

## **Annual Report from the Chair**

An election year is an especially good time to reflect on where we've come from in the last 3 years we were voted in as trustees and where we're heading to now.

As marae trustees, we're legally charged with having responsibility for:

1. Our marae assets
2. Our marae visitors who uses those assets
3. Our marae finances to ensure those assets are maintained to health and safety standards.

It also gives you our marae beneficiaries some insight into what the Waipapa Marae Trust stands for and it gives you an understanding of some of the decisions that we have had to make in the last 3 years we were voted in as trustees.

Our biggest strategic win in the last since we were elected to serve you as trustees was building the new wharekai, Te Maru o Hikairo for \$1.3m. The next strategic challenge will be the infrastructure rebuild.

While the wharekai has been our biggest win, It was also one of our near misses. When the funders discovered we were in court charged with mismanaging our marae funds, I received a call from Internal Affairs to say they were seriously considering taking the funding off us because we were a liability to them. I requested they give us time to address those issues in court.

Today, all of that is water under the bridge. The wharekai was built in 6 months and opened at the poukai in 2018, free of debt. There were compromises because we couldn't afford to include toilets. We also cut back on the size of the dining room and the size of the chiller to cut costs. But life is all about compromise.

In July of this year after more than 2 years of court appearances, the judge gave his final judgement and cleared the trust of mismanagement of marae funds but called for clear lines of financial accountability from the trust. That was a fair compromise. Since I joined the trust, we have audited the marae accounts every year since 2017 and made them available to all beneficiaries. Prior to that the marae accounts were not audited.

Shortly, Hinga will give you the financial summary of income and expenditure for the last 12 months to 31 March 2020 for the Waipapa Marae Trust. But for the first time, we received the green light for a complete audit.

Our next Waikato Tainui grant will be deposited into our bank account next week. This will allow us to pay our marae contribution of one third of the total costs for the infrastructure rebuild. This will immediately trigger our ability to go out and raise the extra funds we need to cover the total cost of the rebuild.

While the Covid 19 pandemic has forced us all to look at the health and safety standards on our marae, fixing the broken infrastructure on our marae was always part of our marae development plan. The wharekai was stage 1 and the infrastructure rebuild was stage 2. Our endeavour was always to fix up our toilets, drainage and sewage systems and fire alarms after we built the wharekai. For example, it is against the law to sleep more than 40 people in each of our two wharenuī without fire alarms and water sprinklers. Furthermore, Ngā Tai also needs two fire exits in the event of a fire. At the moment there's only one exit in breach of the law.

The pandemic has made us highly aware of how susceptible our manuwhiri are when they come to Waipapa, how vulnerable our pakeke and kaumātua are and how liable we are as trustees when people come onto the marae to use our marae assets.

As trustees, we run the risk of being in breach of health and safety standards every time the toilets block, it's a health risk. We can't forever live with portaloos and we can't forever go on sleeping more than 40 people in the wharenuī, it's a fire risk. Covid 19 has given us all the wakeup call we needed to be more aware of hygiene and cleanliness on the marae especially around food and around each other. None of this will be sorted until we bring our marae up to health and safety standards that apply to all marae.

So engineers and architects have been on the marae testing and planning where to re-route and lay the new drainage and sewerage systems, testing the ceiling of Taku Hiahia for the new water sprinklers and drawing up plans for new refurbished wharepaku. Your trustees are working overtime to find the money to get this done along with the feasibility plan. We're almost there. They know where to find the

government dollars and public funds to rebuild our broken marae infrastructure. I ask that you support them because they'll get the job done so we can open up the marae again once it's safe for our manuwhiri and pakeke to come and use our marae assets.

I began my report from the chair saying an election year is an especially good time to reflect on where we've come from in the last 3 years as trustees and where we're heading to now.

I want to end by acknowledging the fact that New Zealand voters last month gave the mana of their vote and endorsement at the elections to the prime minister Jacinda Adern and her Labour government who gave us leadership during the shooting in Christchurch where 50 people were killed. She showed the same leadership when tourists and locals were killed on White Island after the volcano erupted. And when the Covid 19 pandemic hit the prime minister reached out to the science experts and provided articulate leadership for the whole country based on their advice. Today, as a result of her leadership, New Zealand is one of the safest countries in the world.

I have no doubt we all want our marae to be one of the safest marae in Aotearoa so when our manuwhiri come to Waipapa, the risk to their health has been mitigated by the hard work we're doing at the moment to fix our broken infrastructure. We have taken a leaf from the prime minister's book and reached out to the experts from PAUA Architects and engineers from Blake Consultants to plan and rebuild our broken infrastructure. So when we have our poukai our King and his manuwhiri are safe because our health and safety rules are up to standard and when we mourn our dead, our marae is the safest place at a time when we're filled with remorse. Tēnā koutou katoa ngā ringa raupā o Waipapa e kaha nei ki te whakatika i to tātou marae. Ngā manaakitanga o te runga rawa.

