

Taonga take centre stage in Nelson

Two incredibly rare taonga from Kaitāia's Te Ahu Museum, dating back to the 13th Century, have been hand-delivered to a South Island museum for an exhibition.

Te Ahu staff member Louisa Kiddie, Museum Trust Vice Chair Tom Allen and trust member Connie Hassan presented the precious toki poutangata (ceremonial adzes) to the Nelson Provincial Museum last month. They will be on loan until October.

The toki pakohe are sourced from Te Taihū-o-te-Waka (top of the South Island) but their notched edges are characteristics predominantly found in Te Tai Tokerau. They are very rare, with only six known in the country.

The precious artifacts were carried to Nelson in a waterproof, dust-proof, and impact-proof case and will be part of the Nelson museum's upcoming exhibition on pakohe argillite adzes and axe heads.

"The toki poutangata are large, quite heavy pieces with notches on each side and hold important ancestral significance," explains Te Ahu Museum and Archives Manager, Whina Te Whiu. "They are linked to the chief Kahungunu, originally from Tinotino Pā in Ōrongotea, later named Kaitāia. He was known for his prowess in land and sea endeavours and undertook ambitious projects, including excavating a canal from Awanui to Kaitāia to aid Ngāti Awa's navigation. He later left the north to travel south."



These incredibly rare toki poutangata (ceremonial adzes) from Te Ahu Museum in Kaitāia will be part of an exhibition in Nelson.

Te Ahu Museum was approached by Hāmuera Manihera, Kaitiaki Taonga Māori Manager at the Nelson Provincial Museum, to borrow the items for its exhibition *Pakohe*.

The exhibition explores trade among iwi of Te Taihū-o-te-Waka, looking at the distribution of the toki to other takiwā and how they were used and adapted.

The artifacts were presented to the museum at a ceremony attended by Hāmuera Manihera, Ngāti Koata trustee Kimiora McGregor, Ngāti Kuia representative Christine Hemi, and Nelson Provincial Museum Chief Executive Lucinda Blackley-Jim.

The exhibition is in the upper gallery of the Nelson Provincial Museum from 28 June to 6 October.

Free public Wi-Fi for Hokianga



Internet users can connect to FNDC Community Wi-Fi for free.

The council's Nothing But Net programme, which enables communities to connect to the internet by providing free public Wi-Fi, recently completed an extension into the Hokianga with hotspots now available at Ōpononi and Rāwene.

The award-winning programme has been running since 2021 and co-ordinates the installation of high-speed fibre (by Chorus) along with Wi-Fi access points, allowing anyone to connect to the internet wirelessly.

Internet users can access one of the free Wi-Fi hotspots by selecting the 'FNDC Community Wi-Fi' option in their phone's network settings when they are in range of the service. No password is required.

In the months ahead, the programme will continue to extend Wi-Fi access to Far North residents and visitors with plans for community 'hubs' at marae, town squares, along cycle trails, and health centres.

Enabling Far North communities to better access free online services makes practical tasks like paying bills, accessing bank accounts, and connecting with friends easier. It also opens up education and job

opportunities and is a useful health and safety tool for those enjoying remote adventure activities.

The \$350,000 programme is mostly funded by the government's Tourism Infrastructure Fund, with the Far North District Council also contributing financially, including dedicating staff to run the programme.

Citycare wins key contract



Citycare Property will take over a range of maintenance services.

New Zealand-owned property maintenance company, Citycare Property, has been awarded a contract to manage Far North community facilities for the next five years starting on 1 July 2024.

The contract will see Citycare Property take over a full range of maintenance services including reserve mowing, garden and playground maintenance, toilet care, litter control, town centre pavement cleaning and grave digging in all three Far North wards.

The multimillion-dollar contract, currently held by Green by Nature, ends 30 June 2024. Property maintenance is one of the council's most significant contracts worth \$16 million over five years.

By specifying a five-year contract (with an option to increase to nine years) the council aimed to encourage

the successful provider to invest in Far North communities and people, and to fund suitable plant and equipment.

After evaluating all tenders, the council's procurement team concluded that, as well as securing a proven operator, Citycare Property offered the best service and value for money for ratepayers.

Far North water restrictions lift

Level 2 water restrictions applied during the summer months to Kerikeri-Waipapa, Paihia-Ōpua-Waitangi, Kawakawa-Moerewa, Ōpononi-Ōmāpere, Ōmanaia-Rāwene and Kaikohe-Ngāwha have been lifted.



Signs to raise awareness about restrictions have been removed.

All Far North water sources are at healthy levels thanks to recent rainfall having a positive impact on rivers and groundwater sources. Lower temperatures combined with consistent rain, predicted in long-term forecasts, were the main reasons for the decision.

Two of the council's eight water schemes - Kaitāia and Ōkaihau - remained at Level 1 throughout the summer season. Far North residents are always encouraged to use water sensibly.