

1. About me

I attended school at Mercury Bay Area School from 1982 – 1995. In 1996 I attended UNITEC where I completed a Bachelor of International Communication. In 2002 I completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Business at Auckland University of Technology.

I have worked in marketing, communications and public relations across a number of industries including construction, engineering, oil and gas, aviation, marine, education and health recruitment. I spent six years working for Royal Dutch Shell, in both London and The Hague, including three years in a global external affairs role for Shell Aviation. Currently I administer our family building business. I am also a marriage celebrant.

In 2013 my friend and I launched the concept of the Whitianga Charity Ball. We've had great success and buy in from the community. Over the past three years we have raised over \$25,000.00 for various charities.

In 2015 I was the manager for the Junior Rugby Rippas. This year I am the secretary for the Mercury Bay Junior Rugby Club. Last weekend we had our prize giving and Blackout night fundraiser which I organised in conjunction with the junior rugby committee.

Earlier in 2016 I also coordinated a pink ribbon breakfast which raised money for the NZ Breast Cancer Foundation.

I would see the Whitianga Charity Ball as one of my key achievements over the past few years. We volunteer our time to design, develop, promote and then host an event which raises funds for local charities and not-for-profit groups. Over the last three events we have raised some \$25,000.00 for the Coromandel Rescue Helicopter Trust, Community Pool and the Hot Water Beach Life Guards. This October we are hosting the Heroes and Villains Ball, which will benefit the Whitianga Sea Scouts, who are fundraising to build their new Scout Den.

This began as a simple idea with no budget; it was executed through the share determination of two women who wanted to give something to the community. Now it is a fixed event on the calendar, which always sells out. If we aren't promoting the up-coming event we are constantly being asked what the theme is, or who the charity is for the next event. It has become a 'must do' on the communities social calendar in this short space in time.

2. Approach to Local Community Matters

The role of a council should be to focus on core activities while ensuring community and environmental wellbeing. If there is the real need for a non-core economic development I would like to see council work together with private business to see it come about - in more of a facilitation role. A council should focus on quality infrastructure and public services.

Residents and ratepayers needs vs. Business exploitation are very difficult to discuss in general terms. I feel that all applications should be looked at on case by case bases weighing up the pros and cons.

The future of our area is important to me. I am passionate about the sustainable growth of our area and I feel strongly that this should not happen at the cost of our environment. I have recently read an interesting article about business and council working together particularly in the areas of beach erosion. I would also like to see more done about effluent travelling into our water systems.

Rekha Giri-Percival, Candidate for Community Board, Mercury Bay Ward

More than a campaign based on promises I am campaigning on the overall concept of: Representing the wishes and needs of our people. Above all I strongly feel that it is important the Community Board supports and maintains critical infrastructure while ensuring careful planning for the future.

3. Hahei Issues

I understand that traffic and tourist management is a huge issue at present. From my personal experience over last summer there is a need for more footpaths in the area, pedestrian traffic needs to feel safer. Listening to those who are experiencing this day in day out is key to the solution. I am here to listen and represent the voice of the Hahei community.

Success is best achieved when EVERYONE is on the same page. Developing another major tourist attraction would only make sense once the current traffic challenges are sorted and future proofed. Council's role should be to support the community with what they see as 'fit for purpose' solutions. In this case I see that as - enough cost effective parking supported by Park n Ride. This could be extended into a ferry and bus ticket (combo deal/price) so that visitors can travel from Mercury Bay over to Hahei without bringing their cars.

I am assuming that funds have not been allocated for a spatial/development plan. Having clarity on what is expected should be ironed out as a first step. This would mean bringing together key parties like the HBRA, the business association, as well as referencing the Hahei Community Plan. First off coordinating and facilitating discussions so that any plan development would be achievable. However, given the visitor numbers and focus the area will receive during the proposed Captain Cook celebrations in 2019 it would make sense to work toward making a start on this. One thing I would love to see included into this plan is a series of signs that give an overview of historical sites. These are dotted around Mercury Bay town – it would be great to extend this to other sites of interest across the Mercury Bay ward.

Preserving our pristine marine and outdoor environments is important. I would like to see more done about effluent travelling into our water systems. At this stage I don't have the full picture on what water sampling is completed by the council or regional council. I also feel that environmentally efficient wastewater treatment systems should be encouraged into new building developments – rather than the common septic tank – as these have numerous benefits.

Thank you for the opportunity to complete your questionnaire.

Warm regards

Rekha Giri-Percival

Please visit: www.communityhosting.co.nz/rekha-giri-percival if you would like to know more about me.