

DONKEY SERENADE

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Editor - Lou Bartlett

Highfield Donkeys Launches New Website

SCAN THE QR CODE!

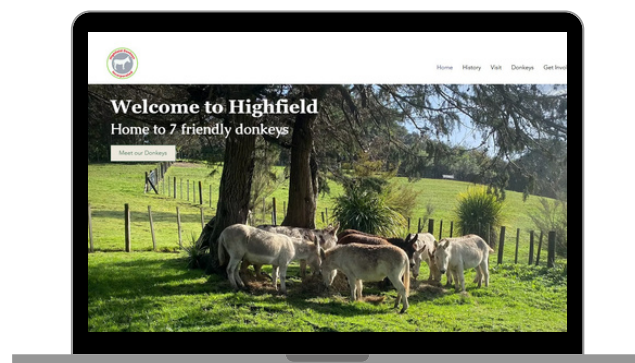


There's something delightfully charming about our donkeys – and now, thanks to the launch of www.highfelddonkeys.nz, it's easier than ever to learn about, connect with, and plan your visit to see them at Highfield Garden Reserve.

Highfield Donkeys has just unveiled a brand-new website, offering a fresh online home for all things Highfield-related. The new site has been designed to be user-friendly, simple to navigate and complementary to the popular Facebook page.

At www.highfelddonkeys.nz, you'll find:

- 🌿 **Discover the History:** The website invites visitors to explore the history of Highfield Garden Reserve – from its origins including the arrival of donkeys and their growing role in the landscape. It's a story of vision, care, and connection between people, animals, and the land.
- 📍 **Visit the Reserve:** Thinking about a trip to meet the donkeys in person? The site provides everything you need to plan your visit – directions, opening hours, accessibility info, and what to expect during your time at the Reserve.
- 🐴 **Meet the Donkeys:** Get to know the friendly herd of 7 donkeys – who's who and their family ties. You'll quickly see that this isn't just a group of animals – it's a tight-knit family.



- ❤️ **Get Involved:** Want to do more? Understand how you can support the Reserve through volunteering, memberships, or simply by spreading the word. Whether you have time, skills, or passion to share, there's several ways to contribute.
- 🎉 **Events to Remember:** Donkey Days are a highlight on the local calendar – free, fun, family-friendly events where visitors can enjoy time with the donkeys, take part in activities, and celebrate everything Highfield Garden Reserve has to offer.



Fundraiser underway

Fundraising efforts to help build a new shelter over the existing picnic table (see images), are progressing well.

The picnic table was built by local volunteers and financed by the local Rodney Board back in 2015. The shelter will be built by local handyman Mark Becroft alongside volunteers and provide well-needed shelter from the elements all year round.

Generous donations towards the project so far have been received from local Harcourts Real Estate Agent Sarah Howlett and the Algies Bay Residents & Ratepayers Association. Volunteers Mike and Claire Anstett, and the Committee's Finance Officer Marion Jones, attended the Association's recent AGM to personally thank them for their support.

Dave Whyman, owner of Four Square, Snells Beach has also confirmed they intend to collect donations at the till and display a fundraising "thermometer" to track progress towards our goal. He has also committed to matching donations dollar for dollar.



The picnic table is situated near the entrance to the Lily Pond Track.



Tina Health Update

Recently Tina has had a few health issues but we are pleased to report she is doing well.

Members of the public contacted Donkey Managers Peter and Ox, as well as on Facebook with concerns about Tina's appearance. Ross the Vet was

called and treated her with anti-inflammatories medication and antibiotics. Tina has now recovered significantly but was being kept separate from the herd, in company with another of the older donkeys.

Tina is the oldest of the herd, born in 2002 and mother to Tara.

Volunteers social event



About 20 volunteers and some partners came together for a social evening and pot luck dinner on 6th April. It was a lovely and relaxed evening. Many thanks to Jim Hight for supplying the wine.

Meet Farrier Sonya King



Sonya King is a third generation farrier who was recommended to us as a good donkey bare hoof trimmer after Frans Jansen left after many years of service. Sonya's experience in animal health and donkey behaviour is very well welcomed. She has other interests as a marathon runner, so she is one super fit lady - which you have to be to be a donkey farrier.

Dogs woof, cats meow and donkeys bray

By Ox Wightman

The donkey's distinctive "hee-haw" bray might bring a smile to some and test the patience of others - but love it or not, it's uniquely their own.

Donkeys bray for a variety of reasons. They may be expressing loneliness, hunger, fear, stress, or even pain. Sometimes, they're simply saying hello to fellow donkeys, other animals, or familiar humans.

Here's a closer look at some of the most common reasons donkeys bray:

Hunger

Donkeys aren't shy about letting you know when it's mealtime. Some are more vocal than others, but most will bray to signal their hunger.



Donkeys are not shy when it comes to eating.

Loneliness

Donkeys are naturally social animals. While they bond best with other donkeys, companionship from horses, goats, or other livestock can also help. When left alone, a lonely donkey may bray loudly in search of a friend. For this reason, it's always best to keep donkeys in pairs or groups whenever possible.



Donkeys are naturally social animals.

Distress

If a donkey is injured, unwell, or being bothered by pests, they may bray to get your attention. If your donkey is braying without an obvious cause, it's a good idea to check for signs of discomfort, wounds, or insect bites.

Fear or Aggression

Donkeys will also bray when they sense danger - usually to warn others of a potential threat, like a predator nearby. While donkeys are generally calm and confident, a sudden, urgent bray can be a signal that something's not right.

Communication

Braying is also a donkey's way of staying in touch. Whether greeting a familiar face or calling out across a pasture, donkeys use their voices to keep connected and avoid getting separated. Their powerful bray can travel surprisingly far. Handy when you're trying to be heard across wide-open spaces!

SAVE THE DATE: AGM

Monday 18th August 2025 at 4pm,
Snells Beach Bowls Club. Special guest
speaker: Dan Marrow, Park Ranger.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: Have you paid your \$10 membership for the current financial year which ends 30th June 2025? Payments to ASB

12 3095 0254516 00. Please include **name** and **phone number** in the reference details. Thank you!



For all the latest news and up to date information, please follow us at: facebook.com/donkeyshighfield