

# THE LOCAL



# Karori

NGĀ KARERE HAPORI O KARORI



## FOODBANK REVEALS THE NEW FACE OF NEED

**F**amilies who once felt financially secure are now turning to the Karori Foodbank as rising pressure pushes more locals to seek help with the basics.

Food parcel demand has climbed sharply over the past 18 months, with community workers

saying the increase reveals a quiet but growing struggle to keep food on the table.

The Foodbank says people from all walks and stages of life are calling in for help, showing the extent of the impact of the economic downturn.

Read more on page 3. ➤

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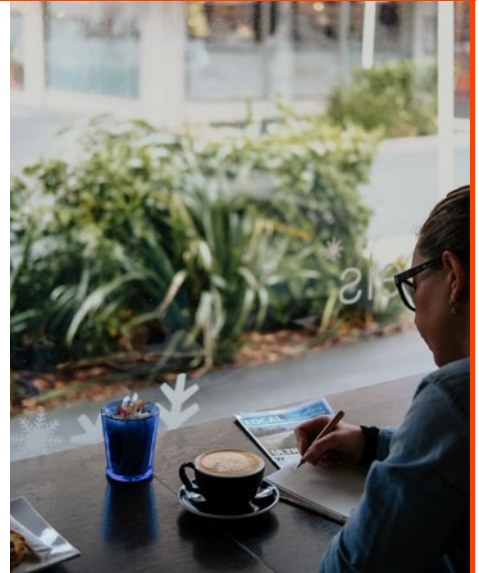
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This workshop is brought to you by *The Local*, Wellington's community newspaper and an enthusiastic supporter of emerging writers and journalists, and will be hosted by editor **Jane O'Loughlin**.



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# Foodbank reveals the new face of need

Jan Galloway at the Karori Foodbank

**Demand for the Karori Foodbank has nearly doubled over the past 18 months, driven by a changing demographic that now includes unemployed professionals, recent graduates, and the elderly. Indy Radcar reports.**

“I haven’t done this before,” the caller says. “But I need food.”

For volunteers at the Karori Foodbank, those words have become increasingly familiar. The community-run service, which supports residents in Karori, Northland, and Wilton, is seeing a sharp rise in demand – but just as startling is who is seeking help.

Last year, the foodbank distributed 248 household food parcels, up from 137 the previous year – an increase of 81 per cent. The trend has intensified in 2026, with parcel distribution in the first five months of this year already 44 per cent higher than for the same period last year. Many of the new cases are people seeking help for the first time.

“You can hear the hesitation in their voice,” says volunteer Jan Galloway. “No one’s coming because they want to. Many are embarrassed.”

People reveal little about their circumstances – most collect their parcel and quietly leave. Yet over time, a picture has emerged. Poverty in Karori is no longer confined to isolated pockets of the community, but is increasingly affecting people who, until recently, would have been financially secure. The trend mirrors wider economic pressures across the capital, where public sector job losses, a sluggish labour market, and persistently high grocery prices have left many households vulnerable.

“We’re seeing a lot of families where the breadwinner has been made redundant,” says board chair Rose Marsh. “We have one client who has been looking for work for more than a year and just can’t find anything. She has two teenage sons at home, and teenagers eat a lot.”

Other groups seeking help include recent graduates who can’t find any kind of job, and middle-aged couples who have taken in elderly parents and are struggling to absorb the additional expense.

For some, it takes only a single setback to tip an already stretched household budget into the red. One elderly couple relies on the service during school holidays when their grandchildren stay with them. Another client sought help after his car broke down, forcing him to choose between repairing the vehicle and buying groceries.

Clients’ reactions to the parcels often provide another glimpse into the realities of hardship – a reminder that poverty is measured not only by empty cupboards, but by the small comforts that disappear from everyday life.

“A lot of them are overwhelmed when they see what’s been provided,” Jan says. “One man nearly cried. He looked in the parcel and said, ‘Oh, I haven’t had cheese in ages.’”

Even so, some packers need to be reined in, as many are tempted to slip in an extra treat for the children. The foodbank has to be disciplined to ensure there is enough for everyone; last month the shelves in the stockroom almost ran bare.

As the interview draws to a close, Jan notices a lone jar of hazelnut spread sitting on a shelf. Her face lights up. “That will make a lovely surprise for a family,” she says. **TL**

## The Karori Foodbank explains what you can do to help feed locals

Donate to our bank account 02 0500 0677261 00, or scan the QR code below. Email the treasurer at [lucefromnz@gmail.com](mailto:lucefromnz@gmail.com) to request a donation receipt. Volunteer your time as a packer. You can connect with us on our Facebook page to do this ([facebook.com/KaroriFoodbank](https://facebook.com/KaroriFoodbank)).

Donate non-perishable items to the Karori Community Centre or at your local church. We appreciate the following list of non-perishable items: canned items (baked beans, spaghetti, soups, tomatoes and other veges, fruit, fish), rice and pasta, biscuits and crackers, spreads such as peanut butter, jam, honey and vegemite/marmite, instant coffee and tea, laundry powder, dishwashing liquid, body soap bars and toothpaste. We also love getting brown paper bags as we use these to pack our parcels into.



# Stepping up

Our hearts go out to those mentioned in the lead story in this edition, who – perhaps for the first time in their lives – are having to ask the foodbank for help to feed their families.

People like to be self sufficient and it's an act of humility to know when you reach your limits. How wonderful though, to know there is a service available, and a community willing to pitch in and help.

In desperate times, we seek leadership and direction. Often we look to people in high profile and highly paid roles to provide it: prime ministers, mayors, chief executives.

But the most effective leadership often occurs more discretely, at a local level. It's those people who see a problem and take the initiative to provide a solution. One example is the food bank working hard to make sure struggling families have food, but there happen to be several others in this edition of *The Local*.

You can read about the Salvation Army store that actively provides a welcoming place for young people with different needs. Locals building neighbourhoods connection with a community orchard project. And the Residents Association taking action to preserve the stories of our local history so others can benefit.

Most of these groups are not loud or attention-seeking, but are quietly doing the job of stepping up to make the community a better place. Let's not take them for granted!

You may notice that this edition of the newspaper is 24 pages long, which is the next step up from the previous 16 pages (the paper is based on multiples of 8, because it's sheet of paper cut into four pieces). We can do this as a result of increased advertising support, so I'd like to thank all those organisations and businesses who have recognised the value of this community paper.

Matariki is nearly upon us; I wish you a happy time with your friends and whanau as we exit the darkest time of the year and move towards the summer. TL



**Jane O'Loughlin**  
Editor

## THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS

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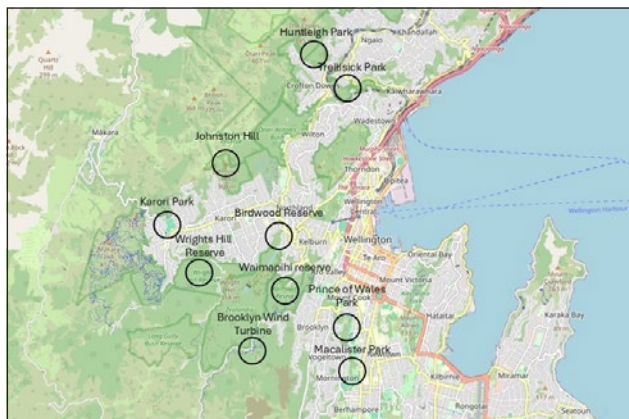
### Deliveries and Distribution

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## Kākā cameras

**T**rail cameras have been put in place to observe the behaviour of kākā, and how they interact with brodifacoum pelifed stations in reserves around Wellington.

The research is being conducted by Ryan Jagers, a Master’s of ecology student at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington, and has the permission of the Wellington City Council to conduct this research.

“With the images of kākā we gather I intend to use machine learning to identify the individual kākā. This will let us know how many unique kākā are visiting these stations so we can look into the extent of this behaviour,” Ryan says.

The map shows where the cameras will be.

“We will also delete images of people that we capture so do not be concerned if you accidentally stand in front of one.” **TL**

## New street name for Karori

**A** new private right-of-way in Karori has been officially named.

The Wellington City Council’s Regulatory Processes committee agreed in June to a recommendation for a new right-of-way off David Crescent to be named Ara Kaha.

The council’s Māori strategic partnerships and capability group, Mataaho Aronui, suggested the name. Kaha refers to a rope used to snare birds (‘rore’ being the action of snaring). According to the council, the proposed name references the te reo name for this area, Kaharore. **TL**

## Copper theft in the community

**P**olice are asking property owners to take extra precautions, particularly at vacant homes, renovation or construction sites, rural properties, and unoccupied rental properties to safeguard against copper theft.

“We encourage owners and neighbours to secure vacant buildings where possible, install lighting, alarms, or cameras, regularly check unattended properties, and report suspicious activity promptly.”

Police are also reminding scrap metal dealers, recyclers, tradespeople, and members of the public to be alert for anyone attempting to sell suspicious quantities of copper cabling, earthing straps, plumbing lines, or burnt copper wiring. Report any suspicious vehicles or people seen near power poles, roadside infrastructure, or vacant properties – particularly during late night or early morning hours.

If suspicious activity is happening now, call **111** immediately. If it is a non-emergency, it can be reported via **105** online or by phone. Information can also be provided anonymously through Crime Stoppers on **0800 555 111**. **TL**

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**For more information contact: Angela 027 349 9691  
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# New takahē in Zealandia

**Lily-Raema Aikman** from Karori West Normal school reports on new arrivals at Zealandia.

**T**akahē are known for being a blue-green flightless bird that was pronounced extinct at the turn of the 20th century, until they were re-discovered in 1948.

Even so, they're still highly endangered and only about 500 are left. That's why Zealandia was happy to announce they have acquired not one, not two but three new takahē in the last seven months.

Only last November, a new takahē chick was born at Zealandia, coming as a surprise to staff and volunteer workers. The chick was born to first-time parents 5-year-old Waitaa and 8-year-old Bendigo.

"Bendigo and Waitaa came to Zealandia almost three years ago as a non-breeding pair," says Ellen Irwin, Zealandia's lead conservation ranger.

"However, in November 2025 Zealandia's conservation team heard some high-pitched calls indicating the pair had – miraculously – produced a chick. Trail cameras placed at their feeding station confirmed the new arrival."

The adorable takahē's name and sex were disclosed in April by Terese McLeod (Taranaki Whānui), Zealandia's Lead Ranger in Bicultural Engagement. Her name was to be Hiwa-I-Te-Rangi, or Hiwa for short, for the youngest star in the Matariki cluster that represented dreams and aspirations, while also paying tribute to a previous chick hatched in Zealandia, Āwhiorangi.

For the first few months of her life Zealandia provided special chick supplementary food.

"Staff and volunteers sourced an interesting variety of food to create a nutritious mash made from carrots, potatoes, cabbage, spinach, parsley, vegetable oil and clover," Ellen says.

The chick has been adapting well, being an adventurous young takahē who is now the size of her mother, Waitaa. She can be seen wandering with her parents in the bush, frequently exploring the upper valley even near the fenceline.



Zealandia is a retirement home for new arrivals Autahi (left) and Hopi. Credit: Lynn Freeman x Fujifilm

## Autahi and Hopi were moved from Burwood, where they've lived all their lives, so they can live a relaxing retirement in the valley.


But Hiwa isn't the only takahē new to the valley.

In May Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne welcomed a pair of advocacy takahē (takahē too old or unable to breed) from DOC's Burwood Takahē Centre near Te Anau: 13-year-old Autahi (female) and 16-year-old Hopi (male).

Autahi and Hopi were moved from Burwood, where they've lived all their lives, so they can live a relaxing retirement in the valley. Between them, they've produced around 20 chicks and even grand-chicks but are aging out of takahē breeding and are not expected to produce any more – "though you never know", says Ellen.

The two quickly found a cosy area where they are seen most, next to their feeder at wetland lawn.

"They're still getting used to being around so many people, but they also really love their pellets and the lush grass that had been sown just for them," says Ellen.

If you do visit and see the pair, it would be appreciated if you gave them lots of space and stayed quiet when around them to give them a nice life at Zealandia. 



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Serena Perin with volunteer Mary at the Karori Sallies op shop.

# "There's a vibe up here"

The Karori 'Sallies' Op Shop has become a place where young people who don't always fit in can learn skills. Cynthia Morahan reports.

**W**alk into the Karori Salvation Army op shop at any time of day and it's a hive of activity and organised chaos. At the centre of the operation is Serena Perin, who will mark three years as manager this October.

Serena has been with the Salvation Army for 22 years, starting as an assistant manager in Kilbirnie and later running the City store. She eventually landed in Karori when her son Dawson turned 17 and his schooling schedule finally allowed her to take on full time hours. Dawson, now 20, lives with autism, ADHD, epilepsy, and a developmental delay – all realities that have shaped Serena's approach to work and people.

"Nothing fazes me," she says. "You learn to work around things and build on people's strengths."

Of the 41 regular volunteers that help run the Karori Salvation Army, at least six are neurodiverse. When Serena arrived, she started with a few Wellington Girls' College students who volunteered, then word spread. One of the early volunteers was neurodiverse, and Serena realised the shop could adapt to support people with different needs and abilities.

"We've got volunteers with all sorts of abilities now. One is non verbal – we just talk for him when needed."

"A lot of shops don't use cash anymore, but we do."

Many volunteers have gone on to paid work. Nine-teen recently completed the ServiceIQ Retail Savvy Award, earning 23 credits toward a qualification. Serena pulls out their certificates with a matter of fact pride. "It was a mission, but they passed."

Serena has found Karori locals welcoming. Dawson is a regular in the shop on Saturdays. "Sometimes he's a bit loud," says Serena. "But people know him now. They ask after him. They know his name."

And yes – the unofficial shop cat, Zee, deserves a mention for her local celebrity status. Not in the least for occasionally getting locked inside overnight. There are regular dogs visitors too and the staff hand out treats.

Serena isn't a Karori local, but she's settled in. "I love being up here," she says. "There's a vibe."

Mary Jackson, her second in charge, sums it up: "We're a family."

And judging by the waiting list of would be volunteers, plenty of people want to be part of it. **TL**

The shop has become a place where young people who don't always fit in can learn skills... "They're still challenged," Serena says. "But they just get to be themselves in a safe environment."

# Crêpes & connection at Thurleigh Grove Community Orchard

**Layla Latu is one of a group of Karori locals working to create a vibrant community in their neighbourhood. She reports on a recent shared initiative.**


**A** sunny Sunday and the smell of fresh crêpes brought Karori neighbours together at Thurleigh Grove Community Orchard in May. Around 30 locals gathered for an informal shared kai, with one resident cooking crêpes on a griddle while others contributed toppings and hot drinks. The event created a relaxed space for neighbours to meet, chat and connect. The gathering was also an invitation for more people to get involved in caring for the orchard, which has long been a quiet but evolving part of the neighbourhood.

Leased by Kai Cycle from Wellington City Council, the orchard was planted more than a decade ago and has seen varying levels of upkeep. In recent years, however, a group of junior youth have led efforts to revitalise the space as part of a service project, encouraging greater involvement from families and the wider community.

This is the third year organisers have hosted a shared kai event at the orchard, and there's growing hope it will become more of a frequent meeting point for the community. The crêpe day was designed to bring people together and spark ideas for future improvements to beautify the orchard and get to know each other.

“At a time when people are yearning for connection, it's important to know who our neighbours

are,” one attendee said. Others agreed, highlighting how valuable it was to simply get out, meet others and strengthen local ties.

A working bee is held at the orchard on the last Sunday of each month, and new faces are always welcome. 





## Life on the beat

Karori West Normal school journalism student **Noah Rex** sat down for a chat with Karori's new community constable, **Chris Wake**.

### What does being a community constable involve?

All sorts! My primary day-to-day is investigating files reported to Police. In our small team, we work with communities to identify and prevent crime. On top of this, we help the Public Safety Team units respond to 111 calls. These jobs can include disorders, shopliftings, family harms, vehicle crashes etc. We also assist in operations like VIP visits, sports games and community events.

### Why is having a community constable important?

Great question. By having constables working closely with the community, we can be more proactive and find solutions to prevent crime, and not just be responding to it. We are also accessible and provide a familiar face. This helps to build trust and confidence between the public and Police. We also liaise with organizations such as WCC, Kainga Ora, Community Patrollers and other groups, which means we are staying in the loop with what's important in our neighbourhoods.

### Where are some of the Karori places you will patrol/visit?

Everywhere. Marsden Village, the mall, library, community and rec centres etc. I'll do my best to attend some events like Halloween on Friend St as well!

**“By having constables working closely with the community, we can be more proactive and find solutions to prevent crime, and not just be responding to it.”**

### Did becoming a community constable involve any extra training?

No extra training as such. You pick up different skills in this role and think differently, from a prevention mindset. For example – If a particular store sees an increase in shopliftings, we look at the layout of shelves, cabinets and checkouts to perhaps reduce offending opportunities. We consider natural surveillance, lines of sight or access control. This is called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. If you're interested, search CPTED online as there is a lot of theory and different resources available.

### Is there any information about the 'Things being planned in Karori' that you mentioned in your blurb?

We are working on bringing a 'Safer Plates' workshop to the Karori area. This is where we install tamper-resistant security screws that replace the usual screws on car number plates. It helps reduce number plate thefts and associated crimes like petrol drive offs and stolen cars. We will be working with community patrollers and others. Just getting our ducks in a row!


### Where in Karori will you be based?

I will still be based out of my home police station in Johnsonville, but I hold the Karori portfolio.

### What previous police postings have you done?

I started policing in the Community Prevention Team in Wellington in 2019, then moved to the Public Safety Team which is frontline. I've also had a stint on road policing as well.

### What attracted you to community policing?

I really enjoy getting involved with the community, and talking to different people who represent a range of organisations or walks of life. The job is great for problem-solving and coming up with solutions to prevent crime which keeps you thinking. 



## The golden retriever who retrieves cuddles and pats, not balls

**Maggie Tait meets an adorable dog on wheels.**

If you've spent any time at Karori Park over the past few years, chances are you've already met Cassie. A golden retriever with a gentle disposition, a tendency to flop onto her back for a tummy scratch, and only three legs, she's become one of the neighbourhood's most recognisable figures.

Cassie was named Hopalong Cassidy, and shortened to Cassie by her previous owner. Her current owner, Sean Rodgers, who has lived in Karori since 2014 with his wife Julia, saw no reason to change that.

Sean had wanted a dog for years. With the kids grown and gone and wanting motivation to exercise, he started browsing Trade Me, and at Julia's suggestion, searched for golden retrievers.

Six months in he came across smiling Cassie. She'd been born in Timaru with a forelimb that hadn't developed properly in the womb and was removed at around eight weeks old. A change in circumstances meant the owner had to return her to the breeder. Sean drove south, brought his daughter along from Canterbury to help him make the right decision, and left with the dog after 20 minutes.

"I wasn't looking for a three-legged dog," he says. "But nothing really put me off. It just seemed right all the time; she's got a lovely nature."

Back in Karori, Sean tried to get Cassie to walk around the park but that was frustrating for them both. "I learnt to adjust my expectations. Now the whole point of going to the park is just meeting the people and meeting the dogs."


Three legs means more strain on the joints, and the vet has already flagged early warning signs for the future. Too much exercise can leave Cassie in pain for the rest of the evening, so Sean has learnt to not let her overdo it.

Recently Cassie has been out showing off her new wheels after Sean ordered a custom-made wheel frame from a specialist company in Massachusetts. Getting the fit right has been a project in itself with lots of adjustments needed and the ongoing challenge of fine-tuning Velcro straps on a wriggly, very hairy dog. But the goal is quality of life. "You want to be fit and happy for as long as you can. It's the same for dogs."

These days, a trip to the park is less about exercise and more about connection. Cassie is deeply social, and Sean has noticed she's often more interested in the people than the dogs and forces him out of his comfort zone. "I work in IT. She actually gets me talking to people, I find it difficult, but at the same time, it's probably a good thing for me to be doing."

What he's noticed is that the people he warms to most are the ones who see Cassie first, not her missing leg. "I appreciate it when people don't immediately ask about the leg," he says. "They put their hand out, Cassie sniffs them, and that breaks the ice."

He has a soft spot for Cassie's smaller friends. There are four toddlers he thinks of as regulars, some barely two years old, who make a beeline for Cassie whenever they see her. A couple of them have taken to feeding her kibble that Sean provides, pressing their fingers right into her mouth, fearless. He keeps an eye on it, but with Cassie, he says, he's never worried. Golden retrievers were bred to retrieve game birds without crushing them, and it shows. "She's so gentle," he says.

Cassie decides who to greet, when to lie down, and how long to stay. She calls the shots at the park, and Sean is entirely at peace with that. "That's what Cassie wants," he says. "I'm just along for the ride." 

# Walking and talking

Every day John Innes is out, aiming to walk 10,000 steps before settling into a cafe for a latte and, maybe, a sausage roll. It's about exercise, but also about connection to the Karori community. **Lee-Anne Duncan** joined him.

**J**ohn Innes is a hard man to keep up with. Sure, he recently celebrated his eightieth birthday and he walks with a femur full of metal, so requires his crutch, but this man is *fit*.

You've probably seen John striding along the streets of central Karori. He's been walking each day "unless the weather is filthy" for about 30 years, usually racking up 10,000 steps, sometimes twice that.

His route varies, but his friendly face, cheerful hello, and probably a "bit of cheek" to those he passes are constants. Also constant are his shiny shoes. No longer must John wear a suit and tie – as he did when employed as a shipping agent, then operations manager for Wilson's Parking – but being tidy is paramount.

"Clean shoes have always been one of my things. People do comment on them," he says, after I comment on them. "These aren't even that shiny – it's a week since I've done them." I bury any offence that sharing his walk with this *The Local* correspondent did not necessitate a polish. Nonetheless, he cuts a neat figure as he exercises.

"I walk because it's good for physical fitness, but it's also good for mental health, which is just as important, or even more so when you live on your own. Through this walking I've made some wonderful friends. I meet all sorts of people, and I go to the same café every day."

That's Marsden Village Café, where he stops for a latte and a chat with the proprietors. On Mondays he might also pop into Rosina's where John recommends the steak and mushroom pies. "I love cafés. I've always been of the opinion that cafés are not just places to buy a cup of coffee. They're also places to chat with people. They're social places."



## Often he'll listen to German tango bands as he walks. Even so, he's always happy to stop and talk.

And not just cafés. If it's Tuesday or Thursday, John is off for morning tea with his friends at Karori Auto Services, where he's known the boss for more than 40 years. That's a long time, sure, but John has lived here for half a century.

"I grew up in the Hutt, but we used to come here when I was young to see an aunt. I was young, of course, but I always liked this suburb. It had a feel about it. I thought, 'One day I'm going to live here', so I bought my first house in Karori and I've been here ever since."

While John is a man-about-town many Karori residents might know, here are some things they may not know: John is the main tour guide up at the Wright's Hill Fortress, sometimes taking three tours a week; he's a long-time lover of opera, ballet and classical music; and often he'll listen to German tango bands as he walks. Even so, he's always happy to stop and talk.

"I just like chatting, in case you hadn't noticed," he says with his cheeky grin. **TL**



Could this be the breakthrough election for the Opportunity Party? **Jane O'Loughlin** talks to Wellington North candidate **Jessica Hammond**.

**T**his is not Jessica Hammond's first rodeo. This year will be the fourth general election she has stood in representing Opportunity (formerly known as TOP or The Opportunities Party), but this one feels different.

"It feels really different," Hammond says. "I've always loved it and I believe in what I'm doing, but this time it feels a bit more like we're pushing on an open door. There are people coming to us wanting to talk to us. I had this strange experience of being lobbied, which I don't think people thought was worth bothering doing before. So now I'm getting a taste of what that feels like. It feels like we have momentum – the kind of momentum we've never had in the past. So it's really exciting."

Hammond puts the change down to a mix of leadership, experience and timing. A major factor, she says, is the arrival of Qiulae Wong as Opportunity's leader.

"We ran a really good process to select her and I think the proof is in the pudding that people are connecting with her," Hammond says. "And not just externally – the membership is behind her."

She also believes the party has matured. After several election cycles, Opportunity has learned more about politics, campaigning and the practical work of trying to win votes. It has also attracted people with political experience, including former Labour minister Iain Lees-Galloway.

On top of that, Hammond says, "it also feels like the time is right": people are prepared to look at new ways of doing things.

It was the Opportunity's big picture policies that first attracted Hammond to the party.

"I was very excited by their ideas and the... idea that you can actually fix things. rather than tinkering."

This election those policies include a land value tax, a universal basic income, and making retirement savings compulsory. Significantly, the party says it's prepared to work with either National or Labour. This means if it reaches the 5% threshold or wins an electorate seat, it could play a role as a 'kingmaker' when it comes to forming a Government.

If Opportunity makes it into Parliament this year, Hammond is likely to be among its MPs, which would mean an abrupt career change for the public servant.

Hammond is a born-and-bred Wellingtonian. She grew up in Wilton, now lives in Khandallah, and is familiar with the city's western and northern suburbs.

Like many Wellingtonians, she has spent time around Cuba Street and Courtenay Place, and she says one of the things she has always loved about Wellington is that it has "such a centre" and "such a heart". Her own teenagers, she says, share some of that affection for the city's alternative energy.

Hammond has stood in Ōhāriu three times, but this campaign places her in Wellington North.

"It's definitely a very different electorate from what I'm used to," she says, noting different demographics and a much busier campaign schedule.

Although she won't say no to electorate votes "this is a party vote campaign for everyone except for Qiulae."

For now she is looking forward to being on the campaign trail once more, and hoping this time it leads all the way to the steps of Parliament. **TL**

This is the first in a series of political profiles and articles *The Local* will be running in the lead up to the general election in November.

# Smooth sales start early

Avoid house sale stress with advance planning, advises **Andrea Skews** from **Lowe & Co**

One of the biggest mistakes I see homeowners make is waiting until they're ready to sell before they start preparing.

By the time many people call an agent, they've already spent months worrying about where to start, what to fix and how they'll ever get it done. The smoothest sales often begin much earlier.

Over the 17 years I've been in real estate, I've noticed a pattern. The sellers who achieve the best outcomes are the people who sought advice early, created a plan and tackled tasks over time.

Many homeowners assume preparing for sale is all about decluttering, gardening, painting and fixing the odd maintenance item. Those things certainly help, but they are only part of the picture.

Increasingly, buyers want information as well as presentation. They want to know what work has been completed, whether improvements were consented where required, and whether there is documentation to support claims about upgrades.

Some of the most valuable preparation is gathering paperwork: insurance information, council consents, Code Compliance Certificates, warranties, trade invoices, LIM reports and building reports. Having records of completed improvements readily available can make a real difference to buyer confidence.

Planning ahead also gives homeowners time to make informed decisions about where to spend their money. Not every renovation adds value, and some cost far more than they return. Getting advice on what local buyers want can help prioritise the right improvements.


For many long-term owners and downsizers in Karori, the challenge is not deciding to move – it's knowing where to start. Years of accumulated possessions and memories can feel overwhelming, and I regularly meet people who simply put the whole idea off for another year.

One of the advantages of starting early is having time to tackle the process step-by-step. Through years of working with local sellers, I've built a network of trusted professionals covering decluttering, packing, repairs, gardening, staging and more. Sometimes all people need is a practical plan and the right support.

Early planning can also help answer bigger questions. Should you sell first or buy first? Who is the most likely buyer for your property? Are there maintenance items that should be addressed now rather than becoming an issue during negotiations?

As we move through winter, it can be a good time to start preparing for a spring or summer sale. Tackling jobs gradually is often less stressful than trying to do everything at once.

Some of my best client relationships begin six months, a year or even several years before a property comes to market. Having a plan doesn't just improve the presentation of a home – it gives people confidence, reduces stress and helps avoid costly mistakes. If you'd like to talk through your options or connect with my network of trusted providers for pre-sale assessments and preparation, reach me at [andrea@loweandco.nz](mailto:andrea@loweandco.nz).

The Real Estate Authority has a website for buyers and sellers called [Settled.govt.nz](http://Settled.govt.nz) that has helpful information about getting ready for sale. 

## Choose the agent that has

- Local knowledge
- Professional standards
- **Community trust**

Call Andrea Skews on **0220 SELL IT**  
or email [andrea@loweandco.nz](mailto:andrea@loweandco.nz)

Andrea Skews is a licensed salesperson with Lowe & Co Realty, Real Estate Authority Board member and Karori Residents' Association Chairperson. The views expressed are her own and not made in any official capacity.

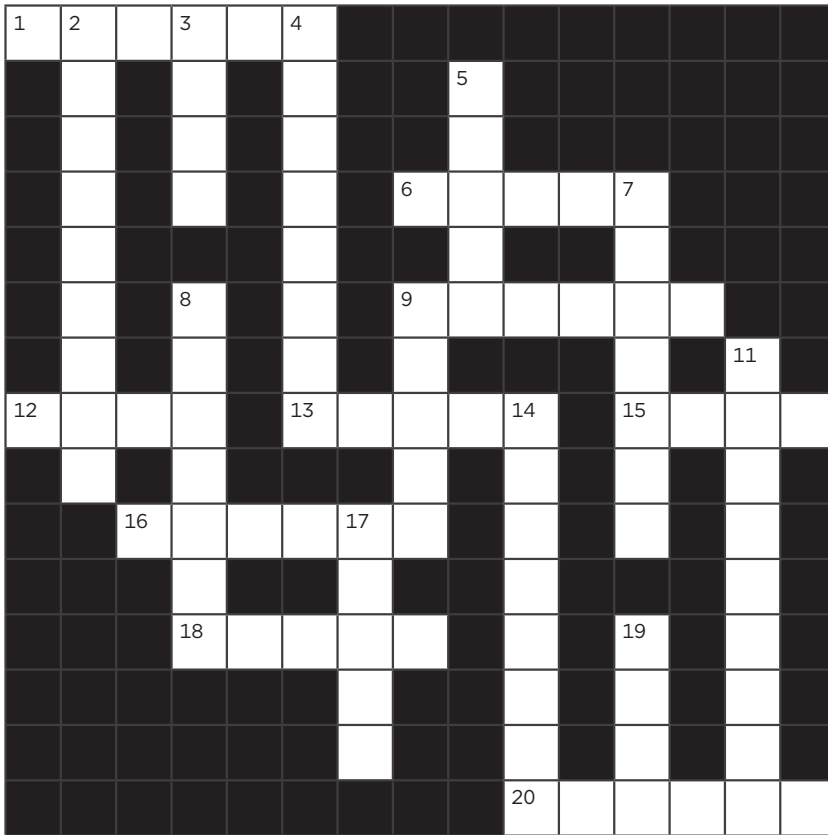


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REALTY

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# Beau's Crossword #9



## Across:

1. Fear. (6)
6. Boring, simple. (5)
9. A person walks, a baby ----- (6)
12. Forlorn. (5)
13. First time. (5)
15. Specific spot, a ---- of respect. (4)
16. Terminology. (6)
18. Smooth and dynamic. (5)
20. Birthplace or deathbed of stars. (6)


## Down:

2. Dramatic exaggeration. (9)
3. Capital city of Azerbaijan. (4)
4. Class with 8 legs. (8)
5. Paver. (5)
7. Issue, tough decision. (7)
8. An explorer's tool, moral ----- (7)
9. Airplane interior, ---- fever. (5)
11. Worst nemesis. (9)
14. Object that brings good fortune. (8)
17. A story told through music. (5)
19. Chatter incessantly. (4)

For the solution see [the-local.co.nz/crosswords](http://the-local.co.nz/crosswords)

# ULO ? Unidentified Local Object

Identify the mystery object – something in Karori – to win a \$20 book voucher.

Email your answers to us at [karori@the-local.co.nz](mailto:karori@the-local.co.nz). If there's more than one correct answer, the winner will be selected at random. Congratulations to Riley Fraser who correctly identified June's ULO as part of the gate from the Karori Bowling Club. 



# Staying Steady



Neurological and vestibular physiotherapist **Vicki Thirkell** explains how older adults can prevent falls and keep their independence.

## Why this matters – and why there's good news

Around one in three New Zealanders over 65 has a fall each year. Falls are the most common cause of injury in older adults. Falls also affect confidence, mobility and independence. But falls are not an inevitable part of ageing. Decades of research show that balance can be maintained, and often *improved*, well into our 80s and 90s. A few consistent habits can keep you doing the things you love, from gardening to grandkids to tramping the local tracks.

## How ageing affects balance (and what that means for you)

Balance relies on teamwork between your eyes, your vestibular (balance organ) in your inner ear and the position sensors in your muscles and joints. All three systems change with age, along with loss of muscle strength and slower reactions. Certain medications and conditions can further reduce balance. However, the good news is that every one of these factors responds positively to action – strength can be rebuilt at any age, balance improves with practice, and a medication review with your GP or our Clinical Pharmacist here at Karori Medical Centre can make a real difference.

## Exercise and balance training – your biggest win

This is where the evidence is most exciting. Aerobic exercise is important – aiming for a total of 30 minutes each day is the recommendation (this can be broken into smaller chunks through the day). Equally important is moving more and reducing the amount of time we sit each day. Strength and balance exercise done twice a week can reduce falls by up to 30%. We have to keep challenging our balance to maintain it. Community classes such as Steady As



You Go and Tai Chi are great ways to target strength and balance. You can find lots of local exercise classes, suitable for all levels at Live Stronger for Longer ([livestronger.org.nz](http://livestronger.org.nz)). This site also has lots of good tips on exercises you can do at home if a group class is not your thing. If you are not sure where to start, find a vestibular physiotherapist to help you.

## Fuel your strength

Good nutrition will keep your muscles strong and bones resilient. Aim to eat some protein at every meal – eggs, dairy, fish, chicken, legumes, nuts – roughly 1.0–1.2 g per kilogram of body weight daily. Calcium-rich foods (milk, yoghurt, leafy greens) plus vitamin D, especially through winter, will help protect your bone density.

## Footwear that works with you

Supportive shoes are an easy win – wear well fitting, supportive footwear both inside and outside. Around the home, choose enclosed slippers rather than loose scuffs, jandals or socks. It is important to address any foot pain so this is not a barrier to moving and activity.

## In conclusion

You have more control over your balance than you might think. Move regularly, eat well, wear supportive shoes, and stay curious about what your body can still do. The path to staying steady, active and independent is open at any age – and it starts with the next small step. **TL**



record that knowledge for the first time, alongside the broader historical story of the Fortress and its role during the war.

### Video and explanatory panels

The project centres on the production of a 45-minute

## Preserving the story of Wrights Hill Fortress

A new documentary project will record the history of the WWII site and the volunteers who have restored it, creating a lasting resource for the Wellington community.

**H**igh above Wellington, Wrights Hill Fortress stands as a visible reminder of New Zealand's World War II history. Less visible, however, is the decades of work by local volunteers who have restored, maintained, and brought the site back to life. Much of what makes the Fortress special today is not just the physical structure, but the knowledge, experience, and stories held by those volunteers, many of which have never been formally recorded. As time passes, there is a real risk that this history could be lost. A new project aims to change that.

### Capturing the history

The Karori Residents Association has developed the Wrights Hill Fortress Legacy Project documentary to capture both the history of the site and the people behind it, creating a lasting record that can be shared with the wider community and future generations.

Built as part of New Zealand's coastal defence network during World War II, Wrights Hill Fortress is a significant heritage site with a unique place in Wellington's history. Over many years, a dedicated group of volunteers has worked to restore the site, maintain its complex tunnel systems, and open it to the public. Through that work, they have developed a deep understanding of the Fortress – knowledge that exists largely in conversations, memories, and hands-on experience. The documentary project will

heritage documentary that will document the site's history, its restoration journey, and the experiences of the volunteers who have sustained it. Installation of permanent on-site panels at the Fortress will provide historical context and link directly to the documentary through QR codes, allowing visitors to engage with the story whenever they visit. Together, the documentary and on-site panels will create an enduring educational resource for schools, families, and the wider community.

With a total cost of \$38,000, the project covers the full scope of research, filming, and production of the documentary, along with the design and installation of permanent information panels at the Fortress.

### Supporting the project

Significant in-kind contributions from volunteers and project partners underpin the work, reflecting the strong community commitment to preserving and sharing the legacy of Wrights Hill Fortress.

The project team is also seeking funding support and welcomes interest from those who would like to be part of preserving this important piece of Wellington's history. Those wanting to find out more about how they can contribute are encouraged to get in touch with the Karori Residents Association. **TL**

### Get involved

Do you have an idea, a skill, or a passion for your community? We'd love to hear from you – whether you're ready to lead a project or just want to explore what's possible.

@ [chair@karoriassociation.nz](mailto:chair@karoriassociation.nz)

📍 [karoriassociation.nz](http://karoriassociation.nz)

📘 [facebook.com/karorires](https://facebook.com/karorires)



# The economic engine of the community

This month we introduce KBA General Manager, Bill McDonald.



I'm **Bill McDonald**, a born and bred Wellingtonian, chartered accountant, commercial advisor and business owner. I live in Kilbirnie and care deeply about this city, its people, and the role local business plays in shaping vibrant communities. I'm involved in a range of family businesses – a preschool, a commercial kitchen and a honey operation with hives in the Wellington Botanic Garden that many people pass daily on their way to and from Karori. I'm also involved with Free For All, a zero-waste not-for-profit helping reduce waste to landfill in Wellington.

I became the General Manager of KBA in July 2025, after working with business improvement districts across Wellington.

Since I started, my focus has been on strengthening what was already in place – revitalising networks, refreshing infrastructure and building a small team to support members. Day-to-day, the role is about staying connected – with members, partners, council and the wider community.

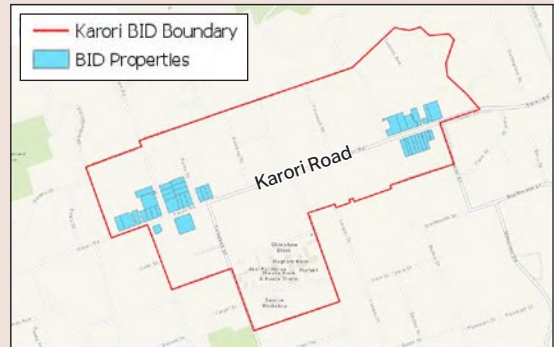
Advocacy is a key part of what we do and a clear message from our members. I've been actively working on issues like parking, consultation processes and development impacts, making sure local business voices are represented. Building strong relationships across council, community groups and organisations has been essential to making that advocacy effective.

We've grown from a small Marsden Village group into a wider organisation representing Karori's business community. Now, we're looking to grow further. I encourage businesses to get involved, become members and help us continue building a stronger, more connected and more vibrant Karori.

Bill McDonald can be contacted by emailing [manager@karori.org.nz](mailto:manager@karori.org.nz)

## What's the BID?

The Karori BID (Business Improvement District) is a partnership between the business community in a defined area (Karori Road from Marsden Village to Karori Town Centre) and Wellington City Council, and is funded from a targeted rate on commercial properties in the BID zone. KBA members are businesses operating from commercial premises in the BID, and businesses that opt into becoming members.



## KBA Associate membership

Karori businesses outside the BID zone are welcome to join KBA. Get *The Local* ad deal, come to all member events and meetings, vote at the upcoming AGM, and receive a standard (rather than basic) listing in the KBA website. Annual fee: \$300+gst or monthly fee: \$30+GST (fees are subject to change). Email [members@karori.org.nz](mailto:members@karori.org.nz)

## The Local – Karori advertising discount

*The Local – Karori* and KBA have joined forces to offer KBA members a great deal on advertising. Place a display ad (1/4, 1/3, 1/2 or full page) from July onward, and receive a 15 per cent discount off the rate card cost. To take up this offer, email the helpful team: [sales@the-local.co.nz](mailto:sales@the-local.co.nz) with “KBA discount” in the subject line. Conditions apply.

## KBA Calendar

- **KBA Board meeting:** 6–8pm, Monday 17 August at Karori Community Centre, 7 Beauchamp St. Open to KBA members. RSVP by 13 August to [members@karori.org.nz](mailto:members@karori.org.nz).
- **KBA Winter networking event:** 5.30–7.30pm, Monday 27 July at The Pickle Jar, 5 Parkvale Road, Karori. KBA members welcome, RSVP to [members@karori.org.nz](mailto:members@karori.org.nz) by 23 July.

## LISTINGS

The Listings section is an affordable way to let people know about your service. Advertise in *The Local* for as little as \$60.

### Antiques wanted

**GOLD, SILVER & COSTUME** jewellery wanted & coins, scrap and alluvial. Small to large lots. Highest ever NZ prices paid. 0800 559922 for free no obligation appraisal.

**WATCHES** wanted, wrist and pocket style going or not, modern & old any considered 0800 559922

**MASONIC LODGE** items wanted badges, aprons, jewels and regalia all items considered 0800 559922

**CAMERAS** wanted, film type modern & old, Any considered Ph Ben 0800 559922

**COINS & Banknotes** wanted. Pennies, threepences NZ & foreign. All types. ph Ben 0800 559922

**FOUNTAIN PENS** Wanted. Conway Stewart & Parker Style. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

**MEDALS** wanted. Military and sports medals. Any medals & badges considered. ph 0800 559922

**MILITARY** Items wanted. Books, badges, buttons & uniform. Ph 0800 559922

**NZR** New Zealand Railways items wanted. Badges, signs, uniforms. Ph 0800 559922

**RUGBY** Programs & badges wanted. Single items or whole collections. Ph 0800 559922

**STAMPS** First Day Covers, postcards & albums wanted. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

**RECORDS** Wanted. 33s, 12s, 45s. Modern & old. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

**BOOKS** Books Books Wanted. Fiction & Non-Fiction. Modern & old. Small - Estate Lots Ph 0800 559922

**BOTTLES** wanted, glass, marble, codd, stone & soda syphon types, NZ & Overseas Ph 0800 559922

**BAYONETS** swords and pocket knives wanted. Modern and old. Any considered ph 0800 559922

**SCOUTS & Boys Brigade** Memorabilia wanted Patches, blankets & uniform all items considered Ph 0800 559922

**TYPEWRITERS** wanted. Modern or old any considered. Ph Benjamin 0800 559922

**TAXIDERMY** wanted NZ - Exotic skins, heads, birds & mounted animals any considered ph 0800 559922

**MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT & Police** Memorabilia wanted. Badges, uniform & equipment - any items considered. ph 0800 559922

**FIRE SERVICE /Brigade** items wanted. Badges, patches uniforms & equipment all items considered 0800 559922

**SHEET MUSIC** wanted modern & old small to estate lots Ph Ben 0800 559922

### Imperfect clinic



Marsden Village, 021 363 898. [imperfect.co.nz](http://imperfect.co.nz)

Within imperfection is perfection. Anti-wrinkle injections \* Dermal filler \* AI facial scanning \* PPL \* Medical grade skin treatments & homecare products. Registered Nurses - Results driven - Free consultations. Shop 7,

### SMASH Club holiday programme



Join the SMASH Club Holiday Programme this July! Every day features a new theme with activities for all ages and interests. From outdoor adventures and an ice-skating trip into town to creative crafts, quiet groups, and quality time with friends, there's something for everyone. Our experienced and passionate staff ensure every child feels included and supported. View the programme and enrol online at [thesmashclub.org.nz](http://thesmashclub.org.nz) or email [office@thesmashclub](mailto:office@thesmashclub) for more information.

Join the SMASH Club Holiday Programme this July! Every day features a new theme with activities for all ages and interests. From outdoor adventures and an

Your children are already amazing.

AGES  
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We just help them prove it.

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Free assessment  
Book now!

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NumberWorks  
'nWords

TUITION  
CONFIDENCE  
RESULTS

Community notices are free for local groups and not-for-profits. Get in touch if you would like to include your listing in *The Local*.

### **Colours of Futuna Concert Series Presents Elementi "Something old, something new"**

Elementi performs medieval and modern music for flute, viola and soprano in the historic Futuna Chapel on Sunday 5 July at 2pm. Tickets \$15 on **Humanitix** or at the door.

### **Counselling services**

Te Kororia offers affordable, accessible support for people in the Karori community who may be experiencing stress, anxiety, grief, relationship challenges, life transitions, or emotional overwhelm. Email [counselling@tekororia.org.nz](mailto:counselling@tekororia.org.nz). 170 Karori Road. [Tekororia.org.nz](http://Tekororia.org.nz)

### **Friends of Karori Cemetery: upcoming tours**

- An Evening Tour at 7:30pm on Friday 24 July.
- An Intro Tour at 10:30am and then a Gallows Tour at 2pm on Saturday 1 August.

To find out more go to: [friendsofkaroricemetery.co.nz/tours/](http://friendsofkaroricemetery.co.nz/tours/)

### **Karori Arts & Crafts Centre**

Our Matariki-themed school holiday programme runs 6 July to 16 July with creative hands-on activities for primary school-aged children. Term 3 brings afterschool classes for kids plus adult classes including printmaking, spinning, watercolour, drawing, and more. Visit [KACC.org.nz](http://KACC.org.nz) to explore and enrol.

### **Karori Repair Cafe**

Our next Repair cafe will be on Sunday 9 August 10am-1pm at the Karori Community Centre. Bring your item needing repair – we have blade sharpening, computers, sewing, electrical, jewellery repair and more. For more information talk to Julia 021 045 8767. [karorirepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:karorirepaircafe@gmail.com)

### **Playgroup at Karori Baptist Church**

Caregivers with their babies and pre-school children welcome. Every Wednesday between 9:30-11:30am during school terms. Morning tea provided for adults; children bring their own. 163 Karori Road, Marsden Village, Karori. \$3.00 per family. Contact Annette on 022 107 2751.

### **Futuna Chapel Open Sunday**

Karori's historic Futuna Chapel is open to the public on Sunday 5 July from 11am-3pm, 67 Friend St, Karori. Enjoy the atmosphere and history of this internationally revered chapel designed and built by architect John Scott and the Marist lay brothers in 1961.

### **Karori Community Centre – Community Lunch**

The Karori Community Centre's next Community Lunch is on Thursday 16 July. Koha is appreciated on the day. For regular updates, visit: [Facebook.com/KaroriCommunityCentre](https://www.facebook.com/KaroriCommunityCentre)

### **SMASH Afterschool and Holiday Programmes**

Vibrant, child-focused spaces where daily activities are tailored to the children attending. SMASH also offers Christian programmes as part of our community-focused outreach. Visit [thesmashclub.org.nz](http://thesmashclub.org.nz) or email [office@thesmashclub.org.nz](mailto:office@thesmashclub.org.nz) for more.

### **Stroke Survivors Groups**

The Karori/Western Suburbs Stroke Survivors Group meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10.30am, Huntleigh Home, 219-221 Karori Road, Karori. Stroke survivors (and carers) are most welcome. For further information email: [wgtnwsss@yahoo.com](mailto:wgtnwsss@yahoo.com)

### **Trail Mixers**

We meet on the last Saturday morning of the month to walk for about 1½ – 2 hours (approx 7km) on trails and always have a social afterwards in a local cafe. Friendly dogs on leads also welcome! Contact [office@karorianglican.org.nz](mailto:office@karorianglican.org.nz) for more information.

### **Stroke Survivors Groups**

The Karori/ Western Suburbs Stroke Survivors Group meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:30am, Huntleigh Home, 219-221 Karori Road, Karori.

### **Karori Floral Design Club**

Do you love flowers, creativity, and good company? We meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm at St Ninian's Church, Karori Rd. For further information contact Cheryl at 021 268 9377.

# No pressure

AI generated image

## Leah McFall considers the frightening implications of Karori suddenly becoming stylish

I met friends at an intimate suburban wine-bar one late afternoon last week. It used to be a butchery – you know the one.

It was snug, with the chef almost in touching distance. The wine and exquisite little plates of local, seasonal, wild-grown food were chosen for us and served in style. I've never had fish in a cone before, and I'd eat it again.

The best thing was that we had such an early booking, we were finished by 7.30pm and home in furry slippers by eight. As somebody born in the 1970s, this is very appealing.

"We need a place like this in Karori," J had said, while I was chewing on a nasturtium leaf. I nodded with vigour, because wasn't she right? We've two family pubs and plenty of brisk and busy takeaways, but nothing like this – a word-of-mouth micro-bar, with a ritzy wine list and the confidence to make ice-cream from a nice bit of butterfish.

It would add glamour to our lives. It would save us from driving to town. It would clean us out of our savings. I could think of at least a dozen people who'd be up for it.

But, having slept on it, I'm now beginning to wonder if a wine-bar would be the beginning of the end for this suburb.

Karori is many things to the rest of Wellington but primarily, it's uncool. People move here for an easy life, especially with young children. Everything's within walking distance; schools, a medical centre, two tennis clubs, a vet. You can borrow a library book, fill a cavity and worm the cat, all in the same

outing. Pretty much everything in Karori can be done in Uggs. Do we really want this to change?

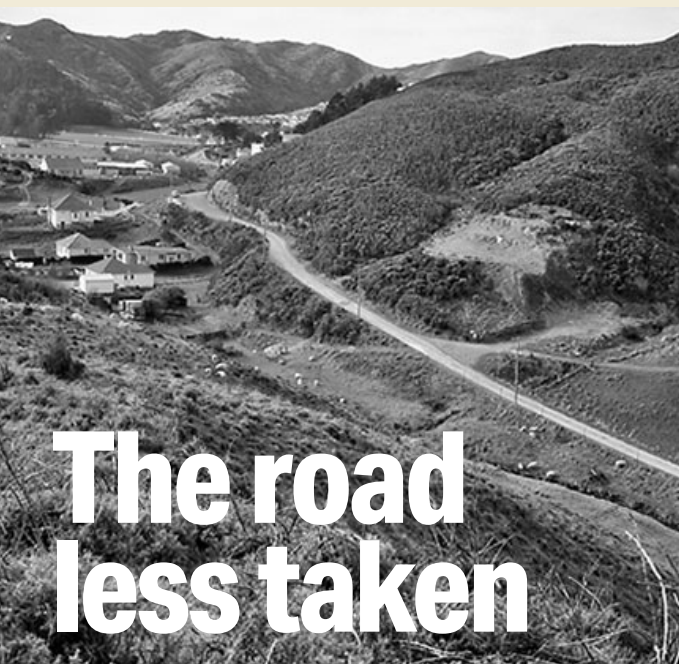
I've seen early signs of coolification already, around the Shelly Bay Baker on Karori Road. Who knew we had a constituency of locals prepared to brush their hair before 9am and line up for sourdough? By the look of them, these people may even have sex lives. It's not the Karori I know.

I've made friends in this suburb thanks to how daggily I behave. John, profiled elsewhere in this paper, insists that on the day we met I was on my street wearing pyjamas. I've certainly stood outside in an apron more than once, talking to passersby. This unstylish behaviour can't continue if a wine-bar crowd moves in. I'd need to get fully dressed, for one thing, and in outside clothes, not indoor ones.

A major trend among the latest restaurants is hyper-local eating, which means foraging in the neighbourhood. I don't want to find a sous-chef I've never met snuffling in my herby borders.

I live in Karori partly to escape the pressure of wearing the right clothes, saying the right things and being seen with cool people in edgy places. Sometimes I can go all week getting it wrong, and Karori lets me off. Being accepted for the dag you are? I'll drink to that. **tl**

**You can borrow a library book, fill a cavity and worm the cat, all in the same outing. Pretty much everything in Karori can be done in Uggs. Do we really want this to change?**



# The road less taken

Photo credit: Wellington City Council Archives, 00158-646-b

## Gordon Tait recounts the history of South Karori.

**S**outh Karori is not well known even by locals. South Karori starts at the bus terminal and follows the (dead end) road down the valley. The road is narrow, and in parts dark from the high banks and trees before opening out into a small valley.

South Karori remained more isolated than the main Karori basin when settlers started moving in: access was difficult, the land steeper, and soils thinner. However, farming families established sheep and cattle runs, cleared bush, and created the pattern of long narrow properties still visible today.

Unlike the main Karori basin—which gained institutions such as the Lunatic Asylum (1854) and later the cemetery (1891) – South Karori remained a quiet agricultural district in the 19th century, supplying firewood, stock and produce to Wellington. Roads were basic and often in disrepair, and the steep terrain limited subdivision.

At the bus terminal (the current site of the dairy) was the Spiers stagecoach depot until trams and buses were introduced. In the 1970s there was a supermarket behind the current bus terminal (Write Price) which was later converted into apartments. Moving down South Karori Road at the corner of Hazlewood Ave

## For those looking for a short excursion consider a trip down South Karori Road.

was the Karori “Side School” that was run from the 1870s to the first part of the 20th Century. This school was part of Karori Normal School, but it was for the benefit of South Karori pupils to save them walking the extra distance to Donald Street. There was a rest home at 115 South Karori Road (Willowdene) catering for those in their twilight years.

Further down the road was the Blue Cross Kennels that was in operation for 35 years from the 1950s. It provided a boarding facility for up to 200 animals. Over the road from the kennels was a large hill side property that was owned by Rob Moodie who for six years bred pedigree goats. Moodie was a flamboyant figure: ex police officer, Police union official. Moodie was renowned for dressing in Kaftans and later changed his name to “Miss Alice” and wore an Alice in Wonderland outfit.

At the end of the road was a commune, that has been part of the valley for some decades. There is also a road that leads to the Western Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Karori stream was in the early part of the 20th century renowned for its trout population – with anglers recording “record catches” and Limit catches in a matter of hours.

The South Karori stream was well known for containing small amounts of gold flakes, particularly in the small creeks that feed it of the Hawkins Hill steeps. (There was never enough to interest the old-time prospectors, although recently applications have been made for mining licences.)

The stream has a deep swimming hole at the carpark at the end of the road – although recent weather events can silt it up. In the early 20th century a Mormon population used these holes for religious purposes. The creek that emptied into the stream was called Mormon creek. Regrettably, religious intolerance forced the Mormon settlers to depart.

The Valley has had its issues with the road, with many references to better maintenance required, including maintaining the bridges. In 1911 one bridge was blown up using dynamite – the reason nor culprit were never discovered.

For those looking for a short excursion consider a trip down South Karori Road. **TL**

# A salesperson with a network

I come with trusted advisors,  
declutterers, gardeners,  
stagers, and photographers  
ready to showcase your home  
at its best. Leave everything  
to me and my team.

*Local knowledge. Professional standards.  
Community trust.*



**Andrea Skews**

 **0220 SELL IT**

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**Lowe & Co**

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