

Most local businesses will survive - survey

Most local businesses are confident they will survive the economic turmoil caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, according to a survey by *Helensville News*.

However, business owners estimate it will take anywhere from three months to up to two years to resume trading at pre-lockdown levels.

Leah Hide, owner of Muscle Management, says her company will survive, "however it will take months, possibly years. [It's] hard to know the future of how this pans out."

Treena Gowthorpe, manager at the Helensville Community Recycling Centre, is more optimistic, saying "we should be able to bounce back quite quickly."

Responses naturally varied according to

the type of business, with Parakai Spring's Dion Tilson saying the hot pools "should" survive, "but we expect it will take a long time before customers have confidence to return to a public pool complex."

None of the survey respondents have laid off any staff, and while some say they definitely won't, for others it's on the cards.

"It is a possibility," says Dion, while Paper Plus Select owner April Ashton simply says: "not yet".

Kaukapakapa-based Dizzy Heights Tree Services' Dion Mayes says he hasn't laid off any staff yet, "but the possibility is imminent depending on how much longer we cannot operate." He adds he would rehire staff once things pick up.

Sean Gray Electrical owner Sean Gray is

adamant he will keep his staff.

"I have not laid off any and have no intentions of doing so. I have had my employees for many years, so will stick by them for as long as I can," he says.

Asked to rate the government's response to the pandemic crisis from a business standpoint, on a scale from excellent to poor, 14 percent rated it as excellent, 40 percent as very good, 26 percent as good, and 20 percent as average. None rated it as poor.

"The wage subsidy helped for sure, but as a business owner I believe the real pain is still to come financially," says Sean, adding that further government assistance will be required.

Several respondents believed more businesses should have been allowed to stay open.

Andrew Hall, owner of Lifestyle Mowing Machinery at Waitoki, says: "More businesses should have been able to stay open using a common sense approach to interactions between customer and retailer. Australia put more emphasis on maintaining businesses and is doing better than us per million people, as far as infection and death rates go."

Dizzy Heights' Dion Mayes says: "[It's] frustrating that small businesses like ours that could operate safely have been unable to."

"The wage subsidy has been a huge contributor to continued employment for our staff, but it won't save the business if we don't get back to work soon. We are eating away at thousands of dollars every week to stay afloat, but it has an end point - the money will run out!

"As a small business it's terrifying not to know when you are going to earn money again. Spare a thought for all those small businesses that don't have a 20 percent pay

New Helensville playground



Work on this new Cabeleigh Drive playground could start next year. Read more on page 6.

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editorial

I hadn't really expected to be able to produce any sort of *Helensville News* for May, but somehow I've managed to fill 10 pages again - even if it's only an online issue like last month. Once again, none of the advertisers who appear in this issue are being charged for their adverts.

The plan is to be back in print for our June issue, so that's something to look forward to. Production could be a bit of a challenge, as I am still 'confined to quarters' due to health issues, but I'm sure I'll get an interesting read out in time.

I think you will find the result of our business survey interesting. I had also hoped to bring you an article about how locals had been coping with lockdown, but despite our Facebook post asking for your stories reaching more than 3100 people and having over 300 engagements, only two people responded. So thank you to the two who did get in touch - there just unfortunately wasn't enough to make a story from.

- Dave Addison, Editor

Business Survey cont...

• From page 1

cut - they have a 100 percent pay cut!"

While most local businesses were shut under Level 4, and many still are under Level 3, most survey respondents say they have been able to do at least some work from home.

Sandra Burrows, who only moved her House of Patchwork business to Helensville about a year ago, says she has "managed to [do] some practical work which I needed to get through."

You Travel owner Karen Reilly has been busy working from home, helping clients with trips they had booked.

"Our clients have been amazing, and we would like to thank them very much for their patience and understanding," she says.

Treena Gowthorpe says: "It's been Zoom meetings and business continuity planning, and a chance to catch up on those tasks you were going to do when you got a spare minute."

Sue Narbey, owner of local physiotherapist practice Physio Flex, has been able to operate remotely from home via a telehealth platform called Doxy.me.

"Even though I thought I was pretty well set up, moving to my home office was more involved than I anticipated. It meant shifting all communication streams; accessing the practice management system remotely has been tricky for some physios due to internet connection reliability."

She says the logistics of contacting patients was time consuming.

"We have been completing a small number of telehealth consults each week, which has been great for patients but also for our physios to keep using their skills and keep a connection to the outside world. It's certainly a very challenging time!"

Nicky Horsbrough of Harcourts the Difference says: "All staff are working from home. The sales team have been attending a lot of training and upskilling, and our administration team have still had a lot of work to do and have used this time to catch up on a lot of projects which were not urgent."

"Our property management division has had a lot of legal changes to keep up with, and communication with landlords and tenants has been vital."

"So it's still very busy for us!"

Paper Plus' April Ashton has also been operating from home, managing Facebook and communicating with customers.

Asked for other comments, Dizzy Height's Dion Mayes says: "Let's take time to know our local businesses that need our support, not just when this lockdown ends but for the future too. Let's all start thinking about where we spend our dollar and support our community first."

The Helensville Railway Station Trust's Scott Osmond, which runs the historic Helensville station, says the rail museum and all business tenants in the station were

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Recycle centre opens under Level 3

The Helensville Community Recycling Centre reopened its doors with the move to Alert Level 3 - albeit in restricted form.

Four weeks of enforced time at home meant people had the time to do all the jobs they were going to do 'when they had time', says centre manager Treena Gowthorpe.

"Many households have taken the opportunity to have a good clear out of rubbish, and the fine weather has meant lots of pruning and garden waste."

She says that, combined with an increase in recyclables which were often too much for wheelie bins, left locals hanging out for the recycling centre to reopen.

"It's not been any easy task meeting all the Health and Safety requirements of opening at Level 3", she says, but the recycling centre got the green light to open on Thursday, April 30.

Hours and services are restricted under Level 3.

Drop off is limited to rubbish, recycling and green waste only. The shop will not be open, and no donations can be accepted for the shop. Customers will need to unload their cars and trailers, and numbers will be restricted on the site at one time.

A comprehensive plan has been put in place to move people through as quickly as possible, with extra recycling drop-off areas available.

Customers will need to have closed in shoes, and gloves are recommended to protect hands while unloading. Pre-sorting material before arrival will help with fast drop-offs and help the recycling centre keep the flow of traffic moving.

Treena says if people sort their recycling by type, they will be in and out in no time. Staff will be on hand - maintaining a two metre social distancing - to guide people to drop-off points and answer questions.

Helensville Community Recycling Centre hours under Level 3 are Thursday to Sunday 9am to 3pm. Normal hours will



• An aerial view of the Helensville Community Recycling Centre site

resume at Level 2.

The recycling centre's website has COVID19 updates, conditions of entry and current pricing: helensvillerecycling.com.

Business Survey cont...

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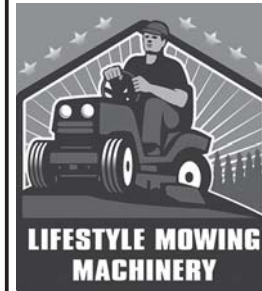
closed due to lockdown.

"We have given a month rent holiday to the tenants," says Scott. "Their on-going business success is in our best interests, but the costs will impact our future maintenance and development of the railway station precinct."

Finally, Treena Gowthorpe adds: "I'm very proud to be in a country that puts people first and has such a tiny death toll. We are the lucky ones when you look around the world at the horrendous loss of life."

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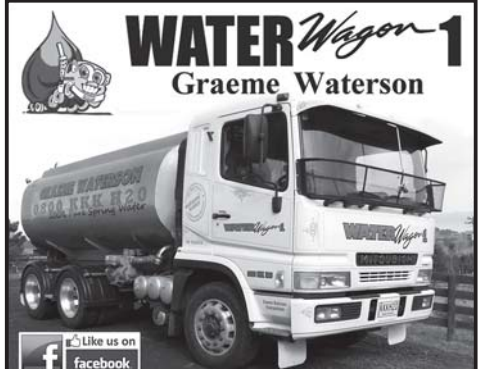
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Call to 'buy local'

Buy locally and help our community - that's the call from North West Country business association chair Tony Forlong.

Tony says there are more than 800 businesses from Kauakapakapa to Riverhead that supply goods and services to the public and each other, and who employ hundreds of people in our local community.

"From horticulture to manufacturing, health and education to professional services, hospitality, and retail, virtually everything you need is available locally," he says.

"By shopping locally or using local services you are ensuring we continue to have access to a great range of services, and that there are opportunities to work close to home and protect our local economy."

Tony says the last few weeks have been unprecedented.

"With a few days' warning we suddenly ended up being confined to our homes and the area around them. At the same time essential workers have played a vital role in keeping our supermarkets open and supplied, or prepared for the worst in the health sector.

"At the time of writing the direction our country has taken seems to have worked. Our health services haven't been overwhelmed with thousands falling ill and dying as we've seen overseas," he says.

Tony says as we emerge from Alert Level 3 and into Level 2, it is going to be to a "changed world".

"For the last four weeks, most of our local business owners that provide goods and services have been sitting at home waiting to see what will happen, and how they will reopen.

"The effect on our restaurants and bars is going to be huge, likewise many service businesses and manufacturers have been without income for over a month.

"The film industry which employs over 1000 people locally has been dormant and that has, in turn, affected those businesses and contractors that supply that industry [with] goods and services."

He says COVID-19 will in some way have touched every local business and industry, and the people employed by them.

The North West Country business association has an online directory of 400-plus businesses, and a growing list of them that are ready to trade either online or by click and collect. The website is at: www.northwestcountry.co.nz.

When lockdown finishes there will also be a comprehensive local events page and some suggestions for day trips to explore the area.

"So, before you trek into Westgate or go online to buy something off a business somewhere else in Auckland, pay our website a visit and see if you can find it locally," suggests Tony.

Candidate calls for rail to Helensville

Reinstating a passenger rail link to Helensville should have been included in the Auckland Council infrastructure 'wishlist' just submitted to the government says Callan Neylon, the Social Credit candidate for the Kaipara ki Mahurangi electorate (formerly Helensville).

"As the community group 'Trains to Huapai' pointed out there is 'no shovel required' as the tracks and platforms are already there and the community wants it," he says.

"It would have been one of the easiest projects to get underway, as the lead time from approval to work proceeding would have been short."

Callan says the Public Transport Users Association is correct when it points out action is needed to relieve congestion in Huapai and Kumeu. Stations and Park and Ride facilities are already built, and lie unused at Waitakere and Huapai railway stations.

"I would go one step further and say rail services should be extended to Helensville and electrification of the line take place," Callan says.

He says the government has taken the first step by investing over \$100 million into Northland track maintenance, and a report should be commissioned urgently to see whether electrification could be undertaken in tandem with the planned work.

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Have say on new playground

Helensville's timber history and stream have inspired the design of a new playground in Cabeleigh Drive.

Developing the 'toddlers to teens' playground on the Cabeleigh Drive Pond Reserve is a Rodney Local Board priority, but chair Phelan Pirrie admits getting public feedback when playgrounds are closed is an unusual situation to be in.

"But even during lockdown, local feedback is important. We want to keep the project moving as we enter recovery.

"The design celebrates Helensville's timber history, with trees, logs and wooden play equipment incorporated into a nature-based theme, with rocks as a boundary between the junior and teen play areas," says Phelan.

A major design consideration has been to ensure the children aren't encouraged to go near the reserve's pond.

The proposed design seeks to highlight the natural play spaces with timber logs and rocks, giving children the ability to walk across logs and rocks as they move around the site.

Board member Vicki Kenny says the new playground is well situated for families living in Helensville and Parakai.

"[It] caters for toddlers to teens with separate but interconnected play areas. A path running through the reserve will make for easy access even in winter.

"There are good sightlines from the street to the playground and on-street parking. A stream on the site will be planted with natives to filter stormwater pond run-

off."

The design includes spinning bucket, horse springer, and ladybird springer rides, a slide, climbing net, swings, logs for nature play, seating, and a picnic table.

The concept features two connected but distinct play areas, a junior playspace and a primary/teen playspace, both influenced by nature.

The junior area integrates a 'miniature' form of nature play through low lying logs. Rocks intermixed with seating separate the junior and primary/teen areas.

The intermediate area incorporates a more challenging nature inspired playspace with a net platform for children to climb on, plus a slide and a tire swing.

The project's next step will be presentation of feedback to the local board in



• A designer's impression of the new playground site.

July. A detailed design will be completed later in the year, with construction planned to take place from February to May 2021.

Locals can view the design concept online at www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz. To provide feedback they can complete the online survey, or email feedback to parksnorthfeedback@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

The consultation period closes on Sunday, May 31.

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local board matters

Everyone will be getting used to a bit more freedom by now, and no doubt itching to get further beyond their direct neighbourhoods.

Our district is blessed with parks that have some of the most beautiful views in Auckland and which are great for a walk while maintaining social distancing.

Note that under Level 3 all parks facilities and playgrounds are closed, so sorry, no toilets! This is because the Council is unable to clean them every time they are used to avoid public exposure to infection.

The obvious one is Muriwai Beach, with over 50km of wild black sand and dunes. Get out now and enjoy some raw west coast beauty north of Okiritoto Stream which is dog friendly, with few other people, and for a few more weeks without vehicles.

If your dog is looking for a change of scenery you can let them blow off some steam at the local park in Pollard Lane in Waimauku.

Near Muriwai there are another couple of great Department of Conservation walks:

Head to Constable Road to the Te Henga track, part of the Hilary Trail, which runs from Muriwai to Bethels Beach. Take half a day or so to do the whole track, or just get down to the cliff edge walk to blow out any cobwebs.

If you want to do a bush walk, at the beginning of road is the peaceful Goldie Bush walk down through a kauri forest to the Mokoroa Falls - you'll need good walking shoes for the falls walk. No dogs are allowed at either reserve, and make sure you use the

shoe wash stations to stop the spread of kauri dieback disease.

Another well-kept secret is the large Te Rau Puriri Regional Park at 2911 South Head Road.

This relatively undeveloped 340-hectare park has grown over the last few years with the addition of new land, and boasts stunning views of the Kaipara Harbour and one of the peninsula's dune lakes, Rototoa. A new management plan is being developed which will see this park become a great destination for the north-west. There are some seasonal restrictions with dogs because it is a working farm, so check online before you go.

In Parakai there is Kaipātiki Reserve (formerly Parakai Domain). This is a jointly managed reserve between Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara and Auckland Council. There is a major redevelopment plan underway for the reserve over the coming years.

In Helensville, the recent addition of a perimeter track at Rautawhiri Park allows all-weather walking - dogs are welcome. There's also the small Sinclair Park in Kaukapakapa, off Macky Road.

Consultation has been delayed on the Council's Annual Budget due to Covid-19. There are now going to be significant cuts to spending over the next year.

This is partly because of the expected reduction in income from investments like Auckland Airport and Ports of Auckland, plus reductions in fees and charges. There is going to be a public consultation on two options for a rates increase going to the public, which will also identify which areas of spending will be cut and what the implications of this will be. At the time of writing, I don't know what the implications will be for local projects.

If you have questions or concerns about Auckland Council, please can contact me.

- Phelan Pirrie

Chair, Rodney Local Board

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from our local MP

The word 'unprecedented' has been used liberally in the last several weeks, with good reason. Our collective lockdown, undertaken of course to avoid coronavirus spread, is unlike anything that we've known as a nation. I'd like to congratulate everyone who's committed to surviving these difficult days as part of a collective effort.

While the exact nature of the lockdown has indeed been unprecedented, many of us have been drawing on life experiences to help get through.

Readers of *Helensville News* will have their own insights to share about coping in confined spaces, of a physical or emotional nature. Not that I knew it at the time, but spending several years in the submarine squadron of the Royal Australian Navy prepared me pretty well for the past few weeks. And so I thought I'd share a few ways that the world beneath the waves has helped me think about life on lockdown.

First, understand that even the longest voyage is made up of only three weeks. Of course the calendar may record a longer period of time than that but psychologically there is always a first week, a middle week (which may in fact be several weeks long!) and a final week.

Know that the first week will go slowly but in the middle one time appears to run much more quickly. In the final week, time seems to slow again as you count down to the end.

It's important not to look too far ahead of the week you're in – particularly in the first and middle weeks – as that way often lies restlessness and frustration.

Second, share a sense of purpose. When we're thrown together in a situation that will test each of us in different ways, keeping our eyes on the collective prize ensures we're all on the same page about the things that matter. Whether it's avoiding the spread of infectious disease or achieving an aim underwater, having a common purpose enables accountability of each team member to another.

Third, maintain strong routines. When humans operate in regular ways (for example, having good sleep patterns and a consistent diet) we give ourselves the best possible chance to operate well. We're not all able to be masters of our own destiny each minute of every day, with so many factors that can come from outside of our control, but avoiding irregular sleep and interrupted ways of living represents our best bet to hold the line in tough times.

Take care, stay safe and stay sane!

- Chris Penk, MP for Helensville
chris.penkmp@parliament.govt.nz
Ph: 09 412 2496



New name, boundaries for electorate

Helensville electorate is no more.

When voting in this year's general election, locals will instead have to vote in the Kaipara ki Mahurangi electorate.

Along with the new name, the Representation Commission has changed the electorate boundaries.

Kaipara ki Mahurangi has taken over parts of the Northland and Whangaparāoa (formerly Rodney) electorates, and now extends further north to include Wellsford and Warkworth, and east to incorporate Mahurangi.

However the former Helensville electorate has also lost some of its southern areas, from the Waitakere Ranges to New Lynn. The boundary changes were made to balance out the populations of different electorates.

The new name 'Kaipara ki Mahurangi' was suggested by Ngā Maunga Whakāhii o Kaipara Development Trust during public consultation, and literally means Kaipara to Mahurangi.



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Back in print!

We're aiming to have *Helensville News* back in print for our June issue. The deadline for articles and adverts is Tuesday, May 19.

Te Rau Puriri park plans

Auckland Council is calling for public feedback on concept plans for Te Rau Puriri Regional Park on the South Head Peninsula.

Locals can have their say up to Friday, June 12. After consultation closes, feedback will be analysed and the draft plan changed accordingly.

The revised plan will go back out for consultation in July/August this year, with the aim of getting the final plan signed off in September 2020.

We will aim to bring more detailed information on the concept plans in our June issue. In the meantime, more information is available on the council website at: <https://bit.ly/2Yk8dET>

Poem - Covert Encounter

Stanley is staring at me,
Thick set with round dark eyes,
Proudly stood to attention,
With no regard to his size.

Yes, Stanley is staring at me,
Upright with legs astride,
No intention of moving,
Despite the man at his side.

Stanley is staring at me,
Stout and sandy in colour,
Black to the centre of his face,
A rather handsome fella.

Yes Stanley is staring at me,
As I casually keep walking on,
Hoping he won't follow me,
As he looks pretty strong.

Stanley is staring at me,
I won't be able to fend him off,
He'd get the better of me,
I'd be the loser, of course.

Yes Stanley is staring at me,
With no intention at budging,
Despite his companions persistence,
And a certain amount of tugging.

Stanley is staring at me,
Hope this poem hasn't foxed ya,
In case you hadn't figured it,
Stanley's a dog, he's a boxer!

- Pauline Denton



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2020 issue dates and deadlines:

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
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