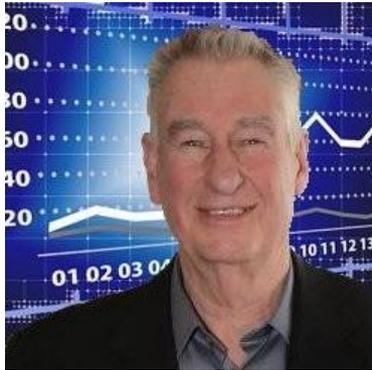


View from the Chair – Alan Duncan, PANMURE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



Dance studio owner, Alan Duncan, *pictured*, is a man in step with the changing shape of Panmure.

We spoke with Alan to find out how the business association that he's chaired since 2015 is facing up to the transformation.

Keeping in step with constant change

The ever-changing face of Panmure is testing the resilience and agility of the town centre's business association and the members it represents.

Second-term PBA Chair Alan Duncan acknowledges that major infrastructural projects, increasing ethnic diversity and the emergence of mega malls and online shopping are constant challenges.

"As in other town centres, recent history has seen large shopping centres decimate local business infrastructure and confidence," he said.

"The PBA is working closely with the council, its CCOs, the Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board and other parties to rebuild the heart of our town.

"I see the measure of success of this work will be the perception and reality that Panmure is a great place to live and work.

"Ultimately, (we want) to be held in similar high regard as Ellerslie or Ponsonby," said Alan, who moved his (The Loft) dance studio business to Panmure in 2011.



“We (the PBA) have a good working relationship with the Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board which supports many of our projects. With one of their members attending our monthly PBA meeting, we have a valuable information exchange and are continually being encouraged to bring matters to the local board for its attention.”

The PBA strongly supports Panuku’s [Unlock Panmure programme](#).



“The Panmure town centre and environs is certainly in need of work,” Alan said.

“The plan, though ambitious, is nothing less than what is required for a positive, sustainable future for this part of Auckland to be in keeping with development plans for the city as a whole.

“The opportunities presented in the plan are significant and we all look forward to seeing progress being made. After many years of promises we look forward to a well-managed project that achieves continual visible signs of progress.”

Alan Duncan acknowledges the significant contribution of the Tāmaki Regeneration Company (TRC), the Crown-Council partnership behind the largest urban transformation project in New Zealand.

Formed in 2013, TRC works with residents and businesses (including PBA and neighbouring Glen Innes Business Association), mana whenua, local and central government agencies, local service providers and the private sector to provide a platform for successful regeneration in Tāmaki (Panmure, Glen Innes and Point England).

“We enjoy good relationships with TRC and are delighted to have Kris (LaI, TRC’s External Relationships Manager) as part of our (PBA) board.

“With the TRC housing project having a huge influence of how the surrounding area develops, the two-way communication allows both parties to be well informed of any factors likely to influence the work being done. Kris brings a wealth of expertise on governance and public projects to inform the board in its deliberations.”

The AMETI/Eastern Busway project, while welcome, has seen the removal of several buildings, meaning a reduction in BID targeted rate income.

“This presents an additional challenge to (PBA) which is already having to deal with members’ concerns over project uncertainties, safety, ongoing projects and maintenance needs,” Alan said.

“The impact of having to defer maintenance, upgrades, or replacements, and cancel or limit projects is a difficult balancing act. A further challenge is the unknown length of time before town centre regeneration is completed - and enough for BID income to rise again.

“In the short term, the board must consider whether there is a need to ask members at our next AGM to approve an increase in the rate collected. At the day-to-day level it is becoming more difficult to manage core services with costs increasing continually,” he said.



Alan Duncan and Chris attended the Panmure Buslink & Community Open Day last October



As Panmure Town Centre Manager Chris Sutton outlined at May’s BID networking meeting, the ethnic diversity of Panmure has increased over recent years with the ownership of businesses changing accordingly.

Alan agrees with Chris’ point that while many of the migrant business people have not entirely come to understand how PBA can help them, particularly given language issues, efforts are being made to bridge the communications gap through multi-lingual staff and material.

“At the governance level, an ethnically representative board is important, so the PBA can take a wide view on the issues before it. In the past we have had representation from the Indian community though none currently.

“We hope that (the ethnic representation) will be widened further after the next AGM,” he said.