

Support for zero-waste heroes

Over \$100,000 has been awarded to three environmentally minded Waiheke organisations in the drive to tackle commercial and household waste on the island.

"In the next three years we aim to achieve zero waste when it comes to construction waste on Waiheke," says Jeremy O'Hanlon of Clean Island.

Jeremy's business, formerly known as The Rubbish Company, was awarded almost \$50,000 from Auckland Council's Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund.

"To start we will be ensuring 10 tonnes of Waiheke construction waste stays out of the landfill each week," he says.

"It's a big undertaking, and my wife and I have been pouring our energy and savings into it, so the grant is a huge help."

Clean Island has garnered support from Te Huruhi, Downers and Placemakers, and Jeremy is hoping to get more of the building community on board.

"Construction waste that's disposed of at the transfer station just goes into landfill, and I want to start working towards sorting, recycling and reusing this waste locally," he says.

The Waiheke Resources Trust was also awarded almost \$50,000 to expand the scope of its commercial composting operation.

"It means aggressive expansion," says

trust manager Michael Maahs of the reach of the grant. According to the trust, almost 50 percent of Waiheke waste sent to landfill can be composted, and if it were, there would be a significant reduction in toxic liquid from food scraps and garden waste, which contaminate local waterways.

The third recipient, Plastic Free Solutions, also known as Plastic Free Pantry, received a grant of almost \$10,000 to go towards reducing the use of soft plastics. At Plastic Free Pantry foodstuffs are sold

with vigour and urgency. After all, our oceans depend on it."

Anna says the funding will be used to invest in efficient glass washing and reuse systems to encourage a circular economy on Waiheke. • *Sophie Boladeras*



Jeremy O'Hanlon is aiming for zero construction waste on Waiheke within three years.

in glass jars, which the organisation picks up, sterilises and reuses.

"We are thrilled to receive the grant," says founder Anna Dawson.

"More than anything it's another vote of confidence. We are the only retailer on the island 100 percent focused on reducing packaging, and at times it feels like an impossible task however grants like this tell us to keep pursuing what we believe

Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund

Funding for the Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund comes from the national waste levy (currently set at \$10 per tonne) which is administered by the Ministry for the Environment.

The fund has \$500,000 to distribute annually, with one funding round per year for grants of over \$5000 and up to \$50,000 (September) and two funding rounds for grants of \$5000 and under (April and September).

The fund was created in 2013 to support projects and innovative solutions that promote or achieve waste management and minimisation, reduce waste to landfill following the objectives of the Auckland Council Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, and foster new ideas and encourage community participation in reducing waste to landfill.

The fund is open to community groups, businesses, iwi, Māori organisations, early childhood centres, schools, tertiary organisations and other community-based organisations operating in the Auckland region. •

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Clean Island, aiming to get 10 ton of Waiheke waste out of landfill per week

CLEAN ISLAND