

A Rotorua Success Story

Rotorua is well known in national and international settings in terms of its tourism products and experiences. Visitors are often wowed by the people, the place and the opportunity to see, hear and smell things that are very unique.

An interesting part of the “Rotorua Experience” has been the formulation and ongoing development of the Rotorua Sustainable Charter. While formulated primarily in a tourism environment, the charter is a local home grown initiative – developed and operated by locals committed to ensuring that Rotorua delivers on its sustainable commitments and ensures that the destination, businesses and the community collaborate to achieve enduring sustainable outcomes. This philosophy has also been recently picked up by Rotorua District Council (RDC) and Rotorua 2030 Vision and its work towards a more resilient community, healthy homes and an enhanced environment.

Both the Charter and RDC work programmes bring challenges around how the opportunities, issues and successes are communicated particularly to the wider community.

The Charter has enjoyed much success with members deriving considerable benefits in reducing resource utilisation and increasing their bottom line. Other achievements include:

- The assessment process that businesses and organisations go through which is focussed on developing capability and commitment to sustainable principles.
- The 64 members in the Tourism Charter and 19 in the Business Charter that continue to grow and develop a unique local initiative.
- Focussing on sustainable updates through the website which presents opportunities for members to be more engaged in the Charter and for improved communication with members.
- An active committee with a breadth of membership which includes Harvey James (Waimangu), Justin Hutton (River Rats), Pam McGrath (Buried Village), Sarah Uhl (Okere Store), David Blackmore (Skyline), Rosemary Viskovic (RDC), Darren Walsh (Chamber of Commerce) and James Billing (Rydges).

Another recent success has been working with partners such as RDC, Red Stag, Te Puia and other parties on the restoration of areas around the Kuaka Stream by the Waipa Mountain Bike Carpark. There have been a series of plantings and working bees with the most recent working bee by Charter members held on the afternoon of 27 November.



Rotorua Sustainable Charter Working Bee November 27 2014

A key to the Charters success has been developing good relationships and having outstanding support from many people in the community. Someone once said that Rotorua is great at flying in formation and I would like to think that the Charter in Rotorua is a reflection of this.

What’s next for the Charter is to continue to build on the efforts of Rotorua business leaders who have established an opportunity to create systemic value for the Rotorua community on an ongoing basis through commitments and giving effect to sustainable principles.

For further information go to: <http://www.sustainablenz.com/>.

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