



## Meet Toni van Tonder



Energy, enthusiasm and passion sum up the Devonport local and mother-of-three who has stepped into the 25-hour-a-week [Devonport BID](#) Manager role, replacing Judy Grieve.

**Toni van Tonder**, *pictured above*, knows the heritage-rich village well, both as a local resident and co-ordinator of the Devonport Arts Festival which she helped revitalise in 2012.

“We’re really excited to have Toni on board and when you meet her, you’ll see why!” said Devonport Business Association Chair Dianne Hale when announcing the appointment.

Infectious enthusiasm abounds with Toni, a Tokoroa-born, Christchurch-raised political science graduate and former Takapuna Grammar English teacher. Together with the arts, Toni’s passion extends to the environmental sector through her recent work with the western Shore’s Kaipātiki Centre.

Local economic development is the focus of Toni’s new role and she’s well up for the challenge.

Toni’s first day on the job in mid-September finished with the 2016-17 AGM at the iconic Esplanade Hotel which is a landmark of the historic village and next door to Toni’s office, located within the former Devonport Borough Council office at 3 Victoria Road.

Toni does not, however, plan to spend most of her time behind her desk.

“I’m keen to get out and about meeting local business and property owners to firstly get to know who I’m working for. I want to learn about the specific challenges they face, and discuss what I can do that gives them value for their targeted rate investment,” she says.

Toni says the Devonport BID programme, now entering just its fourth year, is in a strong position to really deliver something great for members.

“We have an excellent board that is representative across all range of businesses as well as property owners. All members share a true passion for Devonport so it’s easy to get excited about the opportunities ahead.”

Toni is keen to highlight the ways in which the BID programme benefits the business and wider community.

“There’s loads of untapped potential in our area and I’m keen to put lots of energy towards building the Devonport brand and raising our business district’s profile through a strong social media campaign and associated website facelift.

“There are all sorts of qualities that make Devonport unique and these should be celebrated and supported through a strong programme of street-level activation, as well as in our marketing.

“For locals, Devonport should be the place to go because they’re proud of Devonport, proud of what Devonport offers. For visitors, it should be the place to go because there’s no other place like it,” says Toni.

Like all BID managers, Toni is employed by the local business association, an independent incorporated society. She will, however, be based three days a week (Monday to Wednesday) at the council’s former area office in Victoria Road, next to the Esplanade where Devonport held its 2017 AGM in September.



**Pictured above, from left to right: Devonport Chocolates are based in Wynyard Street; Devonport Village – looking from the wharf up Victoria Road; Toni van Tonder with Chair Dianne Hale (of family firm Fleet Street Panelbeaters) and newly-elected Board Member & social media-savvy retailer, Laura Foote.**

- **For more information, contact Toni on 021 0246 0123, [manager@devonport.co.nz](mailto:manager@devonport.co.nz)**