "I just think AT is missing the point on the road deaths," he said. "I don't think putting 30k in these particular areas is going to help us very much."

Member Aidan Bennett said the board should trust the experts. "There's a definite correlation between speed and safety. Dropping from 50 to 30 really over time will change behaviour."

Member Jan O'Connor said backing for the lower speed through public feedback – 68 in support among 263 respondents – was not high enough to warrant a change.

She was not a fan of the existing 30kmh limit



on Hurstmere Rd.

Board chair Ruth Jackson suggested the reduction to 40kmh rather than 30, noting that many residents did not support any speed reduction.

Van Tonder said the term 'many' was inaccurate and misleading.

Jackson took umbrage at what she said was a questioning of her integrity.

She had noted a number of submissions were opposed, as well as hearing anecdotally

from the community.

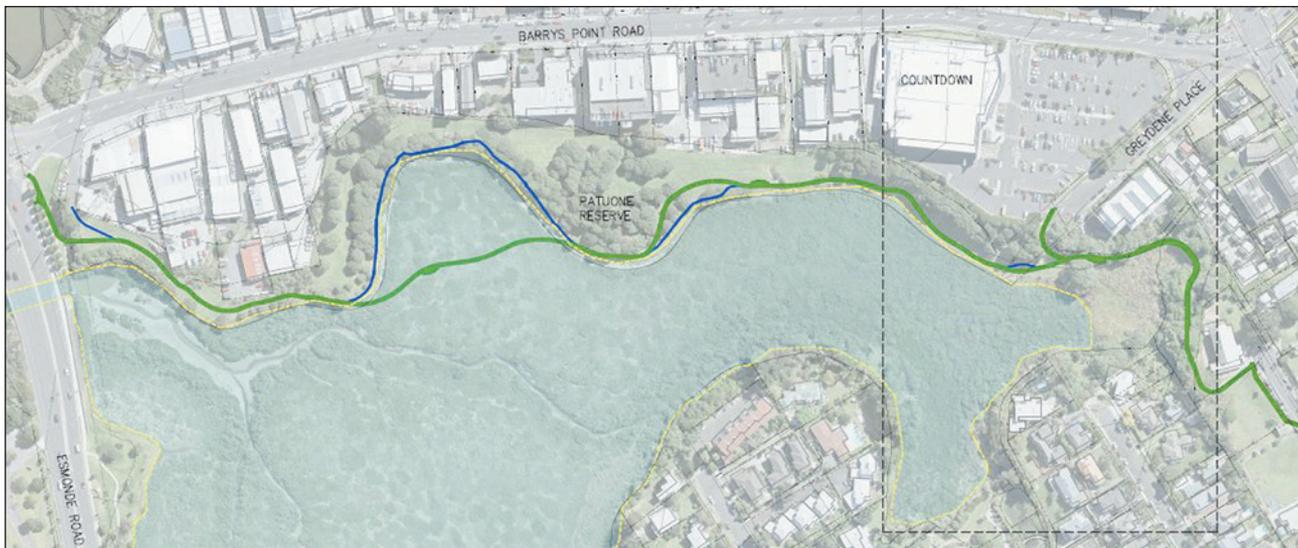
"Many" isn't quantified. It may be subjective but it isn't dishonest."

The board voted 4-2 in favour of a reduction to 40kmh, with Bennett and van Tonder opposing.

Its feedback will go to AT, but the decision is out of the board's hands.

If finally approved by AT, the new limits are scheduled for introduction at the end of November.

Rundown walkway given a makeover



Mangrove meander... The Patuone walkway runs from Esmonde Rd (at left) to Auburn St reserve (right). The purple sections are existing pathways that will be realigned to the new green route.

The first section of an upgrade to a little-known walkway in Takapuna that is due to open by the end of the month.

The path and boardwalk of the Patuone Walkway, running from Auburn St to Esmonde Rd, had fallen into a state of disrepair, requiring a staged upgrade.

The first stage, from Auburn St to Grey-

dene Place – the small lane behind Countdown Takapuna – is almost finished.

“There have been some delays caused by Covid-19 isolation requirements, but these have not impacted the budget,” Auckland Council area operations manager Sarah Jones said.

The cost of the project was forecast at

\$1.9 million in February.

“Stage two, which runs from Greystone Place to Esmonde Rd, is now also under way,” she said.

Part of the concrete footpath for the second stage is already poured. The section is expected to be completed in the final quarter of the year.

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Lobby group asked to look to future

Takapuna needs to pull together to build the best future it can, says latest residents' association chair Steven Salt (pictured).

He wants the Takapuna Residents' Association (TRA) – founded to campaign to keep the camping ground and the central car-park site – to now look ahead.

"The car-park matter is pretty well done," he told the association's annual meeting. "It's probably time for the TRA to become a voice for Takapuna around more than one issue."

While that might be hard for some people to swallow, it was time to rebuild trust and collaboration among the area's stakeholders, he said. With council and business groups having supported the Takapuna town square development on the Anzac St car park, an alternative outcome had been hard to achieve.

"Takapuna is like a river – we are not going to stop it, things will keep changing, but the best we can hope is to guide it."

Salt said he wanted to ensure the TRA evolved and was consulted to ensure the voice of residents was heard.

About 20 people were at the meeting last week. They applauded Salt's vision and were



quick to take up his invitation to spell out issues they thought should be championed. Among these was speaking up for a stronger police presence and more CCTV cameras, encouraging environmental projects and monitoring intensification. Working with the Milford Residents' Association on common issues was also suggested.

Salt, who took over as chair from Terry Dunleavy several months ago – shortly before Dunleavy, 93, died – acknowledged his predecessor's passion for the TRA and Takapuna. He was a great loss, as were outgoing committee members, said Salt.

The group has a database of around 1000 people and more than 100 signed-up members. Salt said subscription renewals, remaining at \$20 a year, would be an opportunity to see how much of the membership was still active, given some initially signed up to campaigns to save the car park and Sunday market. He said the committee was open to co-opting interested newcomers and part of its aim was to attract new members.

The TRA reported a surplus of \$2000. It intends to develop its communications.

Milford association proud of its impact

Efforts to improve the environment have been cited among the successes of the Milford Residents Association (MRA).

At the group's AGM last week, re-elected co-chairs Deborah Dunsford and Norma Bott said its achievements included being part of the push to improve the condition of Wairau Estuary. This had helped lead to its permanent water-safety warning finally being lifted late last year, after work to trace illegal discharges.

One regular swimmer told the meeting council water-quality improvements from Takapuna to Milford seemed to be paying off, with the water in the best state she had known it in 30 years.

Among other projects in the area, 'halo' areas are being extended, with more pest-trapping volunteers taking up the challenge. The MRA is also working closely with the Pupuke

Birdsong Project, with Kitchener Park a current focus.

Around 30 people attended the meeting. The association has around 90 members, and welcomes newcomers.

It donated \$500 to the Wairau Estuary Environmental Protection Society (WEEPS) and has other money in the bank, although ran at a small loss of \$145 last year.

A \$10,000 contribution it received from Auckland Council towards the Wairau Estuary Boardwalk is on hold, along with the project. "We hope at some stage we can use that," said Bott.

The MRA is pushing for improved pedestrian access from the Omana North development to the estuary area and said it would look into an attendee's call for a crossing near the mall entrance from Kitchener Rd.

Sunnynook leads way in community resilience drive

Sunnynook is leading the way in community-led resilience efforts, with the publishing of information leaflets in both English and Mandarin.

Groups from other suburbs in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area are also working on plans in case of civil defence emergencies. These are designed to give residents an overview of how to best prepare to help themselves and also what assistance is on offer locally.

The initiatives started several years ago after local board members became concerned that city-wide Civil Defence planning had slid. The board arranged for the umbrella group, Auckland North Community and Development Inc (Ancad), to get something under way locally with a series of public meetings held.

Work slowed with Covid, but meetings recently started again. Ancad's community resilience co-ordinator, Madison O'Dwyer, said groups were at different stages of preparedness. Training sessions were planned and St John, Community Patrol and community constables were also involved.

The Sunnynook Community Association decided to forge ahead, its chair Mel Powell said. It tapped into Ancad's support to get a folder of information ready as it wanted information quickly at hand, rather than a detailed plan. This had been well-received by new and existing residents and was available at the community centre.

O'Dwyer said other areas were taking different approaches from Sunnynook and Forrest Hill. The Takapuna group was well under way with a plan for its area, while representatives from Milford and Castor Bay, who came up with a civil defence plan going back a few years, were looking at issuing a flyer and communicating with schools, rather than repeating their efforts.

Plans will be posted soon on a Resilient Auckland North website. People interested in becoming involved in work in their area, can contact madison@ancad.org.nz

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Golf-course plan sparks fears of 'land grab'

A golf-course management plan proposed by Auckland Council opens the door for development on golf-course land, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board says.

The plan has been promoted by council staff as a way of increasing Aucklanders' access to publicly owned golf-course land.

But the local board is opposing it, claiming that its mention of an urban land shortage signals an intent that open space could be used for development.

"This thing smells to me like a land grab," board member Aidan Bennett said at a board meeting last week.

The board voted unanimously to express its opposition to any golf-club land being

released for housing or business use.

Thirteen golf facilities across Auckland use public land, including the Waitemata Golf Club in Devonport, the Takapuna Golf Club on Northcote Rd, the Golf Warehouse Driving Range on Fred Thomas Drive, and the Pupuke Golf Club, whose land is Crown-owned but council-managed. Auckland has a further 25 privately owned golf courses.

The council plan would guide future decisions on golf-course leases when they expire, instead of each being considered individually.

But it also seeks more use of the land for non-golfing activities, and opens the door to development, noting that "housing and business land are in short supply in urban areas".

In its feedback, the local board said that many golf courses were already popular walking destinations, and that perimeter walking, jogging and cycling tracks could be introduced without adversely affecting courses.

Board member Toni van Tonder said she would like to see golf courses used more, and noted that during lockdown people enjoyed walking without fear of getting hit by a ball. "There's always going to be the tension around access for those who aren't golfers," she said.

The Auckland Council parks, arts, community and events committee will decide mid-year whether to adopt the plan.

Hold on: no new toilets soon

A public-toilet review has found some gaps in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area, but any new toilets will be a long time away.

At a local-board workshop this month, Auckland Council parks and places specialist John McKellar presented his findings on the availability and condition of the area's public toilets.

The local board had requested the assessment which will guide it to put its money where the need is.

McKellar's report said facilities were well-spread geographically across the northern end of the board area – from Takapuna to Sunnynook.

Town-centre parks and civic spaces provide services near the coast and bus-station toilets cater for the western boundary near the motorway.

But gaps were found around Quarry Lake/Taharoto Park, in western Milford and Castor Bay, and around Knightsbridge Reserve in Forrest Hill.

Toilets were suggested for Knightsbridge Reserve, Taharoto Park and Barrys Point Reserve.

Board member Jan O'Connor raised concerns about the existing need at Barrys Point Reserve, saying many children playing sport traipsed in to use the Lake House Arts Centre toilet, and that the Akoranga station toilets were 500 metres away.

"The Lake House is not suited for young kids to be coming in with their football gear," she said.

The survey found 19 of the 29 publicly owned facilities in the area were in 'good' condition while the remaining 10 needed upgrading.

The northern end of the board area has three facilities in need of upgrading: The PumpHouse toilet at Killarney Park is in 'average' condition, while the facilities at Sylvan Park are classed as poor, with their renewal on an upcoming work programme. Becroft Park's toilets are also listed as poor and needing renewal.

Feedback from the board will be added into the final report, which will be used to set priorities for future work programmes.

Sunnynook skatepark work to start early next year

Work is expected to start early next year on Sunnynook's long-awaited new skatepark.

To be built on the Sunnynook Square near the basketball court, the facility replaces an old bowl in Sunnynook Park. Its more central location will also benefit from lighting, which like the concept design was signed off recently by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

Community feedback influenced the location and the design which is expected to cost \$458,673.

Budgets did not leave enough money for a pump track for bikes that residents would like to see built in the park, but this has won approval in principle for future funding

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Pretty in pink... Liezel Tiltman and Misty played up to the Hurstmere Green crowd

Woof! Mutts descend for day of doggy fun

Takapuna went to the dogs this month, with canines of all shapes and sizes gathering at Hurstmere Green for a Dog Day Out featuring workshops, product stalls and a pageant runway



Family favourite... Max Harpur, aged 5, and sister Chloe, 8, from Hauraki, with Shadow, who was judged second in the dog runway pageant. With Shadow's birthday looming, she was dressed up in a tutu and a party hat for the occasion.



Double delight... Anne Bennett, with parti poodles Edna and Doce. Parti poodles have irregular, patchy colouring, unlike most poodles, which are usually of just one, solid colour.



Winning steps... Gala Emmerton and her rescued staffy, Bronx, won the pageant. Gala, 17, rescued Bronx from a Hamilton shelter when he was about to be put down on Christmas Eve 2018. The pair now do tricks. Bronx is also Instagram-famous.

Out of this world... Clarissa Ranchor and Hari took dressing up to the next level for their parade through Hurstmere Green, where the audience cheered on entrants



Proud pet parents... (from left) Jennie Pang and Rosie, from Milldale, dressed in matching tops; Salome Nourse, who has a dog photography business, Yellow Lab, brought along Max and his giant yellow bow; and Ling Xu accessorised Louis in blue for his trip from Torbay

Carmel teacher recognised for regional hockey work

A Carmel College teacher has been recognised by Hockey New Zealand for her service to the game.

Kathy Giles (pictured, right), who is a PE teacher, health teacher, dean, and coach and director of hockey at Carmel, will this month receive Hockey New Zealand's Bronze Service Award for her contribution to the sport at the school and across the region.

She is in her 19th year at the school, where she has worked and coached hockey since arriving in New Zealand from the UK.

Giles said she was simply one of many contributing. "Part of me thought 'gosh, you could give this award to a lot of people around Harbour Hockey'," she said.

Giles was a sporting kid at school, took a break at university and picked up hockey again in her early 20s.

"As soon as I got to Carmel as a PE

teacher, it was just the done thing that you got involved in a sport," she said.

"Nineteen years later I haven't missed a year of coaching and I love it."

She enjoys watching a team develop as a unit. "That's just so awesome and I think the students feel it too."

Giles finds hockey great for fitness. "I also love the team side of things. Most of the squads have between 14-16 people you're playing with."

She still plays masters for an ABC (Albany Birkenhead Collegians) team, and previously played premier 2 before deciding to drop a grade to preserve her body.

"But actually I've discovered there's just as much running."

Giles lives in Torbay with her partner and has two step-daughters.

"New Zealand suits me. It suits my lifestyle," she says.



Bike-track repaint awaits Watercare sign-off

Repainting a kids' cycling track on top of a water tank in Forrest Hill is on hold, with Watercare making sure no chemicals will get into drinking water as a result.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board has put \$106,653 towards repainting the learn-to-ride track on the tank at Greville Reserve, which has almost been worn away. The work is behind

schedule due to Auckland Council staff waiting on a report from Watercare.

Watercare northern networks operations manager Tim Scheirlinck said the company had commissioned a report on the reservoir, part of which was to determine any risk of chemicals or paint seeping into the tank. "If there's no risk of paint ingress, we will be happy for

the reservoir to be repainted. However, the timing of this will depend on whether or not the reservoir requires maintenance."

The reservoir was structurally sound and safe for children to play on, he said.

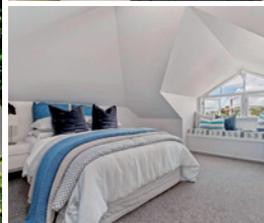
Watercare is expected to update the council shortly after receiving and "digesting" the report.

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Mid-season clash offers tantalising title teaser

Takapuna takes on North Shore in a top-of-the-table North Harbour premier rugby clash tomorrow with a crowd of more than 1000 expected at the Vauxhall Rd grounds in Devonport.

The local derby generates such heat that Takapuna is continuing to locate its coaching staff and bench behind the goalposts instead of on the sideline in front of North Shore's passionate supporters.

"It drops the intensity a bit and takes the pressure off the crowd reactions," said Takapuna head coach Aaron Katipa.

The stage is set for an intriguing day of footie. Last weekend the premier matches went to form but the margins were perhaps larger than expected: North Shore beat Northcote 35-3, and Takapuna thrashed Kumeu 82-0. In the premier reserve grade front-runners North Shore dipped below Takapuna with a 16-10 loss to Northcote, while Takapuna accounted for Kumeu 38-14.

Takapuna goes into the local derby top of the premier and premier reserves divisions with North Shore in second place in both divisions after seven matches.

Players make Harbour cut

Six Takapuna premier rugby players have been selected for North Harbour's high-performance programme. They are: Jay Fonokalafi, Aisea Halo, Tika Lelenga, Talimoni Finau, Harrison Mataele, and Tseard van der Mei. Some of the players are likely to make the North Harbour squad, which has yet to be named.

Katipa said both sides were relatively young, but bolstered by a few veterans. Lock Shane Neville continues in the engine room for Takapuna and is on track to notch his 150th game for the club in the last round of pre-knockout play.

"We're expecting Shore to front up with (experienced props) Alex Woonton and Finbarr (Kerr-Newell) for most if not all of the game."

While the match would be a good yardstick for both teams, Katipa added "championships aren't won in May".

Indeed, Takapuna can expect a huge influx of talent once the Super Rugby season is over

including Karl Tu'inukuafe and Kade Banks from the Blues, Fine and Lotu Inisi from Moana Pasifika and Bryn Gatland from the Chiefs. North Harbour Mitre 10 Cup player Jack Heighton is also expected back from New York in time for the play-offs. Another possibility is New Zealand sevens player Moses Leo, who may be available if he fails to make the squad for the Commonwealth Games.

The absence of top players has had its benefits in bleeding promising younger players such as Jay Fonokalafi, Harrison Mataele and Tika Lelenga, "which is vital for the growth of our club," said Katipa.

While the Takapuna v Shore result will give one club bragging rights mid-season, Massey – currently third – is the dark horse of the competition. It has a number of players to return from the Moana Pasifika side "and could possibly be the best team", Katipa said.

Ironically due to the vagaries of the competition draw and bonus points, Takapuna could finish unbeaten in pool play but end up third overall as North Shore plays the bottom teams twice and has a couple of byes.

Pontoon plan for Quarry Lake canoe polo wins board backing

A bid to provide pontoons for canoe-polo players at Quarry Lake in Takapuna has been backed by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

The Auckland Canoe Polo Society has put in a request for \$705,000 from a \$15.3 million Auckland Council sport and recreation fund for its \$765,000 pontoon project at Quarry Lake on Northcote Rd. It has already raised \$30,000.

The society wants permanent pontoons for the two existing playing areas at Quarry Lake to help with refereeing, training and development, and tournaments. A third

moveable pontoon would be available for hosting regional, national and international tournaments.

Use of the lake is expected to increase from 10,000 to 25,000 participants a year with the pontoons.

Recycled pontoons from Westhaven Marina may be available, which would cut the total cost of the project to \$468,600, with the money sought then being \$408,000.

This plan has been supported by the North Shore Radio Yacht Squadron which races on the lake, Auckland Council sport and recreation lead Shaun Watkins told the local board

at a workshop this month.

"These pontoons would provide a good platform for the radio yacht club activities."

Canoe polo takes two teams of five paddlers which play 10-minute halves trying to score goals in a net suspended above the water at each end of a rectangular 'pitch', which can be in a swimming pool or on open water.

The panel for the sport and recreation fund will meet in July to make recommendations. Decisions on allocating the money will be made at the Auckland Council parks, arts, community and events committee meeting in September.



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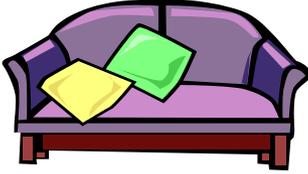
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Work underway on contested Milford development

The building of a large terrace-housing development accessed from East Coast Rd and exiting onto Stanley Ave has begun.

The “very cramped” nature of the development prompted the Milford Residents Association to call last October for it to be scaled back, but planning permission documents obtained by the Observer show little has changed.

Auckland Council has signed off on 31 dwellings being built, down one from the original planning application.

Site work is progressing on the Milford Villas Ltd development being built on three combined rear properties, at 80 and 82 East Coast Rd and 7 Stanley Ave. As well as terrace-housing blocks, it includes two standalone properties, stretching behind the corner shops. Each dwelling will have one car-parking space.

The association noted that the permission

provided for three small communal courts to be added, but said: “We think this is a minimal concession that provides insufficient community space for what is a very intensive development.”

It had suggested six dwellings be dropped to provide residents with more open central space, improved parking and rubbish-collection areas and better landscaping options.

In its consent granted in March, the council said the development provided greater housing choice in the area and would not adversely impact on public infrastructure networks. Impacts on neighbours would be less than minor.

The development is in the current mixed-housing suburban zone on a site of 3844sqm (including driveways). While it will have little visual impact from the street, the association earlier noted it would add more

cars to local roads.

The subdivision application required consent as a discretionary activity under the Unitary Plan because a single entry is not meant to serve more than 10 rear sites.

A council planner, Nick McCool, ruled that he was satisfied the proposed accessways would sufficiently provide for the rear lots. A 1.2m-wide flush pedestrian footpath would lead off East Coast Rd and a second separated pedestrian access would be built to Stanley Ave.

The proposed subdivision enabled more efficient use of the site and was consistent with the aims of the zone, he found.

Overall, the proposal would result in less than minor adverse effects on the environment and neighbours, he found. Only one unit did not comply with zone set-back standards, requiring consent as a restricted discretionary activity.

Residents rubbish targeted rate waste plan

A plan for a targeted rate for Auckland’s waste collection has been criticised by North Shore residents and opposed by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

The proposed system, set to come in under Auckland Council’s 2022-23 budget, will bring in an annual charge for a weekly rubbish collection.

Currently, the North Shore has a pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) method in place – where a user is only charged per pick-up, be that weekly, monthly or less often.

A cheaper, private bag-collection service run by EnviroWaste is also an option.

A meeting of the local board last week heard 56 per cent of public submitters from the board area opposed a region-wide, rates-funded refuse collection.

Members also voiced their support for remaining with the PAYT system. George Wood said rubbish-collection costs would be far greater with the rates system, but he was not

optimistic that PAYT would remain in place.

Member Jan O’Connor said when PAYT was first introduced in 1992, the rubbish sent to landfill dropped significantly.

“Some of us only put our bins out once a month. So why are we intending to pay \$150 a year [in targeted rate] to support people who can’t cut their rubbish down?”

Prior to the meeting, local-board chair Ruth Jackson said the board had already unanimously given its support for the status quo, with many local residents reducing their waste and, subsequently, the amount of times they put their bin out. “A lot of people in our area have very successfully managed their waste and they don’t want to have to pay \$150 a year, or whatever it is, through their rates, for a service that they don’t often use.

“On the North Shore, one of the problems with the wheelie bin service is a lot of people are choosing to use the yellow bags because they’re cheaper.

“Why can’t a huge organisation like council be [price] competitive?”

At Countdown Takapuna, the yellow rubbish bags are \$2.50 each, or 5 cents cheaper in a pack of five.

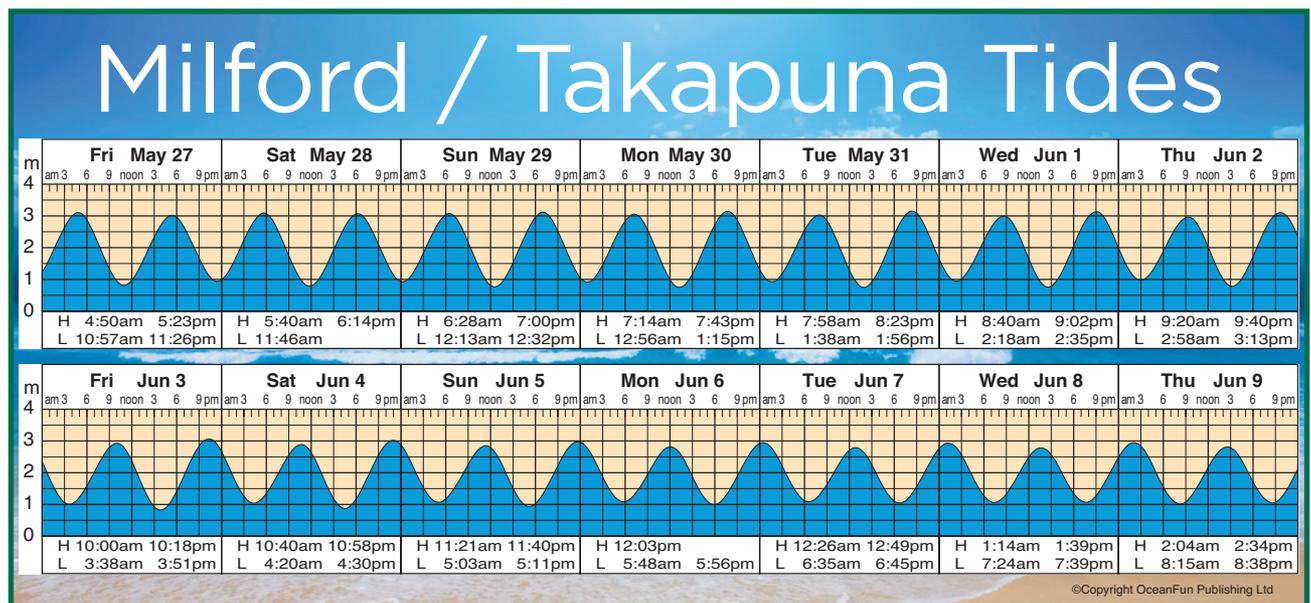
A council tag for an 80-litre bin pick-up is \$2.85. The tag for a 120-litre bin is \$4.25 and for a 240-litre bin, \$6.15.

Across Auckland, more submitters were in favour of the rates-funded approach than against it. Most of the region is not currently on the PAYT system.

A revised budget will now be presented to Auckland Council, taking into account the public feedback.

The local board submitted its opposition to the rates system, but it has no decision-making power.

A decision will ultimately be made by the Auckland Council Governing Body prior to 1 July, when the new budget comes into force.





Flukey auction delivers public art to Takapuna

Takapuna will play permanent host to two whale tail sculptures after a local donor bankrolled the business association to buy them.

They are at 38 Hurstmere Rd and opposite the Bruce Mason Centre, but in time will rotate locations around Takapuna.

Takapuna Beach Business Association chief executive Terence Harpur said he was delighted to be able to add more public art to the area after successfully bidding on the works in a charity online auction. This was made possible by a generous local donor who wished to remain anonymous, he said, but who had given the bulk of the combined purchase price of around \$15,000.

Harpur originally had his eye on an ocean-themed tail that had been on display in Takapuna earlier, but was outbid. He was pleased, however, with the two works secured, saying one was by well-known street artist Component, who has family links to Devonport, and the other by Melinda Butt, whose tail connected well to the beach, with its references to indigenous cultures and the elements. The Component work references his take on Covid-19 and changes in society.

Eighty sculptures were auctioned to raise funds for WWF work in New Zealand, after being on display across Auckland for 12 weeks. The focus of this year's campaign was the endangered Brydes whale which lives in the Hauraki Gulf. More than \$650,000 was raised.

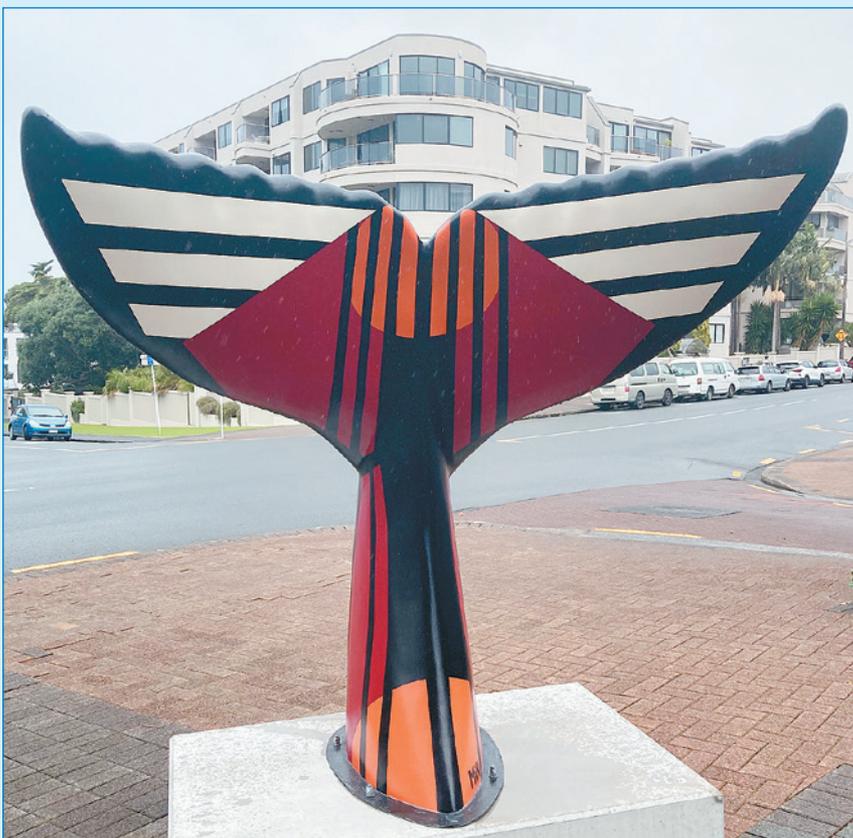
The business association bought an owl sculpture in a similar WWF campaign about three years ago.

Harpur said he was keen to build up stocks of local public art. "We need more of it in Takapuna. It adds vibrancy and provides an emotional connection."

• In another art initiative, the Lake House Arts Centre last weekend provided works for temporary display in the public space on Hurstmere Green.



Tail trail... Terence Harpur (above) with a whale tail by artist Component on display on Hurstmere Rd. Another (below) by Melinda Butt is further along the road, across from the Mon Desir apartments.



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Writer needs no introduction – but is ready to give one

A special coming together of theatre craft in Takapuna will be held next week with readings of the latest work by renowned playwright and local resident Sir Roger Hall.

Tadpole Theatre Productions is giving one-off matinee and evening performances of Hall's *Whine and Cheese* at the PumpHouse, with an introduction by the company's patron – the playwright himself.

The event celebrates the 10th anniversary of the company which was set up to champion professional productions on the North Shore.

A retrospective of sorts, *Whine and Cheese* draws on material from Sir Roger's long career, including the 83-year-old's observations on how his work was received. Part memoir, part theatre talk, it takes in scenes and songs from previous plays.

Leading Auckland actor Simon Prast will read the role of Sir Roger in what is a workshop-style presentation directed by Paul Gittins. Prast will be joined by other noted actors in Darien Takle, Paul Barrett and Andy Grainger.

PumpHouse manager James Bell said the style of production was an opportunity for theatre lovers to get an insight into how a play was developed from workshop-style sessions and audience reaction. Full productions were then developed. "It's a glimpse at how plays are written and developed these days."

Whine and Cheese was also a chance for a behind-the-scenes look at one of New Zealand's iconic playwrights, with the production including his reaction to various reviews over the years, said Bell.



Since its inception in 2021, Tadpole has brought two works a year to the PumpHouse Theatre, although Covid-19 interrupted its more recent scheduling. The first production was *The Lion in Winter*, chosen in line with Tadpole's founding model of picking suc-

cessful plays with small casts to help offset the financial fragility of live theatre, while delivering crowd pleasing offerings. Its next production will be in September.

Sir Roger, who was born in England, emigrated to New Zealand in 1957, and began writing for television in the 1960s.

His plays have won both national and international recognition. They include *Glide Time* (1976) about civil servants, a play that was made into the 1980s television series *Gliding On*. Overseas audiences picked up on *Middle-Age Spread* (1978), which had a West End, run and *Conjugal Rites* (1991) which became a UK television series. The characters had a second life in *Winding Up*, which was put on by the Auckland Theatre Company in 2020.

Sir Roger, who was a founder of the New Zealand Writers Week, has been recognised with a host of theatre awards and fellowships. He has also written more than 20 children's books and an autobiography, *Bums on Seats*, published in 1998. He was a co-writer of *Footrot Flats the Musical*.

In Takapuna, he started the Christmas Day beachside tradition of staging a scene from Bruce Mason's one-man play *The End of the Golden Weather*.

Whine and Cheese is on at PumpHouse Theatre on Wednesday 1 June at 2pm and 7pm. Tickets \$20. Bookings at pumphouse.co.nz

Online sculpture show still raises \$80k

NZ Sculpture OnShore has donated \$80,000 to Women's Refuge, despite being forced online last year rather than staging its usual biennial event at Fort Takapuna.

Board chair and local resident Sally Dewar confirmed the donation amount last week, following the completion of commissioned artwork sales from last year.

The well-established fundraiser will be back on the clifftops next year.

Postponing the multi-day exhibition due to Covid in 2020, then moving it online last year, had been a tough decision and new territory for the Friends of Women's Refuges Trust, said Dewar. "We could not have imagined the public's support and generosity with this terrific result," she said.

The money, raised from both sales and a Givalittle campaign, will be used to create welcoming spaces for children in Refuge NZ's 40 safe houses.

In 2018, the event raised \$219,000. Although the latest tally was well down on that, Dewar said last year's online initiative offered food for thought for the future. "At the same time, with the tremendous level of public support for the physical exhibition, we are delighted to confirm we will be back at O Peretu Fort Takapuna in October 2023."

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