

# The Valley Profile

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## Rail trail plea for \$7m upgrade



Now 10 years old, the Hauraki Rail Trail surface has reached the end of its life-span, and will cost between \$6-7 million to upgrade. Photo: CHRIS PARKER

By KELLEY TANTAU

A pitch for Thames-Coromandel District Council to contribute funding to the Hauraki Rail Trail was heard at council's first day of Long Term Plan hearings last week.

Day one of the hearings, held in Thames on May 4, was attended by a full house of elected members. To them, Hauraki Rail Trail Charitable Trust chief executive Diane Drummond asked for council's financial support for the resurfacing of the trail between Kōpū and Hikutaia in order for it to continue to meet

Grade One standards of the Great Ride network.

She said the district council's Long Term Plan (LTP) consultation document was "silent on support" for the trail upgrade.

"The trail surface has now reached 10 years of age, and that's the end of its life-span. We're looking at between \$6-7 million dollars of resurfacing for the trail network," she said.

The cost would be divided among Hauraki District Council, Matamata-Piako District Council, and Thames-Coromandel District Council, with the latter's expected costs amounting to

just over \$1.3 million. However, Diane told council the resurfacing should meet the criteria for support from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) for 50 per cent co-funding, meaning TCDC's exposure would be reduced to \$651,376 plus GST.

She also said the number of people using the trail between Kōpū and Thames was up 81 per cent since 2019, with trail users in Thames recorded at 22,155 during March and peaking at 41,500 in December, 2020.

"In Hikutaia, we're on par with last year, but we're up 100 per

cent on 2017-2018 numbers.

"People are coming," she said. "It is driving people to our area. Our average spend in the last 12 months is \$220 per person per stay.

"People are staying longer, they're wanting to come back, and with the opening up of our borders again slowly, people are investing in campervans, and e-bikes, so the market has still got a lot of room for growth."

Council received 1,622 submissions on the LTP, "far more than for any other recent Long Term Plan consultation".

Council's preferred "no frills

budget" included a proposed average 4.79 per cent rates increase per year over 10 years.

If adopted, this would include a proposed average rates increase of 7.1 per cent for the 2021-22 year, dwindling to 2.4 per cent in 2027, and 2.9 per cent in 2030.

However, a second option adding "nice to have" projects, including a Thames sports precinct and a Totara Valley Rd services extension, would increase rates to an average 9.34 per cent per year over 10 years.

Council will deliberate on the LTP on June 1-2, and will formally adopt the plan on June 30.

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**NEWS/EDITORIAL**

Editor Teresa Ramsey

Ph 0204 0944 853

Email: editor@valleyprofile.co.nz

Reporter Kelley Tantau

Ph 022 619 4889

Email: kelley@valleyprofile.co.nz

**ADVERTISING**

Ad manager Nikki Sanders

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# Pipiroa Road in 'bad state of distress'

By KELLEY TANTAU

A road in rural Hauraki which has felt the weight of heavy vehicles and a summer drought leading to "cracking, slumping, and rutting", could cost around \$260,000 to repair.

Around 1.3km of Pipiroa Rd in the urban area towards Ngatea was in "a particularly bad state of distress", Hauraki District Council group manager service delivery Adrian de Laborde said.

The culprit was last year's drought, when low rainfall combined with above-average temperatures, he said.

This has been exacerbated by increased traffic volumes, particularly when there has been a high proportion of heavy vehicles using this road as a detour during Ngatea's main street upgrade. However, increased traffic wasn't the primary cause of the pavement distress, he said.

"Pipiroa Rd was one of the many roads affected across the Hauraki Plains due to the drought. We are also investigating the impact of large roadside trees on the surrounding soils' moisture content and ground movement on this section of road," Mr de Laborde said.

Council planned to fix the ur-

ban section of Pipiroa Rd prior to winter this year; however, it was deemed prudent to wait until the Ngatea main street works were finished before starting repairs.

Council hoped to have the road repairs underway in the next construction season "at the latest", starting in October.

"Waka Kotahi (NZTA) have always shown a willingness to contribute to repair costs where increased traffic has triggered the road failures. However, in this case, the pre-existing pavement failures on Pipiroa Rd have complicated the identification of pavement distress associated with the increased traffic volumes during the Ngatea Main St upgrade," Mr de Laborde said.

NZTA will be contributing to the repairs though, as it had already approved some of the cost of fixing road damage caused by drought.

"Waka Kotahi already contribute significantly to all road works in our district through subsidies, and has recently approved \$2.8m worth of drought repairs across the district, including \$100,000 for the 1.3km urban section of Pipiroa Rd."

Mr de Laborde said there were several road repair options being considered, based



Council expects work to repair Pipiroa Rd will begin after October.

on available budgets, such as doing repair patches or rebuilding the entire road section.

"In early 2020 we established that fully rebuilding the urban section of Pipiroa Rd would cost approximately \$260,000.

"Whichever option we go with, we need to balance costs with the long term integrity of

the road, as well as what impact it will have on the budget for other programmed road repair sites throughout the district."

Temporary speed limits along this stretch had been put in place because of the uneven surface, and council would be looking out for signs of further deterioration, he said.

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## Thames Tides

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue																								
May 12	May 13	May 14	May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18																								
<p>Morning: 1:22am 0.8, 7:37am 3.2</p> <p>Afternoon: 1:41pm 0.7, 8:01pm 3.3</p>	<p>Morning: 1:59am 0.8, 8:18am 3.2</p> <p>Afternoon: 2:19pm 0.7, 8:38pm 3.3</p>	<p>Morning: 2:37am 0.9, 8:57am 3.2</p> <p>Afternoon: 2:56pm 0.7, 9:14pm 3.3</p>	<p>Morning: 3:15am 0.9, 9:36am 3.2</p> <p>Afternoon: 3:34pm 0.7, 9:51pm 3.3</p>	<p>Morning: 3:55am 0.9, 10:15am 3.1</p> <p>Afternoon: 4:12pm 0.8, 10:29pm 3.3</p>	<p>Morning: 4:37am 1.0, 10:55am 3.1</p> <p>Afternoon: 4:52pm 0.8, 11:11pm 3.2</p>	<p>Morning: 5:21am 1.0, 11:37am 3.1</p> <p>Afternoon: 5:35pm 0.9, 11:56pm 3.2</p>																								
<p>☀️ 7:07am 5:21pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 12:03am 12:25pm</p> <p>🌑 New Moon Rise 7:08am, Set 5:38pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:08am 5:20pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 12:48am 1:11pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 8:07am, Set 6:11pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:09am 5:20pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 1:34am 1:58pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 9:05am, Set 6:49pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:09am 5:19pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 2:23am 2:48pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 10:02am, Set 7:33pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:10am 5:18pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 3:14am 3:39pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 10:56am, Set 8:24pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:11am 5:17pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 4:05am 4:31pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 11:45am, Set 9:21pm</p>	<p>☀️ 7:12am 5:16pm</p> <p>🐟 Best At 4:57am 5:22pm</p> <p>🌑 Rise 12:28pm, Set 10:22pm</p>																								
<p><b>MOON AND FISH KEYS</b></p> <p>☀️ New Moon    🌑 First Quarter    🌕 Full Moon    🌘 Last Quarter</p> <p>🐟 Good Fishing    🐟 Fair Fishing    🚫 Not So Good</p>																														
<p><b>TIME DIFFERENCES FOR OTHER PLACES</b></p> <p>To determine tide times at the following places, add (+) or subtract (-) the given time difference from the Thames times listed in the calendar.</p>																														
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PLACE</th> <th>Hr</th> <th>HIGH</th> <th>LOW</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Coromandel</td> <td>-0</td> <td>04</td> <td>-0 04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whitianga</td> <td>-0</td> <td>02</td> <td>-0 06</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tairua</td> <td>+0</td> <td>10</td> <td>+0 21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whangamata</td> <td>-0</td> <td>07</td> <td>-0 07</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Waihi Beach</td> <td>-0</td> <td>12</td> <td>-0 12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							PLACE	Hr	HIGH	LOW	Coromandel	-0	04	-0 04	Whitianga	-0	02	-0 06	Tairua	+0	10	+0 21	Whangamata	-0	07	-0 07	Waihi Beach	-0	12	-0 12
PLACE	Hr	HIGH	LOW																											
Coromandel	-0	04	-0 04																											
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Waihi Beach	-0	12	-0 12																											

# Audrey and Bill celebrate 65 years in love

By KELLEY TANTAU

It's easy to see Audrey and Bill Graham have lived a life filled with laughter.

In a photo taken of the two of them, there's a snake wrapped around Audrey's neck and a camera clamped in Bill's hand.

They're both smiling, a gleeful, open-mouthed kind of smile, and when they reflected on their 65 years of marriage last month, humour and happiness seemed to be a recurring theme.

"He was a bit nutty, and I liked that," Audrey recalled.

"I was brought up in a Christian family and I told him once that I'd never been to a horror movie. He said, 'I'll take you to one'.

"When he had seen it, it was scary because it was in black and white, but when we went, it was in technicolour, so we ended up laughing the whole way through."

The pair met in Bible class when Audrey was 18 and Bill was 28. They tied the knot one year later on April 28, 1956.

Even the wedding had its own dose of comedy.

"Audrey decided she didn't want a wedding march when we walked into church, and there was a mix-up, and they thought she meant she didn't want any music," Bill said.

"We walked up to dead silence!" Audrey added, and the two of them chuckled.

Now 84 and 94, respectively, Audrey and Bill have lived in Katikati and Whangamatā, and now reside in Thames. They had three kids, six grandkids and three great-grandchildren.

Audrey said she was not the "adventurous" one of the pair, though the photo with the snake begged to differ - as did the drawing a friend drew of her riding on a motorbike.

Before she married Bill, she bought a BSA Bantam motorcycle and learned to ride on unsealed metal roads. Some years later though, Bill commented that he could "walk faster than I rode", she said.

Bill was the adventurous one. Well into retirement, he went bungee jumping with son Peter, as well as bike riding on trips Peter led, including one from Christchurch to Queens-town, and another from Hamilton to Whangamatā. Together, Bill and Audrey also went parasailing in 2018. But among the highs there was also a low, when their Whangamatā farmhouse went up in flames three years after moving there.

"I took the message from a friend of mine, and she said the house was on fire. I practically laughed at her because I'd only just left the house," Audrey said.

"I was up the back of the farm and I had to tear home on the tractor, but by the time I got there, the whole thing... you couldn't get near it," Bill added.



Audrey and Bill Graham tied the knot on April 28, 1956 - 65 years ago.

Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

"I thought Audrey and [daughter] Lyn were still inside so I was panicking. It was quite [a relief] when they turned up."

Audrey admitted they weren't "perfect", but after 65 years, Bill could still "anchor" her.

"I forget what I told mum when I got married to you," she said, looking over to him.

"But it was just that you keep my feet on the ground."

RIGHT: Audrey and Bill Graham on their wedding day.

Photo: SUPPLIED



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# Mine manager dies in duck shooting accident



As part of a Valley Profile series, **MEGHAN HAWKES** explores our local history by seeking out stories of life and death in the Thames Valley

A few days' duck shooting on the Piako River was a welcome break for James McLean, a 34-year-old mine manager of the Tararu Creek Gold Mining Company. In early April, 1899, he was one of a group who left Tararu by yacht for Kerepēhi, where they set up camp.

The next morning, they broke up into small parties and James, George Tetley and Naki Eahu, accompanied by a dog, set off up the creek in a small canoe. When a mile and a half from the Māori settlement, the dog began to fidget and stood up with its forefeet on the edge of the boat. This tilted the frail craft to one side; it filled with water and overturned throwing the occupants out.

James McLean, who was not a very good swimmer, swam a few yards when Naki called to him to return to the capsized canoe, which he attempted to do but failed then sank. Naki got hold of James who clutched at him but the strong tide separated them. James grabbed at Naki a second

time and they both sank together. Naki managed to surface and with great difficulty reached the bank, having swallowed water and being quite exhausted.

James rose a second time but only his hand was visible before he sank again. He was fully dressed and, weighed down by ammunition and his gun, was no match for the very strong current of the tidal river. George Tetley, who was unable to swim, had drifted down the creek with the canoe and using his gun as a paddle, made it ashore.

A woman named Ngatira along with several others began searching for James. They would be in the water continuously for four and a half hours.

The terrible news was brought into Thames and at about 8.45pm, a boat full of men and Constable Stevens left for the scene with grappling gear to drag for the body. After a run across the Piako, a hard pull of 15 miles brought them to the accident site. It was about 2.15am and the trip had been a very unpleasant one. Rain began to fall and there was no shelter except for a tent.

They huddled around a fire as they could do nothing until daylight. Local Māori assembled on the river bank and at about 4am, the search parties breakfasted on ducks and kumara. At daybreak they divided into two sections, one proceeding up and the other down the river.

The river was thoroughly dragged. When the grappling irons touched anything on the river bed Māori men and wom-



James McLean (inset) is buried at Tararu Cemetery.

Photos: SUPPLIED

en dived to see what it was. The current was so strong they had to drive a manuka pole into the mud down which they scrambled. The river was full of snags, and dynamite was sent for in the hope an explosion would bring the body to the surface.

The tug *Comet* arrived with another search party. Shortly after 3pm James' body was found and enclosed with nets to prevent it from drifting. A great gloom fell over Thames and operations at the Tararu Creek Gold Mine were suspended. James McLean was a modest man but held in the highest regard by his employees and friends. He was a mine manager of undoubted

ability - a young man who had advanced by sheer hard work and perseverance. The accident had cut short a most promising career.

James was buried at Tararu cemetery, his funeral attended by all sections of the community and all of his employees. James left a wife, Margaret, and seven children.

The help of local Māori in searching for James was highly praised. Both young and old remained with the searchers until the body was found.

A month later relatives and friends of James McLean were welcomed at their Kerepēhi settlement in his memory.

# Entries open for business awards

Entries are now open for the 2021 Hauraki Coromandel Business Awards, which will now be held in October after last year's awards were postponed due to Covid-19.

Committee chair Kate Rigg said the past year was "an incredibly challenging time for businesses. But people in our region have shown extraordinary resilience as they've managed their business through this period, and that's something we want to acknowledge and celebrate".

There are seven categories businesses can enter: Emerging Business, Hospitality, Manufacturing and Trade, Professional Services, Retail, Rural and Primary Industries, and Tourism. There's also the Services to Business award, nominated by members of the public and chosen by awards' judges, and the ever-popular People's Choice awards, decided by public vote.

Kate Rigg says the awards were an excellent opportunity for businesses take a good look at their operation.

"Previous entrants say the process has helped them considerably in setting goals, renewing their enthusiasm for their business, and to feel very proud of the work they're doing here in Hauraki Coromandel."

The gala evening will be held at the Grand Mercure Puka Park in Pauanui on October 28.

Entry forms: [www.haurakioromandelbusinessawards.co.nz](http://www.haurakioromandelbusinessawards.co.nz).

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This year we'll also have some of the exciting new models on show such as the Kia e-Niro, Hyundai Kona and the MG ev.

**When:** 10 am till 1 pm, Saturday 22nd May.  
**Where:** Mackay St carpark (next to bowling club and opp. TCDC)  
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# Paramedic retires from front line after 34 years

By KELLEY TANTAU

When Peter Young watches the Paeroa ambulance depart from its station with its siren blaring, he often wonders where it might be heading.

But then he thinks: "Been there, done that."

The 69-year-old has recently retired from the frontline after working for Paeroa St John for 34 years.

During that time he dealt with reckless Christmas injuries and medical emergencies, and was a calming influence for patients as they rode in the back of the ambulance to Thames or Waikato hospitals.

"You might be thinking 'holy sh\*t' inside, but you've got to be acting calmly as though there's nothing too much wrong with them," he told *The Profile*.

"You can only do what you can."

A mechanic by trade, Mr Young was involved in the industrial fire brigade at Te Rapa, Hamilton, and upon moving to the Paeroa, he intended to join

the local brigade there.

"But because I'm colour-blind, in those days they didn't accept you. Then Selwyn Wood asked me if I'd drive for [St John], and he talked me into it and that's how it all started."

Mr Young went on to complete his paramedic qualification in 1999 and became the first paid officer in Paeroa in 2002.

*"Sometimes you might have been in the back of the ambulance with a patient for an hour or more, and it was really quite nice being able to see what you'd done and how they got better."*

- Peter Young

One of the jobs that stuck out to him was helping a man who was eventually diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm.

"When I went to the guy in Paeroa, he looked really sick, and I was only going to go to Thames [hospital], but as I was coming out the gate, [I decided] we're going to Waikato.



Peter Young, pictured with his wife Lesley, was celebrated at a farewell last month.

Photo: SUPPLIED

"I gave him a little bit of fluid, a bit of pain relief, and called the hospital early so they were prepared when we got there. That had a really good outcome, that job... it would've been a job that saved his life."

And whenever they arrived at the hospital, Mr Young said there was always a "thank you" waiting.

"A lot of people wrote in and thanked the ambulance staff... they appreciated what we were doing," he said, "and talking to the people in the back of the ambulance, we had some really interesting discussions with them."

"Sometimes you might have been in the back of the ambulance with a patient for an hour

or more, and it was really quite nice being able to see what you'd done and how they got better."

Mr Young's commitment to Paeroa's St John ambulance was acknowledged on April 18. He is still involved in St John as a peer supporter, and is the chairman of the Paeroa area committee.

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Email your community event or club or group notice to editor@valleyprofile.co.nz. Listings are published at the editor's discretion and may be edited. Clubs and groups are responsible for keeping listings up to date.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 13: The Sweet Caroline Tour:** A Tribute to Neil Diamond, performing at Thames War Memorial Civic Centre, 200 Mary St, 8pm – 10:30pm.

**May 14: Ragtime Washboard Kings:** Performing at The Backroom, 714 Pollen Street, Thames, between 7:30pm – 10:30pm. General Admission: \$24.54.

**May 19: Pink Ribbon Brunch:** 10.30am-2pm, Old Paeroa Racecourse to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Foundation. Live music and raffles. Transport available, Ph: 027 681 8610.

**May 21: Te Puru School Quiz Night:** Register your team of up to six people now for this school fundraiser. \$20 per person. BYO. Snacks, cake, tea, coffee available. Ph 07 868 2747 or TePuruPTA@gmail.com to book.

**May 28:** Waikato Students Instrumental Group will perform at St Georges Church, Thames, 12:15pm. Entry is free but donations are appreciated.

**June 13:** Bliss Harp Quartette with Anna Dunwoodie will perform at St Georges Church, Thames, at 2pm. Tickets \$20 or \$15 for TMG Members and \$5 students. Cash only available at the door or at Carson's Bookshop.

**July 3-10:** Thames Music and Drama presents *Peter Pan & the Medallion's Secret*, at Thames Civic Centre, July 3-10.

**August 21:** Thames Valley Chess Championship at the Thames War Memorial Civic Centre Conference Room, Mary St. Must be level one to play. Free entry.

## LOCAL MARKETS

**Kaiaua Seaside Market:** Held opposite the garage in Kaiaua, on the last Sunday of each month. Set up a stall or come along to hunt out a bargain. Ph 021 130 1851.

**Karangahake Hall Market:** Fourth Saturday of the month, 9am-2pm, 12 Crown Hill Rd. A great variety of

stalls selling handcrafts, preserves, plants and more. Ph 027 678 2035.

**Paeroa Car Boot Market:** First and third Saturdays of the month, 101 Normanby Rd, weather permitting. Treasures, creative wares and yummy food. Ph 07 862 7833.

**Thames Market:** Every Saturday in Grahamstown, 8am to 12pm. A huge range of stalls, fruits and veggies, arts, crafts, collectibles.

**Turua Market:** Third Sunday of the Month at Turua Hall, 9am to 1pm. Homemade food, lots of stalls. Contact Betty, Ph 027 696 7644.

## COMMUNITY CONTACTS

**Classical Music Club:** Kim Reid, Ph 07 862 3839

**Corinthian Masonic Lodge, Thames:** Colin, Ph 07 868 8196 or 021 259 6699

**Craft Market:** Lynette Mapson, Ph 027 617 4470

**Diabetic Support Group:** Thames Hauraki, Brian Corr, Ph 07 868 8551

**Goldfields Women's Institute:** Ph 07 868 8984

**Grey Power Paeroa:** Ken Carter, Ph 07 862 7271

**Hauraki Bowling Club Mangatarata:** Pene Koch, Ph 07 867 3380

**Hauraki Cardiac Support Club Thames:** Ph 07 868 6148

**Hauraki Country Music Club:** Tina Haakma, Ph 07 868 3443

**Hauraki Golf Club:** Len Cameron, Ph 07 867 7660

**Hauraki Plains Co-operating Parish:** Jane, Ph 027 471 4654

**Hauraki Plains Diabetic Support Club:** Ryan Corr, Ph 07 868 8551

**Hauraki Plains Lioness Club:** Jill McIntosh, Ph 07 867 7373

**Hauraki Plains Rural Show:** Sonia, Ph 027 431 5825

**Hauraki Plains St John:** Call or pop into the Op Shop, Ph 07 867 8073

**Hauraki Plains Youth Cricket:** Anna Dodunski, Ph 027 466 4126

**Hauraki RSA Memorial Club:** Ph 07 867 7898 (evg) or 07 867 7301

**Hauraki Vintage Machinery Club:** Ph



Join the Pink Ribbon Brunch for the Breast Foundation in Paeroa, May 19.

07 867 7281

**Jig Saw Puzzle Library:** Mangatarata, Ph 07 867 3250

**Kerepehi Brass Band:** Rowan Garrett, Ph 07 867 6762

**Kerepehi/Paeroa Indoor Bowls:** Ph 027 418 4300

**Kerepehi Women's Institute:** Ph 07 867 6002 or 07 868 8582

**Mahjong:** Nola Walker, Ph 07 867 7301

**Music and Movement:** Suzanne, Ph 027 337 2544

**Ngatea Badminton:** Jenny Adams, Ph 07 867 3028

**Ngatea Chinwang Cafe:** 10am-12 Tuesdays, parish hall, Darlington St

**Ngatea Community Garden:** Jane, Ph 07 867 7245

**Ngatea Garden Circle:** Alice Douglas on 07 867 7463

**Ngatea Indoor Bowling Club:** Ph 07 867 6082 or 07 867 8015

**Ngatea Lions Club:** Bruce Foster, Ph 021 043 9280

**Ngatea Playcentre:** President, Ph 027 327 5536

**Ngatea Pony Club:** Nicky Hamblyn, Ph 07 867 7078

**Ngatea Scouts:** Kim Donaldson, Ph

07 867 7350

**Ngatea Women's Institute:** Nola Walker, Ph 07 867 7301

**NZ Red Cross Thames:** Betty Sutcliffe, Ph 07 868 6148

**NZ Society of Genealogists Thames:** Pam French, Ph 07 868 6492

**Paeroa Citizens Advice Bureau:** Tuesdays/Thursdays 10am-1pm, Ph 021 2573841

**Paeroa Community Programmes:** Ph 07 862 9129

**Paeroa Grey Power:** Secretary Gail Locke, Ph 07 862 6256

**Paeroa Society of Arts:** paeroaartsociety@gmail.com

**Paeroa Walking Group:** 9am Mon Wed Fri, Elaine Lally, Ph 07 862 8409

**Probuss:** Jill McIntosh, Ph 07 867 7373

**Scrapbooking:** Pam Tonks, Ph 07 867 7780

**Solarpunk Aotearoa:** John McKeown, Ph 021 063 5483

**St Paschal's Catholic Church:** Ph 07 867 7401 and 07 867 7056

**Tai-Chi exercise Kaiaua:** Stacy, Ph 09 576 3705

**Tasty Books & Wine Tasting:** Anne, Ph 07 867 3367

**Thames 50+ Cycle Group:** Chris, Ph 0274 998 159

**Thames Bonanza Club:** Meets third Thursday of month, Ph 07 868 6673

**Thames Chin Wag Cafe:** Mondays 12.30pm to 2pm, 608 Queen St

**Thames Continuing Education:** Fourth Wednesday of month, Ph 021 564 339

**Thames Creative Fibre Group:** Dana Catley, Ph 07 868 7310

**Thames Croquet Club:** Dennis Karl, Ph: 07 868 2423

**Thames Dahlia Club:** Paul Silvester, Ph 07 868 9346

**Thames Hauraki Parents Centre:** Meike, Ph 07 867 3163

**Thames-Hauraki Scottish Country Dance Club:** Ph 07 280 0631

**Thames Heritage Network:** Margaret Cropp, Ph 07 868 1024

**Thames Lions Club:** Ph 07 868 9873 or email: pandb@xtra.co.nz

**Thames Menz & Womens Shed:** Tony Winter, Ph 027 290 0023

**Thames PickleBall Club:** Tuesdays, 10-11am, Ph 027 290 0023

**Thames Probuss Club:** Meets second Tuesday of month, Ph 07 868 5573

**Thames Rotary Club:** Warren Sly, Ph 021 772 351

**Thames Ruby Redz Red Hatters:** Ngaire Potter, Ph 07 868 3421

**Thames Tennis Club:** Maree, Ph 027 217 1682

**Thames Senior Indoor Bowls:** Tuesdays 9.30am - 12pm, St James Hall. Ph Val, 021 054 2337

**Thames Toy Library:** Lesley Ph 07 868 6274

**Thames Valley Adult Riding Club:** Helen Pooley, Ph 021 233 1245

**Thames Valley Zonta Club:** Pam Harsant, Ph 027 495 5583 or 07 868 9554

**Totally Thames Inc:** Deb MacDonald Brown, Ph 027 228 8011

**Turua Playcentre:** Estelle, Ph 027 371 8511

**Turua Scouts:** Leanne Scott, Ph 027 329 7887 or 07 867 8388

**Women's Loan Fund:** Cara, Ph 07 868 7820

# Scott Simpson

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## Best under pressure

# Cruising to success with new driving course

By KELLEY TANTAU

Students eager to “get back on the road” and obtain their licence are now able to do so following the launch of Thames Community Centre’s new driver mentor programme.

Starting on May 16, the initiative pairs students of all ages with like-minded mentors as they cruise their way to becoming a qualified driver.

“What we found was that we were helping a lot of people get to their learners stage of their licence, but quite a number of them were struggling to go any further because they didn’t have a car to practise in, or a qualified driver to help them,” centre manager Jeff Whitfield said.

“So the board late last year identified this problem and said: ‘Why don’t you see if there’s some solution?’”

After being provided the use of a hybrid vehicle from Valley Toyota, the centre recruited mentors to kick-start their drivers’ skill set - they have seven drivers and seven mentors so far. Two of the mentors, Stuart Saunders and Don McAndie, said the programme was an opportunity to give back to the younger generation, while the centre’s committee chair Ian

Stewart said it was an important initiative to support.

“It’s really exciting to have seen an idea that was in the community, and have it anchored in a venue with a really good co-ordinator,” he said.

The students will have an initial lesson with a local driving instructor, and that will determine their practise plan and routes for the next six weeks.

The students will then have another lesson before another six weeks of practise. They’ll sit their restricted driving test at the end of the course.

“We’d like to get everyone to their full [licence] as well, that’s what drives us. We’re about getting people to be safer, legal drivers, so they can get work and avoid being in the justice system,” Mr Whitfield said.

“We also offer those people getting that assistance at every level - learners, restricted, and full - to volunteer and give time back to the community.”

That’s what future driving students Marama Anderson and Brennan Dollard have been doing. When she undertook her learners course at the centre, Marama, 16, completed 20 hours of volunteering at Thames High School.

Brennan, 21, has been a volunteer at the centre for two



Thames Community Centre manager Jeff Whitfield, left, with driving students Marama Anderson and Brennan Dollard, mentors Stuart Saunders and Don McAndie, and committee chair Ian Stewart, at rear. Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

years, and said he was excited to get back on the road for the driver mentor programme.

“I’ve had a bit of [driving] experience, and some private lessons paid for by the centre from my volunteer hours, but not quite enough to be confident enough to get my restricted,” he said.

“One of my hurdles is just finding the time to get someone to help me with my licence.

So having this extra source of practise is going to take a lot off my shoulders.”

Marama said the free course was a win for her personally, as well as for the community.

“This programme is going to be cool especially because it’s for free, and the volunteering I’m really happy to do. It’s a really good opportunity for someone like me who’s in a really big family, where getting your re-

stricted is hard because you’re doing so many other things at once.”

The programme starts on May 16, and the centre is hoping to put through 12 learners per programme, so more mentors are needed. Those interested in giving two hours to the programme a week, and who have full licences, are encouraged to contact Jeff on 07 868 9797, or email [trc@xtra.co.nz](mailto:trc@xtra.co.nz).

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# Rural Life

## Passion for permaculture shared in abundance

By KELLEY TANTAU

A book written by two Thames gardening gurus has topped the New Zealand nonfiction charts.

Niva and Yotam Kay of Pakaraka Permaculture, in the Kauaeranga Valley, published their first book, *The Abundant Garden: A Practical Guide to Growing a Regenerative Home Garden*, in April.

For two weeks in a row, it has topped the nonfiction best-sellers list.

“We didn’t expect that at all,” Niva said.

“It’s definitely been really heart-warming to see this reception. It’s also very exciting to know that so many people are going to be in their gardens and planting vegetables and thinking about their soil.”

Niva and Yotam have an abundance of experience with permaculture gardening.

They’ve honed their skills and shared their knowledge both in New Zealand and overseas. The pair’s book was now on to its second print, with copies arriving into New Zealand around May 16-17.

It detailed how to create and maintain a productive and regenerative vegetable garden, and included chapters close to Niva and Yotam’s hearts.

“We’ve put ourselves in so many of the chapters and each one is special to us. The vegetable chapter is particularly long,” Yotam laughed.

“But besides the gardening techniques, we’ve also added in recipes from the garden, and I’ve got my grandmother’s shakshuka recipe in there, so that’s a warm spot for me.”

The “comprehensive” book took around six months to write, and to those who now had it in their hands and were ready to get out in the garden, Yotam said the first thing to remember was location.



Niva and Yotam Kay, with their two daughters Lily and Dina, joined Pakaraka Farm in 2014. BELOW: the couple’s first book.

Photo: JANE USSHER

“I would encourage people to make sure their garden is in the best location around where they live. If they can, make sure it’s really visible and accessible, and it’s a place where you pass on a regular basis,” he said.

“You can see the vegetables smiling at you, and you can see the weeds calling you, and you can harvest things that are ready to harvest, and water what needs watering, because out of sight means out of mind, and a reproductive garden is in

a place that’s accessible.” Pakaraka Farm was established by Harry Parke and the late Jeanette Fitzsimons in 1991, and Niva and Yotam, and their two daughters Lily and Dina, joined in 2014.

It now doubled as an education centre for regenerative living, and an organic market garden. Going forward, Niva and Yotam will be busy processing more than 150 book orders, preparing for their May 22 Auckland TEDx Talk, and

planning their eight-week gardening course, starting in July.

“For those people who can’t come here for a workshop, they can still have all the tools and all the knowledge with the book,” Niva said.

“What was really important for us was to make it accessible, to show that it was not rocket science, but it was really for everyone who wanted to garden.”

For more information, visit: [www.pakarakafarm.co.nz](http://www.pakarakafarm.co.nz).



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# Rural Life

## Farmer and truck wash company fined

A Hauraki farmer and a Matamata truck wash business have been convicted and fined over separate pollution events resulting from poor management of effluent infrastructure.

William Gary Brunt was fined \$49,000 by Judge Brian Dwyer in the Hamilton District Court for unlawfully discharging animal effluent into the environment at his Nether-ton farm.

Paddy Smith Limited was fined \$60,000 by Judge Jeff Smith in the Tauranga District Court for the unlawful discharge of animal effluent from the washdown of stock trucks at their rural site.

In the Brunt case, an effluent holding pond was found to be overflowing into a nearby paddock by Waikato Regional Council staff during a routine inspection in August 2019.

The council said it had alerted Mr Brunt to the risks his system posed to the environment during previous

inspections.

In the second case, council responded to a complaint from a member of the public in May, 2020. Council staff found an irrigator had been operated next to a gully for about six hours resulting in substantial ponding of contaminants creating flow paths to the Tututahunga Stream. The discharge comprised washdown from stock trucks.

Council's regional compliance manager Patrick Lynch said: "In both cases there was adequate infrastructure to manage effluent; however, they had been poorly managed resulting in these two completely avoidable incidents."

"This is an opportunity to remind anyone that manages contaminants as part of their business to be vigilant, not only to protect the environment, but also to protect themselves from the consequences of environmental breaches," Mr Lynch said.



Effluent overflows from a holding pond on the Brunt farm in Nether-ton.

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# SPORTS

## Netball star visits

BY TERESA RAMSEY

Hauraki Plains College students learned from one of New Zealand's top netballers last week when former Silver Fern attacker Grace Kara dropped in for a skills session.

Now back with Waikato-Bay of Plenty Magic, Kara made time to pass on some of her top tips and advice to HPC senior A and development team players at the Hauraki Netball Courts in Ngatea on May 5, before putting them through some

drills. HPC netball coach Toni Brewer said the event was an "invaluable experience" for the students, who enjoyed the hour-long session prior to their first game of the season.

"I'm just really stoked that we've had the opportunity for a player such as Grace to be able to come here and pass on some knowledge to the players," she said.

"I just think that getting an outside voice coming in and giving them little pointers, they'll remember this for a long time."



Grace Kara passes on some of her knowledge to HPC students.

Photos: TERESA RAMSEY



Former Silver Fern attacker Grace Kara demonstrates a drill.



HPC students learn some defence moves.



ABOVE: HPC players learn a tricky drill under Grace Kara's expert direction.



The two HPC teams with Magic mid-court player Grace Kara.



Senior A players get some advice.



Grace Kara gives some direction.

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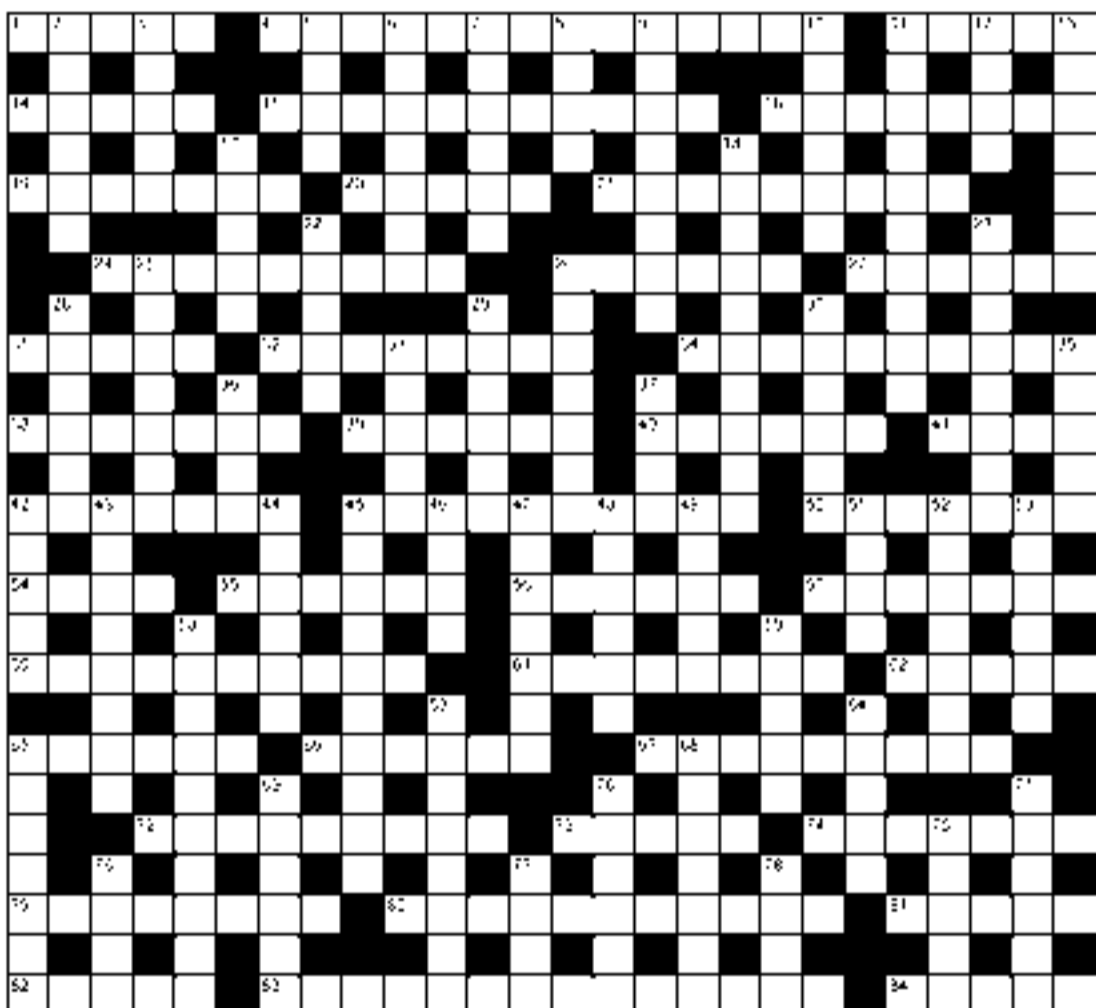
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- 11 Single (5)
- 14 Craze (5)
- 15 Epic film; best-selling book (11)
- 16 Deceiving by false show of self-confidence (8)
- 19 Hair cleaner (7)
- 20 In reserve (5)
- 21 Office fastener (9)
- 24 Absurd cop (anag) (9)
- 26 English poet (6)
- 27 Finale (6)
- 31 Natural talent (5)
- 32 Stylish grace (8)
- 34 Whisky plant (10)
- 38 Part of the body (7)
- 39 Quantity (6)
- 40 Developing unborn (6)
- 41 Connect (4)
- 42 Holding responsible (7)
- 45 Track (10)
- 50 Beams (7)
- 54 Recess (4)
- 55 Looked for (6)
- 56 Not clear (6)
- 57 Hug close (7)
- 60 Glut (10)
- 61 Prickly animal (8)
- 62 Newspaper (5)
- 65 Emergency (6)
- 66 Upper floor access (6)

**DOWN**

- 2 Disinterest (6)
- 3 Poppy drug (5)
- 5 African river (4)
- 6 Got away (7)
- 7 Brutes (anag) (6)
- 8 Otherwise (4)
- 9 Boiler suit (8)
- 10 Objects from the past (6)
- 11 Hostile (10)
- 12 Legal document (4)
- 13 Using a shovel (7)
- 17 Entrance hall (5)
- 18 Open to bargaining (10)
- 22 Motoring event (5)
- 23 Tedious (8)
- 25 Consistent in quality (7)
- 26 Distinguished musician (7)
- 28 Worldwide (6)
- 29 Not certain (6)
- 30 One who perseveres (6)

- 33 Greek letter (5)
- 35 Tugs (5)
- 36 Enthusiastic (4)
- 37 Within reach (4)
- 42 Musical instrument (5)
- 43 Eating disorder (8)
- 44 Clusters (6)
- 45 Ordinance (10)
- 46 Felines (4)
- 47 Apparel (7)
- 48 African country (6)
- 49 Fry quickly (5)
- 51 Weapons (4)
- 52 Topography (7)
- 53 Bring to mind (6)
- 58 Reckoning (10)
- 59 Dense (5)
- 63 Spice (8)
- 64 Unit of capacity (5)
- 65 Open-ended cigar (7)
- 68 Rugby team (7)
- 69 Dulls (6)
- 70 Take away (6)
- 71 Merged (6)
- 75 Nearby (5)
- 76 Abominable snowman (4)
- 77 Gramophone record (4)
- 78 Religious picture (4)



DOWN: 2 Apathy, 3 Opium, 5 Nile, 6 Escaped, 7 Tubers, 8 Else, 9 Overall, 10 Relics, 11 Unfriendly, 12 Writ, 13 Digging, 17 Lobby, 18 Negotiable, 22 Rally, 23 Tiresome, 25 Uniform, 26 Maestro, 28 Global, 29 Unsur, 30 Stayer, 33 Gamma, 35 Yanks, 36 Keen, 37 Near, 42 Banjo, 43 Anorexia, 44 Groups, 45 Regulation, 46 Cats, 47 Clothes, 48 Uganda, 49 Sauté, 51 Arms, 52 Terrain, 53 Recall, 58 Estimating, 59 Solid, 63 Cinnamon, 64 Lire, 65 Cheroot, 68 Fifteen, 69 Blunts, 70 Remove, 71 United, 75 Close, 76 Yeti, 77 Disc, 78 Icon.

ACROSS: 1 Kapok, 4 Under the doctor, 11 Unwed, 14 Mania, 15 Blockbuster, 16 Bluffing, 19 Shampoo, 20 Spare, 21 Paperclip, 24 Cupboards, 26 Milton, 27 Ending, 31 Fair, 32 Elegance, 34 Distillery, 38 Abdomen, 39 Amount, 40 Embryo, 41 Join, 42 Blaming, 45 Racecourse, 50 Ratters, 54 Nook, 55 Sought, 56 Opaque, 57 Embrace, 60 Oversight, 61 Hedgehog, 62 Daily, 65 Crisis, 66 Stairs, 67 Efficient, 72 Ballpoint, 73 Beery, 74 Bracing, 79 Obedient, 80 Omnipotence, 81 Motto, 82 Thing, 83 Spring-cleaning, 84 Weeds.



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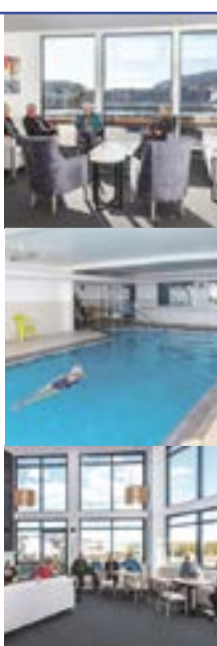
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🏠 3 🛏 2 🚗 2 🚲 1

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RT5633

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# Public to have say in climate change declaration debate

By KELLEY TANTAU

Two failed motions, an allegation of conflict of interest, and a reminder of a \$100,000 High Court case plagued district councillors as they met to discuss their decision not to sign a climate change declaration and the subsequent “consequences” that followed.

The Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) meeting on April 4 was a demonstration of diverse opinions as councillors debated for 40 minutes before deciding the best course of action to take in signing - or not signing - the declaration.

Now the public can have its say on whether the decision made was the right one.

In April, 2019, council decided not to approve of Mayor Sandra Goudie signing the Local Government Leaders’ Climate Change Declaration.

Hauraki Coromandel Climate Action challenged this decision, and following a hearing in the High Court in August last year, the judge quashed council’s decision and directed it to reconsider.

The April 4 meeting began with South East ward councillors Gary Gotlieb and Terry Walker alleging Mayor Goudie was “biased” in the climate discussions, urging her to consider stepping aside from chairing the meeting.

“If you are saying you should be chairing this, I am gobsmacked,” Cr Gotlieb said.

“It does look biased to me,” Cr Walker added.

After obtaining support from Coromandel-Colville councillor John Morrissey, Mercury Bay councillor Tony Fox, and Thames councillor Sally Christie, the meeting pressed on with Mayor Goudie at the helm.

Five options were presented to council, including council approving or disapproving the mayor signing the declaration, as well as an option which made it “very clear” it did not mean council was adopting the declaration as “a statement or binding instrument”.

The fifth option, which was added by Thames councillor Martin Rodley, stated that council agreed with the guiding principles and action in the declaration and approved the mayor signing it. Council would also continue with its current climate change commitments.

Councillors voted 6-3 to make this option their preferred choice, but not before two other options were put forward and quickly turned down.

Mayor Sandra and councillors Tony Fox and Murray McLean were the minority who voted against Cr Rodley’s motion.

“If we sign up to this, then we are committing this council to unknown financial liability, I believe that,” Cr McLean said.

“I accept the climate change argument, and I accept that people are passionate about climate change, but we cannot say we’re signing up to the unknown. I, as a councillor, can’t do that.”

However, councillors Rodley, Walker, and Sinclair alluded to the High Court case, stating that the only time the declaration had been in the High Court was with TCDC.

“Just sign this thing and move on,” Cr Walker said.

“This has cost us \$100,000 already and we’re going nowhere.”

All five options presented to council will go out for public consultation, subject to approval, however, the Mayor is not obligated to sign the declaration following the consultation.

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Students march in Thames during the Strike 4 Climate event last month. File photo: KELLEY TANTAU

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**May BAs**  
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**Ebony Boutique presents: Fashion Show 2021**  
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# Pole dance takes fitness to new heights

By KELLEY TANTAU

A new course to see if Thames' taste for pole fitness is palatable could mark the way for more alternative forms of exercise in the district.

Amy Williams will run her first pole dance classes in Matatoki next month, and if the response is positive, the 25-year-old will look to add aerial fitness with hoops and silks, yoga, and belly dancing to the mix.

The Thames Valley was ready for the unorthodox, she said.

"Thames has the highest population of over-60s in the Waikato, and there is still quite a negative association with [pole fitness], but with that being said, there are a lot of young people who have bought houses here and have families here, and they are more open to it," she said.

**"For me, I'm really big on it as being a confidence booster as well as for fitness."**

- Amy Williams

"But I've had quite a few people in their 40s who have asked a few questions about it."

In fact, Amy has presented her style of pole fitness to a receptive audience at the Tararua Retirement Village, and,



Amy Williams, will run her first pole dance classes in Matatoki, near Thames, next month. Photo: SUPPLIED

in Auckland, it was common to see participants over 50-years-old take part, she said.

Anyone of any age, gender, or ability would be able to give it a go - and it wasn't all about sky-high stilettos and revealing clothing, either, she said.

"I think it's about how you portray it.

"For me, I'm really big on it as being a confidence booster as well as for fitness. There are still people who do the exotic-style of dancing or dance in clubs, but I try to focus more on it as being a different type of exercise."

Amy started pole dancing three years ago after suffering knee injuries, sprained wrists, torn shoulder muscles, and a slipped disc and annular tear in her spine from previous high intensity sport.

Pole fitness allowed her to remain active, she said, and with



Amy Williams took up pole dancing three years ago. Photo: SUPPLIED

the words of her mum in mind - "use it or lose it" - she was looking forward to bringing the art form to the community.

"It's become a big part of my life so I'm excited about showing some of it to an area where it's not currently catered for.

"I'm also really keen to offer aerial silks and hoop work, which people have asked about, so there's definitely a lot of room to expand."

Amy's first block courses will begin on June 18 and will run until July 24. 'Introduction

to Pole' will take place on Fridays at 7pm, and Saturdays at 8.30am; 'Introduction to Spin', Fridays at 8pm, and Saturdays at 9.30am; and 'Pole Fit' on Saturdays at 7.30am.

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