



QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 86: NOVEMBER 2020

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PUBLICATION

The NZOIA Quarterly is published by:

New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association Inc.
PO Box 1620
Nelson 7040
New Zealand

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$30 annually. The NZOIA Quarterly is distributed free to members of NZOIA.

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Articles should be submitted in Word format. All photos must be supplied individually in jpg format and cannot be used if embedded in a Word document.

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Are you getting your weekly NZOIA 4YA?

If you are not receiving weekly emails every Friday from NZOIA, then we either don't have your current email address, or your membership details need updating.

PLEASE check the email address in your membership account on our website, or contact the NZOIA office if you do not have a username and password.

Custom & Contract Courses

NZOIA courses not being run at a suitable time or location? Want to get all your staff sorted when and where it suits you? Got a group of 3 or more people and a date / location in mind?

Whether it be training, assessment or revalidation we are happy to run a custom course for you.

Contact the Operations Manager to discuss your needs and we'll do our best to make it happen. Costs may vary from scheduled courses and minimum numbers of participants dependent on the course type will apply.

Email: admin@nzoi.org.nz Phone: 03 539 0509

Cover photo: Tall Totara Keith Riley descending the Upper Waitaha section of the Waitaha River. Zak Shaw Photography.



NZOIA gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Sport New Zealand

Congratulations

to the following members
who recently gained NZOIA Qualifications!

Abseil Leader	Seth Upfold
Alpine 1	Jenny Lacey, Grace Fleming, Amanda Tutton, Karl Scholtens, Katrina Shepherd
Alpine 2	Alan Haslip
Kayak 1	Joel Charlesworth
Sea Kayak 1	David Williams
Sport Climbing Endorsement	Monika Bischof, Roseanna Hammat
Climbing Wall Supervisor	Rose Cruden



Thoughts from the Board

Kia ora koutou,

He kai kei aku ringa

There is food at the end of my hands

This whakatauki signifies resilience, empowerment and hope.

As I write this, we have just received our spring snowfall in Ōtepoti Dunedin, a reminder that we are still in transition from winter towards summer. As the seasons are changing it is a reminder that the only constant is change, and we have certainly been dealing with a lot of 'change', ambiguity and uncertainty this year.

Alert levels have been changing as well. At the time of writing this, most of Aotearoa New Zealand was at Alert Level 1 and life is pretty 'normal', although with extra hygiene, proximity awareness and movement recording. Auckland was still at Alert Level 2, which meant that NZOIA and Dilworth had to make the hard decision of cancelling the NZOIA Symposium and our NZOIA networking opportunity. The NZOIA office (Penny, Sonya and co) then went into Plan B mode arranging an online AGM, along with ensuring many of the refresher workshops still went ahead. Assessor Conference to come.

At the AGM Gill Wratt is stepping down as an appointed member on the Board. She has volunteered her time to NZOIA for eight years, six of these as the NZOIA Chair. Her commitment, support and guidance to NZOIA and the NZOIA staff has been greatly

appreciated. I offer on behalf of the NZOIA Board and staff our sincerest thanks for all the time and commitment you have given to us over the years and wish you well in your new endeavours. Don't be a stranger.

With that, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Dallis Parker Waters as our newly appointed member to the NZOIA Board. Dallis has a background in leadership development, systems leadership, culture and change, along with having represented New Zealand in the women's rafting team in 2000 and 2003, among many other achievements. She will be a great addition to the Board.

As 2020 really is the year of change, RoVE (Review of Vocational Education) continues with the announcement of the name for the new entity, that is a merging all the Polytechnics and ITO's, this week as Te Pūkenga. NZOIA continues to monitor this evolving space.

While there will always be challenges ahead, I wish you all the resilience, hope and resources to continue facing them—best wishes for Christmas, New Year and Summer adventuring.

Whakatauki Reference:

Inspiring Communities, 2018. <https://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Inspiring-Communities-%E2%80%93-Whakatauki-information-sheet.pdf>

Jo Thompson, NZOIA Board Member



Haere rā Gill Wratt

After eight years, with six of those at the helm, the time has come to thank and farewell Gill from the NZOIA Board. As with many non-profit organisations, NZOIA has faced many challenges over the last decade and without a doubt Gill's extensive governance experience has had a huge positive impact on NZOIA. Membership has increased by nearly 30% and under Gill's guidance, NZOIA is now in a financially stable position, which has been essential during the recent COVID-19 crisis.

What stands out most is the voluntary time and energy that Gill

has given to NZOIA. It can be a thankless task at times, but Gill's upbeat outlook and thousands of hours spent advocating for NZOIA and supporting staff and members has gone well above and beyond the Board Member role description. Her passion for excellence in outdoor leadership and belief in NZOIA has been key to strengthening the Association.

We have been fortunate to have such a high calibre, passionate person contribute to NZOIA and the Board. Thank you Gill, from us all (members, staff and Board) for your long service and contribution.

Tall Totara nominees



Tim Bartholomew

Dunedin Adventures Ltd's Tim is commended for his humble, high quality, down to earth instruction and contribution to the Dunedin rock climbing community. A passionate rock climber and instructor, Tim holds NZOIA Bush 1 and Rock 2.



Jen Riley

Contractor Jen juggles many roles in the outdoor sector and is a multi-talented instructor, tutor and teacher. Described as a highly respected, passionate, knowledgeable, energetic and inspiring educator. Jen holds NZOIA Canoe, Sea Kayak Guide, Kayak 1, Rock 1 Sport Climbing Endorsement and Bush 2.



Keith Riley

West Coast Adventure Skills Ltd instructor and tutor Keith is a dedicated adventurer who contributes significantly to the outdoor profession. He has a talent for inspiring and engaging students and is an accomplished whitewater paddler. He holds NZOIA Rock 2, Kayak 2, Bush 2 and Alpine 2.



Christine Worsfold (Grover)

Director of TOPEC, Grover is a registered teacher and highly respected role model who has 25+ years in the outdoor industry. Her professionalism and unwavering passion and enthusiasm has influenced many programmes and instructors. She holds Kayak 1, Sea Kayak 1 and Rock 2.

Emerging Instructor nominees



Sam Aldrich

Sam currently works at Hillary Outdoors on Great Barrier Island. Described as a trustworthy, technically skilled instructor who has a passion for the environment. He holds NZOIA Bush 1, Sea Kayak 1 and Rock 1 Sport Climbing Endorsement.



Tamara Green

Tamara is an outdoor instructor at Kahunui's St. Cuthbert's College. A strong professional female role model who shows empathy and devotion. She has gained NZOIA Rock, Abseil and Kayak Leader, and Bush and Sea Kayak 1.



Paddy Tucker

Peel Forest Instructor Paddy Tucker is described as a hard worker with a passion for the outdoors. A team player with high standards, he shown a commitment to upskilling gaining NZOIA Bush and Rock 1 and NZRA Grade 3 Raft award.

Emerging Guide nominees



Oscar Hadley

Oscar is a humble and skilled canyonner, experienced tramper, whitewater kayaker and sea kayak guide, who guides for Abel Tasman Canyons and contracts to NMIT's outdoor tertiary programme. Oscar has NZOIA Canyon 1.



Jamie Marr

Queenstown Basecamp Adventure's guide Jamie has a passion for rock climbing and the mountains. He is commended for his drive, humour and easy rapport with clients. He holds NZOIA Rock 2, Bush 1 and Alpine 1.

TERTIARY AWARD RECIPIENTS 2020

This award is aimed at students who have a passion for outdoor instruction and show great potential for further involvement in the industry beyond their studies.

Amorangi Apaapa (Wintec)

Amorangi was recognised for his hard work and dedication to using Te Reo Māori in his instruction. Completing the certificate programme in 2018 and a Heke Reo Māori Diploma in Te Reo Māori in 2019, he returned to Wintec this year to focus on Bush and Canoe. In between study, he has spent his last two summers sea kayak guiding in the Abel Tasman. With his strong Te Reo Māori skills, he will be asset to our industry in the future.

Nicole Davenport (Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology)

A tireless dedication to self-improvement, NMIT 2020 student Nicole specialised in Rock climbing, Canyoning, Rafting and Skiing. Her compassion for others and deep understanding of human nature will make her a winner in any team. Her ability to work hard, face her fears and thrive made her a worthy recipient of this award.

Jason Bond (Tai Poutini Polytechnic)

Jason was selected based on his performance and teaching ability. He is an avid adventure racer and logs days in his electives maintaining a good degree of technical competence across multiple disciplines. His level of professionalism is high and he presents himself well amongst staff and his peers. Educating in the outdoors will be a strong career path for him.

Libby Clifton (Hillary Outdoors)

Libby joined the Diploma course this year and has demonstrated a great connection with the outdoors and a willingness to develop her skills. She is always engaged with the modules and has been a key driver in getting group expeditions planned and completed. Libby is an enthusiastic and motivated student that is willing to put in the effort required to reach her goals.

Robbie Smith (Ara Institute of Canterbury – Christchurch Campus)

An exemplary role model, Robbie has demonstrated a wide range of outstanding instructional attributes. From being proactive with planning, actively seeking opportunities to engage with students and enhance their learning, to absorbing and applying feedback to continually improve. He has excellent rapport and interactions with a wide range of students.

Tia Denovan-Stroud (Ara Institute of Canterbury – Timaru Campus)

Tia has studied at Ara Timaru for the last two years, consistently performing at a high standard in many areas; instruction skills, teamwork, a positive attitude, personal skills and motivation, paperwork, professionalism and safety. She is a motivated and trustworthy person who has much potential in the outdoor industry.



Awarded to a current instructor or guide who personifies 'excellence in outdoor leadership'. A highly respected role model, someone who has contributed significantly to outdoor education in New Zealand through both work with clients and with aspirant instructors/guides.

What stands out about "Keith the Great" (as he likes to be known) is that he dedicates himself to his trade. Keith strives to keep developing and expanding not only in his personal skills but also as an outdoor professional.

As an educator Keith utilises a full range of delivery techniques designed to inspire, reward, self-motivate and teach. He operates from a place where his information is real and student engagement is high. He is continuously researching the latest equipment and techniques and the foundation of his teaching and management of outdoor education experiences stems from an expert level of personal skill and judgement.

Keith is an adventure icon! He has many long days in wild places from all over the world under his belt and he has many more to come. When asked who the most gifted athlete in the outdoors is, Keith comes to mind. He has an incredible balance of endurance, strength, co-ordination, head space and a smart strategic brain to perform at a high level in many pursuits.

As Keith's time in the outdoors increased so has his contribution to advocacy and conservation, particularly with regards to the threats posed to NZ's wild rivers.

Keith is becoming one of the rare few that hold the "guru" quiver of NZOIA qualifications; Kayak 2 Bush 2, Rock 2 and Alpine 2, and he's still using them all! It is small wonder that he is an ideal person to have on the NZOIA Technical Sub Committee.

Keith is humble and does all this for internal rewards rather than external, which is probably why he does it all in a chilled manner. It may also be why he is always striving to be incognito, changing his facial hair on a weekly schedule from beard, to handle bar mo, to thick sideburn chops.

Three cheers to Keith the Great!!

TALL TOTARA CONGRATULATIONS: KEITH RILEY

"Around 1993, I had been rock climbing for three years and just started cracking Dunedin's hardest grade at the time, grade 24. Armed with my 20 year-old ego, I thought I was pretty hot stuff. That is until a ginger arrived from the depths of Southland. Initially it was OK as he was "just a paddler". Mind you, he was a pretty tidy paddler. He quickly rose up through the ranks of the OUCC and was paddling some full-on white water. He paddled Nevis Bluff when only a handful of people had paddled it. Then he took up climbing, and was climbing grade 24s within a few months of taking up the sport. I was crushed.

When people ask me who the most gifted athlete I have ever known personally, the person that always comes to mind is Keith. He has an incredible balance of superb endurance, strength, co-ordination, head space and a smart strategic brain to perform at a high level in many pursuits; kayaking, rock climbing, mountaineering, adventure racing.

Keith's blend of super solid technical skills, high intelligence both in terms of IQ and EQ, world class athleticism, fantastic teaching and people skills, a high level of risk awareness and safety management, a great sense of humour, and his relaxed and super likable character make him an exceptional outdoor educator. He not only excels at teaching and connecting with students, but also inspires and leads by example by staying on the cutting edge of pursuits."

Sash Nukada – Ara Institute of Technology Tutor

"In my time working and recreating with Keith it's apparent that a considerable depth of personal experience supports his teaching methodology.

Within the whitewater kayaking community of Aotearoa Keith Riley's name is synonymous with first descents. No other paddler has approached the task of kayak exploration with as much vigour and dedication as "Keith the Great". He's hard on gear but he would argue it's because his gets used more. As Keith's time on the water has increased so too has his contribution to advocacy and conservation. He has contributed heavily to public awareness regarding the threats posed to NZ's wild rivers.

Beneath the outer appearance of him being an absolute weapon, he's humble and patient and as a result he's an accessible resource to our aspirant instructors and guides. I have the impression that all those who have taught Keith, received guidance from Keith, learnt from Keith, been on an adventure with Keith and worked with Keith would say he's deserving. As far as being a Totara that's tall, Keith has it in spades."

Zak Shaw – Tai Poutini Polytechnic Tutor



Awarded to an emerging guide who displays great potential, talent and commitment to a career in the guiding sector.

With a wry smile and personable demeanour Jamie is a favourite with clients and receives numerous positive reviews on social media.

Graduating from Ara Timaru and working at Basecamp Adventures in Wanaka and Queenstown, Jamie has a training background in education and instructing. As his skills developed he realised that his passion is with guiding and he began seeking opportunities to head down this pathway.

Because of his background he is able to provide the unique combination of instructing and guiding for his clients. He can guide them confidently and safely up routes and teach them about anchors at the end of the day as a bonus.



Jamie holds an impressive array of NZOIA awards including: Sport Climbing Endorsement, Bush 1, Alpine 1 and most recently Rock 2. He was awarded the NZOIA Tertiary Prize through Ara Timaru in 2017.

Clients will always say a guide is good, but the size of the tips speak the truth – just check out Jamie's new mountain bike!

EMERGING GUIDE

CONGRATULATIONS: JAMIE MARR



“ Jamie is great with people, I've worked with many guides and instructors and it's not often that people master both. Jamie is a good instructor but is becoming a great guide.

Starting at Basecamp with Bush and Rock 1, he very quickly became the main instructor for our Queenstown outdoor operation. But the sparkle in his good eye said that guiding was where his passion lies, gaining Alpine 1, Avalanche level 5 (AVO 1) and Rock 2 allowed him to persevere. Guiding snowshoeing and rock trips as much as possible, he always gives the clients an amazing trip and they come back singing his praises.”

Loz Ogle – Basecamp Adventures Managing Director

“ Jamie demonstrates great personal skills in rock climbing and mountaineering and has had plenty of success as a recreational climber. He brings all those skills to the fore when he is in a guide/leadership role.

Jamie is always open to communication on any level and is always looking for opportunities to enhance his clients' experience and ensure everyone finishes their activities happy and healthy.

His passion for the outdoors and mountain activities are infectious to those around him.

His environmental awareness is high and he looks for opportunities to pass that knowledge and awareness on to others.”

Chris Prudden – Alpine Works



Awarded to an emerging guide who displays great potential, talent and commitment to a career in the guiding sector.

Sam has relentless energy for the outdoors and is rarely found inside. Whether he's going the extra mile with his students or dragging his work mates out on adventures, he's always making the most of his time and the environment he is in.

Sam is drawn to the ocean and what better place to be, than working as an instructor at Hillary Outdoors Great Barrier. During his time there, he has developed into a technically skilled instructor gaining NZOIA Sea Kayak 1 and other maritime qualifications to go alongside his Sport Climbing Endorsement, Bush 1 and Kayak Leader from Ara Timaru. His understated confidence and recognised competence quickly found him in the role of training and inducting other instructors. He has just completed training as a NZOIA Sea Kayak Leader Assessor.

Above all that though, the experiences he provides in the outdoors for his students leaves an inspiring and lasting impression. He gives so much of himself that his courses often leave even the toughest characters in tears of gratitude for what they have learnt and achieved.

Safe yet relaxed, firm yet approachable, professional and oozing enthusiasm Sam is an instructor in the zone, completely in his element, using his gifts and sharing his passion.

“ His competence in a wide variety of environments has seen him move into a role where he now inducts and trains other instructors, and contributes to the ongoing development of our safety management system. His sound technical skills also allow him to focus fully on his participants; allowing them to take the lead and actively develop their experience while he monitors that this is done safely.

Above all this though Sam facilitates high quality learning experiences for his students, he wants to see them learn and develop, he invests in them as individuals, and plans a programme to meet their needs.”

Gemma Parkin – Hillary Outdoors Great Barrier

EMERGING INSTRUCTOR

CONGRATULATIONS: SAM ALDRICH

“ I've never met a man who can engage and relate with so many different people in the way Sam can. Sam's a changer, a doer, a motivator. I have no doubt he's going to be one of the greats of the outdoor industry.”

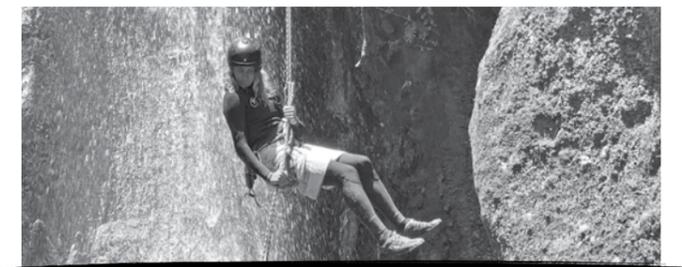
Soul O'Reilly – Hillary Outdoors Intern 2018

“ Sam is very personable and quick to establish positive yet professional relationships with both the youth that attend programmes and the adults that accompany them. He is extremely genuine in his efforts to provide the best experience possible for each and every young person he takes into the outdoors. The youth he works with are naturally drawn to his friendly and approachable nature and they confidently put their full trust in him. Sam is always conscious and confident with all the safety aspects of his practice.”

Karlie Clifton – Teacher Hillcrest High School

“ Sam has taught me many valuable lessons regarding outdoor instruction and knows how to work with groups like second nature. Sam has an air about him when instructing that demands fun and keeps stoke levels high, though he also knows how to control a group in risky situations.”

Joshua Murphy – Hillary Outdoors Instructor



“ Sam has this amazing presence with his students: earns respect and has mana but is unassuming, is very approachable with his easy-going surfer vibe but is completely prepared and professional, and fully onto the safety and risk management side of things. I've seen Sam under pressure and he just stays totally calm and positive, and focused on the task. He is very trustworthy; even as a student instructor I would have been happy to hand my own kids to Sam and know that they would be safe, learn some cool stuff, and have an absolute ball. Sam is inspiring and fun, and is always up for an adventure.”

Sash Nukada – ARA Institute of Technology

INCIDENT SHARING: MEDICAL PRIVACY

A week into a multi week programme, a group and their instructor headed out for an overnight trip. After a fairly long tramping day, the group arrived at their campsite. After dinner and a few night activities they relaxed around the fire for the rest of the evening.

While relaxing, one of the students, who we'll call Kate, fell asleep. She was difficult to wake up and the group elected to carry her to her tent and settle her into her sleeping bag. During the carry process she woke up.

The instructor questioned Kate about the lead up, concerned there might be something behind the deep sleep; like a head knock that he didn't know about. Kate was insistent she was just really tired.

The next day proceeded as planned, Kate was back to her normal self and participated in the day's activity. In the afternoon the group returned to base by van, during the van ride Kate fell asleep again and couldn't be woken.

Back at base I became involved, and concerned that this was more than a tired student I contacted Kate's family. Information from the family confirmed that this was not normal behavior and further medical care was arranged. During this time Kate again woke up and admitted she had slipped during the night activity and hit her head. Over the next few hours this story changed to; slipped off a log, and eventually to fell one and a half metres out of a tree.

Local medical staff were quite concerned and Kate was taken by helicopter to the nearest hospital for scans. Unfortunately, the helicopter was already carrying another patient, so as Kate was not a minor she was sent without an accompanying adult. Her parents met her at the other end.

Contact with the family overnight was primarily managed by Kate's school. In the morning we were given an update that Kate was fine, she had been given the all clear and her parents wanted to get her back to the programme as soon as possible. I was surprised by this outcome so gave the school a few questions to go back to the parents with; I wanted to know the cause of the deep sleep. The reply was she was just very tired and had been given the all clear. Kate returned to the programme that afternoon.

Something still didn't feel right about this so I contacted our local medical care provider; the 'all clear' didn't align with their level of concern the night before. They contacted the hospital and found out Kate had indeed been diagnosed with a concussion; she should have been monitored at home for 24 hours before

returning to the programme, and was also told to be on light duties for two weeks. She had been given future care notes to pass onto us, which we did not see.

For me this was not only a gut feeling that something wasn't right, but I'd had experience of similar situations in the past. Unfortunately, this wasn't the first time a family or school had tried to return a student to our programme nursing a concussion. There is lack of understanding the seriousness of a concussion or the consequences of a second knock. There is also wanting to make the most of the financial investment they've made in the programme.

What rights do we have when it comes to accessing students' medical records?

When I phoned our local health care provider at the time I was unsure if they were even allowed to disclose the student's medical records. My question/statement to them was "Kate has returned to our site, and I'm told she has been given the 'all clear'. Is there anything I should know about her condition so we can manage her appropriately heading forward?"

We're fortunate to have a great relationship with our medical team and they were forthcoming with information and crystal clear on what Kate could and couldn't do.

A few weeks later I followed up to find out what our rights are when it comes to accessing student medical records. The answer; under the intent of the loco parentis status, medical providers can give us access to student medical information where it affects the student's ongoing care.

The age at which a student stops being a minor in the eyes of the medical profession is grey; it's 15 or 16 years of age, and this should be considered when developing guidelines for working with students in a medical setting.

Adding an additional line to our consent forms could make the access process smoother. Something like; 'I give permission for (provider) to access relevant medical information pertinent to the ongoing care of my son/daughter.'

For us and the school involved we'll also insist that a copy of the medical discharge notes are emailed to our office before accepting participants back to the site.

Note: Out of respect for the student and the school involved, the author has requested to remain anonymous.

ADVOCACY

SAM NEWTON

Recreation
Aotearoa

We are all hoping that this pandemic is a 'once in a lifetime' event, perhaps even a 'once ever' event. We certainly don't want to see another one.

The resulting economic shock has been described as a 'once in a century' recession. While the economic forecasts are not as bad as they were in April, jobseeker benefits are at an all-time high.

Elections happen every three years, which is far too often for some and can't come soon enough for others. It's not often we get a global pandemic, a once-in-a-century recession, and an election happening all at once. There's no denying that we live in interesting times.

At Recreation Aotearoa, we utilise election years to ask each political party a series of common questions relating to policy in the realm of Recreation. It is a pretty successful technique. For example, in 2017 we asked: "Does your party support a step change increase in funding for the Department of Conservation (DOC) to carry out its function of fostering recreation?"

I don't think we can solely claim credit for the huge increase in Conservation Funding announced in the 2018 budget. It might have happened anyway. But it didn't hurt to ask and then remind the governing parties of their answers in early 2018.

But I am pretty confident no one else in 2017 asked "Does your party agree that the organisations engaged in facilitating school-aged children into the great outdoors should be exempt from DOC concession fees?". We did ask that and used the answers we got to press the issue. This has recently resulted in the following commitment from DOC: "Those concessionaires that are non-profit or charitable organisations undertaking education and instruction with primary and secondary aged students engaged in the NZ school curriculum will not be charged activity or per person fees."

Pleasingly, we have had some organisational members report that they have recently received credit notes from DOC for the concession fees they have paid. That is a great result.

In 2020, we asked a series of different questions and have received answers that can be viewed at: <https://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/site/advocacy/projects/political-party-responses-to-ra-questions-2020.aspx>.

[nzrecreation.org.nz/site/advocacy/projects/political-party-responses-to-ra-questions-2020.aspx](https://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/site/advocacy/projects/political-party-responses-to-ra-questions-2020.aspx). The topics covered included a range of technical policy ones, like reforming the Walking Access Act and resourcing DOC strategy and management planning, to fundamental needs such as children learning to swim.

Perhaps the one I am most excited about is "What will your Party do to ensure that every New Zealand primary school pupil is afforded the opportunity to have an overnight school camping experience in the great outdoors?" It is great to see that the responding parties agree with the premise of the question. That is, Outdoor Education and school camps are fundamentally good things. This is an area that Recreation Aotearoa has been advocating on for at least five years.

Our hope is that as we recover from a global pandemic and economic recession, New Zealand's renewed appreciation for the great outdoors, localism and need to build resilient tamariki will result in a greater degree of government support for Outdoor Education. New Zealand needs it now more than ever.

Before I sign off, I want to give a shout out to Grant Robertson (Labour Spokesperson for Sport & Recreation) and Mark Mitchell (National Spokesperson for Sport & Recreation). They both kindly participated in our Q+A election discussion, with a positive and cordial kaupapa. Being busy MPs in a very difficult time, it was generous of them to spend time answering our questions on Recreation Policy. I suspect that they both learned some things about our sector and perspective. You can review a recording of the broadcast at: <https://vimeo.com/454185395> or listen to it as a podcast at: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1325680/5268601>

Recreation Aotearoa advocates on the outdoor sector's behalf. Stay up to date with what's happening in the advocacy space by receiving our Kaitiaki newsletter. You receive it as part of becoming a member of Recreation Aotearoa – you can sign up as a virtual member for free! Join here: <https://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/tools/clients/new.aspx?SECT=virtual>

Sam Newton, Advocacy Manager | Recreation Aotearoa

We want your story!

We are looking for contributions from you, the NZOIA members, for the NZOIA Quarterly. Do you have a story to tell? Do you know someone who has thoughts to share?

Articles could be:

A personal adventure and how your experiences have impacted your instruction/guiding of others. / An incident, near miss or accident that others could learn from. / A personal profile – an interesting tale about how you got to be where you are now in the world of outdoor instructing. / An organisation that is doing innovative and interesting things – with its programme, philosophy, direction and instruction or guiding. / A reflection on any aspect of outdoor instruction/guiding that you think would be educational and beneficial for others to hear.

Contact the editor with your ideas and for guidelines: editor@nzoi.org.nz





HELEN TAYLOR

LIVING A VALUE DRIVEN LIFE

What draws you most to the outdoors? Is it the sense of adventure? Risk taking? Quality time with others or doing fun activities? Watching others be challenged, grow and develop? Or is it the incredible splendour of nature? For me it is a mix of all of those things and so many more.

I have worked and played in the outdoors for the last 12 years. I now find myself in Far North Queensland surrounded by crocodiles, tropical rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef. When someone asks me "What do you do?" I call myself an 'Adventure Therapist' ... often receiving a blank reply or a response of "adventure what?"

After travelling for a year I realised that this is one of the top questions that we often ask new people we meet and I spent my time breaking down that question into a further level of depth. Instead of hearing "What do you do?" I now feel the better question is "Why do you do what you do?", "What values do you live out in your life?"



Let's start off with how I got to where I am today. I left school at the age of 17. Despite despair from family about my future career prospects and that being an outdoor instructor isn't any kind of a career for a woman, I went and studied a Certificate in Outdoor Adventure at Whitireia Polytechnic. That year had a significant impact on my life, as one of only two females (and inherently a high achiever) I was determined to prove myself. I remember my tutor sitting me down one day and saying "Helen, I have to apologise to you..." going on to say that he had totally judged me on first appearances by my blonde hair and being a

city girl. He must have thought he was going to have a hard time on his course this year because he'd have to look after me all the time (a feeling I can now totally relate to in group work...).

I am so thankful that he was so honest with me about this as it has shaped my work as a Pākehā wahine working with others, especially those who may externally seem very different from me like people from other cultures, people with disabilities or other physical characteristics.

I learnt that year, that I wanted to work with people. But, still under pressure from my family to get a "real" career, I went and studied a Bachelor of Social Work at Massey University. After four long years of craving the outdoors, I finally completed my degree and moved to Nelson to complete a Diploma in Adventure Tourism. I am fortunate that my working life has been shaped by great mentors and role models, especially my years working at Adventure Specialties Trust. I now work in an Adventure Therapy role in Cairns, Australia for The Northern Outlook who are under The Department of Youth Justice.

So, if we move beyond first appearances now. What do you find draws you, or should I say, drives you to be, work or play in the outdoors?

There was a period in my life a few years ago where I found extraordinary healing from being in the outdoors, specifically surfing. I would go out through the crashing waves and sit (or survive, depending on the conditions), waiting to dance on the green of the waves. Looking out on the horizon, by myself or with friends, I could connect with something far greater than myself.

It was during this time of healing that I had a first-hand encounter of what I had been preaching, teaching and weaving into my work in the outdoors as I encouraged others to challenge, grow, develop, and connect with themselves and others. I became acutely aware of how I was impacting others through my actions. More specifically, how sustainable and ethical my actions were. How was I connecting my values from working with vulnerable people into all aspects of my life? How was I living a value driven life?

I started with a New Year's resolution at the beginning of 2019 – to only buy what I needed, from ethical and sustainable brands. That first month really opened my eyes to how difficult it is to live out my values in all aspects of my life! I began to really question how ingrained my values were. Including questioning what made the people in my groups more important than the ones who were across the world, those making the clothes or products we were

buying to supply and prepare for our adventure expeditions.

Interestingly my twin sister, Clare, who was then living across the other side of Australia, also went through a similar awakening at the same time. She approached me last year with a business idea to help make it easier to do what we were doing. To make it easier to live a value driven life! Together we built prizedlife.com. Prized Life is an online directory – one place to find ethical and sustainable brands. It allows everyday people to quickly and easily find brands that are better for people and planet, providing a platform to live out your values every day.

We released Prized Life just as Covid-19 started to hit hard and I wondered whether it would crash and burn. However, one of the most incredible aspects of Prized Life has been connecting with small business owners and supporting them during this difficult time. It really cemented the ability to live a value driven life wholeheartedly.



Because I live and breathe the outdoors it is really important to me that we develop a devoted "Outdoors" category. While this is still growing on our platform, I'd like to share a number of our brands doing their bit for the outdoor industry, for you and for me, to help us live out our values:

- Toitū: Jessie, an Outdoor Leadership student in Victoria, is building an online gear shop devoted to supplying the industry with eco-conscious outdoor gear and apparel, from brands that give a damn about the Earth.
- Team Timbaktu: creating waterproof jackets and activewear for women from recycled fabrics.
- Eco Friendly Surf Shop: aiming to supply the best range of high quality sustainable and eco-friendly surf gear.
- Gemma Lee: NZ designed, bold, bright and playful – wetsuits and swimsuits made from eco-conscious materials.
- One Tree at a Time: renovating ex-display winter gear garments from trusted suppliers that would be destined for landfill – ready for new adventures.
- Fierce Hazel: high-quality and cruelty-free bags, backpacks, wallets for cyclists and outdoors people – ethically made from factory deadstock.

I'd like to encourage you in your journey, wherever you are at. Whether you are dedicated to sustainability or thinking of making small changes, never underestimate the impact that you can have on those around you. I encourage you in your work, to embrace your community from local to global. Finally, do your best with what you have, to live a value driven life. Kia haha.

prizedlife.com @the.prizedlife

Helen Taylor Co-Founder Prized Life, Adventure Intervention Officer, The Northern Outlook

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SATELLITE BEACON DEVICES: PROS AND CONS

DAVID TAIT

I am currently employed by TrackMe New Zealand, where my official title is Ambassador for Adventure, Fun and Safety. I came into this position after working a bit over twenty years in the outdoor education, youth and event management sectors. With the help of some great people and since graduating from AUT, I have managed to establish an Outdoor Education Trust and four adventure-based events.

In this article I will outline some of the pros and cons of various satellite beacon devices, and will share some of the innovations that we have been involved in at TrackMe.

When we talk about satellite beacon devices we are mainly talking about Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs), Spot and inReach devices. There are a few other non-mainstream devices around too. All satellite devices need to establish a connection with their satellite network to work and some networks are more reliable than others. The three common satellite networks are the Cospas-Sarsat satellites that PLBs use, and the Global Star and the Iridium networks that Spots and inReaches use respectively.

In New Zealand we have a good choice of beacons that can be used to alert an SOS. PLBs have a dedicated battery and a one-off activation, other devices have live tracking and/or messaging. Live tracking has benefits but requires a data connection so has added cost.

My association with TrackMe New Zealand started when they sponsored the 2015 GO-4-12 Youth Adventure Race. The event in the Kaweka Range in Hawkes Bay, was remote with zero cell coverage. I was concerned because over the years, on several disconcerting occasions, we could not answer two very important questions during an event: "where is that team?" and "are they okay?" Live tracking allows you to see where the device is. This has been handy as we've seen teams take some interesting alternative routes including a team of rafters ditching their raft and walking overland.

Live tracking is great for anyone who is responsible for multiple people in numerous locations. We have had a team set off the SOS due to a MTB crash and several teams have sent 'Send Help' messages as they have been lost or unable to continue. We use the inReach for our staff as two-way messaging is invaluable. When used well this technology is game changing and we simply would be unable to race our event in the format that we do without it.

At TrackMe we are seeing a move to the inReach devices, but it is important when using any tool that you know its strengths and weaknesses. As a satellite device, an inReach enables two-way messaging beyond cell networks. But being a satellite device, it needs to see a satellite to receive or send data. In fact it utilises two satellite systems; the Global Positioning Satellites for location and the Iridium network to send or receive data. The terrain that you are traveling in will affect your ability to connect with these systems.

An inReach will indicate when it cannot see a satellite, and when a message is sent from a unit it will notify you with a sound and the sending icon will disappear from the screen. One of their other really useful features is that if it cannot see a satellite it will send your data when it can, and if that data is tracking points it will send through the points that had not been sent when the satellite was obscured.

The Iridium Network has proven to provide high quality voice and data connections over the planet's entire surface, including across oceans, airways and polar regions. In New Zealand you have four options when it comes to data accounts: Pivotal, Garmin, Smart Track and TrackMe New Zealand. If you are connected with TrackMe New Zealand your SOS activation will go directly to New Zealand responders and not be forwarded through an overseas system.

For those who like fun facts: the Iridium Network was so named because Iridium is sixty-sixth on the Periodic Table and there are sixty-six active Iridium satellites. To be more accurate there are seventy-seven, as there are eleven spares shadowing for backup. The Iridium satellites have a pole to pole orbit and are cross-linked Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. In 2019 Iridium replaced all the first-generation satellites over eight different SpaceX launches.

We have clients using inReaches in some extremely remote parts of New Zealand with great success. We also see that the more people know about the devices, the better they use them. One fundamental is to carry the inReach in a position that it has a clear view of the sky. We also recommend having it on and live tracking because every ten minutes you will create a very easy to follow breadcrumb trail. A tracking inReach will literally take the search out of a search and rescue. If someone is overdue but an SOS has not been activated the inReach allows for communication and investigation options beyond what a PLB could offer.

One limitation of an inReach is that you can run its battery flat, whereas a PLB has a dedicated battery. Consider which inReach you choose, because the battery capacities for different models vary. You can also carry an extra battery pack. It is also worth noting that the pre-set messages (OK, custom and Help) use little data and are often free as part of a contract. These messages can be sent easily to your contacts while you are on the move as they have pre-set recipients and can often be sent in two or three button pushes.

As Kiwis we are innovators and problem-solvers, both TrackMe and one of our development and product partners, GetHomeSafe, have created some world firsts. These innovations include health and wellbeing tools such as a cell phone app that integrates seamlessly with the satellite devices via the cloud. We have also built our TrackMe Pro app that gives the ability to track and message devices from a phone or tablet.

Get home safe is one of my core values. We should go and explore today but take every step we can to ensure that we get to explore tomorrow too. This is even more poignant when we are responsible for others in the outdoors and two forms of emergency communication is standard practice for the outdoor industry. My favourite phrase that I used when I was the Director of our Outdoor Adventure Trust was "Every program that we run needs to be safe, fun and educational" and these technologies enhance our ability to make this happen.

One of my roles at TrackMe New Zealand is to find ways to get more devices into more hands. This includes promoting for people in the outdoors to carry a PLB as the bare minimum



when heading out. We are also looking for innovative ways to get people using devices and hopefully by the time that this article goes to print we will have launched our Adventure Club. The club will allow members to use devices for up to 30 days a year as part of their membership for a reasonable cost. We also have a group of Brand Ambassadors who are passionate about these tools and help us share the passion. We make an effort to support organisations that encourage youth to get into the outdoors including Scouting New Zealand and we support a range of youth events including the Hillary Challenge, Get2Go and GO-4-12 events.

If you want to know more about TrackMe New Zealand go to: <https://trackme.nz>

David Tait, TrackMe New Zealand, Ambassador for Adventure, Fun and Safety

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FLUID RISK MANAGEMENT

GOOD DECISIONS, GOOD PEOPLE, GOOD INFORMATION AND KNOWING YOUR ABILITY

KEITH RILEY

Like living in a ski town on a powder day, Hokitika is a river town, and we get our fair share of 'fat' powder days – just the melted type. The ultimate forecast is a grumpy Norwester, warm and wet, slamming into the Southern Alps, getting an orographic super charge and saturating the valleys with an unfathomable volume of water, clean, pure water. Give this time to sink into the rivers, then, just as it swings to the south, the hose gets turned off the sun comes out, and we are poised, ready to paddle some of the best white water in the country. With the wonders of online weather forecasting, and a bit of intuition, we can nearly always get it right.

There is a touch of stigma in paddling flooded rivers, "flooded rivers are dangerous". Among other fatalities, the Mangatepopo tragedy reminds us of this.



Rivers in general are dangerous, as are mountains. Irrespective of how much water is in a river, rocks, water and gravity behave in a predictable manner. As a generalisation, flooded rivers are faster, features are bigger and rapids are generally longer, relative to their usual flow. Take a rapid on a flooded small river and you'll likely find a similar rapid on a normal flow big river.

So, like any backcountry user, we watch the weather and wait for the right conditions. The red on the rain forecast model normally prompts a few folk to wriggle out of work and to coordinate a meeting time.

Akin to making an assessment on avalanche conditions prior to going into the mountains, we monitor the weather closely looking for the right ingredients to get the 'freshies'... safely. How

the precipitation falls, where it falls, when it fell. These all help create a picture of what the terrain will be like, and how it will change throughout the day.

One of our best rainy day activities is kayaking the gorgeous Lower Kakapotahi, a little known gorge 40 kilometres south of Hokitika, also known as the 'little Waitaha' after her better known big sister running parallel to the south.

Granite plutons sitting west of the Southern Alps create distinct river corridors. Stubborn granite domes do not yield to the big floods. Geological weaknesses funnel water into fissures concentrating the erosive power. Rocks get polished over millennia leaving architecture a skate park designer would be proud of!

Unlike the geology of rivers flowing through the Southern Alps, granite riverbeds like the Kakapotahi tend not to change much. Rocks become familiar. Layered with a given flow, we remember all the rapids and many of the features. As flow increases, a rock becomes a recirculating hydraulic, becomes a wave, becomes a BIG wave, becomes gone. At the upper end of the flow range, this familiarity becomes essential as the speed of our descent increases. The river feels bigger, more powerful; being in the right place and knowing where that is keeps you in control.

Strangely, the heaviest rain is often nocturnal on the West Coast meaning the best white water is at dawn. Families still sleeping, we slip out the door in the dark hopeful to have read the weather right. If you live on the West Coast you really need to appreciate rain, here it is about as good as it gets!

From the put in, the Kakapotahi descends into a world largely untouched by people. Old growth rain forest clings to the valley walls, thousands of years in the making, protected by the steep terrain. Rain clearly nourishes this valley, the forest comes alive. Noise, colour, feel, to me this environment in this weather embodies all that is 'West Coast'. It could not be wetter. If the trip goes well, we'll be home for lunch, get it wrong and suddenly we are in a remote and inhospitable world days from civilisation.

The put in itself is the first challenge. Slithering down a steep, muddy old moraine "trail". Kayaks are put on "leashes" so they don't career down the hill and decapitate our comrades.

A knotted fixed rope assists the sketchiest section. A familiar marker rock indicates volume and trend, the higher it is, the more 'full on' it is, although some rapids get easier. The brown colour can be intimidating, but often is more related to the stability of upstream slips. Sometimes we run the shuttle first to let it drop a little more, sometimes we berate each other for arriving too late, missing the 'sweet flow'. We always talk, no egos, nothing to prove, all opinions valid. Today, it's good to go.

Early on in the journey, bedrock pinches the river into a four metre wide slot. Water thunders through a thin hallway framed by looming granite walls. It's always intimidating floating up to this ominous spot. We take out on river right to scout the gorge. The gorge hasn't been on for a few years since a 500 year old rimu tree became wedged sideways blocking the path of anything floating on the surface. A recent flood beat the log into submission, (a testament to the force of water), today the gorge is back on. Heart rates rise, grins form. A well-worn track leads to an outstanding vantage point. Perched 50 metres directly above the bowels of the thundering rapid, this bird's eye view is a seldom offered perspective on the upcoming white water. Left, centre or right line, all completely different routes and with variable flows, this single rapid offers countless opportunities to test one's white water prowess. Translating this helicopter perspective to a river level one requires conscious recalibration.

Regardless of the flow, the rapid is a tricky Class 5. The portage always an option (unless you're here way too high in which case a small creek crossing might encourage a long sit contemplating your weather reading abilities). The gorge entrance is a little chaotic as 40 metres wide instantly becomes four. So long as you stay upright, you're fine, as the smooth featureless walls cause no trouble. The water immediately flattens to a pool above a noteworthy horizon line. Very much the point of no return. By now the decision has been made... Left line.

Float the flat water towards the horizon, centre left, suck in the O₂ and calm the nerves. Spot the rock shelf with water running over it, when the time is right, accelerate with all you've got, aim more left knowing the water will carry you right (like shooting with a cross wind). Time your last stroke to be you best.

If you nail it, your kayak slides over the rock shelf with enough depth of water not to slow your momentum, hopefully your last stroke caught deep green water giving you the punch you need. You fly forward...for a split second you float mid-air, it's calm, metaphorically quiet despite the world of chaotic white way below you. Take the nano second to spot your landing. Land flat is the goal, this keeps the kayak on top of the water and you in a position to have control.

Get this line wrong and your hull grinds on the rock shelf, momentum, is lost, you nosedive, your kayak goes deep, appreciating a softer landing, but losing valuable seconds as you fight to resurface and get that control back. Move centre so you have space to drive back right across falling water and into a surging eddy... Breath.

For safety we run the gorge in pairs, we are each other's safety net. From the surging eddy above, you can climb out of your kayak and clamber up to a rare flat spot. Here you can offer throw bag support to your team in the likely trouble spots and have immediate access to a log jam, that has never, but could, cause problems. This is the only spot where you can see your entire team. Those fidgeting at the top, those in the thick of it, and those on safety at the bottom. We function as a team



despite our physical separation. Sign language controls the pace and gives additional beta that helps your mates nail the line.

If you're not feeling it, now is the time to walk out. The final egress before descending into no man's land. What awaits is near continuous Class 4 white water. As classy as it gets. Hopefully the river is high and dropping, but there's a good chance of some latent down pours – the type that wind shield wipers can't keep up with. This place comes alive in the rain, the uniqueness in seeing this environment in its saturated state is not lost on me. From our dry suit cocoons, we comfortably get to experience an atmosphere most would seek shelter from.

Other than stopping to play on some surf waves or repeating a few of the favourite moves, we run this section fairly continuously. There is enough room and enough options for a big team to all be weaving through the same rapid at the same time, we all take the approach of keeping eyes on the paddler above us and paddler below us, which ensures everyone is always accounted for.

We fly through this scenic hydro slide, being thrown around as jets of water take hold of our buoyant boats, over, under and through waves, slamming into liquid crash pads, grinning like fools.

At the takeout, the farmer pulls over, frowning, shaking his head, wondering what manner of creature has entered his domain. Helmets come off and faces get recognised, kids taught, sheds built, sheep sold, referrals made. In a heartbeat, we go from freaks, to members of the same community. Conversation bounces from TB testing to kayak design to local politics. He leaves still shaking his head... but I'm sitting next to him, soaking his seat and getting a lift back to the put in and our car.

Paddling flooded rivers is not without its risks, we know this and do all we can to keep it as safe as possible. Mostly it's about making good decisions based on good information, being with good people, and being in tune with your own ability. In getting this right, we take the worst forecast and turn it into the brightest day.

Editor's note; This article was originally written for the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ. As well as representing recreation in the same places, FMC, Whitewater NZ and Recreation Aotearoa share many common members and values. These organisations share information and together, collaborate on advocacy and submissions on recreation issues on public conservation lands.

Keith Riley, NZOIA Technical Sub Committee member

SUSTAINABILITY AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

It is a difficult task to strike the balance between describing the urgency with which we must respond to the climate crisis and other pressing sustainability issues on one hand, and the opportunities for positive action and many reasons for hope on the other. One walks a fine line between guilt and ignorance, despair and false optimism, sadness and possibility.

Internationally we are now witnessing many of the impacts of climate change which science predicted years ago, often with devastating effect (IPCC, 2014; Gleick, 2020).

In April 2019 the “Environment Aotearoa” report outlined concerning trends of increasing pollution, loss of habitat and biodiversity, declining fisheries, and the impacts of climate change within our own country (MfE 2019).

In September 2020, referring to the 2010 international biodiversity agreement made in Aichi, Japan, the UN reported that “the world has failed to meet a single target to stem the destruction of wildlife and life-sustaining ecosystems in the last decade” (Greenfield, 2020).

Somehow, humanity has come to see itself as separate from nature, rather than a part of it. We continue to chase after a growth based economic system which prioritises profit over people and the environment, with seemingly little understanding of the ecological foundations on which the natural world – and our own livelihoods – is based. No wonder then that many scientists and scholars are urging for “rapid and transformative change” across all aspects of society.

Luckily, there are numerous ways we can all make positive contributions. A brief exploration of key concepts within the field of sustainability helps us to understand how we can do this at both a personal and professional level.

Sustainability. What's it got to do with you?

Common perceptions of sustainability relate to things like gardening, composting, recycling, and being more energy efficient. These actions are really important, yet there are much more significant actions we can undertake.

Fundamental principles of sustainability are:

- We need to live within the finite limits of our planet's natural resources
- We need to ensure that every human being has the right to a decent life
- We need to do this for present and future generations.

Looking around the world right now, these principles may seem idealistic. They are definitely aspirational, yet that should be a call to action, rather than an excuse for inaction.

Key concepts

Sustainability can be broken down into four key aspects: environmental, economic, social and cultural. These four aspects of sustainability are inherently connected; each affects the other. Some basic models can help visualise this.

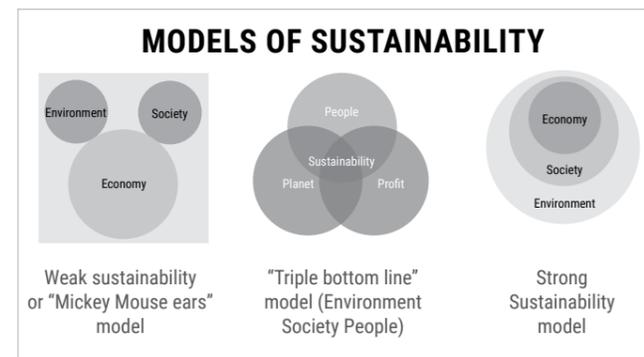
Micky mouse model: the economy and economic growth is prioritised. The role of people is to keep the economy going, and the role of the environment is to support people and the economy. This is pretty much how our system currently works.

Triple bottom line model: people, the environment, and the economy are considered more equally. This model is characterised by practices such as triple bottom line accounting, or the people, planet, profit movement.

Strong sustainability model: the planet is given priority. People live within the natural limits of our world, and the economy exists to support people. There are plenty of ideas around how we could achieve this on a practical level. One example comes from Kate Raworth's recent book “Doughnut economics”. Check out the links below for some interesting examples of how this idea is currently being considered within Aotearoa New Zealand.

<https://www.doughnuteconomicsnz.com>

<https://www.projectmoonshot.city/post/an-indigenous-view-on-doughnut-economics-from-new-zealand>



Interconnections

Because these four aspects are so interconnected, we won't be able to completely solve any sustainability issues in one area independent of the others. How do we solve our environmental problems without also changing the priorities of the business world and our consumer habits? How do we solve social issues without addressing broader economic and environmental ones? And how do we encourage cultural inclusivity and diversity without confronting societal attitudes and racism?

Obviously politics is inherently involved in the answers to all of these questions. But at a time when around the world we are seeing a rise in populism and decrease in participation with traditional systems of democracy, particularly with younger voters, how do we ensure politics is part of the solution?

Solutions

Complex problems have complex solutions, and the answer to all these issues lies in a wide range of positive actions from all of us. Active citizenship, conscious consumerism, involvement in community and conservation projects, reducing our personal carbon and eco footprints – there are plenty of examples of positive action we can undertake at an individual and organisational level.

One barrier to taking action can be knowing where to start. I have heard people accused of hypocrisy for trying to make changes in some areas of their lives, while still retaining old habits in others – for example changing their diet while still driving around in petrol powered vehicles. This argument is fundamentally flawed: our default settings, or the mainstream/ easiest/ cheapest options in most areas of our lives, tend to have the most environmental impact. Therefore it takes conscious effort to make positive changes. To make this effort is commendable. Once changes in one area of our lives have become more habitual, then it is easier to make changes in other areas. Our efforts make it easier for others to do the same. Our collective efforts create significant change.

Bang for your buck

Informed action helps us get the most return for our efforts. The changes that are possible through national and local government decision making will generally have more impact than our individual efforts. As such active citizenship – making informed votes in both national and local elections, writing letters to MPs and local newspapers, giving businesses feedback, signing petitions – is a better use of your time than worm farming. But worm farming definitely has its place, so don't give it up unless you really can't do both!

Conscious consumerism is hugely influential. Every dollar you spend is a vote for a product or service and the company that stands behind it. The fact that one in five kids in this country are growing up in poverty, and many people don't have the luxury of doing anything other than purchasing the cheapest option available, is all the more reason for active citizenship.

Money talks. What's yours doing? Ethical investment is hugely influential at a global and national level. Many Kiwis are signed up to KiwiSaver, yet may not know how their money is being invested. Luckily there are several tools that can help you with this, for example check out Mindful Money at: <https://mindfulmoney.nz/pages/3/about-us/>

Reduce your carbon footprint. Conscious consumerism, and in particular changing our dietary habits, is one way to significantly reduce our impact. Most of us can't afford to rush out and buy an EV, nor should we get rid of perfectly good petrol cars (a lot of energy went into making them, and a lot of energy will go into making your new one). But let's not drive them any more than we really need to. Carpooling and keeping the adventures local is a good place to start. Lack of public transport in your area? Refer to active citizenship. Really need to get another car? EVs or hybrids are great if you can swing it.

Get involved in your local community. Science tells us that we are going to see a lot of change within our lifetimes. Well connected communities will be much more resilient in the face of this change.

Businesses and organisations

There are plenty of examples of grassroots community groups doing awesome work to address a wide range of sustainability issues both within Aotearoa NZ and around the world. At a business level there are a wide range of innovative practices being adopted across all industries.

For some big picture inspiration, check out the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Recent Colmar Brunton Polls show Kiwis are really concerned about sustainability issues and keen to support businesses that are being proactive in this space. At the same time, businesses are concerned about where to start – and that if they try to make progress in one

area they will be accused of “greenwashing” because they aren't making such good progress in other areas.

To address this, it's all about authenticity – businesses communicating clearly what positive changes they are making, while acknowledging they still have areas to work on. Recent research from the NZ Sustainability Business Network indicates customers respond really positively to this transparent approach. Many sustainability initiatives also offer efficiencies in energy, materials, time and money; and provide opportunities for collaboration and partnership. Put sustainability on your meeting agenda once a month. Spend some time talking about ideas and possibilities.

Opportunities within Outdoor Education

Outdoor education within Aotearoa New Zealand has traditionally focused on personal and social development, generally with varying degrees of environmental education thrown in. While there are some excellent learning outcomes associated with this focus, they don't necessarily translate into pro environmental / sustainability behaviour. We need to help our students connect the dots a little more overtly, to help them develop a deeper understanding of sustainability related issues, and what we can do about them. It is important that we empower students through this process so that they know they can take positive action and make a difference. It is also important that we take a diplomatic approach to exploring these issues, for example by leaving our own political views aside.

Some areas where we can maximise inherent learning opportunities include:

- Our students experience their courses in some amazing natural environments which are regularly a source of wonder, awe and inspiration. We need to help them to understand and strengthen this connection with the natural world.
- Within te ao Māori, people are not considered separate from, but rather a part of the land. Incorporating aspects of te ao Māori within our courses not only helps us to recognise our bicultural heritage, but opens the door to this world view.
- Outdoor education courses often include some element of values exploration. As a society, we urgently need to shift our values from the individualistic and materialistic towards the altruistic and humanitarian.

Our society faces some urgent sustainability issues. The solution lies in positive actions from all of us. There are multiple opportunities within our personal and professional lives to help achieve this.

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PROFILE: VERTICAL ADVENTURES

If you have ever been climbing in Auckland, chances are you've heard of Vertical Adventures, but what do you know about this small family owned business?

Vertical Adventures is a member of NZOIA. Its owner and founder, Darrin Worsfold has been an avid climber for more than 25 years. The climbing gym went from a dream and concept drawings in 2008, to reality in 2010. As a qualified builder, instructor and teacher, Darrin was fully involved in every area of the design and build process and is pleased with the finished product. He loves seeing people's reactions when they walk in the door.

The unassuming building in West Auckland is split into three areas. The middle is three stories of seated areas, reception and amenities. The righthand side has 31 very colourful eight metre high, themed walls, with suitable challenges for all ages and abilities. These use auto-belays, making it safe and fun for the whole family. The left-hand side consists of ten to twelve metre high walls, with bulges and overhangs to challenge the top climbers. There are over 60 top ropes and some auto-belays for the climber who does not have a partner or wants to train hard.

When designing the walls, one goal was to create an environment where every skill necessary for outdoor climbing could be taught in an inside controlled location. Features have been built to enable teaching skills such as anchoring, multi-pitching and abseiling. Some small bouldering areas are there to fine tune even the most advanced climbers' skills. Whenever groups are assessing rock climbing outside and the weather turns bad, they know they can come to Vertical Adventures to finish their assessments.

In November of 2010, a mother approached Darrin about climbing lessons for her kids. Over the next few weeks her kids joined his to form the first class, which would later be called Rock Hoppers. Now Hoppers boasts over 100 kids climbing, every week. Most of them have had a birthday party at the climbing gym and they continue to bring their friends and climb. At Hoppers kids learn climbing techniques, ropework, teamwork and co-operation and each lesson is finished with a life-skills talk, as well as making lifelong friends. Of the original eight Hoppers, four still work for Vertical Adventures part-time.

Throughout the year Vertical Adventures runs theme nights, such as a Circus night, Headlamp night and others. There are regular seasonal bouldering competitions and the gym has hosted regional and national competitions, all of which were well attended.

In 2012, Vertical Adventures re-started the inter-school climbing competition, which had previously been run at another location. Darrin wanted something for his Hoppers to aspire to; a stepping stone to regional and national competitions. He changed the format, adding in speed climbing, prusiking and knot tying which proved to be extraordinarily successful and has run every term since.

Vertical Adventures also runs several indoor climbing courses including indoor lead climbing, abseiling and climbing skills. Darrin's background as a teacher led to him writing up a programme for business studies classes to visit which now more than a dozen schools take part.

The gym has been closed for most of Covid-19 as all the programmes have been unable to run. During this time, the team have completely upgraded the facility and developed new programmes to introduce the young people of West Auckland to climbing. These include a climbing development programme stemming from Rock Hoppers, and a Kiwi Sport programme. Two proposed programmes are in the pipeline too, one aimed at over 2000 kids at six different schools and another targeted at high school leavers. 2021 is looking like it will be a busy time for the Vertical Adventures team.

Editor's note:

September 12, 2020. Auckland is in Alert Level 2.5, the rest of NZ is in Level 2. I asked Darrin how the lockdowns have affected his business. As a South Islander, I've felt fairly isolated and naïve to the impacts in other areas so found his response confronting.

"Even under Level 2.5 the restrictions are limiting: max 100 people in building and no groups or birthday parties larger than ten. School groups can come as one bubble, but the bus companies won't or can't transport them. If a large school group does arrive (by school vans) we have to put them into groups of nine and add one of our instructors to make ten, which have made staffing ratios not cost effective.

It's been awkward when a child comes with mum, dad and grandparents; we have had to ask that only one spectator come in with one paying customer to keep our numbers down for the 100 and try and maximise paying customers unless we are quiet. Our Hoppers and coaching programmes can't operate until Level 1 as kids are from lots of schools and different bubbles.

Roll on Level 1 so we can at least cover our costs and get our programmes running. Yes I do want the gym full of noisy sweaty climbers again soon!"

November 2020. Congratulations Vertical Adventures and every other operator in Auckland who has made it through two lockdowns. Here's to a successful wrap up of 2020 and a prosperous 2021!

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Tramping on Mt Howitt, Hooker Range, high above the Landsborough Valley

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