

2023 LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards Media Pack

Including the winners of Overseas Manager Exchanges, the New Zealand Leg of the Australasian Management Challenge, Emerging Leader of the Year, and Distinguished Management Award.

June 2023



leadinglearninglinking

Each year Taituarā gives a series of awards to showcase and celebrate the outstanding people and mahi that contribute to the success of the local government sector.

The 2023 LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards® were announced during the 2023 Taituarā Gala Dinner which took place on 8 June 2023.

This included an overall Supreme Award as well as the following:

- Te Tohu Waka Hourua – The Buddle Findlay Award for Māori-Council Partnerships
- The MartinJenkins Award for Collaborative Government Action
- The Minister of Local Government’s Award for Council/Community Relations
- The Capability Group Award for Organisation and People Development
- The Datacom Award for Digital Leadership
- The GHD Award for Environmental Leadership
- The Beca Award for Placemaking

The following awards were also announced during the 2023 Taituarā Gala Dinner:

- Four Overseas Manager Exchanges, sponsored by, Marsh, Civic Financial Services, and AskYourTeam
- The winner of the NZ Leg of the Marsh Australasian Management Challenge
- The Taituarā Emerging Leader of the Year Award
- The Taituarā Distinguished Management Award

This media pack details the awards and this year’s very worthy recipients. For further information please email info@taituara.org.nz

The Supreme Award

The winner is: Hutt City Council for Takai Here Tāngata

Takai Here Tāngata is also the winner of the MartinJenkins Award for Collaborative Government Action.

Further information about the project and what the judges said about it can be found below under the Collaborative Government Action category.

Previous winners:

- 2023 Hutt City Council, Takai Here Tāngata
- 2022 Far North District Council, Te Hiku o te Ika Revitalisation Project
- 2021 Western Bay of Plenty District, Transfer of Ownership of Panepane Purakau
- 2020 Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Te Arawa Catfish Killas
- 2019 Auckland Council, Kia Puāwai
- 2018 Waikato Regional Council, Kawe Kōrero
- 2017 Waimakariri District Council, Draft Waimakariri Red Zone Recovery Plan
- 2016 Hamilton City Council, Council Transforms A City Dump – The Restoration of Hamilton Gardens
- 2015 Selwyn District Council, Project Helix

About the sponsor: The New Zealand Local Government Funding Agency (LGFA) specialises in financing the New Zealand local government sector, the primary purpose being to provide more efficient funding costs and diversified funding sources for New Zealand local authorities. LGFA was established to raise debt on behalf of the local government sector in a cost-effective manner.

This is the third year that LGFA has been a major Excellence Award sponsor and the ninth year supporting this event. We are delighted to have them as our partners, and greatly appreciate their sponsorship of this event, and the Supreme Award.

Te Tohu Waka Hourua – The Buddle Findlay Award for Māori-Council Partnerships

This award recognises programmes, projects or initiatives that demonstrate outstanding results from working in partnership with Māori. Entries may come from any area of local government activity but must be able to demonstrate a commitment to partnership with Māori.

The winner is: Tauranga City Council for Joint Land Ownership – the Right Thing to Do

About the winner: Te Manawataki o Te Papa – the Heartbeat of Te Papa – is a transformative redevelopment of Tauranga’s Civic Precinct, which will reinvigorate its city centre and make it the cultural, historic, economic and social centrepiece of Aotearoa New Zealand’s fastest growing city.

The land underlying the Civic Precinct has been the subject of disputed ownership since it was gifted to the Crown by the Church Missionary Society in the 1860s, directly contravening the understanding that mana whenua had when the land was first sold. Tauranga City Council, in collaboration with iwi and hapū, sought and implemented a joint ownership solution which has restored the mana of the whenua to its original owners.

The Judges said: Working together has resulted both in the resolution of a long-standing dispute outside of Te Tiriti processes and empowerment of a large transformative project with multiple wellbeing outcomes. A clear commitment to partnership was evident. This was indeed, the right thing to do.

Highly commended: Greater Wellington Regional Council for Climate Resilience Programme – Broader Outcomes

About the entry: This entry is a structured programme delivering a set of broader social and economic outcomes alongside the council’s more business-as-usual flood protection work. This includes the provision of training, employment opportunities, and programmes to reconnect imprisoned Kahungunu with their whenua.

The judges said: This project is a shining example of the kind of integrated approach to community wellbeing that Parliament had in mind when it restored wellbeing to the purpose of local government in 2019.

About the sponsor: Buddle Findlay is one of New Zealand’s leading commercial and public law firms with a significant local government practice. Buddle Findlay’s

experienced partnership brings energy and enthusiasm to New Zealand's legal market. They are known for their strong focus on collaboration and building strategic and enduring relationships. A practical approach allows Buddle Findlay to provide balanced advice within a broader commercial context and bring strategic thinking to legal problems.

This is the third year that Buddle Findlay has sponsored the Te Tohu Waka Hourua – Award for Māori-Council Partnerships. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The MartinJenkins Award for Collaborative Government Action

This award recognises outstanding results that have been achieved through local authorities working with other government agencies. This category could include programmes or projects from any area, provided there is a demonstrable community benefit, and the approach is transferable to other local authorities.

The winner is: Hutt City Council for Takai Here Tāngata

About the winner: Takai Here Tāngata (binding people together) is an urban village of 19 houses built situated on Te Ara o Takapā in Taitā, Lower Hutt. It is the result of Hutt City's innovative partnership with its property arm Urban Plus Ltd, Kahungunu Whānau Services, and Te Rānanganui o Te Āti Awa.

The judges said: Good housing outcomes make positive outcomes in other areas so much easier to achieve. We regard Takai Here Tāngata as a proof of concept for a highly transferable methodology that has the potential to deliver housing at scale.

Highly commended: Central Hawke's Bay District Council for Jobs for the Central Hawke's Bay

About the entry: This project is a collaboration between the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs, the Ministry of Social Development, Central Hawke's Bay District Council, and local government agencies working within the skills, training and employment sector to enable local voices to resolve barriers and implement opportunities which long-term benefit the community.

The judges said: Jobs for the Central Hawke's Bay is a great example of a small council working successfully with multiple government agencies to deliver wellbeing objectives. An important result for the sector – especially those in smaller local authorities.

About the sponsor: MartinJenkins works at the intersection of government and business, helping organisations navigate and implement policy, regulatory, and organisation change to improve organisational performance and the lives of all New Zealanders. MartinJenkins is an organisation made up of people who want to be of service. They have an investment in excellence that goes beyond just getting the job done.

This is the second year that MartinJenkins has sponsored the Award for Collaborative Government Action, and its third sponsorship year overall. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The Minister of Local Government's Award for Council/Community Relations

This award recognises programmes, projects, or initiatives that demonstrate outstanding results through excellent community engagement or community empowerment. Entries may come from any area of local government activity, but must have community engagement, empowerment, or partnership as a key aspect, especially those undertaken over and above statutory requirements. Entries may include successful collaboration with private or community organisations. The approach taken must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

The winner is: Waimakariri District Council for Regeneration Kaiapoi

About the entry: Regeneration Kaiapoi represents the culmination of more than a decade's recovery planning and delivery in the red-zoned parts of Kaiapoi. This entry showcases how the council ensured everyone had an opportunity to shape these spaces and participate in ongoing management of the amenities.

The judges said: Thus was a highly complex and challenging multi-year programme that is an exemplar for those communities needing to recover from a natural disaster. A planned, purposeful blending of engagement and some community empowerment has delivered a fantastic end result.

About the sponsor: The Department of Internal Affairs is the sponsor for this category. The Department's Local Government branch provides expertise and experience across central and local government agencies to build relationships, provide a two-way conduit for issues playing out in local government, and supports a range of activities that are critical for communities and are a shared priority for both arms of government.

This is the seventh year the Department of Internal Affairs has sponsored a category in the Excellence Awards, and the fifth year it has sponsored this category. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The Capability Group Award for Organisation and People Development

This award recognises approaches that build an exceptional organisational culture or capability through the application of transformational leadership.

Entries in this category might be multi-year programmes or one-off projects. They will involve organisational redesign, human resource management, leadership development or other means of building organizational, or staff capability. The approach must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

The winner is: Toitū te Kotahitanga – Better Together

About the winner: Toitū te Kotahitanga is Whakatāne District Council's journey of transformation of its organisational culture and leadership capability. This led to staff developing and owning their vision and values and working towards being 'better together'.

The judges said: We saw five organisational culture programmes this year. Toitū te Kotahitanga stood out not only for the improvements in staff engagement, but that there was a strong linkage to the council's strategic objectives.

About the sponsor: Capability Group is a provider of professional development opportunities that transform individuals and workplace cultures. Capability Group partners with Taituarā to develop leadership capabilities within the local government sector.

This is the sixth year that Capability Group has sponsored the Award for Organisation and People Development. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The Datacom Award for Digital Leadership

This award is for programmes or projects that result in an exceptional service experience through new delivery models or the redesign of business processes or practices. The programme or project can relate to any area of council activity which is about delivering improved value for money to ratepayers. The approach must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

The winner is: Christchurch City Council for Christchurch City Information Network (CCIN) - Early Fire Detection Sensor Network

About the winner: This is a highly successful pilot project of a sensor network as a means for detecting fires in the Waitākiri / Bottle Lake Forest Park. The network sends warnings to authorities in real time and protects wildlife, facilities, and people.

The judges said: This was the stand-out entry in the digital category, as a smart application of sensor and internet of things technology. A highly transferable solution to manage a risk that will only grow as climate change sees significant parts of Aotearoa New Zealand grow hotter and drier.

About the sponsor: Datacom is the country's largest and longest serving technology company. It delivers an evergreen service called Datascape to councils which contains a wealth of intellectual property built from its multi-year success within local government.

This is the third year that Datacom has sponsored the Digital Local Government Award. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The GHD Award for Environmental Leadership

This award recognises programmes, projects, or initiatives that provide tangible benefits to the environment, or showcase leading practice in managing environmental impacts in the local community. The approach must be capable of transfer to other local authorities.

The winner is: Thames-Coromandel District Council for Shoreline Management Pathways Project

About the winner: Thames-Coromandel has undertaken shoreline management planning for its 400km of coastline to reduce risks to people, property, the environment, and tāonga associated with coastal hazards. The result is a set of 138 adaptation pathways specific to the aspirations and concerns of each community and the principles of kaitiakitanga.

The judges said: Thames-Coromandel's management planning provides tailored, flexible solutions to ensure future resilience of the Coromandel's coastal communities. We were taken by the extensive community engagement on a highly complex set of decisions at the intersection of science, policy, and property rights. Sixty-six councils have a coastline making this one of the most transferable of this year's entries.

Last year's winner: Wairoa District Council for Toi te whenua, Manaaki ki te whenua

About the sponsor: GHD are committed to addressing the world's biggest challenges in the areas of water, energy, and communities. GHD is a global network of over 10,000 multi-disciplinary professionals, passionate about providing its clients with integrated solutions through its engineering, environmental, design, and construction expertise. Its future-focused, innovative approach helps to connect and support communities around the world, building resiliency and sustainability for generations to come.

This is the third year that GHD has sponsored the Award for Environmental Leadership and the fourth year supporting this event. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

The Beca Award for Placemaking

This award recognises programmes or projects that shape or create a vibrant local economy/local culture or promote the achievement of positive social outcomes. Any project or programme in these areas may be entered, but it must be able to demonstrate that it is transferrable to other local authorities.

The winner is: Hastings District Council for A Place for Everyone

About the winner: A Place for Everyone showcases the newly refurbished, reopened Hastings municipal centre. A stunning building in its own right, the centre forms an integral part of Toitū, the city's arts and event centre, and the entertainment and hospitality precinct.

The judges said: This is a significant project of scale that has retained the heritage building and provided a catalyst for further regeneration. The project builds on a community connection to place and bring in mana whenua and local identity within the performing arts to further contribute to place memory. This is the very essence of successful placemaking.

Highly commended: Wellington City Council for The Pōneke Promise

About the entry: The Pōneke Promise is a joint initiative between key Wellington stakeholders from across local government and business. It is a combination of urban design, public space, safety works, and resourcing support intended to create a central city environment that is vibrant, inclusive, compassionate, and safe.

The judges said: This is an integrated, inclusive, and comprehensive programme responding to a set of concerns that are endemic to literally every urban area in the country. The multi-faceted nature of the response is both transferable and easily adaptable to the needs of other communities. This entry also demonstrates that successful placemaking is about people, and not just 'building things'. It is early days for this project – we look forward to hearing more of the progress The Pōneke Promise has made.

About the sponsor: Beca is one of the Asia-Pacific's largest independent advisory, design, and engineering consultancies. Their vision "creative people together transforming the world", reflects their culture and aspirations and has been powering what they do for a century. Together with their clients they are transforming communities and changing lives.

This is the second year that Beca has sponsored the Award for Placemaking. We are delighted to have them as our partners.

Overseas Manager Exchanges

The Taituarā Overseas Manager Exchange programme is designed to provide local government managers with an opportunity to focus on their management development and career in local government through a short exchange with a partner manager in another country.

This is one of a range of Taituarā initiatives that provide leadership and development opportunities specifically tailored to the local government environment. This year four exchanges were awarded.

The AskYourTeam Overseas Manager Exchange to New South Wales, Australia

The recipient is: Anne Blakeway, Manager for City Partnerships at Tauranga City Council

Anne led the development of fundraising strategies for Te Manawataki o Te Papa, Tauranga's new civic precinct development, as well as managing the relationship with and governance of their council-controlled organisations and leading the economic development portfolio.

She began her career in the tourism and hospitality industry in the UK and USA and has a Master of Business Administration with Distinction from the University of Waikato. She has also led the economic development portfolio during the COVID era and launched HeretoHelpU – an online social wellbeing support service, in partnership with other agencies.

The AskYourTeam Overseas Manager Exchange to Queensland, Australia

The recipient is: Dennise Elers, Group Manager for Community Partnerships at Central Hawke's Bay District Council

Dennise has over 20 years' experience. Her role in community partnerships was highlighted while applying for this exchange. She is committed to working with and within communities to support them to achieve their goals, dreams, and aspirations.

She has extensive experience in social and youth development having developed several approaches that support communities and rangatahi self-determine their futures. Dennise worked with communities dealing with the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle, and she is looking to embed an indigenous lens to the recovery.

About the sponsor: AskYourTeam has offices in New Zealand and Australia and has been in business since 2014. They have a strong record of delivering on their promise to help organisations build cultures that involve their people and lift their productivity and wellbeing.

Together with their customers throughout the private and public sectors, they are creating the organisations today's society expects, where employees feel that they belong and where performance is continually being optimised.

The Civic Financial Services Exchange to the United States

The recipient is: Libby O'Brien, General Manager, People and Customer at Taupō District Council

Libby is an experienced young leader who has spent time working across central and local government motivating people with her infectious passion to empower people to be their best.

In her current role she is leading the charge to put people at the heart of everything, giving the tools to enhance their wellbeing so they are at their best to care for their communities.

The Marsh Overseas Manager Exchange to Canada

The recipient is: Sarah Matthews, General Manager, Finance and Environment at Taupō District Council

Sarah Matthews is General Manager Finance and Environment (CFO) at Taupō District Council. She is a young executive leader and was winner of the 'Emerging Financial Manager' award at the 2021 New Zealand CFO awards. She credits the sector for her leadership style and is passionate about making a difference in the community.

About the sponsor: Civic Financial Services is a specialist superannuation provider for local government. It administers the SuperEasy superannuation schemes - SuperEasy KiwiSaver Superannuation Scheme and SuperEasy employer scheme.

Civic Financial Services is one of our principal partner sponsors and makes an extremely valuable contribution to our ability to provide the range of services to our members and the wider sector. Thank you for your support Civic Financial Services.

The NZ leg of the Australasian Management Challenge

Each year Taituarā runs the New Zealand Leg of the Australasian Management Challenge sponsored by Marsh.

The Australasian Management Challenge is Australasia's premier forum for current and emerging local government leaders.

The challenge is designed to enhance leadership and management skills of local government professionals through team-based learning and development.

This year, in the New Zealand Leg of the Management Challenge, seven councils competed for the New Zealand title to represent Aotearoa in Australia later this year.

Teams were from Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Central Otago District Council, Invercargill City Council, Kaipara District Council, Napier City Council, Rangitikei District Council, and Tauranga City Council.

In third place is: The Trail Blazers from Central Otago District Council

The Trail Blazers were a determined and focused team who demonstrated effective leadership, good team interaction and collaboration.

In second place is: BOPR-Tea from Bay of Plenty Regional Council

BOPR-Tea worked well together with equal participation across the team. They shared views, celebrated success, and encouraged each other.

The winner is: Tauranga Moana Taskmasters from Tauranga City Council

Tauranga Moana Taskmasters demonstrated all the characteristics of a highly effective team – interacting well, demonstrating collaborative behaviour, and including everyone's perspectives. They were supportive, had great energy, and worked really well together.

About the sponsor: Marsh is the world's leading insurance broker and risk advisor serving commercial and individual clients with data driven risk solutions and advisory services. Marsh is one of our principal partner sponsors and makes an extremely valuable contribution to our ability to provide the range of services to our members and the wider sector. We thank Marsh for their support.

The Taituarā Emerging Leader of the Year Award

The Taituarā Emerging Leader of the Year Award is presented to an up-and-coming leader with a proven track record of designing and delivering innovative and successful programmes, projects, processes, or practices with an identifiable community impact.

The recipient will travel to Austin, Texas later during the year to attend the 2023 ICMA Conference.

The recipient is: Lauren Baddock, District Plan Lead at Horowhenua District Council

Lauren is the District Plan Lead for Horowhenua District Council and has demonstrated the ability to navigate the challenge between a growing urban sector and infrastructure within a rural and provincial setting.

Lauren has progressed through several roles in her time at Horowhenua and in each role she has led by example with a focus on community outcomes at the heart of her work.

The Taituarā Distinguished Management Award

The Taituarā Distinguished Management Award recognises someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of local government management in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The recognition of this contribution should be made by more than one local authority in respect to a current member of Taituarā.

The recipient is: Barbara McKerrow, Chief Executive Officer at Wellington City Council

Barbara was nominated by both Wellington City Council and New Plymouth District Council in recognition of her 37-year career in local government.

Barbara has played a significant role in leadership and management not only in local authorities she has worked in but also across the sector.

Barbara has held a range of executive management roles as well as being Chief Executive for New Plymouth between 2008 and 2017 and Chief Executive of Wellington City since 2020.

Barbara is known for her strategic thinking while navigating complex environments. She is also a keen collaborator and is currently a member of the Advisory Board for the Wellington School of Business and Government.

She has been a staunch supporter of Taituarā having served as President for three years, co-chaired the central and local government chief executive forum and represented Taituarā overseas at the ICMA.



Professional excellence in local government

Taituarā — Local Government Professionals Aotearoa

Level 9, 85 The Terrace, Wellington
PO Box 10373, Wellington 6143

T 04 978 1280

E info@taituara.org.nz

W taituara.org.nz