



Tauranga Bay

DWC PLEDGES \$3.57M TO FLOOD RECOVERY

Development West Coast Trustees have approved in principle a \$3.57 million package to support Westport's flood recovery.

DWC Chair Renee Rooney said Trustees were keen to support the recovery, acknowledging the flooding in July was a significant regional event requiring a coordinated recovery.

"It has been a devastating blow to Buller, damaging homes and farms, and causing much disruption to the region."

The flooding left 23 per cent of Westport's housing stock in need of repair. 71 homes were severely damaged and deemed unsafe, while a further 388 homes require significant repairs. There has been close to \$90 million in insurance claims, and about 140 people remain displaced from their homes.

DWC Chief Executive Heath Milne said the flooding has had a profound impact on the District and its business community, while also exacerbating pre-existing issues with the housing stock.

There was already an acute shortage of rental and permanent accommodation in Westport, which has been put under additional stress from displaced residents and the number of tradespeople coming into the district for repair work.

"We've been working closely with Buller District Council (BDC) and their Flood Recovery Team to establish a support package that will assist the business community, while also aligning with the region's housing and aged care strategies," Mr Milne said.

DWC's package includes a \$1 million business support fund to assist Buller businesses through the recovery.

"The structure, eligibility and criteria of this fund will be established following the completion of a

survey to assess business needs in the community," Mr Milne said.

\$20,000 has been allocated towards analysis of the number of temporary houses required.

Funding of \$2 million has been approved in principle for aged care housing. DWC will work in partnership with local stakeholders to expedite the building of residential units to specifically target local flood-affected elderly residents.

\$350,000 has been approved in principle to assist with the cost of relocating five houses donated by Kinga Ora for displaced residents.

DWC will also contribute \$200,000 to Community Energy Action Charitable Trust (CEA) as third-party funding. This together with CEA's discretionary funding and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority Warmer Kiwi Homes grants for insulation and heating will amount to over \$1 million for improving the standard of Buller homes, over the coming months.

CEA's Chief Executive Caroline Shone said "I'm thrilled and humbled that DWC will provide this funding to CEA. This will allow us to offer 'free insulation' and possibly heating too to those that are eligible, particularly in an area that has been hit so badly in recent months."

Buller Mayor Jaime Cleine said BDC and their recovery team have been partnering with a number of agencies to ensure not only an appropriate response to the floods but a sustained recovery.

"I'm very pleased DWC have supported our request to support the business community and to accelerate our urgent housing needs. These initiatives will certainly help our District navigate a recovery that is complex and will take time to work through."

FROM EMPLOYEE TO BUSINESS OWNER

Support from DWC enables Hokitika man to transition from employee to business owner with six staff.

Jaimee Morgan worked for seven years at Hokitika Collision Centre, where he completed his apprenticeship and qualified as an Automotive Refinisher.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the atmosphere and the work, and I was always looking for the next opportunity to better the business and myself," Jaimee says.

After the COVID-19 lockdown, the previous owner offered to sell the business, presenting Jaimee a chance to become his own boss.

"I grabbed it with two hands. This was a life opportunity that I did not want to pass.

"It was not easy for a young man like myself to buy a business, I jumped through hoops to achieve it.

"After trying several other services for funding, I approached DWC, it was effortless, and they supported myself and my ideas. DWC were a big help to get me across the first line and they have followed through with ongoing support and help.

"Currently leading into my first year of owning the business, I quickly learnt my responsibilities, and the different challenges to overcome.

"The previous owner has helped me through the transition of being an employee to employer, and still continues to help frequently."

Jaimee also believes being based on the West Coast has been an advantage.

"I appreciate the support of the locals. Taking on the business after the initial COVID-19 lockdown was a risk but thankfully local assistance is continuing to come through the door.

DWC Chief Executive Heath Milne says business succession is a significant challenge facing a number of West Coast businesses.

"It's great to see a young Coaster like Jaimee work his way up, ensuring there is a safe pair of hands for a business to transition to."



I WAS A 25-YEAR-OLD, WITH A YOUNG FAMILY, AND NOW I AM AN EMPLOYER TO SIX STAFF.

Jaimee Morgan, Hokitika Collision Centre

UPCOMING EVENTS



Digital Upskilling, Tourism Workshop | Westport

Tuesday, 19 October 8:30am - 3pm

EPIC Kawatiri Westport | FREE

Register online at www.dwc.org.nz



Digital Upskilling, Tourism Workshop | Hokitika

Wednesday, 20 October 8:30am - 3pm

Hokitika TBD | FREE

Register online at www.dwc.org.nz



Digital Upskilling, Tourism Workshop | Franz Josef

Thursday, 21 October 8:30am - 3pm

Franz Josef TBD | FREE

Register online at www.dwc.org.nz



Opportunities in Agritourism | Whataroa

Tuesday, 26 October 10am - 12pm

Whataroa Community Hall | FREE

Register online at www.dwc.org.nz



Opportunities in Agritourism | Reefton

Wednesday, 27 October 10am - 12pm

St John Reefton | FREE

Register online at www.dwc.org.nz



DWC Leading Light Business Excellence Awards

Friday, 18 March 2022

West Coast Events Centre, Shantytown

Enter online at www.leadinglight.co.nz

WEED FREE TAI POUTINI

A DWC led project, through the Kotahitanga ki te Uru partnership, will provide work for up to 21 people.

Funding from Government's Jobs for Nature programme is enabling an ambitious \$3.3m project to eliminate all significant land-based weeds from Westland.

The project will see workers searching for and removing weeds from approximately 30,000ha of public conservation land from the Taramakau River in the north, to Barn Bay in the south, and from the mountains to the sea.

Weed Free Te Tai Poutini also aims to stop weeds from spreading and taking hold within the western alpine areas of Arthurs Pass National Park.

HELPING OUR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL LEAVERS

Latham Martin has recently started in the role of Vocational Coordinator at DWC for the MSD funded Mahi Tai Poutini: Education to Employment initiative.

Mahi Tai Poutini connects ākonga, our students and school leavers, to the world of work across the West Coast, helping our youth to be better informed and prepare for their future.

Latham is working closely with West Coast organisations and agencies to ensure strong and sustainable pathways from schooling to employment for all school leavers, supporting and developing opportunities for all rangatahi to achieve success.

www.westcoast.co.nz/mahi-tai-poutini/
latham@dwc.org.nz

