



# Sustainability Report 2023

The Hotel Britomart









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## KIA ORA KOUTOU,

As we approach the end of 2023, we're grateful to have been operating under relatively normal post-pandemic conditions for nearly a year and a half now.

I say 'relatively', as the hospitality industry still faces challenges, including a shortage of workers, lower visitor numbers and people scaling back travel due to increased costs of living and the threat of a recession.

Despite this, we've welcomed more than 40,000 guests through our doors over the past year. As expected, this led to increases in the hotel's use of resources like electricity and gas, which flows through to the carbon emission data we submit annually to Toitū Envirocare.

Although these increases are a natural result of business growth, we were delighted to see that when calculated on a per-room basis, our emissions numbers have nearly halved over the past year. There's more about how this works on p30. At base, it can be attributed to our core focus on optimising energy use and reducing waste, as well as the more efficient use of space that has occurred as guest numbers have risen.

One of the pleasures of working at The Hotel Britomart is that sustainable operation was built-in from day one. Of course, starting from a very efficient baseline also means progress is by nature granular, and it is challenging to make significant leaps in improvement. To remain as a leader in sustainable hospitality, we've been pushing ourselves to think creatively.

This year we've developed a closer working relationship with our sister property, The Landing, in the Bay of Islands. Working with their tree nursery and landscape team, we've established an annual native tree-planting programme. (More about this project on p32 of this report.) At this stage it's not formally recognised as a carbon-mitigation programme, but we know that every tree planted has real-world benefits for carbon reduction.

We're excited to watch our forest grow over the coming years and to give our team members the chance to participate directly in this work. Most of all we're pleased to have found another way to ensure our operation makes a difference to Aotearoa's future, and for our guests to be able to feel they've had a hand in that.

Ngā mihi nui.

CLINTON FARLEY  
General Manager  
The Hotel Britomart





# About The Hotel Britomart

## THE PROPERTY

The Hotel Britomart is a 10-storey, 104-room hotel located in the centre of Britomart, a vibrant nine-block retail, hospitality and commercial precinct on Auckland’s downtown waterfront. Completed in late 2020, the new hotel building is set amid refurbished brick and timber heritage warehouses and has been integrated physically and visually with its environment.

From the ground level to the fifth floor, the new hotel building is connected to the adjacent century-old Buckland and Masonic Buildings, with two of the hotel’s premium Landing Suites set on the rooftop of the Buckland Building, and the hotel’s event spaces, The Libraries, found on the second floor of the Buckland Masonic Building.

The hotel’s restaurant, kingi, is situated on the ground floor of the Buckland Masonic Building alongside kingi Private, offering sustainably sourced seafood and local produce. A glass-roofed laneway weaves between the existing refurbished buildings and the new hotel, while the hotel’s cast-brick exterior and windows on the lower levels were designed to reflect the brickwork and window forms of the heritage buildings around it.

Under the direction of Cooper and Company, the hotel was designed to New Zealand Green Building Council’s 5 Green Star standard by Auckland architectural practice Cheshire Architects and built by Bracewell Construction.



## THE BUSINESSES

**THE HOTEL BRITOMART**  
Single-room hotel guest accommodation in downtown central Auckland.

**THE LANDING SUITES**  
Luxury suite guest accommodation within The Hotel Britomart, designed to reflect the spirit of The Landing, a separate Cooper and Company property in the Bay of Islands.

**THE LIBRARIES**  
Event spaces available for select private functions and the use of guests of The Hotel Britomart.

**KINGI**  
The hotel restaurant, open to guests and the public.

**KINGI PRIVATE**  
A private dining and meeting room.

## THE STAKEHOLDERS

**COOPER AND COMPANY AND THE BRITOMART GROUP OF COMPANIES**

The owner of The Hotel Britomart.

**THE HOTEL BRITOMART LTD**  
The management company and team members who operate the hotel.

**THE HOTEL BRITOMART GUESTS**  
Domestic and international guests who stay at or visit the hotel.

**NGĀTI WHĀTUA ŌRĀKEI**  
The Māori iwi who hold mana whenua over the land the hotel stands on.

**BRITOMART AND DOWNTOWN AUCKLAND COMMUNITY**  
The people who live, work and visit the hotel’s neighbourhood.

**TFE HOTELS**  
The Hotel Britomart’s hotel affiliate partner.











# Mana Whakahaere Governance

The Hotel Britomart is managed by The Hotel Britomart Ltd, a member of the Britomart group of companies. Monthly management meetings are held with the team at Cooper and Company, which owns both The Hotel Britomart and the Britomart precinct. Quarterly reports are provided to Cooper and Company's board of directors.

The hotel's brand and construction were developed within the context of Cooper and Company's long-standing commitment to sustainable development and alongside its Sustainability Framework, which holds sustainability – economic, social and environmental – as one of five central brand values.

The hotel has signed up to the Tiaki Promise, a commitment among New Zealand tourism industry organisations to care for New Zealand and encourage visitors to do the same, as well as Tourism Industry Aotearoa's Tourism Sustainability Commitment, which involves undertaking 12 sustainability commitments in economic, visitor, community and environmental categories.



# Executive Team

GARTH SOLLY  
Director of Hospitality,  
Cooper and Company

CLINTON FARLEY  
General Manager

JANE FERNANDEZ  
Finance Manager

ROCHELLE GRAY  
Head of Marketing

JAMIE SWAN  
Head of Sales

The hotel has a Sustainability Committee, which meets monthly to share initiatives, goals and progress on goals. David Oliveri, who worked as Executive Assistant Manager until August 2023, was a key member of this team and guided several sustainability projects at the hotel. Alice Gabites, who heads up the Food & Beverage management at the hotel, has also been a core member of this team. The Sustainability Committee drives awareness of these goals and activities across the wider team and has recently started sending out a quarterly sustainability newsletter to the hotel team to keep everyone up to date.



# The Hotel Britomart Brand Values

DESIGN  
We value the way thoughtful design and attention to detail can transform the experience of place.

NEIGHBOURHOOD  
Guests at The Hotel Britomart aren't just staying in a building, but in a community.

CONNECTION  
The Hotel Britomart creates strong and genuine connections with its guests, and in turn connects them with the neighbourhood and city around them.

SUSTAINABILITY  
The Hotel Britomart subscribes to Britomart's values of long-term ownership, stewardship and community-building.

CARE  
The Hotel Britomart cares deeply about its guests and their experience in the city.

# Sustainability Partners

NEW ZEALAND GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL  
The Green Star certification system, administered in Aotearoa New Zealand by the New Zealand Green Building Council, is Australasia's foremost sustainability rating certification. It awards commercial buildings a rating of zero to six stars, with one representing minimum practice, five being stringently high and representing excellent performance at a national level and six indicating world-leading standards. The Hotel Britomart holds a 5 Green Star Design and Build certification. It is the first hotel building to be certified to this standard in New Zealand.

QUALMARK  
Qualmark is New Zealand tourism's official quality assurance organisation, providing consumers with a guide to quality travel experiences within New Zealand. Their Sustainable Tourism Business Award assesses a wide range of categories, including Environment & Culture, Social, and Health & Safety. Accreditations are given as star ratings from 1 to 5, as well as Bronze, Silver or Gold awards. In 2022, The Hotel Britomart was accredited at a 5-star Gold award level, with all categories of assessment rated either Excellent or Representing Best Practice.

GREEN LOAN BANKING PARTNERS  
The Hotel Britomart is one of seven buildings at Britomart that sits within a portfolio covered by a Green Loan Agreement between Britomart and its banking partners. The agreement classifies the lending that covers The Hotel Britomart and other buildings at Britomart as 'green finance': financing of assets that can be proven to be sustainable through external certifications from organisations like the New Zealand Green Building Council and NABERSNZ.





# 2023 Recognitions

AUGUST 2022

**Best Luxury Hotel and Best Restaurant  
for the hotel restaurant kingi**  
2022 Hospitality New Zealand Awards

MAY 2023

**#1 Hotel in NZ**  
TripAdvisor

MAY 2023

**Readers' Choice Best Hotel**  
Remix Magazine Lifestyle Awards

MAY 2023

**Finalist**  
New Zealand Hospitality Awards  
Best Luxury Accommodation  
Best Sustainability / Environmental

AUGUST 2023

**kingi One Hat** 🍷  
Cuisine Good Food Awards

AUGUST 2023

**Highly commended**  
AmCham Commitment to sustainability

OCTOBER 2023

**Finalist**  
Hospitality Management Awards  
NZ Luxury Hotel, NZ Front Office Associate  
(Daria Kuleshova)





# 2022 Goals: Progress

GOAL	ACHIEVED	ADAPTED	NOT ACHIEVED	
MANA WHAKAHAERE GOVERNANCE				
Gain Toitū Envirocare Certification and develop an emissions reduction plan.	●			The hotel's base year for emissions measurement was established using data from the financial year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. A second set of data for the hotel's second year of assessment has since also been submitted. An emissions reduction plan has been formulated and is on track to be achieved.
Establish a tracking and communication process for tree-planting associated with the Green Clean initiative.	●	●		This goal was adapted due to the challenges of engaging people with 'lighter' cleaning practices in a post-COVID environment. Instead, a tree-planting programme associated with the hotel's meetings and conferences offering was established, with clear tracking and a communications plan made.
TE TAIAO ENVIRONMENT				
Improve sustainability communication strategies and storytelling.	●			Our first Sustainability Report gave us the opportunity to share our sustainability story in an expanded and detailed way. Our in-house sustainability newsletter keeps our team members up to date and engaged with our sustainability progress and activities. Our website is currently under review, with a number of sustainability-related profiles set to be posted.
In conjunction with the Britomart precinct operations team, investigate potential alternative waste streams for guest slippers to ensure the optimal stream is being used.	●			Members of the hotel's sustainability team engaged in an investigation into waste management and alternative systems alongside the wider Britomart sustainability team. It was confirmed that commercial composting for appropriate slippers would be possible, and the slipper supplier was changed in order to make this work.
Increase the percentage of guests choosing the hotel's Green Clean.		●	●	Despite promoting the Green Clean programme to more than 40,000 guests throughout the year, only 93 opted-in to the Green Clean, making it environmentally ineffective. Instead, a tree-planting initiative associated with the meetings and conferences offering was established (see p32), which has resulted in 1200 trees being planted at The Landing this year.



TE TANGATA PEOPLE AND CULTURE				
Develop partnership opportunities with ocean-related charities Live Ocean and Sustainable Coastlines.	●	●		The Hotel Britomart worked alongside the wider Cooper and Company team to raise in-house awareness of Live Ocean's Swim for the Gulf partnership with endurance swimmer Jono Ridler. The team also collaborated with Critical NZ to develop a chopping board recycled from fishing nets, which will be sold to benefit ocean charity Legasea.
Review the range of best-practice social sustainability certifications and accreditations in New Zealand, apply for certifications where deemed beneficial and identify areas for improvement, with or without certification.	●			Alongside Cooper and Company's director of sustainability and brand, the hotel team reviewed social sustainability certifications, and became aligned with the Pride Pledge. Members of the hotel team were invited to attend a Pride Pledge training session to familiarise themselves with key issues faced by New Zealand's rainbow community.
Work alongside the Britomart precinct to enable a vocational partnership with Te Kura Kaupapa Māori at Hoani Waititi Marae.	●			Students from Te Kura Kaupapa O Hoani Waititi visited The Hotel Britomart March, April and May 2023 to gain an initial understanding of how the hotel operates and the kinds of job roles available in hotel hospitality. Student internships at the hotel will commence in the 2024 year.



# Clinton Farley

GENERAL MANAGER OF  
THE HOTEL BRITOMART



Looking back over the hotel’s first year emerging from pandemic conditions, general manager Clinton Farley sees positive growth for the hotel’s operational efficiency, refinements being made to improve the sustainability of supply chains and opportunities for more community collaborations in the future.

**MELINDA WILLIAMS** The Hotel Britomart is coming up to its third year of operation, although the first under normal conditions. I say ‘normal’ with a certain amount of reserve. In terms of sustainability, what are you most proud of achieving over the last year?

**CLINTON FARLEY** A focus this year has been on the waste management within the hotel and making sure any waste from the operation is going into the right waste stream, whether that be recycling, landfill, composting and so on. One thing we’ve done in the last couple of months, which we’re very proud of, is to start working with a new dairy company in the Waikato to remove plastic milk bottles from our supply chain.

We’ve recently installed a milk tap in kingi. The milk is delivered to us in reusable pails and goes back, gets sterilised and refilled with fresh milk. That same partner also supplies us with glass mini milk bottles for guest rooms, like the cream bottles you used to get at home, but with screw caps. Twice a week, they take away the empty bottles, wash, sterilise and refill them and they come back to us. Prior to this we’d been filling the bottles ourselves and had been exploring a direct supply for some time. It is a great initiative to create a more sustainable flow for our milk with the milk being fresh from the Waikato.

Another exciting initiative is our tree planting programme. For every 10 guests who hold a meeting or event at The Libraries at The Hotel Britomart, we plant a native tree at The Landing, our sister property in the Bay of Islands. There’s been a long-term focus on reforesting up at The Landing, so it’s great that we can intertwine with that and fund the planting of more trees via guests who hold meetings here. It’s a value-add for clients to know they’re having a positive impact when holding events with us. Every few months, the team at The Landing will send us some photos we can share with our clients and guests to keep them up to date with what’s happening. It’s something our team can participate in eventually as well.

**MELINDA** Are ‘sustainable meetings’ something people are looking for now?

**CLINTON** Absolutely. We offer a sustainable package for our meetings and events at the hotel, and that is a key sales point when we communicate with clients who are considering somewhere to hold a meeting or conference. Our Sustainable Meetings package highlights all the sustainable things we’re doing here at The Hotel Britomart, from the way the hotel operates on a day-to-day basis with energy efficiency and waste reduction initiatives, to the notepads, the pencils, the way we source our food and beverage and amenities as well, with a focus on getting as much as possible locally.

**MELINDA** What other sustainability projects have you been working on?

**CLINTON** We’ve continued our messaging to our suppliers around our Plastic Free Policy. Our removal of plastics focus is a really big one. A lot of hotels are still focused on

small interventions like removing plastic straws, which was a big thing about four or five years ago. The same goes for our Social Procurement Policy, which focuses on ensuring wherever we get our supplies from, the people there are treated fairly and well. For most of our procurement we focus on working locally within New Zealand, but when that’s not possible, we assess suppliers against our Social Procurement Policy.

**MELINDA** With more hotels and chains actively increasing their sustainability efforts, what do you think continues to set The Hotel Britomart apart as a leader?

**CLINTON** Obviously, that we’re a 5 Green Star rated hotel through the New Zealand Green Building Council. The first accreditation was because of our design and construction, but this now flows through to the day-to-day operations, how we’re managing energy, water, waste streams and overall business efficiencies to reduce our impact. And then there’s our Toitū Carbonreduce status. We are accredited with Toitū as a carbon reduction business to maintain that, they also want to see year-on-year improvements which we monitor monthly.

As you said earlier, this is the first normalised year we’ve had. Last year was an interesting year to do our first Toitū audit as a baseline year. When we look at last year’s audit versus this year’s audit, we have seen a growth in our carbon. However, that’s to be expected. When you look at the figures overall, we’ve had a really strong focus on continuing to be as efficient as we can, whether that be our electricity, gas, water, all those systems that we continue to monitor on a regular basis through our building management system. This year’s results show a more normalised year and more useful information, with the hotel trading at an occupancy that we would expect it to be trading in the future.

Although overall carbon has increased, when analysing this on a per room occupied basis, our impact has improved significantly year-on-year, which is excellent.

**MELINDA** The Hotel Britomart is known for its sustainability, but it’s a multifaceted brand. How important would you say that sustainability is to The Hotel Britomart’s brand now that it has been in operation for a few years?

**CLINTON** Really important, and this is something I talk about to every team member we recruit into the business. On a day-to-day basis, no matter what decision we are looking to make within the hotel, there are two key things we consider. And those two things are, is the decision brand aligned? And is it sustainable? And if those two questions cannot be answered with a ‘yes’, it might not be the right decision to make.

We want to continue to be a leader in the sustainability space; a change maker and a business that challenges the industry. The example of the milk bottle project earlier was something we’ve been challenging suppliers to come up with a solution for a while, before we came across this new start-up supplier from the Waikato. Another example of driving change within the industry is that we encouraged our suppliers to develop a compostable coffee pod, a step further than recyclable options and only recently achievable. As a result, we have introduced coffee pod machines in guest rooms.

I think being a small, independent New Zealand-owned business gives us a lot of opportunity to challenge the status quo. We encourage the team to give us thoughts and ideas and feedback about the whole business. A lot of the team are really engaged and passionate about sustainability as well. We’re never short of ideas, it’s just about finding the right partners to help bring some of these ideas to life.

**MELINDA** Do you get a lot of feedback about the hotel’s sustainability from guests?

**CLINTON** The feedback we do get is that guests love staying with us because we are a sustainably focused hotel. We have strong support from a number of government entities as well as corporates that chose to stay with us due to our efforts in this space. When we look at corporate travel, particularly in the last year, there has been a notable shift to a more focused decision to stay in hotels that are sustainably accredited. Sustainability has become a key consideration during the annual RFP [Request For Proposal] season, when clients decide which hotels they want to stay at. We get a lot of questions asked about sustainability and our Green Star rating and Toitū certification and scorings. Those are figures we’re able to share with clients to get business over the line. Our Sustainable Meetings focus is also a favourite among conference organisers.

But from a day-to-day guest feedback perspective, the general messaging is that guests love what we’re doing and appreciate the efforts we’re going to, to be an industry leader in this space. I think we have a good opportunity to celebrate and share a bit more now that we’ve done the tree planting, telling these stories because they will resonate with not just corporate and conferencing people, but also our hotel guests as well as encouraging our team to keep thinking differently and to challenge the status quo.

**MELINDA** Would you say that there is now a clear relationship between strong sustainability performance and business success?



**CLINTON** I definitely believe people choose us over other hotels because of our sustainability focus. And obviously that supports our occupancy within the hotel, supports the demand coming into the hotel, and our ability to charge a premium when the demand's high. So yes, it is a key consideration that guests are making when staying with us and not staying elsewhere. And ultimately, yes, is growing our business success.

**MELINDA** What do you see as the biggest opportunities to extend your work in sustainability going forward?

**CLINTON** I know globally, some travellers are looking for hotels to stay at where they can actually be involved in the community. Regenerative travel. Giving back. A challenge we have with New Zealand being located at the bottom of the globe, is the transport miles and carbon associated with that. So, when travellers are exploring our shores, some are now considering how they can make a sustainable impact whether that be environmental or social good. There's potentially opportunity to work with a partner, where when guests are staying with us, they can go out and do something in the community. We already have some charities we partner with as a wider company, so it may be about looking at some of those organisations and whether guests, while they're staying with us, could somehow get involved.

**MELINDA** Are there other emerging trends in sustainability within the hospitality industry that you think are likely to be picked up by the industry here?

**CLINTON** I've been to a couple of sustainability seminars recently and one of them was a workshop on the New Zealand Tourism Sustainability commitment where there's been a goal set for all in the industry to be committed to sustainability by 2025. The other was on the Draft Tourism Environment Action Plan which is a sustainability pathway the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is working on towards the government's goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

One of the biggest contributors to carbon in the tourism industry is obviously air travel, and the industry is working on ways to reduce that impact, whether that be hydrogen or electric planes. Another big contributor to carbon in the tourism space in New Zealand is vehicles, rental cars and coaches. That part of the industry is considering ways in which they can become less carbon-emitting, whether that means electric cars, coaches or considering alternate forms of transport.



At the hotel, we've recently established a relationship with a new rental car company that has a good supply of EV vehicles. Those are recommended in the first instance to our hotel guests. Some more global initiatives that will likely hit our shore in the next few years will be self-drive EV vehicles or air taxis. I think we'll also see more sustainable energy sources such as solar and wind type installations as we head towards our national goals and there may be more emerging technologies in the virtual reality space which will challenge the industry in new ways.

**MELINDA** What's next for The Hotel Britomart? Do you have any exciting sustainability projects planned for the next few months?

**CLINTON** We've got some exciting initiatives underway, one of which is working with a couple of partners in relation to sea conservation and moving deep sea fishing nets out of the ocean by recycling them into chopping boards. It's a great partnership that we pulled together after finding out about a supplier that was making chopping boards from recycled plastic.

With our focus on sustainable fisheries, we thought, how can we use this technology to support something that we're really passionate about, being our oceans. We put two and two together with LegaSea. The chopping boards are being sold by LegaSea as a means of fundraising to support their ongoing efforts to clean up and preserve our oceans. This initiative really closely aligns with our focus on sustainable fisheries, led by our restaurant kingi, and as a wider company. Apart from that, the next few months are about focusing on what we can continue to tweak to do better.







## Mana Whakahaere Governance

### GOALS FOR 2024

To work with the team at Cooper and Company to more closely integrate the cultures of the two companies and establish a wider sense of belonging and opportunity, with a view to benefiting team retention.

To achieve the reduction goals set within our Toitu Carbonreduce plan by creating a structured action plan.

To create a one-page document that clearly outlines the total carbon emissions associated with a standard night's stay or holding a meeting at The Hotel Britomart, to enable corporate clients working to carbon budgets to clearly understand our carbon value proposition.









# Te Taiao The Environment

The 2022/23 year was the hotel's first 12 months of operation under more normal post-pandemic circumstances for the tourism industry, following the lifting of New Zealand's international border restrictions on travellers.

This year, the hotel's resource use data more accurately reflects levels that might be expected on an ongoing basis. Previous totals for electricity, water and gas use and waste production were artificially low due to lower guest numbers, so have all increased in raw terms year-on-year. This will have a flow-on effect to the hotel's Toitu Carbonreduce totals, which are based in part on non-renewable energy consumption. However, with increased guest numbers expected for the 2023/2024 year, these raw numbers are likely to rise again in future. At the same time, the higher occupancy rates mean there has been increased efficiency in the baseline levels of resource use.



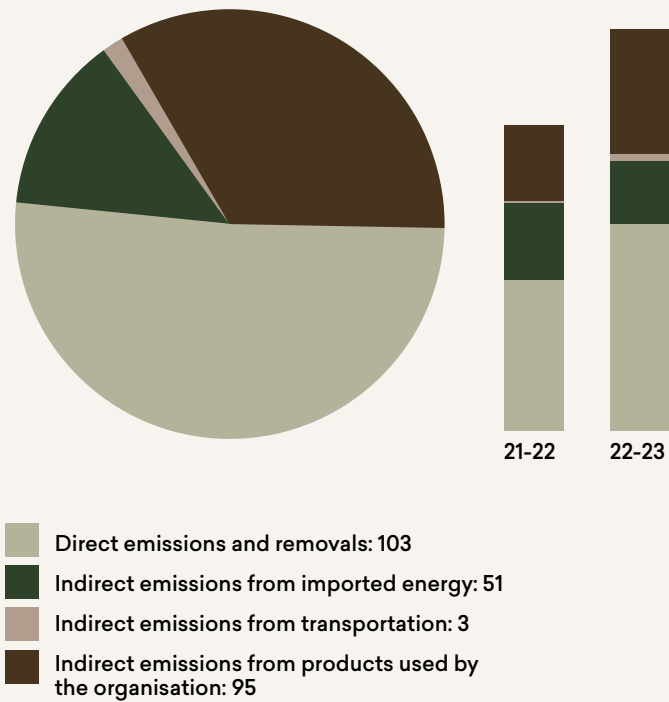
# Toitū Carbonreduce

Data for The Hotel Britomart’s second year of carbon emissions assessment was submitted to Toitū Envirocare in August 2023, reporting on the year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Toitū’s auditing of this data took place on 19 October.

In the hotel’s ‘base year’ Toitū assessment, data was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the hotel was permitted to operate under lockdown conditions, there was almost no guest hosting for three months within the reporting period. This meant estimates for normal usage had to be made based on the ‘busy’ months of the year, even though these months were also not true reflections of normal operation. This year’s data gives a more realistic picture, but a fully balanced picture won’t emerge until next year’s data has been compiled and audited.

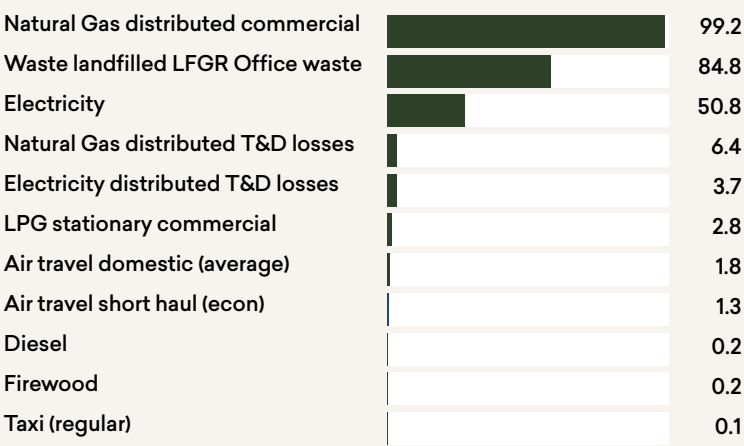
This year’s raw numbers for energy consumption (‘direct emissions’), waste to landfill emissions, travel emissions and indirect emissions are all up on last year. However, when emissions per occupied room are considered, there has been a significant improvement year-on year. Median tCO2e [tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions] per occupied room for the full year is calculated by total tCO2e divided by total hotel rooms sold to give a per occupied room of 0.011. This is an improvement against the base year, which provided a per occupied room total of 0.020. For future Toitū submissions, the hotel team will also calculate tCO2e per guest, to allow them to track food and beverage performance as well as guest rooms.

**tCO2E BY CATAGORY**  
1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 location-based method



**TOTAL 251**

**tCO2E BY SOURCES**  
1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 location-based method





# Tree-planting collaboration with The Landing

In the 2023 year, the hotel team introduced a new programme designed to mitigate a portion of the hotel’s carbon emissions in a non-formalised way. For every 10 guests who take part in a meeting or conference at The Hotel Britomart, a native tree will be planted at The Landing, the hotel’s sister property in the Bay of Islands.

For the 2022/23 year, 1200 trees were planted as a result of the programme. Online figures suggest that once established, trees absorb, on average, 20-25kg of carbon a year, meaning this year’s planting will absorb between 22 and 27.5 tonnes of carbon a year on an ongoing basis.

On an ongoing basis, the hotel team expects to plant around 1500 trees a year as part of the programme. An area of land at The Landing (previously used for grazing) has been set aside for this project, chosen for the fact that it encompasses a stretch of stream and will create riparian habitat while protecting the stream from damage or pollution by cattle.

## HOW WE ESTABLISHED OUR TREE PLANTATION

The site at The Landing that was chosen for The Hotel Britomart’s tree-planting programme was selected for the multiple benefits reforestation would offer it. A hillside riparian area with a stream running through it, it was converted to pasture decades ago, and the planting will return cover and stability to the stream area. This will allow native species to return and flourish, while keeping grazing stock away from the waterway.

The Landing’s nursery manager Caleb Scott says the site has a mixture of wetland, wetland/stream margin and dry areas. “As this is a new area of planting, most of the plants selected are pioneer species, used mainly for their fast growth to establish cover and to shade out weed species. We will interplant larger tree species in the future.”

Other plant species were chosen to assist with high water flow issues in heavy rainfall events. “The wetland species get established and stabilise stream edges, trap silt and help disperse the water flow over a wider area so that it’s not channelling down a single stream and potentially causing erosion over time,” says Caleb. The stream margin trees are taller plants that will create shade to help keep water temperatures cooler, which is great for the creatures that live in the waterways.”



## WETLAND

Phormium tenax	Harakeke	New Zealand Flax
Cordyline australis	Ti Kōuka	Cabbage Tree
Dacrycarpus dacrydioides	Kahikatea	White Pine
Carex virgata	Pukio	Swamp Sedge
Cyperus ustalatus	Toetoe Upoko-Tangata	Giant Umbrella Sedge

## STREAM MARGIN

Melicytus ramiflorus	Mahoe	Whiteywood
Pseudopanax laetum		Five Finger
Pittosporum eugenioides	Tarata	Lemonwood
Plaigianthus diveracatus	Makaka	Saltmarsh Ribbonwood
Leptospermum scoparium	Mānuka	Tea-tree

## DRY AREAS

Oleria paniculata	Akiraho	Golden Akeake
Pittosporum crassifolium	Karo	Stiffleaf Cheesewood
Pittosporum eugenioides	Tarata	Lemonwood
Coprosma repans	Taupata	Mirrorbush
Leptospermum scoparium	Mānuka	Tea-tree
Vitex lucens	Pūriri	New Zealand Mahogany



# WASTE

Waste generated at the hotel is separated into four streams on-site: general waste, cardboard, plastics, recycling and compostables. In the last year, the hotel’s sustainability team has worked with members of the Britomart operations team and Cooper and Company’s sustainability team to review waste management for the precinct in general and to look for ways to optimise systems.

This investigation resulted in the establishment of an end-of-life programme for IT equipment, as well as minor waste streams for specialist items like batteries, which are used in electronic equipment throughout the hotel. Where possible, rechargeable batteries are used in order to extend the life of the batteries before they are sent for recycling.

These efforts saw some clear benefits; in the first six months of the 2022/23 financial year, the hotel saw a reduction from around 17 litres of landfill waste per occupied room to around 14 litres of landfill waste per occupied room.

# CLEANING PRODUCTS

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, hygiene practices were of high concern for hotel guests. The hotel adopted a ‘Covid Clean’ protocol in association with TFE Hotels (the hotel’s affiliate partner), which included stringent disinfection procedures. Since the easing and lifting of all Covid restrictions, the hotel has moved to a new cleaning product supplier that has a lighter chemical footprint while still delivering high-quality disinfection.

Eco Group NZ produces safe, healthy and environmentally conscious cleaning products for businesses in New Zealand and overseas. They have a circular economy policy and their products are backed by Environmental Choice NZ accreditation and AsureQuality assessments. Products are packaged in Post Consumer Recycled bottles made in New Zealand, with sustainable paper labels.

All high-grade cleaning products employ some chemicals to effectively clean and disinfect against virus and germs. Eco Group products use a hospital-grade raw material for their disinfectant. Their Surface Sanitiser uses a proprietary sugar ester and locally sourced ethanol, which can be safely used in food preparation areas. Fragrances in the products are safe, biodegradable and made in New Zealand.

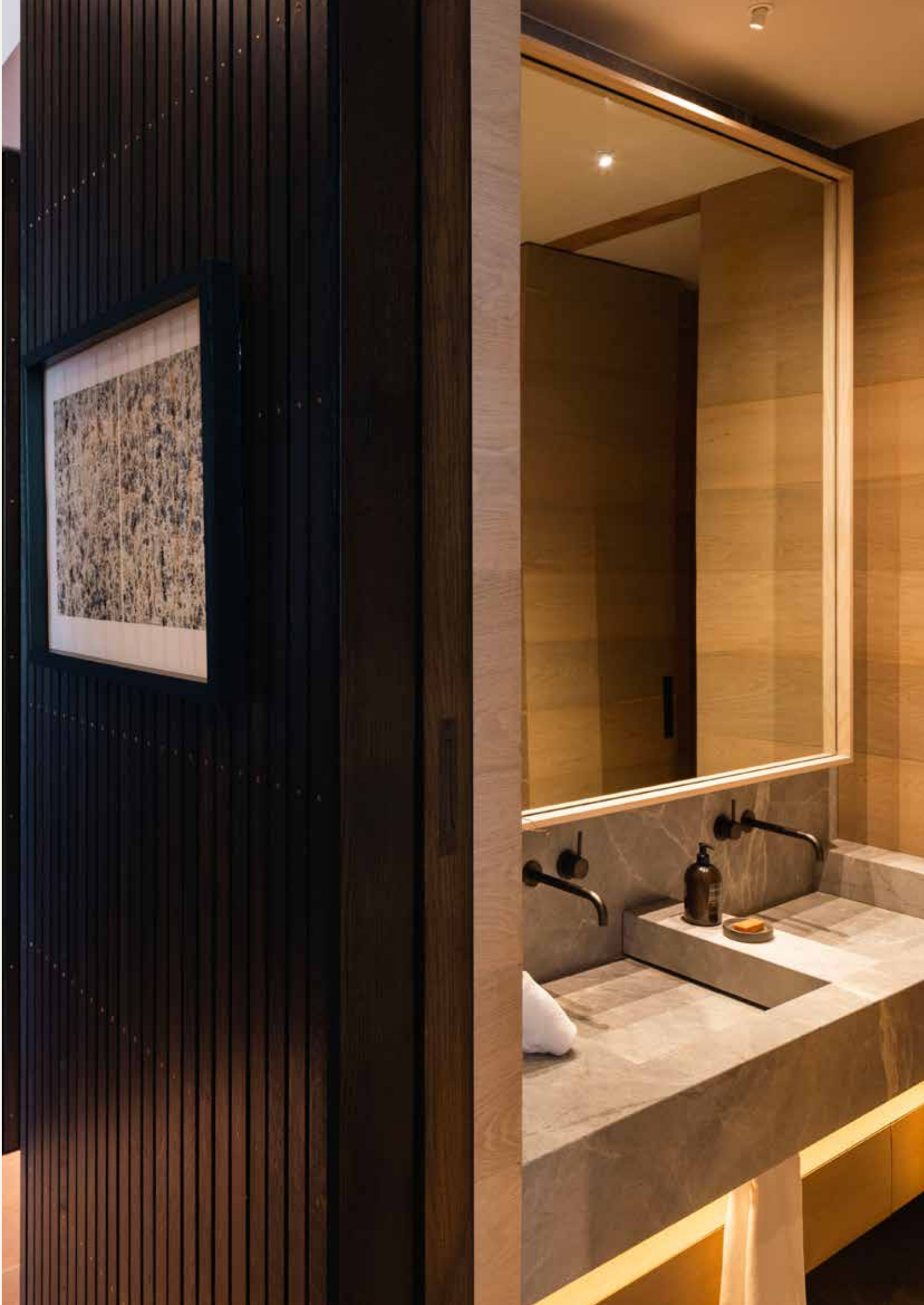
# PLASTIC-FREE POLICY

The hotel’s Plastic-Free Policy aims to eliminate single-use plastic from the hotel’s supply chain. In the 2022/23 year, this maintained a high level of compliance from suppliers to the hotel, sitting at around 95 percent. All local procurement suppliers support the initiative. The small quantity of plastics still coming into the business through the supply chain comes from overseas suppliers shipping large and fragile items such as televisions. Large mainstream suppliers are more difficult to convince to change their practices as The Hotel Britomart represents only a tiny proportion of their customer base.

The hotel continues to increase awareness of the effectiveness of this policy by sharing information about it with industry peers, in the hope that if more hotel businesses adopt similar policies – particularly large hotel chains – then greater pressure can be collectively applied to mainstream international suppliers to change their own practices.

In instances where suppliers are not adhering to the Plastic-Free Policy, the hotel team takes an educational approach in the first instance. “First, we go back to the supplier to remind them of the policy,” says general manager Clinton Farley. “Remind them, remind them again. But if it continues, we look to source from alternative suppliers who can align with our philosophy.”

Single-use plastics received from suppliers are recycled through the hotel’s recycling streams to avoid adding shipping miles from returning the plastics to source.





## INTERVIEW

# Tom Hishon

CO-FOUNDER, KINGI



One of the most innovative items on the menu at kingi is the braised Fiordland wapiti neck, a striking, deeply coloured dish that makes use of a protein source that is typically discarded. Wapiti, also known as North American Elk, have bred in the wild in New Zealand since 1905, having been introduced by the New Zealand government as a game species. The species thrived in Fiordland (several earlier attempts to introduce them in other parts of New Zealand failed) but their success came at a cost to the environment.

In 1923, the first wapiti hunting block licenses were issued, and today these have become so sought-after that they are allocated by ballot. Due to the difficulties of extracting beasts that can weigh up to 450kg from deep in the Fiordland National Park, many wapiti that are killed each year are simply left where they are after hunting trophies like antlers are removed.

Tom Hishon, co-founder of kingi, is part of a collective that has worked to find a use for this resource. Under the WithWild programme, up to 600 wapiti a year are recovered and processed as protein to be served in restaurants through the country or sold direct to consumers.

**MELINDA WILLIAMS** How and why did you come to set up WithWild?

**TOM HISHON** The opportunity came about over the second lockdown back in 2020. A group of five of us were the founders, all industry peers – some from hospitality, others in food service. One of the founders, Scott [Mcneil, owner of Awatoru Wildfood] reached out to a couple of us, and said, “The guys at the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation have all this amazing meat that they’re going to have to kill and leave on the side of a hill.” That happens quite a lot in

New Zealand, through culls organised by the Department of Conservation to control pest numbers.

And we got together and just started talking about how we could stop it from going to waste. We were throwing around ideas, and we couldn’t believe that a protein source that’s raised in the depths of Fiordland, in a UNESCO World Heritage Site, that there would be no value to that. So, we thought it would be great if we could start a business that could build in conservation.

So, we’ve partnered on this project with Fiordland Wapiti Foundation. And they’re essentially a group of hunters who are also big into conservation. They manage about 200,000 hectares in Fiordland, alongside DOC, they have an agreement with DOC that they manage the cull each year, and extract a certain number of wapiti from the area. In the meantime, they make the habitat better, so they’re doing a lot of conservation work around increasing the amount of bird numbers through pest control.

**MELINDA** Yes, from my reading it sounds like it’s making a real difference.

**TOM** Yeah. Just in the last couple of years, we’ve got a new fundraising stream through money that we’ve raised through partnerships with BurgerFuel. That’s what WithWild is about. It’s creating value around... I don’t want to say pests, but around introduced wild animals.

**MELINDA** Perhaps my understanding is wrong, but I thought deer were damaging to the native ecosystem, which is why their numbers are controlled. What’s the reason you wouldn’t use the word ‘pest’?







**TOM** Well, technically they are pests, but we think that when we talk about them as pests that their value can be diminished in people’s minds. Wapiti is an amazing protein, probably better than most farm-raised animals. It’s a pure protein source from Fiordland. In many ways it’s like eating native fauna. It’s Fiordland on a plate.

**MELINDA** It’s a really interesting story of how they were introduced to New Zealand, isn’t it, with, I think, 10 of the first 18 animals being gifts from the American President Teddy Roosevelt.

**TOM** That’s right. The 100-year anniversary of hunting licenses being issued was a month ago, and we took a group of chefs down to Fiordland, as well as Jesse Mulligan, who wrote a big story about it. It’s been awesome to see how well restaurants and chefs have received it.

**MELINDA** Are you a hunter yourself?

**TOM** I grew up in Southland, but I wouldn’t classify myself as a hunter. I’ve been hunting, but I don’t own a gun, and I don’t go out.

**MELINDA** More of a fisherman?

**TOM** Yeah, a fisher, gatherer, forager.

**MELINDA** Had you tasted wapiti before you embarked on this project?

**TOM** I’d tasted Fiordland venison, which was probably red deer, but the genetics is a cross-breed. They did some DNA testing, and it sits at around 50% Wapiti now instead of red deer, which is incredible to have. For a farmer that’s breeding in a new line, introducing a new sheep breed, you only really need 10% of the DNA of a specific breed to get the qualities and the attributes. So, to have 50% of wapiti in the breed, it’s become its own subspecies now, Fiordland Wapiti. It’s different to the North American Wapiti. But they display and they look like a wapiti.

**MELINDA** When I first read about wapiti, I had a moment of confusion about how long the deer had been in New Zealand. The name looks and sounds Māori, but it’s actually a Native American word, isn’t it?

**TOM** Yes, it is.

**MELINDA** Taste-wise, what do you like about the meat?

**TOM** It’s got a really intense depth of flavour. We think that because of its diet, it has this amazing slight oiliness to it in a really good way. And the hue’s different as well, verging on deep, red bronze, whereas red deer can be really light, kind of a brick red. The flavour is superior to any other breed of deer.

**MELINDA** How are you serving it on the menu at kingi at the moment?



Wapiti venison strip loin, beetroot slaw, cherries, mint

**TOM** We’ve had it on for a couple of years now in different dishes. At the moment, we’re serving the neck, which is braised and finished through the wood fire. It’s amazing just how much meat is on the neck. Wapiti are a grazing animal and they’ve got big heads, so they’re roaming around and using their necks all the time. They’ve got big antlers, so the necks have lots of beautiful intercostal meat that, when you braise it, breaks down and is super-delicious. We’re doing that as a sharing meal, served with pickled cherries, beetroot slaw, and then a jus. I think we’re the only restaurant that has the neck on the menu, which is cool.

**MELINDA** With your nose to tail approach to food, am I right in thinking you’re ordering specific cuts that might be less popularly used? You’re not getting a whole wapiti, and seeing what you can do with it, are you?

**TOM** No. They process the wapiti in Southland. That’s where the whole processing’s done, where they take the skin off, break it into the large muscle groups, and then it goes to Wellington to have the secondary processing done. So, when we get pieces in, say we get some legs, they come broken down into the five muscle groups. We just take the approach of full utilisation of the animal. There’s no bad bit. It’s just more of how to apply the right cooking technique to make it delicious.

**MELINDA** And what sort of feedback have you had from the customers on it?

**TOM** People love it. It’s one of those visual things; when it’s coming through the restaurant, it’s quite impressive. The neck’s around 800 grams, so it’s substantial.

**MELINDA** You’re also using it over at Daily Bread as well, aren’t you? In a wapiti pie?

**TOM** Yeah, that’s right. We’re using the shoulder meat to do a wapiti pie, and that’s amazing. Again, we’re braising long, slow, just taking a traditional approach. Lots of red wine, and then a mirepoix, which is your carrots and garlic, so carrots, onion, celery, that adds to the taste.





## Te Taiao Environment

### GOALS FOR 2024

To review and update the sustainability storytelling on our website to reflect our status and priorities after three years in operation, and to share new stories around our sustainability practices and partnerships.

To extend our tree-planting programme at The Landing to include Green Cleans at the hotel.

To give team members the opportunity to participate in our 2024 tree-planting programme at The Landing, along with a beach clean-up during the same visit.









# Te Tāngata People and Culture

The Hotel Britomart employs a little over 100 full and part-time workers. The average age of employee is 29 years, and gender diversity has a slight male skew. There's a diverse range of ethnicities – more than 30 at last count.

The hotel has had a strong recruitment drive in the last 12 months, to address team and industry shortages brought on by the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, and has grown the overall team size by around 50 percent from the previous year.

Employee wellbeing and retention is a high priority for the hotel's management team. All members of the team are paid at or above Living Wage standards, and have access to the Employee Access Programme for wellbeing, financial and life counselling support. Team members are celebrated on their birthdays, and monthly team celebrations are held recognising a Team Member of the Month, Leader of the Quarter, and Team Member and Manager of the Year.



# Social Procurement Policy

Social procurement is an approach of choosing business suppliers based not only on cost, but on the social value that the economic relationship can have for the wider community. Some ways social procurement policies can generate social value include:

- Working with diverse businesses, which employ members of under-represented ethnic, age, gender or ability groups
- Working with businesses that have active social giving programmes to address homelessness, women’s rights, health-related charities, food poverty, community support, etc
- Working with businesses that use proven fair-trade and sustainable sourcing and production practices

The Hotel Britomart has a social procurement policy of ensuring 95 percent of all procurement through The Hotel Britomart and food and beverage outlets at the hotel originate from New Zealand suppliers. Further to that, 80% of all procurement is New Zealand made, reducing the need for importation, and localising the supply chain to reduce carbon emissions.



## SIX FOR GOOD

One of the hotel’s key supply partners is Astro Hospitality, which operates the Six For Good initiative. Sustainable tissues and toilet paper, every carton of branded product includes a donation to six charities: Big Buddy, CureKids, Foster Hope, Kids Can, Upside Downs Education Trust, Heart Kids

In the previous 12-month period, The Hotel Britomart ordered 303 cartons of toilet tissue and 19 cartons of facial tissue through the Six For Good programme, resulting in a donation of \$966 to the selected charities.

## SOAP AID

Another key partner of the business is SoapAid, a not-for-profit organisation that recycles soap and sends it to communities in need within the Pacific area, improving hygiene, helping prevent disease and reducing waste to landfill.

In the past 12 months, The Hotel Britomart sent 275kg of soap to SoapAid to be donated to these communities. Lucy Vincent, founder of Sans [ceuticals], the key soap supplier for the hotel, says it’s rewarding to know the brand’s products have a productive second life. “One of the beauties of soap is its ability to be effectively recycled because of its inherently hygienic qualities. We’re so pleased that both hotel guests and communities in need are enjoying and benefitting from our products.”

## BALD ANGELS

Each year, alongside the wider Cooper and Company team, The Hotel Britomart holds an in-house collection of good condition second-hand clothing, blankets, sleeping bags, shoes and other winter items. These are donated to the Northland-based charitable trust Bald Angels, which supports communities in need in Te Tai Tokerau.





## INTERVIEW

# Ryan Cheemee

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER AT  
THE HOTEL BRITOMART



After a challenging period for hospitality industry recruitment, The Hotel Britomart is fully staffed and looking forward to evolving the team as they grow together.

**MELINDA WILLIAMS** Can we start out by establishing the size of the team at The Hotel Britomart now, after three years in operation?

**RYAN CHEEMEE** As of today, we have 107 team members. That gives us a 76.8 FTE, and I'll get to why that's important soon. As you'll imagine, we've got a mix of full-time, part-time and casual team members. When I joined in May last year, we were at a total of 76 team members. This means we've now got more team members than rooms, which supports the hotel's delivery of personalised, genuine and exceptional guest experiences.

**MELINDA** Right, so you've seen quite a lot of growth over the last year.

**RYAN** We have. Back then, we were at a 45.7 FTE [full-time equivalents], so we've grown quite a lot despite the odds; even with Covid impacting us and the talent shortage in the market, we've managed to push through. There was a bit of blood, sweat and tears, but we've managed to get there and build a really strong and talented team. In terms of statistics, of the 107, 79 of our team are New Zealand citizens or New Zealand residents, which is about 73% of our team. 73.8% to be exact. And then we've got the remaining 28 or 26.2% of our team that are on either working holiday visas, student visas or work visas.

**MELINDA** What sort of diversity is there across the team?

**RYAN** In terms of the average age of our team, we're around 29 years old, with a pretty even gender split, just slightly more of our team identifying as male than female.

**MELINDA** What kind of turnover rate does the hotel have, and how does it compare against the industry average?

**RYAN** Looking at the financial year, we've managed to retain 82.5% of our team, which we're really happy about. We have seen a few of our team leave this year, with a recurring theme of finally taking their opportunity to travel and do their Overseas Experiences after Covid, whether it's been going over to the US or Australia, or China.

**MELINDA** Would that be higher than a normal year?

**RYAN** It's early days still. I think we're doing much better in terms of our retention in comparison to last year. If I look at just last month, we saw 1.8% rate of turnover at the hotel versus last year, it was not uncommon to see 10 to 11% in turnover in consecutive months. It's a huge improvement month-to-month on last year. But again, things change so rapidly and it only takes one month for all your leavers to hit in one month and skew the data a little bit.

**MELINDA** Is the hospitality industry quite a transitional industry in general, with a higher level of turnover being pretty normal within the industry?

**RYAN** Historically, it always has been. I think it's no secret that the hospitality industry also relies heavily on students, international students, working holiday visas, working visas, et cetera. They're all not necessarily indefinite unless they go onto secure residency. Naturally, they do tend to end and impact your turnover. Covid has only increased that, with team members wanting to go overseas now that they have the chance to do so. We're still seeing that happening this year, but we still do whatever we can do for the things that we can control to keep our team here and really listen to their feedback. We also had to show our ability to be flexible during this time, with a couple of our team members needing to go overseas for family emergencies and needing the option to work remotely, making use of our flexible working policy.





**MELINDA** During the time when recruitment was really tough, what sort of things did you do to attract and keep talent?

**RYAN** We really had to sell the dream. It wasn't just about the hotel, but selling the industry and the type of work that we do. Keeping really close-knit relationships with our hospitality schools, helping encourage people into the industry through courses and study, through work experience programmes – for example, with the Restaurant Association and the Hospo Start programme, AUT's work-integrated learning and even the Gateway programme with Year 12 -13 high school students. That's been really key. And we've managed to find people who have fallen in love with the work that they do and really see a career here. We've now got a really strong team that's stable and looking to develop their careers. Our next challenge is being able to provide opportunities for growth and development. Another great initiative was the creation of our own careers portal on our website, and a recruitment video to support selling the dream and offer potential candidates an insight into our culture and what it's like to work at The Hotel Britomart.

**MELINDA** So how do you go about that? What are the main elements of the hotel's approach to making team members feel professionally valued and able to develop their careers?

**RYAN** First of all, we've got a really supportive team of supervising managers that, day-to-day, will listen and help our team at any time. We keep an open-door policy, so anyone who needs support is welcome to see one of the many people available. And we do offer things like the Employee Assistance Programme if anyone is needing a confidential service.

But on top of that, some of the other initiatives we've brought into play are that each month, we host two coffee catch-up sessions. It's really an opportunity for myself and Clinton to sit down for a casual coffee and get to know members of the team a bit more. We share information about our roles and what's happening in the hotel, what's up and coming, what they can look forward to and get excited about. One of the key reasons we brought this in was to offer another feedback channel. It could be positives, or it could be areas for improvement related to their job satisfaction. And then we will consider and action that feedback. It's been a really handy tool and I think the team have responded well to it.

On top of this, each month we host a team member celebration where we invite the entire team for an afternoon tea. The leadership team provides updates on the progress and performance of the company, we welcome new team members and celebrate milestone anniversaries and our

Team Member of the Month and Leader of the Quarter awards.

**MELINDA** What kind of interesting suggestions have come out of that?

**RYAN** Actually, in March this year, we did our annual engagement survey. This initiative has come out of that survey. We've taken note of the responses from the survey and formed action plans, which we used to hone our focus for this year and form our HR strategy for 2023. What we were really happy to see is that the majority of the team reported a "family or team feeling" at the hotel and a sense of empowerment to make decisions to improve our guest experience. On top of that, they also reported that they felt cared for by their managers.

That was really great to see. But of course, we also run these surveys to hear the things that aren't going so well. Some things the team are really focused on for 2023 is new benefits, more social activities together outside the workplace and team building, more training and then also that feedback piece as well.

**MELINDA** Have you brought in more social and team-building events now?

**RYAN** Yes, towards the end of last year, we implemented an initiative that allows our departments to go as a team and do a monthly celebration. Each month, we have activities happening, whether they're social activities or recognition pieces. For example, it could be going down to Holey Moley [a local mini-golf club] and doing something interactive, or it could be vouchers or experiences, recognitions and so on. That's been really fun. We also do our own events at the hotel and we get involved with the Britomart team social club. And every now and then, we'll do wellbeing-oriented activities, like Les Mills classes for the entire team.

**MELINDA** When people first join the team, how do you induct them into the company and familiarise them with the brand and their role?

**RYAN** Once we've successfully hired someone, for me, it's important that we're able to provide them with the tools and the knowledge they need to hit the ground running. On their Day One, we ensure they are taken out into Britomart and familiarised with the neighborhood. We do a bit of a walk around, we share stories, we share knowledge, and then on top of that, just make sure they know where to go within the hotel so they're not getting lost.

Within their first month, we put them through a one-day brand training session, where they learn what it means to be a team member at The Hotel Britomart. Our brand values, our service philosophies, our purpose, which is to deliver



exceptional experiences for our guests. On top of that, learning about our commitment to sustainability and what that actually looks like in our day-to-day roles. That's a really important part of what we're doing here.

After three months of employment, our managers will schedule a sit-down and check-in on that onboarding experience. Have we lived up to the expectations of our new team members? After that, we'll have a mid-year review and an end-of-year review, where they'll set goals, and at the end of the year, we check them, and whether we provided the resources for them to achieve those goals. It's really all about setting our team up for success from early on. We also then offer cross-training for development in other areas of the hotel and advertise all our vacancies internally. We really want to see our team getting interested in other areas of the hotel and the business.

One of the other things that we do from Day One is introduce team members to our online training platform Typsy. It's a hospitality-focused portal and library of over 1000 courses, where people can learn new skills and knowledge, like latte art, knife skills or even revenue management. You might be working as a food and beverage attendant in the hotel but have a goal of entering into revenue. Typsy is an independent

platform, promoted through our membership of Hospitality New Zealand. The courses are recognised by all properties that are also using the platform. Once you complete a course, you get a certificate. If someone was coming to us, they could bring their certificates and we would recognise those.

**MELINDA** The initial interview process itself is a way of ensuring your team members are likely to be a good fit for the team culture, right?

**RYAN** Absolutely. Sustainability is one of the things we quiz when we are doing that initial interaction in a phone interview. We like to ensure that the people we are recruiting are like-minded and passionate about what we believe in.

**MELINDA** Thinking about the broader hospitality industry, what opportunities do you see for the industry to make changes to become a more appealing place to work?

**RYAN** This comes back to investing in people, training, supporting and listening to feedback from their team, and also acting on that feedback. Offering great team benefits, regularly reviewing remuneration, ensuring that they're meeting the market, paying the Living Wage. People are looking for stability and they need to know that hospitality and The Hotel Britomart can provide them with the career they've been looking for.





## Te Tāngata People & Culture

### GOALS FOR 2024

To hold at least six structured learning opportunities in association with the team at Cooper and Company head office, which offer team members the chance to learn more on a range of social and enviromental sustainability topics while participating in a closer shared company culture.

To find a partner organisation that can offer regenerative travel opportunities to interested guests of the hotel.

To encourage team members to collectively contribute an average of two paid hours each volunteering with a community or environmental organisation or initiative of their choice.





# The Hotel Britomart Sustainability Goals for 2024

## MANA WHAKAHAERE GOVERNANCE

To work with the team at Cooper and Company to more closely integrate the cultures of the two companies and establish a wider sense of belonging and opportunity, with a view to benefiting team retention.

To achieve the reduction goals set within our Toitu Carbonreduce plan by creating a structured action plan.

To create a one-page document that clearly outlines the total carbon emissions associated with a standard night's stay or holding a meeting at The Hotel Britomart, to enable corporate clients working to carbon budgets to clearly understand our carbon value proposition.

## TE TAIAO ENVIRONMENT

To review and update the sustainability storytelling on our website to reflect our status and priorities after three years in operation, and to share new stories around our sustainability practices and partnerships.

To extend our tree-planting programme at The Landing to include Green Cleans at the hotel.

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