

Another busy year for our team is coming to a close and our trustees met last week to discuss possible changes to our constitution and ways of working next year. One good thing about an evolving groups like Vision Motueka is our willingness to regularly re-evaluate how we are going and how we can be more effective. More on this shortly.

First though, we can report that our annual **Motueka Volunteers Celebration event** in late October went really well, with probably our best programme yet. The range of local volunteers who received special awards was impressive, and it was an inspiration to be part of the 80 or so crowd who recognised the value of volunteering and are actually playing their part.

Our other ongoing project is the **Youth Employment and Skills Training (Yeast)** initiative. This is a very challenging piece of work, which is making baby-steps, sometimes painful but at least generally in a forward direction. We are still largely in a discovery phase, learning more about the various resources in our community for young people as well as the myriad of hurdles we face in bringing them together, especially for those of our young folk who find difficulty (or are not interested) in accessing these resources. We are leading a strong team of determined people (including three of our trustees) in seeding and growing this project, and work will continue in 2018.

This year Vision Motueka has also been the umbrella organisation for the **Motueka Boomerang Bags** initiative. We helped get it going back in March and April with funding and advice (and with two of our trustees on the team). Of late the project team who run sewing bees and promote re-usable shopping bags has become sufficiently well organised to go it alone. So it is likely that next year Vision Motueka will spin off this project to that independent group.

That's much like what happened to one of our biggest projects for 2017 - the inaugural **Motueka Kai Fest** in April. We initiated the project, gathered a team of (mostly non-Vision) dedicated and creative people, managed the finances and fundraising, and helped in the execution. After its huge success, those people who actually ran the event were in a strong enough position that we could help them form a new, independent Trust to carry the project on. In other words, we seeded the project and the team of organisers, supported them with our strategic and financial experience, and now we've spun it off.

And that, our Trustees have decided, is **Vision Motueka's main mode of operation and purpose** into the future. **Community-led development** can be a painful process. Many community issues have ready answers - just raise some money and buy and install something. But others require creative, strategic solutions, dedication and stamina, in order to gain traction and produce tangible results, often over long periods of time. Furthermore, many of the hardest issues are too big for single groups and they need partnerships with other groups and people if they are to get anywhere. Seven volunteer Trustees of Vision Motueka cannot tackle the big problems alone. But we have proved that great outcomes can be attained by:

1. seeding projects (through either our own initiative or following an approach by others),
2. developing specific partnerships with other groups or individuals,
3. fostering the project team's early work and creating a solid footing, and
4. hopefully spinning them off to new entities.

Examples of this approach are mentioned above - the Kai Fest, Boomerang Bags and the Yeast project. Others from our past include the painting of the four most recent murals on town buildings, the

Community Christmas Dinner, and the Motueka Music Network. We also triggered and provided detailed proposals for a new Library and Community Hub (and remain a participant in that Council-led project), and have contributed several key aspects of the documentation and fundraising work for the indoor swimming pool projects.

All of these projects involved partnerships - to a small or large extent - with other people or groups. So we welcome ideas from anyone or any group who would like to talk through how we could help them in new community projects. We don't do projects *for* you, but we could be persuaded to do them *with* you.

Vision Motueka has its **AGM early each year**, when we elect a team of seven trustees to perform the tasks of governance and project leadership. The date is Wednesday February 14th at 7.30pm, probably at Community House but that is to be confirmed, as will be our guest speaker(s). There will probably be one trustee vacancy to fill, and possibly more, with five positions up for elections. Read our website - [www.visionmotueka.org.nz](http://www.visionmotueka.org.nz) - or contact me if you want more info on what being a trustee entails.

A reminder that in order to vote at our AGM you need to be a Vision Motueka member, and if you aren't a member yet (or have forgotten whether or not you are), please let me know and I'll add you to the list. There is no subscription or any other commitment.

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