



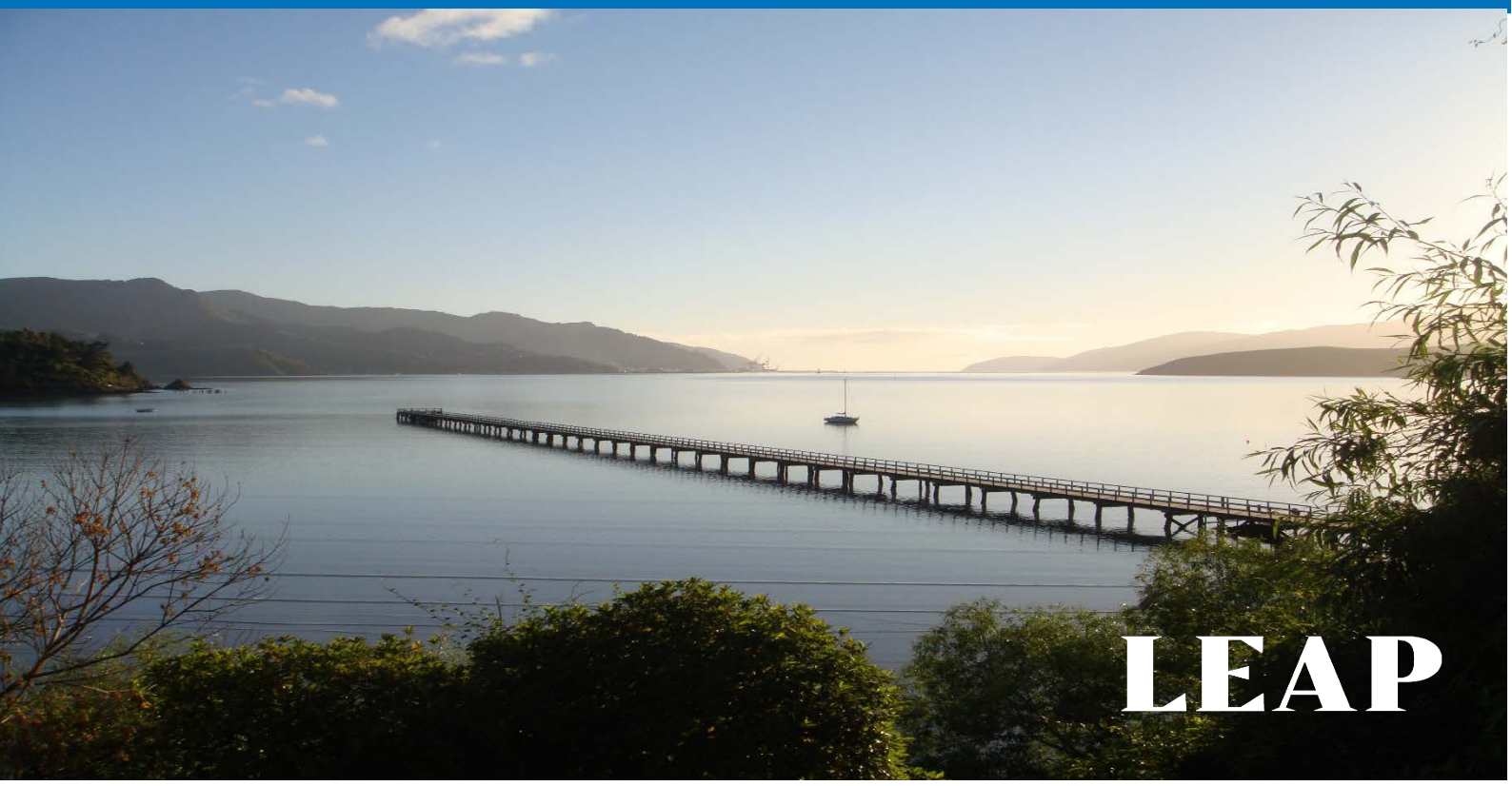
**LINCOLN  
UNIVERSITY**  
Centre for Land,  
Environment  
& People

**LEAP Research Report**  
No. 61

# Jetties and Small Settlement Regeneration in Te Pataka o Rakaihautū/Banks Peninsula

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**LEAP**

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*Front page photo courtesy of Governors Bay Jetty Restoration Trust*

National  
**SCIENCE**  
Challenges

**BUILDING BETTER  
HOMES, TOWNS  
AND CITIES**

Ko Ngā wā Kainga hei  
whakamāhorahora

# Introduction

This report contains a summary of the key findings from a research project exploring the community-led restoration initiatives of jetties in small settlements around Te Pataka o Rakaihautū/Banks Peninsula. This project is based on a Lincoln University Summer research scholarship project titled *Jetties and small settlement regeneration in Banks Peninsula*, funded by Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge through AgResearch.

## Our study

Little research has previously been conducted on the role of jetties in small settlement rejuvenation. We wanted to delve into the importance of these marine structures in small communities and how the process and outcomes of community-led restoration can contribute to community spirit. Our study looked at three jetties: Takamatua, Kaioruru/Church Bay and Ōtoromiro/Governors Bay.

For this study we conducted 18 in-depth interviews: 8 from Governors Bay, 6 from Takamatua, 3 from Church Bay, and one interviewee who had more general knowledge of the area. Most of the participants we invited for an interview were directly involved with jetty restoration local to their area or were long-standing members of the community. All interviews were held in person, except one which was conducted via email. Interviewees were asked a mixture of semi-structured questions relating to the marine environment, the community, the jetty, and the process of the restoration.

In addition to interview data, we also drew on a range of documentary sources. These included council planning documents and meeting agendas/minutes, media articles that had been published about the jetties, and publicly available social media posts made by the Governors Bay Jetty Restoration Trust. Local Banks Peninsula historian Jane Robertson's book *Head of the Harbour* and online blog were a starting point for history on the area.

# Community-led Jetty Restoration

## Ōtoromiro / Governors Bay Jetty

Originally built in 1874, Governors Bay jetty was used in its early years for the transportation of produce. Due to the problematic mudflats of the harbour bed causing boats to become stuck, the jetty has been gradually extended over time to its current length of 300 metres.<sup>1</sup>

Following an engineer inspection, the jetty was closed to the public in July 2011. Three years later in 2014, another inspection was conducted, and the jetty was deemed to be in “a poor state of repair”.<sup>2</sup> The total cost of the repairs was estimated at \$7.8million, due to this mammoth expense, the council had no intention to carry out the restoration.

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson, J. (2016). *Head of the harbour*. Philip King Publisher.

<sup>2</sup> OCEL Consultants NZ Limited. (2014). *Governors Bay jetty structure condition assessment*  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54f3bccbe4b0d74e3cba5d78/t/5d905414f81c5b0c1716ac2a/1569739850922/Ocel+report.pdf>

The Governors Bay Jetty Restoration Trust (GBJRT) was formed in 2015 on a mission to ‘save the jetty’, starting with a meeting where “there was a lot of enthusiasm” to take action and save the jetty. The Trust was assembled by community members from interdisciplinary backgrounds with the collective goal of restoring the jetty for less than the quoted costs. After the Trust purchased the jetty off the Christchurch City Council for \$1, with the agreement to sell back to the Council on completion, the process towards restoration was underway.

The Trust members, in particular, were described as putting in a “mammoth effort” with “huge commitments” involved to keep it going. As one resident reflected:

*“... the extent to which people are prepared to go to save it or rebuild it is extraordinary ... it’s a reflection of the importance of the jetty in their lives.”*

Numerous fundraising activities have been undertaken over the years as a coordinated effort by the Trust, and the Council has agreed to match the money raised dollar for dollar. The jetty is finally due to be rebuilt with anticipated completion in 2023.



*Governors Bay jetty. Photo courtesy of Kate Oranje (2 December 2021).*

### **Kaioruru / Church Bay Jetty**

The Kaioruru / Church Bay jetty was built in 1907. Nestled in a secluded beach area on Banks Peninsula, its original purpose was to transport wool bales to Lyttleton as well as for the local



children to get to school.<sup>3</sup> A report assessing the condition of the jetty in 2011 found that it was in such dire condition that it was considered too unsafe to use. Considering this, and the lack of available funds, the Christchurch City Council made the decision not to finance the jetty repair.

Members of the community came together and began negotiating with the council about undertaking the repairs themselves, to which council agreed. In 2016 the restoration began through many community volunteer working bees led by three key members and a city council ranger who oversaw the project. As one resident reflected:

*“There was good knowledge and the confidence about the ability to do the work. We are also quite fortunate we’ve got some pretty good skills in the community ... We ended up doing everything by hand ... It was very labour intensive.”*

The jetty was successfully restored in December 2016. The overall effect was “bringing the community together” for the “big brand new opening for the jetty”, with the occasion marked by a sign stating “We have saved our jetty”. Kaioruru / Church Bay jetty was subsequently used as a ‘blueprint’ for other jetty restoration projects around the Peninsula.



Church Bay jetty 2021. Photo courtesy of Kate Oranje (2 December 2021).

## Takamatua Jetty

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<sup>3</sup> Robertson, J. (2019, January 12). *Church Bay/Kaioruru #4: The Jetty*. Between Land and Sea: Jetties of Whakapaupō/Lyttleton Harbour. <http://lytteltonharbourjetties.blogspot.com/2019/01/church-baykaioruru-4-jetty.html>

The Takamatua jetty was constructed in 1910 mainly to facilitate the transport of cheese from the bay to Akaroa by ferry. This jetty has a point of difference in the fact that it is built slightly out from the land to allow homeowners who lived further around the bay to drive their tractors between the jetty and the shore. The Takamatua Ratepayers Association have often carried out maintenance of the jetty, with the council commonly funding the materials used whilst the repairs would be performed by a member of the association.

The jetty had slowly degraded over time to the extent that they required further assistance from the council, but this was unsuccessful. Following the 2011 Canterbury earthquakes, a gate was erected by the council symbolising the closure of the jetty due to it being regarded as unsafe. Many members of the community came together to find a resolution as they did not want to see their jetty degrade further: “we can do this”.

In 2016 after long negotiations with the council, an agreement was reached that the council would pay for the materials required and the labour undertaken by members of the community. It started with a small group of people motivated to drive the repair project, but eventually, volunteer numbers grew: “when they saw it happening, they were willing to come and help”.

*“The more people that are involved, the easier the load is on any one of them and the more positive vibe you get going, which gets other people wanting to get involved.”*

Restoration was overseen by a council representative, who also oversaw the Church Bay jetty restoration. The jetty was successfully restored in March 2018.



*Takamatua jetty high tide 2021. Photo courtesy of Hamish Rennie (1 December 2021)*

# Significance of jetty restoration

## Value of the Jetties

Our research showed that jetties are deeply valued by people in a variety of ways. Many use jetties for a range of recreational activities such as fishing, walking along the jetty, jumping off it, and using it to launch a kayak or boat from were a common response.

However, many people also emphasised that the jetties offered much more than their functional purposes. As one interviewee put it: "I don't think you have to use something for it to be precious."

Jetties provide access to the marine environment to which many community members feel a connection and from which they get pleasure. Some utilise its access to nature to enhance their wellbeing and refer to it as the "Blue Hagley Park". Jetties provide an experience and offer a perspective of the bays from the end of the jetty that would otherwise require access to a boat. As one resident commented:

*it's really like walking on water [...] you stand at the end and there's water all around you. The land is quite away and you look out towards the heads there...It's just an amazing experience [...] it's another connection with nature of a different kind.*

Participants reported that their jetty is often used as "place of connection" with others in the community, and those from the wider area, who also find enjoyment in spending time on it. They are often greatly admired as part of the scenery, even if the jetty is not physically used by some, it is still appreciated visually, and as a destination to reach when out walking.

There is also strong intergenerational value in the jetties. Their presence incites queries about its history and purpose, and they are now engrained in the landscape of the bays. Fond childhood memories and sentimental feelings are often associated with jetties it's been a "signature part of their lives" for many. Several participants expressed their delight in creating further memories with their children and grandchildren on the jetty. These memories thus have created strong emotional attachments to the structures.

## Community Relationships

While there may be many community members who did not want to see their respective jetties close and decay into the sea, a handful of individuals put in their time and energy to make it a reality. Interviewees often spoke highly of the passion, dedication, and perseverance of the Takamatua Ratepayers Association, Church Bay Neighbourhood Association and Governors Bay Jetty Restoration Trust members. They took on the responsibility of communicating with the council, mobilising the community, coordinating working bees and fundraising events, drafting designs, and countless other tasks.

Interviewees from all three locations attribute the success (to date, at least, for Governors Bay) of the jetty projects to the various skillsets of multiple people in their communities (engineers, lawyers, architects, contractors, ex-builders, ex-farmers) and the uptake from the general population to lend a hand wherever they could. While there was often difficulty getting the projects off the ground, the



final volunteer numbers were at times so high that they needed to be turned away. As one resident reflected:

*“The process of engaging with the communities, determining skill sets, shared physical efforts, laughs/pain/sweat, arguments and solutions all played a strong connective role between the locals and those outside of the community.”*

It was repeatedly commented that the jetty restoration projects were instrumental in “bringing people together”. The social interactions and getting to know more members in their communities was considered hugely meaningful for many interviewees. The inclusiveness of involvement was commented on by many interviewees, with people who could not necessarily contribute physically to repairs providing a bounty of much appreciated morning teas and lunches.

Those connections have also persisted. It was often mentioned how the jetty has been instrumental in bringing together a range of people and improved relationships beyond the courtesy "hello" when passing each other. Having a "common goal" and "shared sense of achievement" enhanced community spirit.

### **Community-Council Interactions**

The jetty restoration projects have proven that community-led initiatives working alongside the council can lead to successful and positive outcomes. Particularly in Church Bay and Takamatua, after working through some hurdles and developing a tangible plan, in both cases a successful outcome was reached.

The process of the restoration was also reflected on positively. The community members involved in the rebuild spoke highly of their resulting relationship with the council on completion, with expressions like “amazing” and “couldn’t have been better”. More specifically they referred to the council member directly involved that was overseeing the projects and made the effort to work alongside the communities.

Governors Bay jetty is yet to be rebuilt and consequently the same relationships have not fully come to fruition. The ongoing council interactions and view on the relationship between council and community varied between interviewees.

### **Legacies of the Jetty Restorations**

A significant legacy of the jetty restorations is the energising of small settlement communities through restoring the jetty restoration process for future generations to benefit from.

For Takamatua, the jetty restoration project has had significant follow-on effects. After the community saw what they could achieve when working together, they now have the "confidence" to take on other projects, including a partnership with Ngai Tahu and DOC to improve inaka breeding, one hundred mustelid traps that require monitoring, and further planting and building projects. Robinsons Bay wharf repairs would not have occurred without the crucial input from one Takamatua resident in particular.

The Church Bay Neighbourhood Association reported that they usually have a willing volunteer base for community projects. They have also undertaken some other projects, including a new kayak rack and a seat at the land end of the jetty.

For Governors Bay, a significant event is the acquirement of the historical Lyttelton boathouse. This will soon be moved to the jetty's shore end, providing necessary storage for kayaks and dinghies and a meeting room to hold functions.

## Acknowledgements

We want to say a huge thank you to all the participants who agreed to partake in this study by generously giving us their valuable time to sit down for an interview, as well as those who couldn't participate but still assisted us in other ways. We hope you find pleasure in reading our findings.

Jess and Kate had the privilege of participating in a Lincoln University Summer research scholarship project titled *Jetties and small settlement regeneration in Banks Peninsula*, funded by Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge through AgResearch – we want to say thank you for giving us this opportunity and responsibility of undertaking this research.

The team would particularly like to thank Dr Mike Mackay of AgResearch for his initiating and ongoing support of the project.

## More information

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