

Our Kerikeri

- COMMUNITY LEADS CHANGE -

Our Kerikeri Community Charitable Trust Chairperson's Report for year ended 30th June 2023

Kia ora koutou

It has been yet another eventful year, marked by a rollercoaster of experiences as we grapple with the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-evolving landscape of our surroundings. This year has posed challenges for our board, as we confronted the potentially emotionally charged and divisive issue of public housing developments within the heart of Kerikeri township.

Throughout this journey, we have endured countless sleepless nights, engaged in passionate debates, weathered moments of anxiety, and convened numerous meetings with central government agencies, who rigorously tested our determination to advocate for what we believed to be essential considerations. Deep within our hearts, we held steadfast to the conviction that our efforts were pivotal for the long-term well-being of Kerikeri township.

You can access the recording of the community meeting we organized, which drew a huge audience, even in the midst of torrential rain, right [here](#).

We are pleased by the positive outcome of this challenging process, as the final design and density have been significantly improved from the initial proposed plans. We now have a good relationship with the developer, a better relationship with Kainga Ora and a closer relationship with Ngāti Rēhia.

Unfortunately, though, all the time required on this project has meant we haven't been able to start or finish projects as we had planned. However, some of the achievements have been:

- Completed the construction of the joint project [Te Haa o te Ao "The Breath of the World"](#) entranceway sculpture with local hapū, Te Runanga O Ngāti Rēhia Trust within budget. The new entranceway sign was not part of the funding secured, however we have been blessed with volunteers, including the artist himself who are working on a sign. This should be installed before the end of the year.
- A very successful Christmas season, with the lighting of our large [Community Christmas Tree](#), installations throughout town and a very successful Christmas event on the Domain.
- Collaborative project with the Chess Club for the first [Northland Chess Championship](#), designed to bring Northland players together of all ages, ethnicities and skill levels.
- We actively participated in a collaborative project with Bald Angels, contributing to the creation of [Angel Wings](#) that symbolize and celebrate inclusivity and diversity within our community.
- Decorated downtown for [ANZAC day](#) including poppies created by the local schools and crosses in memory of our fallen soldiers.



- Organised the first inaugural Kerikeri 2023 Summer Jazz Festival.
- Organised a community [Easter Hunt](#), where nearly 200 children were given a text clue to their first destination from the Easter Bunny and then taken on a journey to collect the eggs filled with goodies to end up at the Stone Store to collect their prize.
- Secured funding towards community led downtown masterplans for Kerikeri and Waipapa.
- Our ongoing collaboration with the Council continues, with a focus on developing cycling trails that connect Kerikeri to the Twin Coast Cycle Trail.
- We persistently advocated for improved planning in Kerikeri, which encompasses downtown masterplans and the completion of the spatial plan that was initiated by the Council in October 2021.
- Countless hours preparing [submissions](#) to the Proposed District Plan, a huge document with profound impacts on the area that cannot be underestimated.
- We commenced work on an exciting new mural project in Kerikeri's downtown area, designed to revitalize and activate public spaces.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some amazing people in our community. We could not continue to do what we do without their contributions.

Nola Blainey, you truly stand out. Your unwavering dedication to projects and causes is truly commendable. Your boundless energy, selfless sacrifices, and unmatched determination are something that we just can't ever thank you enough for. Melanie Chandler-Winters, we are so thankful to your commitment to the arts and to creating events here in Kerikeri.

Thank you to the dozens of other volunteers who have helped out this year in so many ways, we are so very very thankful. Additionally, a special thank you goes out to the local businesses that have provided both financial assistance and essential supplies to our projects. Your unwavering support has been instrumental in our success, and we appreciate your commitment to our cause.

To my fellow Trustees, I want to express my sincere appreciation. This year has certainly been quite a journey, marked by significant challenges. I'm certain that each of us has experienced moments of doubt, questioning whether the sacrifices we've made in terms of time spent with family, friends, and our businesses have been worthwhile. Special acknowledgements go to Vince Buxton who led advocating for better outcomes for the new public housing development, it has not been easy to navigate, and I know it took its toll on you. Thank you to Kirsty who stepped in to lead Christmas 2023 and takes care of much of the marketing as well as the Treasurer one. Thank you to Lasse who is our secretary and has led the Chess competition and his passion and commitment to inclusivity and providing opportunities for all to come together. Thank you Kipa, your understanding of the Trust's stance on public housing developments and your ability to bring us all together in a calm, thoughtful manner, while considering both sides and striving for the best possible outcomes is invaluable. Thank you, Jaime, for your contribution to ongoing efforts to improve participation in sports.



And last but certainly not least, the biggest thank you to Jo Lumkong, who stepped down as Trustee this year. Jo has been tirelessly fighting the good fight of trying to improve our community's potential and wellbeing through thoughtful and holistic planning of our area.

It has been a tough battle for her. Some excerpts from an email to Council that summed up her resignation is restated here:

Having contributed an immense amount of time, thought and energy in the community space over the past 9 years, I have now made the decision to step down as Chair of VKK and Trustee of OKK. The expenditure of energy is not sustainable and the lack of impact over time is evident. I don't see the necessary decisions being made to enable the changes required to make a real difference in lives as a community leader. I don't see decisions being made which align with what we supposedly desire/require as a society for a brighter future and I foresee things getting much worse before/if they get better.

The lack of design thinking which incorporates pragmatism, empathy and innovation toward goal orientated systems design and decision making is evident. From where I stand I see two things drive change - pleasure and pain.

WE are heading down the painful route.

For now I intend to focus my time and energy on my teenage children in the last few years before they leave home. The degree to which I have been embedded in community has effected us all.

I've battled to have community viewed as an asset rather than hinderance for many years and worked hard on developing relationships within Council.

It seems to me that human energy is missing from the conversation around sustainability. Without clear pathways to success and efficient systems which use the asset of human creativity, intelligence energy wisely, how are we to resolve the issues we face as a society?

Jo, I am forever grateful to your contributions to Our Kerikeri and our community. I am thankful for what you have taught me, your perspective on things and your genuine desire to create a better place for all to enjoy. Thank you.



As I say every year, remember that we do this because we know there is so much more potential for our area. We do this because we want our children to be proud of the place we call home.

And lastly, thank you to the community for your support. We really appreciate it.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AD', written in a cursive style.

Annika Dickey
Chairperson – Our Kerikeri Community Charitable Trust