



# ATTENTION

NEWSLETTER FOR ENTHUSIASTIC TARANAKI EQUESTRIANS

BY TARANAKI EQUESTRIAN NETWORK (TEN) FOR 2021 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

## THE YEAR THAT WAS...

### What's been going on in the horse scene around the region?

Do you want to be in the know about what's been happening?

As busy equestrians, we get deeply into our own thing, be it dressage, show jumping, natural horsemanship or just happy hacking, and maybe don't hear about all the cool horsey action that happens under our very own muzzles.

Here's some holiday reading from TEN to connect horse-people in our Taranaki riding paradise.

Covid-19 pandemic continued through 2021, affecting life in the saddle to some degree. In Taranaki, Level 4 ran from 18 to 28 August 2021 and Level 3 until 8 September 2021. We've just moved to Orange and if vaccine passes are checked, there are no people-number limits with outdoor recreation. So horse events are running more easily.

Through winter and spring 2021, local equestrian events went ahead but mostly with no spectators allowed, or a policy of no entries on the day. It demanded extra effort for event organisers – so, here's an appreciative pat on the back from TEN on behalf of all the horse-riders who enjoyed a clinic, a ribbon day, a progressive jumping day, a show, or a trek through that time.

Hope you enjoy the stories of 2021 to reflect on our horsey highlights and hurdles and some heads-up for 2022...

**Megan Gundesen**  
TEN Co-chair



## TRENDS

**Looking across the Taranaki horse scene, some interesting trends emerge. This is helpful for groups to know as they plan activities for the coming year.**

The numbers of **recreational riders** – especially 40 plus – are on the rise. These people enjoy social rides with 1 or 2 others, at beaches, the Bridle Zone, and over farms they can get access to. They want low-level, fun competitions and clinics – both riding and natural horsemanship. Working Equitation and Cowboy Challenge appeal to this group. **Working Equitation**, which has a strong group developing in central and south Taranaki, also appeals to dressage riders.

**EQUESTRIAN CLINICS** are increasingly popular – local coach Emilie Husillos' Cavalettis & Grids clinics are usually sold out, as are clinics by specialists from outside the region, such as Ben Longwell, Amanda Wilson, Lynley Bolt, Tui Teka, Lisa Coupe, and Chloe Hansen to name a few.

Horse groups are responding to riders wanting more training-level events. Participants want to be judged, receive a score with judges' comments, but don't need ribbons or placings. Easier too for organisers.

**NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP** is becoming more mainstream. For years we just had Steve Brady, but now we have Tui Teka, Lynley Bolt, and Ben Longwell. The value of groundwork establishing leadership and cues for action with our horses means they are better behaved and more rideable.

**RIDING SCHOOLS** are flourishing as they respond to those parents with more money than time. And because riding schools can operate as pony clubs now, riders can achieve their pony club certificates. Pony club numbers in Taranaki have fallen slightly but probably less than most people think.



TURN THE PAGE >>

# TRENDS

## PONY CLUB

Taranaki PC numbers	Under 25's	Adults	HorseMasters
2020	181	144	14
2016	208	197	0

With New Zealand Pony Club Association (NZPCA) now allowing over 25's to join as Horse Masters, Oakura and New Plymouth pony clubs now have a Horse Masters group. Clubs enjoy the help that an experienced Horse Masters group can give. Oakura Pony Club found that having Horse Masters riders encouraged some of the older club members to stay with them instead of joining a bigger club.

**EQUINE THERAPY BUSINESSES** are booming – we have technicians for horse massage, horse physio, Bowen therapy, equissage, naturopathics, dental, and more to come. Plus, there is Equine Interactive offering business and personal coaching using horses, based in Waitara. We also have Horses Helping Humans Taranaki assisting rangatahi to understand themselves – read more on this below. Check out this video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX7z4BGmLCY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX7z4BGmLCY)

Many more property owners are building their own sand arenas. Horse-properties and stable areas are more landscaped, more fenced, more hedged and planted. They impress visitors from outside the region with their number and quality. Read – more economic value with money spent locally on people doing jobs with their hands.

**HORSE TREKKING TOURISM** is growing with Horse Trek'N Taranaki ([www.horsetrekn.com](http://www.horsetrekn.com)), being added to Adventure Horse Trekking ([www.adventuretrekking.co.nz](http://www.adventuretrekking.co.nz)). Both are Urenui based businesses and both are extremely good value.



# EVENTS

## RIDE & ROAM - NEW PLYMOUTH RACEWAY

*Scheduled for January 2021*

This was a TEN initiative to showcase Taranaki to equestrians far and wide. Marketed as a summer family holiday, we offered 3 off-site rides (mountain-side farm, forest, and beach) plus a Pukekura Park ride alongside the cross-country and showjumping courses.

With New Plymouth city on the doorstep, families could enjoy a scuba-diving course, the Coastal Walkway or relax with on-site sushi and pizza. Helloworld Travel New Plymouth were taking care of the marketing and bookings. It was a fantastic concept.

But organising 100 horses and 300 campers proved bigger than anticipated. The promised city-beach ride at North Waiwhakaiho across the end of Rifle Range Road was withdrawn by New Plymouth District Council (NPDC). This was a key drawcard and it was cancelled for no reason we were told of. Traffic management across busy Coronation Avenue was a real concern. Ride & Roam coinciding with the Bowl of Brooklands 'Synthony' concert also got NPDC worried. Finally, we needed 13 volunteers to project manage and create their own volunteer teams. That was the killer. The decision was then made to downsize to a 'proof of concept' mini-event.



On 27 January 2021, the mini-event, called 'Round and Round the Racecourse', went ahead instead. Riders enjoyed a walk through the racecourse tie-ups to the Totara Dell, had photo opportunities in the winners boxes, then out round the Old Trotting Track and eventually to the cross country course.



TURN THE PAGE >>



### Positive outcomes were:

- The Wilson Sisters might come back, they enjoyed the space so much
- NPDC saw TEN trying to create economic value by attracting equestrian tourists to New Plymouth
- Closer ties were formed with New Plymouth Racing who are keen to attract as much alternative equestrian use as possible due to the threat of the Multi Sports Hub development
- The clear possibility of gaining Waiwhakaiho beach access from Rifle Range Road emerged - it just needs council willingness and hapu agreement. Best parking available there.
- Riding access to the Totara Dell (Pukekura Park/Racecourse) has been confirmed. Next step is a \$50 key bond to enable New Plymouth Pony Club riders to go on a hack beside the park.

## NEW PLYMOUTH RACECOURSE IS NOW OPEN

### For business as a venue for future horse camps

Pony clubs, groups and clinicians should seriously consider it for camps and clinics. Spread the word and speak to me if you are keen.

## QUIZ NITE 2021 *July 2021*

**Taranaki equestrians love this annual event. We packed out The Good Home and thereby supported a local hospo venue as well. Donations of auction and spot prize items from local equestrian businesses were AMAZING!**

TEN member Joanne Huitema's outstanding highlighted. We also made a special effort to appreciate our wonderful sponsors with advance prizes-publicity and post-event thank-yous.



As a fundraiser it was the best we've achieved, and our TEN committee worked beautifully together to make it happen. The funds will be used for the Lake Mangamahoe Bridle Zone maintenance and for social media, marketing, and digital assistance to achieve our aims.



effort here needs to be



J. Grant Raffle winner



K. Megchelse raffle winner



## WILSON SISTERS CLINIC

*April 2021*

**The bigger 'Proof of Concept' mini-event for Ride & Roam became the Wilson Sisters 4-day camp at New Plymouth Raceway.**



It attracted 40 horses, riders and their whanau stayed 3 nights using the original stables and yards, the Racing Club kitchen, showers and toilets, and the spacious La Mer Lounge for evening entertainment. The Wilsons said it was one of the best venues they had used. The cross country and showjump areas were close by and the La Mer Lounge space wonderful for its space and views.



## HEROES

### HORSES HELPING HUMANS

*A NZ first here in Taranaki*

**At Warea Stables south of Okato, a revolutionary programme called Horses Helping Humans Taranaki has been born in the past year.**

It is a therapeutic intervention that uses horses (no riding) to teach clients personality profiling and self-awareness of their body language. Clients learn how they can adjust their body language and breathing to regulate their emotions and improve their assertive communication. The programme remodels neural pathways and has proven positive outcomes for anxiety, aggression, ADHD, PTSD, FASD, strengthening interpersonal relationships, and improving confidence.



To see Horses Helping Humans and enjoy this fantastic video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX7z4BGmLCY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX7z4BGmLCY)) for HHH in action and on HHH Taranaki on facebook.

All horse-people can be proud that horses continue to serve humanity. Not only were they vital in building roads and infrastructure of Aotearoa New Zealand, 10,471 horses from this country were part of the war effort alongside our soldiers in Europe in WW1. Now, they are helping to heal wounds and improve emotional health for people worldwide.

If you know someone with a young person who could benefit from this 2- or 3-day programme, connect with Laura Gibson via the facebook page: [www.facebook.com/HorsesHelpingHumansTaranaki](https://www.facebook.com/HorsesHelpingHumansTaranaki)



Laura from Horses Helping Humans

## ISSUES

### NPDC LONG TERM PLAN *May 2021*

Sharon Robinson, Dinky Wynyard and Megan Gundesen fronted up to the Council Chamber and made submissions on this. We said horses and riders need a shared (but separate) path along the Coastal Walkway Extension from Bell Block to Waitara, and that New Plymouth Raceway should remain an equestrian venue. We weren't successful on the raceway, and a multi-sport hub will be built there sometime from 2023. There is a chance we may get somewhere on the Coastal Walkway.

#### PAPER ROADS

Word has it that paper roads are being closed all the time. This is not good news. Paper roads are all potential riding places for people living close to them. TEN knows who to connect with on Council about this, and how to identify roads, but it's a project we'd like some help on.

**IS ANYONE KEEN?**

### DOG ATTACKS ON BEACHES AND DOG BYLAW REVIEW *June / July 2021*

A dog attack at a city beach earlier this year raised a lot of concern amongst riders. A prosecution has been commenced by Animal Control at Council. The bylaw says dogs are always to be under 'continuous control'. These were plainly not. The incident generated a huge amount of sympathy and ample messages about the number of dog attacks at beaches. Thanks to everyone who wrote to TEN about their experiences.

Coincidentally, at this time Council sought feedback on peoples' preferences on dog control in the district so TEN marketed the bylaw review heavily around the network. It's a thorny issue. Some want dogs on leashes at all but one 'dog-beach', others want dogs to wear muzzles in public, still others want dogs to be trained in 'horse-aversion'.

But everyone wanted Animal Control officers to enforce the 'continuous control' policy much more vigorously. I am trialling a BarxBuddy at present – a cheap device you point at a worrisome dog. It sends a high frequency sound (which doesn't upset the horse) and the dog runs away.

TEN organised a news story about the problem:

TURN THE PAGE >>



# HORSE OWNERS FEARFUL OF BEING CHASED BY DOGS ON TARANAKI BEACHES

Brianna McIlraith 06:00, Aug 04 2021

**Taranaki horse riders are calling for more education for dog owners after a number of attacks on the region's beaches. Emilie Husillos has twice been chased by dogs on Oakura Beach and now rarely rides the beach because of it.**

"Every year, every summer I get chased," she said.

"It can be super dangerous obviously, it's lucky I've been riding for so long, and I can hold on."

She's among dozens of local riders who have shared stories via social media of dog attacks, including one woman who feared for her life when the horse she was riding was savagely attacked by a pack of dogs.

"I know a lot of riders that have had dogs try to bite or bite their horses," Husillos said. Horses are allowed on most beaches, but during Daylight Savings time they're prohibited between 9am and 6pm.

The rules for dogs are the same, but they are fully banned in the CBD, and are required on leashes at all times in Pukekura Park and on the Coastal Walkway.

**"People need to be aware we have the same rights, horses are allowed on beaches."**

Most dog owners were pretty good when they saw horses coming and would recall their dogs and put them on the leash, but at least once a week Husillos' horse would be harassed by dogs. Education for dog owners was needed and people needed to be able to recall their dogs, she said.

Taranaki Equestrian Network (Ten) spokeswoman Megan Gundesen is wanting to organise horse aversion training for dogs and their owners.

"Dog attacks are commonplace and are ruining our enjoyment of the outdoors," she said in a press release.

**"We need to encourage Animal Control to patrol beaches to ensure that dogs are under 'continuous control' – that is the current bylaw requirement."**

The concerns coincide with the New Plymouth District Council's review of its Dog Control Bylaw and Dog Control Policy.

The council is carrying out an online survey to better understand people's views and preferences on dog control in the district to help inform the review, before it goes to a formal consultation later in the year. Gundesen said one option could be for Animal Control to randomly require dog owners to instantly recall their dogs and if they can't, they're fined.



New Plymouth District Council is currently reviewing its Dog Control Bylaw and Dog Control Policy. (file photo)

"This is what happens in many other parts of the world. Fines start making the cost of training a more sensible option," she said.

Dog trainer Luzelle Cockburn of SolutionK9, said it wasn't about dog owners being good or bad, instead it was a lack of training.

"Nobody sets out to go to the beach and have their dog attack horses," she said.

Cockburn said it's a case of teaching the dogs that horses aren't to be approached, through recall and aversion training.

Fines for breaking the dog bylaw and policy would encourage people to train their dogs, she said.

"Unless they're being enforced with fines I don't think owners are going to seriously take the responsibility."



Emilie Husillos, left, no longer rides her horse Polly on Oakura Beach because she's fearful of dogs. Pictured with fellow rider Zoe Fairweather, 14, riding Charlie.



Horses are allowed on the district's beaches, but have rules about times during daylight savings.

## DEVELOPMENTS

### EQUESTRIAN STRATEGY

#### What's happening in the North Taranaki horse scene, and what do horse-riders want?

Sharon Robinson and Megan Gundesen have been working hard on this with Council. Council tells us we must produce a strategy to enable horse-riding areas to progress. We're putting together history, statistics, horse scene analysis and updates on current riding trends.

Council supports an equestrian hub for North Taranaki - a place where recreational riders and equestrian groups can congregate and hold their events. TEN sees Hickford Park as being the place for this. Have a look at Marlborough Equestrian Park visit MEP here for an example.

Once TEN's part is done Council will be consulting widely with horse groups for your views. We hope you respond when asked because until this is done, everything is held up.

### COVERED ARENA NOW AVAILABLE FOR HIRE WITHIN NEW PLYMOUTH BOUNDARY

October 2021

#### Yes, it's true!

The New Plymouth RDA now has an all-weather facility which has transformed its activities. No longer are learning sessions cancelled due to rain. Settled down amongst beautiful peaceful native bush, it is a quiet sanctuary with an almost spiritual quality. Horses settle easily under the Smart Shelter roof and the interior is well lit and ventilated.

As Honorary Solicitor to NP RDA, Megan Gundesen has worked with RDA to open it for hire to the general riding public. Open times are from 3pm each day, all day Friday, all weekends, and school holidays - the fees are very reasonable. To arrange hireage, contact Kevin Nielsen in the first instance ([kevin.nielsen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kevin.nielsen@xtra.co.nz)).



## HICKFORD PARK

### Future iwi-lead farm park, equestrian hub, and home for New Plymouth Pony Club?

In 2019, we thought a Hickford Park bridle trail was in the bag. TEN was given high-level Council approval, after a site walk with key personnel. We were delighted. But it has hit a roadblock. Council now wants us to lodge a Future Funding Application (Sport T \$5k grant) for a feasibility study to investigate the need for this before they go any further.

And, annoyingly, for Council to progress any further equestrian projects, there must be an Equestrian Strategy. Once we have consulted directly with iwi to get their input, TEN's vision is for Hickford Park to become a tourist and equestrian venue. Picture an iwi-lead Farm Park which not only attracts tourists wanting a 'rural and farm animal' experience, but also creates an employment/ training scheme for rangitahi to learn environmentally-friendly farming practices in the delicate coastal environment.

Add an iwi-lead horse trekking business round the park and down to the incredible North Waiwhakaiho Beach and eventually linking to the Coastal Walkway to Waitara trail. Having created this perfect background, imagine the Waiwhakaiho Equestrian Hub with two large arenas for hire by all horse groups and cross-country jumps built into the fences. Hickford Park becomes a complete whanau experience as the horse-riders enjoy the arenas and bridle trail while cycling-mad tamariki enjoy the velodrome, BMX track and Coastal Walkway.

**TEN looks to korero with Puketapu and Ngāti Tawhirikura for mutual benefit on this whenua.**





## DEVELOPMENTS

### LAKE MANGAMAHOE BRIDLE ZONE

**New Plymouth residents have woken up in a big way to this green leafy peaceful treasure on the outskirts of the city.**

It is increasingly used by horse riders but also by walking, running and cycling groups. Individuals on foot are fine if they aren't insect hunters who spring out of the undergrowth – yes, it has happened! Or a local naturalist who likes to explore beyond his usual club boundary.

The Bridle Zone has been closed for running / cycling events for 6-part days in the past year, always over summer when we don't have the beaches either. This is a definite inconvenience to riders and TEN has objected to Council that 6 closures are enough. Hoons have wrecked the car park surface three times this year. Council have kindly repaired the area, but the next step is likely to be a swipe system installed at the gate. TEN is in favour of that.

To encourage other Bridle Zone users how to best connect with horses and riders, TEN created a sign for the car park. Thanks to Karen Peters and Neil Florence for this work.



### STRATFORD EQUINE PARK

**The motorsport / equestrian complex proposed around the A&P grounds**

Stratford District Council approved a \$7.2m loan for the A&P Association to purchase land around the showgrounds.

The A&P Association now needs equestrian representatives to drive the project forward under Dana Haszard and Sharon Stevens' experienced direction.

TEN's years of research, along with Sport Taranaki's 2019 Regional Facilities Strategy, supports the development of a training level facility in North Taranaki.

We do however think a bridle trail around the land is a wonderful idea. It is relatively inexpensive and will be enjoyed by all Taranaki equestrians. We are told 1- and 2-hour walking treks will be available in February 2022.



### BALSOM PARK *Williams Street*

**A riding place for Merrilands locals**

TEN partnered with NPDC to enable horse-riders from the Merrilands neighbourhood to access this beautiful tree-strewn park alongside the Waiwhakaiho River. If you can ride to this park, then this could be your riding place. Contact Dinky Wynyard (021 166 9910) to get an access key.

### HORSEY ROADS

**Creating safer riding spaces**

Desperate to make road-riding safer for north Taranaki riders, TEN identified 'horsey' roads by consulting with the equestrian community. Liaison with Council led to horse signs being erected on many local rural roads, the point being to emphasise to vehicle drivers the need to slow down and pass wide when horses are being ridden.

TEN has called for gentler treatment of road verges too. Steep grading (they call it 'water-tabling') has been discouraged because it removes safe riding verges for horses, foot traffic and cyclists. If you see Fulton Hogan steeply grading off a road verge you use, phone Matt Richardson, Roding Manager, at NPDC and he'll know what to do.



# Thank

## TO THE TEN TEAM

**I want to extend my thanks to the TEN committee for their work this year.**

Each person contributes information from our equine interests and clubs, and most TEN members then manage a particular project. It works very well. We said goodbye to **Shah Bothwell** early 2021 and **Sarah McIntyre** replaced her, luckily able to use her social media skills for the good of equestrians.

On board for this past year have been **Sharon Robinson** (Co-Chair, Hickford Park and Equestrian Strategy), **Halina Sarten** (TEN Secretary and Speed Review), **Karen Peters** (Treasurer), **Sarah McIntyre** (social media manager), **Neil Florence** (Bridle Zone), **Joanne Huitema** (Quiz Nite and Roads), **Dinky Wynyard** (Balsom Park) and **Nicola Luxton** (general help). Former TEN members, **Jenny Lavoipierre** and **Susan Rainsford**, were such angels helping us out on the Quiz Nite too.

On a final note, I'd like to register another thankyou for the businesses and individuals who supported our mid-year Quiz Nite fundraiser. Please remember these businesses when you are choosing products or services you need in the next year. Those funds allow TEN to maintain the Bridle Zone tracks and contract in the services we need to keep the work going.

Meri Kirihimete and wishing everyone a safe, happy and horsey festive season!

**Megan Gundesen**  
TEN Co-chair

# you!

## AND TO OUR AMAZING 2021 SPONSORS



**AHU AHU HONEY**  
**SURREY ROAD GRAZING**

**CRAIG NOVAK**  
**HALINA SARTEN**  
**DENISE PATTERSON**

**JULIA BOLTON**  
**MATTHEW GRAYLING**  
**NP & DISTRICTS**  
**ADULT RIDING CLUB**

**TARANAKI HORSE**  
**TREKKING CLUB**

**GLENARA FARMS**  
**TARANAKI EQUINE**  
**SERVICES**  
**DAVE TRINDLE FARRIER**

**LINDA DAY**  
**MARY GLASGOW**  
**PAM LIVINGSTONE**