

WAIKUKU COMMUNITY

EXCHANGE

WAIKUKU PLANT, PRODUCE AND IDEAS SWAP

BY SHARON TORSTONSON



On 21 March 2021 members of the Waikuku community met in the Beach Hall to swap plants and produce, and talk about how we can have a strong local economy.

This event was organised as a volunteer project by Flourish Kia Puawai. We're about being an umbrella for innovative community and environmental wellbeing initiatives.

Flourish would like to thank everyone who came along and participated, including the volunteers who made the day happen, and all who brought along plants and produce to swap and share.

A special thanks to Waimakariri District Council's Community Team who provided staff time (big shout-out to Madeleine and Martin), printing, and other practical support.



MAUKATERE (MT GREY)

[HTTPS://MAPIO.NET](https://mapio.net)

E HAERE ANA NGĀ MIHI KI TE MANA WHENUA O TENEI ROHE.

**KI TE HAPU O NGĀI TŪĀHURIRI, TĒNĀ KOUTOU, TĒNĀ KOUTOU, TĒNĀ
KOUTOU.**

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND SEND OUR WARM GREETINGS TO THE
PEOPLE OF NGĀI TŪĀHURIRI, WHO ARE MANA WHENUA OF THIS
AREA.**

OUR SPECIAL PLACE

Waikuku is a very special place to live. Our backyard is a beautiful natural environment, with the beach, the estuary and flats, the river, and the open countryside surrounding us. We have a relaxed and casual lifestyle, the bustle of that city down the road feels a million miles away. And we have a great community of caring, friendly people who look out for each other.

We interact with each other in all sorts of places - over the fence, at the store, in the playgroup, at the mailboxes, in a community group, or at social get-togethers. One of the places where the community interacts is on Facebook. There you'll see us selling and buying things, giving away items and produce, asking about local tradie availability or for business recommendations, looking for work or help, and all sorts of other economic activity.

Which is all very cool, but how can members of the community who aren't on Facebook, or aren't on the internet, be part of this? How can we encourage more? A few of us on the Waikuku Beach Fan Club Facebook page thought it would be a great idea to see if we could grow and connect up all this trading and gifting in Waikuku and make it so that everyone is able to take part, because;

**ALL OF US HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER OTHER
MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY,
AND ALL OF US COULD MAKE USE OF THE SKILLS,
KNOWLEDGE, CAPABILITIES AND GOODS THAT
ARE ALREADY IN OUR COMMUNITY.**

It might sound odd to describe all this local buy-and-sell and giving unwanted stuff away as economic activity. Mention of the economy can cause some of us to glaze over. All that talk on TV about GDP, inflation, recession, quantum easing and so on - what has that got to do with Waikuku?

The word 'economy' comes from two Greek words, one meaning 'house' or 'household' and the other meaning 'management'. So an economy is just about how we get the goods and services we need and provide goods and services that others need, from the household level right up to internationally. It includes gifting or giving away goods, time or skills, it includes one-to-one swapping and bartering, and it includes using some token of common value (a currency) to exchange for what we need.

COMMUNITY PANTRY

The first speaker at our swap was Kirstyn Barnett, from the Cust Community Network, who told us about the Cust Community Pantry which they set up.

It started with people with excess garden produce who wanted to share it with others rather than let it go to waste. They decided to create a place where they could leave it and anyone could come and take some. They found that it was best to be located on private land, not public. This was because if it is on public land then a whole lot of rules and regulations come into play. The Cust Hotel agreed to host it in its carpark. They then needed to get materials and build a stand. A sponsor was found by asking on the local FaceBook page.

The completed stand ran into a couple of problems. Firstly, it was pushed over by the wind, so the legs were cemented in to concrete blocks. Then the hot sun on the produce spoiled it quickly. Shade cloth was attached and now it is working fine.

The pantry needs a group to manage it and set rules. In Cust this is done by the Cust Community Network. The rules include:

- Leave fruit, vegetables and eggs only. Eggs must be dated. No meat!
- No charge, take what you need for free.
- Anyone can use the pantry, you don't have to be a member of anything.

Their Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/CustCommunityNetwork/>



TIMEBANK



Coordinator Martin Pugh talked about the Waimakariri Timebank.

The Timebank is a bartering / trade system that uses time as its currency. It can be used for all sorts of services, e.g. babysitting, computers, plants, car diagnostics, teaching, arts and crafts. You are paid in hours and then spend your hours on what another Timebank member can do for you.

One thing to be aware of is that you can't offer what you do for your taxable income - e.g. if you were a chef, you couldn't offer cheffing on TimeBank - if this rule wasn't in place, then members would need to declare their credits for tax purposes.

The Timebank has around 100 members and is growing slowly. There is a wide age range amongst members. Police check new members because sometimes members need to go to another's home, and a police check helps keep everyone safe.

Groups can join, e.g. Hope Trust, and the Chicken Rescue are members. Volunteers get time credits. Members can donate time credits to member groups.

Although some people were concerned that they would have nothing to offer and no way of earning time credits, we soon found that no matter who you are everyone has something to offer. The discussion amongst people at the meeting showed that we all had skills and knowledge that we often don't recognise as having value to somebody else.

There is also a Timebank in Hurunui, and they and Waimakariri have an agreement that allows members of each to trade with each other. This is not always the case with other Timebanks.

You can learn more about the Waimakariri Timebank at www.waimakariri.timebanks.org.nz

LOCAL ENTERPRISE TRADING SYSTEM (LETS)

The speaker that had been organised for this topic wasn't able to come along, so organiser (and long-time Waikuku Beach resident) Sharon Torstonsen spoke from his notes. Our thanks to Dave Marra for doing the work to put this together.

Local Enterprise Trading Systems are a way for communities to trade with each other. They are also sometimes called Green Dollars or complementary currencies, because they are a currency that exists alongside the national currency. They can be used for both goods that people have produced, and services that people can carry out.



I have \$50



and fifty LETS units.

I exchange ten units for



and forty for



through the community exchange

and I still have \$50.



LETS create their own currency within defined place-based communities or communities of interest. They need a critical mass of traders and diversity. If we all have similar goods or services to trade and nobody has the skills or goods we want, then the system won't work.

Dave suggested that perhaps Waikuku wouldn't be big enough, so if there was interest we would be best to explore the idea with neighbouring communities.

"Green Dollars" have no implicit value. They only have value when they are traded, and they cannot be traded for another currency such as NZ dollars. There's no point in saving them so it's best to trade as much as possible between pre agreed limits (for instance + and - 500 Green dollars). By trading in the LETS system for things they need, members free up their NZ dollars for other things.

A word of warning: In NZ profit made from LETS trade is taxable and can effect Working for Families. Net green dollar profit before tax must be declared by people on Work and Income benefits.

Find out more about complementary currencies at

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/complementary-currency-cc.asp>

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS

Miles Dalton from Enterprise North Canterbury talked about how and why we can support local trades and businesses.

Spending in your local community helps it be less affected by international economic situation. Of every \$1 spent locally, 45c stays in the local economy. The more you spend locally the more it multiplies by helping employ people.

To support our local and national economy, the best thing we can do is to buy goods produced locally, then to shop at locally-owned shops. We should then support NZ-owned businesses ahead of internationally owned businesses that operate in NZ. The least helpful thing we can do is buy things from overseas on the internet, this doesn't help the NZ economy or environment at all. Spending locally means more quality and freshness, lower food miles and less pollution.

The Pegasus Residents' Group publishes a directory of local Pegasus, Woodend and Waikuku businesses and services. The latest edition is 2019/20 and can be downloaded at:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/541f6b52e4b0a990b34027fb/t/5d857cf847101b6c868a9dc9/1569029413598/Pegasus+Community+Directory+Final+-+small+file+size+spreads.pdf>

<https://madenorthcanterbury.co.nz/> is a site that promotes North Canterbury food and drink.

Enterprise North Canterbury: <https://www.northcanterbury.co.nz/>



The Mill



Old School Collective



Waikuku Beach Store

SUGGESTIONS / COMMENTS

After the speakers, attendees talked about the different schemes and other Waikuku economic activity. People were very interested in what we could do locally.

As well as the discussion, a suggestions sheet was available for people to put down ideas. Suggestions and Ideas:

- ·Would we be better to have a cupboard?
- ·Monthly market
 - Swap & buy?
 - Swap only?
 - Crafts, produce, local talents, painting, macramé, knitting, woodwork, metalware ...
 - Drop off or participate
 - Hire hall in winter, have outside in summer
- ·Bring back Waikuku Beach Gala! Sell and have stalls.



THE GREAT PUMPKIN WEIGH-IN

A group of locals who had been having a pumpkin-growing contest brought along their pumpkins and had the weigh-in as part of the day. They were a real drawcard! The winning pumpkin weighed in at a whopping 118kg.

There was a lot of interest, and people were keen to be part of an expanded contest next year. Watch this space!



WHAT NEXT?

We'd like to hear more from the Waikuku community as to what happens next.

- What do you think of the ideas from the speakers and the participants?
- What other ideas do you have? What would you like to see?
- Would you be willing to help get something set up?

You can share your ideas on a new Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/waikukucommunityexchange/> or email sharon@flourish.org.nz.

If you're not on the internet, then drop a note in the drop-box marked 'Waikuku Exchange' at the Beach Store. Depending on what interest there is, Sharon from Flourish will bring together people who are keen to get something happening and support you to make it happen.

**NĀU TE ROUROU, NĀKU TE ROUROU, KA ORA AI TE IWI
WITH YOUR FOOD BASKET AND MY FOOD BASKET THE PEOPLE WILL THRIVE**