



# Wāhi/Place: Bulletin 3

30 May 2023

Equipping the Community Sector for Climate Action

## Raising the hard questions

I bet there are some people in every organisation in Aotearoa who are asking “What should we be doing about climate change?” I am trying to do this for the whole community sector: to keep on raising the questions about climate and sustainability.

Problem is, no one has spare time or energy. Community agencies and rōpū are already overloaded with human need. No one wants to hear that things will just get harder in the years ahead.

We are only just starting on a time of huge social change as people respond to the massive impacts of climate change. And by ‘we’ I mean everyone. This social change will affect every person on the planet. Right now we have an opportunity gap where we can choose how we respond.

I see a vital role for community sector groups to lead in this space. You know your community. You care. You understand what inequity does. Now the challenge is for you to also grasp how climate change will impact your community. And with that comes the sister challenge to change aspects of how you operate so that your organisation is part of the solution.

For this we need people who keep on keeping on, calling attention to the unfolding environmental disaster. I found a Te Reo Māori kupu for this: **hapahapai**. Raising up, again and again. This is a Bible word, as the priests in the Jewish Temple lifted up sacrifices to God. It feels like this to me, continually standing in the gap, in the conviction that we are not living how we should be living. Those of us who keep raising climate issues hold our community’s sense of our own wrongness and need for new possibilities. We hold hope.

So – I ask you to go to those people in your organisation who bug you with questions about environmental sustainability and encourage them to keep on asking. Charge some of your staff and colleagues with the job of raising climate concerns and proposing changes. Carve out time in someone’s week to dedicate to finding solutions relevant to your organisation. Let’s together raise up environmental sustainability in the community sector.

~ Silvia Purdie

*“Nau hoki ahau i **hapai** ake, a kihai i tukua oku hoariri kia hari ki ahau.”*

~ Psalm 30:1

*You have raised me up; you did not let my enemies get the better of me.*

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## Awesome new resource: Oatas (Our Actions Tell A Story)

Oatas has been developed by a team in Ōtautahi to enable SMEs and Not-For-Profits to report and plan for sustainability.

<https://oatas.co>

Read about founder Mitch Shaw’s story, from an interview with me:

<https://www.place.net.nz/services>



## Action point: join Ora Taiao

Ora Taiao is NZ’s Climate & Health Council (I’m on the exec). Anyone working in health & wellbeing roles is welcome to join.

Check out our fab new website:

<https://www.orataiao.org.nz>

Place Consultancy offers a fixed-price facilitation to get your organisation well on the way towards your own sustainability strategy and climate action plan.

Founder Silvia Purdie is a trainer, counsellor, supervisor, author and ordained minister, based in Upper Hutt, NZ.

Contact Silvia now: 027 242 1113

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*Wāhi/Place Bulletin is a publication of Place Consultancy to bring community organisations regular relevant input on environmental sustainability and climate action.*