

# YOUR SOURCE

*Bringing you team news, updates and information from Watercare*



A GIS map of the Hobsonville area where Auckland's infrastructure providers are working together to build resilient infrastructure.

## Working together brings greater value to north-western Auckland

No matter where we live in Auckland, one can't help but hear of the rapid growth that's happening in the city's north-west. In fact, the council's Auckland Plan has designated Hobsonville, Westgate, Kumeu, Huapai and Riverhead as strategic growth areas for the region in the short and long-term. Collectively, this could mean an equivalent of Hamilton's entire population moving to the North West of Auckland.

As Auckland's water utility and infrastructure provider, Watercare is, of course, actively involved in bringing council's plans to fruition through several large projects in this area including the Northern Interceptor and the North Harbour No.2 Watermain.

As part of this, Watercare is leading the north-western shared infrastructure corridor initiative, which brings together other infrastructure providers like Auckland Transport, NZ Transport

Agency, Chorus, Auckland Stormwater and Vector. The alliance's shared vision is to establish resilient and affordable infrastructure that meets the expectations of the community and achieves a better Auckland.

For Watercare, this collaboration has brought immediate benefits: sharing of information, identifying project constraints early on, improved capabilities for joint delivery of projects in the area; a single communication channel to engage with the community, ensuring less disruption during works and improved outcomes.

Project manager Tim Barry says that so far, the savings on consenting and design processes alone amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars for Watercare and ultimately, the community. "We have a corridor sharing arrangement with NZTA that has secured our access to develop this area in the future; sharing geotechnical information with our partners

has helped us to save considerable time and expense – a win-win for everyone involved. Because of the scale of our involvement, we get priority on purchasing land for potential development; we are collaborating with Vector on the design for both of our pump stations in Hobsonville, to facilitate a harmonised design for the structures that will be constructed next to each other. This is just the beginning; we are likely to see many more positive outcomes from this collaboration in the near and the long-term future."

This is also an excellent example of teams within Watercare working together effectively; the infrastructure planning, consenting, asset information and GIS, new connection and works over teams as well as the individual project teams have come together to share information, resources and expertise, to ultimately build a better Auckland.

## Raveen's outlook

This month, I ask for your patience as we continue to implement our company-wide restructure. I understand the ongoing process is unsettling but I ask you not to lose sight of why these changes are absolutely necessary.



Our vision is to be trusted by our communities for exceptional performance every day. We want to delight our customers by understanding their needs and providing consistently high-quality services. To achieve our vision, we need to change the way we do things. To quote Henry Ford once again: *"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."*

Our restructure is about aligning the internal elements of our business in order to deliver positive customer outcomes. We are aiming to create 'centres of excellence' where employees fully understand their roles and have the opportunity to become specialists in their fields.

What do I mean by this? Let's take a look at the changes Steve Webster is making to his infrastructure delivery team.

Many of you will be familiar with our traditional project delivery model: a project is assigned to an engineer who manages its entire lifecycle from the design tender through to handover to Service Delivery (who is Infrastructure Delivery's 'customer').

Steve sought internal and market feedback and found that our traditional project delivery model could be enhanced by improving the consistency in inputs, process and outputs, and by introducing areas of specialisation to develop excellence.

Taking this feedback on board, Steve disestablished the 'Manager – Infrastructure Programmes' and 'Manager –

Major Projects' roles and created three new roles: Commercial and Tendering Manager, Design Manager, and Construction Manager. I am pleased to confirm that Dominic Hollelland, David Ward and Tim Munro have been appointed to these roles respectively.

The next step is for Dominic, David and Tim to develop their specialist teams – staff will be given the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of their discipline so that we can achieve business excellence.

What does this mean for our project delivery model? Big changes! Projects will pass from one set of highly-capable hands to another, ultimately – we hope – achieving better outcomes in terms of time, value and cost.

We are hoping to achieve similar improvements in other areas of the business such as Retail and Strategy and Planning.

Through the staff survey, you told the executive team you have more to offer. You told us you have new ideas and skills that you are itching to contribute if the opportunity arises. My aim is for the restructure to provide you with those opportunities. We will support you in gaining specialist skills and we will encourage you to show initiative and leadership in your field.

Ngā mihi mahana,

Raveen



Retail, which is one of the business units being restructured, is seeing various teams including revenue, customer service, contact centre and billing come together. The teams used this as an opportunity to get to know each other outside of work over a Lu'au-themed dinner at Manhattan recently.

POP  
QUIZ

## Test your knowledge of all things Watercare

To which of these service providers did we recently transfer our corporate mobile and data communications?

- A) Spark
- B) 2Degrees
- C) Telstra
- D) Vodafone

Please email your answer to [communications@water.co.nz](mailto:communications@water.co.nz)

A winner will be drawn at random and will receive a plate of toffee pops to share with their team.

Congratulations to senior collections clerk, Rajesh Kumar, who is the winner of August's Pop Quiz.

The correct answer to the question 'What is not a funding source for Watercare' was C) Auckland property rates.

Few customers are aware that we are self-funded and don't receive any contributions from central or local government, so be sure to mention it to people, if the subject comes up. Our services are financed through revenue, in the form of water and wastewater charges, and infrastructure growth charges, as well as borrowings to build and maintain assets.



Senior collections clerk, Rajesh Kumar, is the winner of August's Pop Quiz.



# Planting with the young to protect catchments

The month of August saw some spades and shovels on the ground for team Watercare.



Written channel advisor Kay Pillay with Ardmore School student Brooke Childs.

Volunteers from across the company partnered with schools in South Auckland to plant trees in vulnerable catchments around the Hunua Ranges, as part of the Trees for Survival programme.

Trees for Survival is an environmental education programme which involves young people growing and planting native trees to restore natural habitats by helping landowners re-vegetate erosion prone land, improve stream flow and water quality and increase biodiversity.

Watercare is an active sponsor of the programme with our involvement going back at least 10 years. We supply the programme participants with resources to plant trees and educate students on the relationship between the forest and the catchment environment. This year we

participated in four planting days in July-August, with more than 20 staff partnering with students from the Hunua, Paparimu, Ararimu, Ardmore and Clevedon schools.

Written channel advisor Kay Pillay, who volunteered for one of the planting days, says she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. "It was a beautiful, sunny Friday. We planted with the kids from Ardmore School and they were amazing. In just over an hour, our team ended up planting more than 480 saplings and as a reward for finishing early, we were taken on a little walk into the bushes adjoining the land. The barbeque lunch and baked treats were another bonus! I'll also take up the landowner's offer to visit in a few years and see the difference the trees have made to their farm. I would definitely do this again."



Daniel  
highly recommends  
*'The Queen and I'*

*Monthly recommendations from the Watercare team on what to do, read, see and eat.*

Senior policy and communications advisor Daniel Newman recommends *'The Queen and I'* by Sue Townsend for a hilarious, great read.

"An oldie but a goodie, *'The Queen and I'* by Sue Townsend is a hilarious day-long read about the trials and triumphs of Queen Elizabeth II and the Windsor family after a Republican has been elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The Royal household is dissolved and must instead come to terms with living in rented council flats in the Midlands, surviving on the benefit, and struggling to cope with a much-reduced household budget, loud neighbours and disorder in the street. It's hard to find but definitely worth a read."



Daniel enjoyed reading  
*'The Queen and I'*.



# Bringing it, culturally!

*It was a lunchtime feast and entertainment for folks across the company.*

Team Watercare came together with people across the business bringing a plate and decked up in their best cultural attire.

Those who went in to have a peek came back with the world piled on their plates and glimpses of spontaneous performances on the 'virtual' runway and dance floor. Over a hundred varieties of dishes were consumed, from sausages to samosas; poha to pork buns; biltong, dumplings and a dizzying array of sweets.



From left to right: Kay Pillay, Shanthi Palapati, Kaushal Chandra, Catherine Singh, Rashmi Khanolkar, and Jyoti Rizwy.

"I loved the variety of dishes and made sure I tasted all of them," said Marc Vergroesen, credit services manager and winner of the best costume(men).

The festivities were heightened by the fashion show-cum-dance performances. The Samoan group set a high bar with the first performance, stunning headgear, impromptu human props and all. This was followed by a walk-off between the various Indian fashionistas in the house. Last but not the least, our New Zealand fashion

icons demonstrated true Kiwi ingenuity by sporting jandals, chilly-bins and cricket gear!

"It was great to see people in their colourful attire, a nice change in the middle of a bleak and rainy winter," said Parita Pai, IS project manager.

Thanks to the great work of the social club and the droves of staff who contributed home-made or store-bought snacks. The event brought teams across the business together and we learnt a bit more about each other.



Marc Vergroesen, winner of the best costume (men).



Nareleen Sharma and Deepak Udhani.



Greg Elliott on the runway.



Tessah Roache shows her moves.

## Fijian delegates' visit brings opportunities for professional development



Last week a team of six people from Water Authority of Fiji (WAF), led by their chief executive Opetai Ravai, visited New Zealand and spent three days at Watercare. The delegates met with a number of our people and discussed several areas for collaboration and sharing of knowledge such as: reduction of non-revenue water, enterprise risk management, SCADA systems, procurement and revenue and customer services.

Despite the inclement weather, they visited a number of Watercare sites including the Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant and Waikato Water Treatment Plant to view the different technologies in use and discuss potential development paths to improve service delivery for their customers in Fiji.

This was a reciprocal initiative following the visit by our risk manager, Nigel Toms, and water supply manager Tuan Hawke to Fiji recently. They worked with WAF's water and wastewater teams to develop risk assessment

criteria through workshops which identified the highest risk WAF plants.

These visits are part of a bilateral development initiative sponsored by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), to enhance skills and training by leveraging relationships with New Zealand's counterparts.

Raveen, who welcomed the delegation, says, "Watercare and WAF provide similar services and face many of the same challenges and issues. WAF is keen to build a relationship which will aid improvement of their services and we are keen to work with MFAT and WAF as this work will provide additional challenges and development opportunities for staff, and ultimately help us to build centres of excellence within the business."

A big thank you to all the staff involved in making the visit happen.



Staff and delegates at Rosedale Wastewater Treatment Plant.

## Upcoming social events

9 to 13 September

Auckland Home Show

ASB Showgrounds, Greenlane

Watercare, along with EcoMatters, will have a BeWaterwise stall at the Auckland Home Show.

There are four free passes to be won for the Home Show, so if you are interested, please send an email with the subject 'Home Show' to sustainability manager Roseline Klein. Early birds get the tickets!

4 October

Ambury Farm Day

Come along for a day of family fun to Ambury Farm. Every year Watercare has a marquee at Ambury Farm Day, a free community event that makes farming and outdoor recreation accessible to Aucklanders.

Ambury Farm Day is a day filled with farming and recreational displays, demonstrations and activities such as wood chopping, sheep shearing, butter and felt making as well as Watercare's 'make your own bug' stall.

For more details on the event and to volunteer, please contact Mel Verran in the communications team.

September-October

Rugby World Cup competitions

Look out for company-wide competitions in September and October, marking the 2015 Rugby World Cup. Watch this space for more updates.

## Watercare's projects website gets recognised at ESRI User Group Conference



GIS developer Joseph Jose shows off his story map competition prize, a t-shirt.

Folks may remember that back in April, we introduced a new site showcasing our infrastructure projects as a 'story map' designed on a GIS application. In the recent New Zealand ESRI User Group Conference, our site tied in second place in the 'Story Map' competition, based on voting from the conference's user community. Overall there were 16 entries and the first and the second places (tie) were entries created especially for the competition while ours was the only purpose-built entry in the top spots.

GIS manager Neville Perrie says, "Using story maps was a new avenue for us to inform the public about works in their area in an interactive way. It's great to have that acknowledged on a national-level technical platform and receive positive feedback on the design and usability."

Since its launch, the site has had about 3500 page views and can be accessed by clicking on the "What's happening in your area" button on the homepage of [www.watercare.co.nz](http://www.watercare.co.nz).



## A collaborative approach towards rehabilitation and returning to work



We know that there has been an increased focus on building a stronger health and safety culture at Watercare. While tools like Synergi and WorkPace help us to record, understand, manage and prevent workplace incidents and injuries, our rehabilitation and return to work programme aims to address a different aspect of workplace safety.

Watercare has implemented an injury management process which focuses on early reporting of injuries at work, timely rehabilitation and return to work strategies to enable the injured person to make an early and safe return to work. Research shows that recovery is accelerated when there's a collaborative effort and commitment from the employee, their manager, and the organisation to facilitate the employee's return to work.

As a recent example, an injured employee was able to return to work on restricted duties, which allowed him to be engaged in productive activities while still giving him time and space to recover his full capability, the maintenance serviceperson says. "Thanks to timely intervention and rehabilitation, I am managing light duties and am confident that I can return to normal work soon."

His supervisor Dave Herbert adds, "We are working together to ensure that we support him to full recovery, including daily monitoring, recording all relevant information and liaising with his treatment providers as well as the ACC."

Watercare's company doctor Phil McCarthy is very impressed with the rehabilitation programme and has asked if he can share our process with other employers.

Health and safety manager Bruce Taplin says, "as an organisation, our aim is to make sure that for every injury reported, early and effective treatment is provided and the employee and their line manager work together with the common goal of enabling the employee's full recovery and return to work."



## Click and win — monthly photo competition

Here's a chance for staff to showcase their artistic side; take an eye-catching picture, email it to [communications@water.co.nz](mailto:communications@water.co.nz) with a brief caption and you could win a gift voucher worth \$50!

Photos need to have a very high-resolution (300 dpi) and depict one or more of the below themes:

- Living our values
- Delighting our customers
- Engaging our community
- Being fully sustainable
- Going home safe
- Delivering exceptional services
- Building for a better Auckland

You can send in multiple entries as long as we receive them by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the same month. Judging will be based on the quality of the photo and how well it showcases our work.

The winner will be announced in the following month's YourSource. Look to our past annual reports for ideas and inspiration.

Here's one to get the creative juices flowing...



This photo shows the vertical-boilered steam locomotive on line between Big Muddy Creek and bottom of incline, used in the construction of the Upper Nihotupu Dam and was taken in the 1920s.



## Meet the infrastructure planning team



From left to right: Richard Pullar, Nicola Haszard, Scott Pearson, Pearl McFall, Rob Tinholt, ShiSee Tan, Andre Stuart, Melanie Skeen, Sue Parsons, Rebecca Ellmers, Priscilla Chung, Tuan Hawke, Alex Wong and David Blow.

We are a team of 20 who assess water and wastewater network and treatment plant constraints and then identify projects to overcome these. At the moment, our biggest challenge is understanding what we need to build to provide for Auckland's high rate of growth.

For entertainment, we trade movie quotes and song lyrics at all team meetings.

# Day in the life of Mel Verran

Stakeholder media liaison advisor,  
communications



I joined the communications team in May, as stakeholder media liaison advisor. It's a pretty wordy job title, but it basically means my main focus is dealing with the media.

As a former journalist, I have a pretty good sense of what would make a good story and the types of questions reporters are likely to ask. I actually first came across Watercare when I was working at the East & Bays Courier many years ago, and was lucky enough to be taken into the Project Hobson tunnel with Rachel Hughes (who's now my manager) as it was being built.

This is my first job in communications and my move to the "dark side", as journos love to call it, has been helped hugely by being part of such an experienced team who knows Watercare inside out. Rachel and stakeholder and local boards manager Brent Evans are always happy to point me in the right direction when a media query comes in that has me stumped, and the specialists across the business are patient as I get my head around the ins and outs of the water and wastewater systems.

I also work closely with stakeholder liaison advisor Rochelle Gill; Rochelle and Brent keep me updated on any milestones in our infrastructure projects that could be worth promoting in the media.

Then, it's a matter of speaking to the project manager to get the full story before writing

a press release, perhaps organising a photo opportunity and sending it off to the targeted publication.

Maintaining good relationships with journalists and editors is an essential part of my role. Rachel and I have been meeting journalists to introduce ourselves and update them on some of Watercare's initiatives. Having this relationship makes journalists more inclined to publish our positive stories and has already paid off with two great front page articles in local papers recently.

It also means reporters are far more likely to write a balanced article if they've dealt with us in person, when occasionally a story surfaces that may be critical of Watercare.

The realisation that not every journalist values balance in their writing has been a learning curve for me, and when one publication ran a series of inaccurate and accusatory articles about Watercare, we had to work hard to get our voice heard.

Each day I monitor coverage of Watercare in traditional media and on social media. We assess an article's value based on whether or not our key messages were included and its consistency with what we have said elsewhere rather than looking at it at a microscopic level.

When I'm not at work, I can generally be found at home in Mangere Bridge with a ginger cat (or two) on my lap or out walking along

the waterfront. My husband Scott and I are expecting our first baby in January, so we seem to be spending many of our weekends doing some sort of nesting activity. Normally I like to cook, but I've barely picked up a knife in the last few months as just the sight of raw meat can send me running to the bathroom sometimes. Thankfully Scott keeps us all well-fed. We also like good movies and popcorn, catching up with friends and escaping the city whenever possible to spend a weekend on the Coromandel.

I feel I've joined Watercare at a great time; we're embracing a stronger culture of customer focus and becoming more media-friendly is just one of the things we are doing to reach out to Aucklanders and build their trust in us.

We have some exciting communications projects on the horizon and I'm looking forward to meeting more of you as part of our new video project and at our upcoming plant open days. We're also looking to establish a presence in social media, which presents another fantastic opportunity to get our messages out there.

We have lots of great stories to tell, and with more than 800 people working at Watercare, I'm convinced there are plenty more yet to be uncovered. Don't be shy. If you have an idea for a story, give me a call or email me anytime.



EXECUTIVE  
HOOT

**What's on our chief financial officer, Brian Monk's mind? We challenged him to tell us in 140 characters or less:**

"Who we are is the end result of changes in our lives. How we respond to change therefore deserves conscious deliberation if we want to be better tomorrow than today."



## WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

YourSource is your newsletter. If you'd like to talk to us about any stories from this edition or your ideas for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. Email [communications@water.co.nz](mailto:communications@water.co.nz) or just tap us on the shoulder at level 4, Newmarket.



# Day in the life of Mel Verran

Stakeholder media liaison advisor, communications



Monitoring media coverage.



Talking to project manager Stephen Grace, left, about the Central Interceptor model drop shaft during a visit with other Watercare staff.



There's plenty to learn from communications manager Rachel Hughes, right.