

BROWNS BAY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CHAIRPERSON REPORT 2023-2024



Hello and welcome to the 2024 Browns Bay Business Association AGM. First, I want to thank Malcom McDonald for all of his work and time as Chair over the past five years. He leaves big shoes to fill. Thank you for taking the time to be here today. It's been another year of recovery and survival for our businesses. With the pandemic and extreme weather events behind us we anticipated a relatively normal year where businesses could recover, consolidate, and move forward in more buoyant times. But the depressed economy, steep rise in the cost of living, and continuing hangovers from covid made it another tough year.



The increase in the cost of borrowing and mortgage rates have resulted in a severe hit to discretionary spend for many. Marketview statistics reflect the stagnation in spend growth for the 12 months to June 2024 in Browns Bay. The Manager's Report discusses this further.

As a Business Association it was a priority for us to deliver a successful programme of events and promotions to both engage the general public and benefit our members. We ran a series of networking and nibbles evenings for members which facilitated businesses meeting up and sharing aspirations and ethos amongst themselves, and to provide input from motivational speakers who helped to encourage business innovation during difficult times.

We are proud that we succeeded in delivering five free community events, four of which are organised inhouse. We also did two Shop Local promotions to encourage people into town to experience what Browns Bay has to offer. We are able to measure the success of event days in Dollar terms through Marketview data, but we also believe that there are considerable intangible benefits of showcasing the town through these events. We acknowledge the businesses that have generously sponsored our events and promotions this the year: Stihl Shop, Safe Drive Vehicle Testing, House of Travel and New World, to mention a few key ones. Hibiscus and Bays Local Board generously allocated grants to the Christmas Parade and Summer Spectacular, for which we are extremely grateful. Local

Board representatives advocate long and hard behind the scenes, and we really appreciate their inclusive approach, being informed and consulted on initiatives that keep Browns Bay moving in a positive direction.

It is fantastic to have welcomed many new businesses into town. There has been a focus on ensuring that newcomers are informed about the Business Association's role, and the benefits of being a member. It is also extremely pleasing to see empty shops filling up. Alas there are large (ex-bank) tenancies in strategic locations that remain empty.

I want to end on a note of thanks to all our sponsors, supporters and volunteers who make extremely helpful contributions to the success of our annual programme: the executive committee members who volunteer their time and expertise; Sally Cargill for lending a hand with significant events; our Treasurer, Robinson & Running, for their outstanding service and dedication to the association, and the Town Centre Manager, Kim Murdoch, whose work and passion for Browns Bay are invaluable.

Thank you again for attending the AGM. We look forward to a successful Summer at the seaside and prosperous trading in 2025.

Lara Kamionka September 2024