

# New bike track developed by school proving popular

A new Brooklyn bike track is already proving a popular community facility – and fundraising is continuing to make it even better.

The 400m asphalt track at Vogelmorn Park was officially opened on May 4 by Wellington Mayor Justin Lester and MP for Rongotai Paul Eagle.

It has been developed by Ridgway School with the help of the local community, including parents from Ridgway and Brooklyn schools and members of the Kaka Project.

Named the Tawatawa-Vogelmorn Bike Track, it is the eighth track in the city to be developed in conjunction with local schools. It has been substantially funded through Wellington City Coun-

cil's Bikes in Schools programme.

Mayor Justin Lester says the Council is keen to support and encourage the development and use of bike tracks so children can learn to ride, and become confident and competent bike riders.

"We want to see young people out there biking, and these tracks give them safe places, and lots of opportunity to get started."

The new track, which is adjacent to Ridgway School in Mornington, was sealed in March and has been proving a popular community attraction ever since, including after school, at weekends and during the recent school holidays.

Ridgway School Principal Kathryn Smith says their aim is to make sure every child who comes through the school learns to ride

safely.

"It's exciting. We'll be using it as part of our fitness programme and totally expect other schools to come and make use of it too," she says. "The park gets a little boggy in winter, but with the bike track, we'll be able to use it all year around for a range of activities including biking and running."

The team behind the fundraising effort is thankful for the support it has had so far, including grants from ACC, the Four Winds Foundation and NZ Transport Agency, but is still working hard to raise more money to add a bike skills area and pump track.

Businesses can support the project by buying special features like wobbly bridges and chicanes, and there is a Give a Little Page.



Spencer Ravji, 5, enjoys a ride on the new Tawatawa-Vogelmorn Bike Track during the opening event earlier this month.

PHOTO: Supplied



Flight paramedic Hannah Latta with her seven-month-old son Sam. PHOTO: Supplied

## Flight paramedic celebrates new role on Mother's Day

If being a flight paramedic wasn't tough enough, Hannah Latta is now raising her first child too.

Add to the mix studying a Master of Health Science endorsed in Aviation Transport and Retrieval at the University of Otago and running a photography business on the side, and her schedule couldn't be any busier.

But the key for Hannah is good organisation and a few helping hands.

Sam was born in October and, like many first-borns, has changed Hannah's priorities.

"Being a mother impacts every aspect of your life. It's no longer about you and your goals. It's

about you and your family.

"Motherhood changes your perspective and makes you more compassionate for fellow mothers and their children. You develop a mutual understanding that can't be replicated."

As a Wellington Free Ambulance Flight Paramedic and crucial member of Life Flight's Westpac Helicopter and Air Ambulance crew, Hannah helps provide intensive care and specialist medical rescue services to the greater Wellington and Wairarapa region.

It's a skill that's benefited her at home, too.

"Thanks to the medical skills and knowledge that come with

being a flight paramedic, it has influenced my new role as a mother.

"But don't get me wrong; I still panic over the little things, just as any new mother would."

In amongst all the chaos, Hannah says it's important not to lose herself as a person.

"I have my partner, Shane, and a wider support network who know the value of my work and support me whenever I need them. They're pretty great."

"But I also think it's important to take time out for yourself and continue to do the things that make you happy. My partner and I recently took Sam out on an overnight tramp, and he loved it!"

## IBRA plans court action over cycleway

By Jamie Adams

The Island Bay Cycleway saga shows no signs of abating as the suburb's representative group aims to take the Council to court over the matter.

In October 2015, the Wellington City Council began construction on a new version of the existing dual cycleway on The Parade, with the carparks moved into the carriageway and the bicycle lanes moved to the left of them on the road and on the footpaths behind bus stops.

Construction on The Parade was completed in February 2016 and since that time the Island Bay Residents' Association says the cycleway has caused confusion and distress for many locals.

In June 2016 the Council agreed to review the cycleway and to take heed of local opinion.

A replacement design was later adopted that would see the cycle lanes remain to the left of parked cars on raised paths attached to the footpaths.

The association says the new design did not address community concerns, and as a consequence it complained to the Ombudsman, requesting an investigation into the process and the outcome.

Now it has decided it would like the assistance of the High Court in this matter and accordingly the Ombudsman's investigation has been placed on hold.

President Vicki Greco says the association has instructed its solicitor to advise the Council that it proposes to seek a judicial review of the Council's decision.

Vicki says the timeframe of the outcome will depend on whether the council fights the issue in court, should it end up there, or settles with the IBRA out of court.

She says the IBRA remains committed to seeing The Parade's layout reverted to what it was prior to 2015, with cycle lanes on the road-side of carparks, albeit with some modifications.

Southern ward councillor Fleur Fitzsimons says she "totally" supports the right of the IBRA to seek a judicial review, saying "it is an important part of our democratic framework".

Fleur continues to back the Council's "compromise solution" and is "hopeful" of finality.

Fellow southern ward councillor David Lee is also maintaining the Council's stance, saying the improvements "will benefit all road users".

He warns that seeking a judicial review is a costly process. "It is not about relitigating a decision, but a review of process. And, I'm confident the process has been robust."

Rongotai MP Paul Eagle, who voted with the Council when he represented the southern ward, says with construction not expected until the end of 2019 the Council and residents have plenty of time to reach an agreement without having to take the matter to court.

"The only winners in that situation will be the lawyers."