

TIAKI IN KIRIKIROA

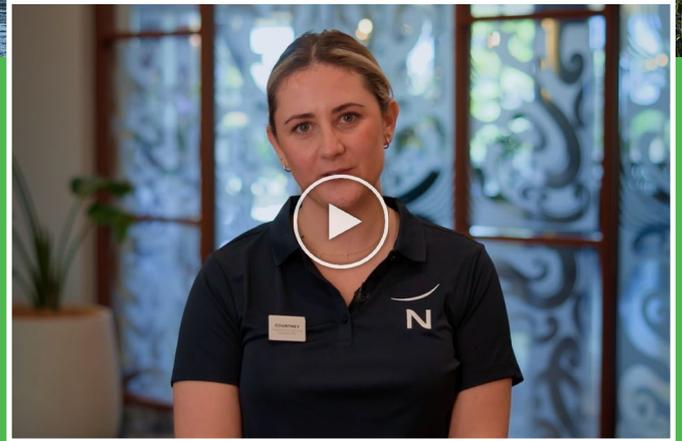
Novotel Tainui & ibis Tainui Hamilton

Sustainable hospitality: A commitment to the community and environment

In the bustling heart of Kirikiriroa Hamilton, Novotel and ibis Tainui stand as beacons of sustainable hospitality, showcasing how the Tiaki Promise can be seamlessly integrated into the operations of two prominent hotels.

Both hotels are making significant strides in community involvement, energy efficiency, and environmental protection, all while offering a warm welcome to guests from around the globe.

A cornerstone of Novotel and ibis Tainui's commitment to the Tiaki Promise is their robust community engagement. The hotels have forged a meaningful partnership with Melville Primary School, contributing to the school's environmental and cultural initiatives. One standout project is the tree planting initiative in collaboration with Hamilton City Council, where students learn about the lifecycle of plants and actively participate in the restoration of local gullies alongside hotel and council staff.



"Our collaboration with Melville Primary School has been incredibly rewarding," General Manager Philip Hilton says.

"The tree planting not only aids environmental restoration but also educates the children on sustainability."

This partnership extends to supporting construction of the school's sensory playground, designed for children on the autism spectrum. Through various fundraising activities, including the sale of surplus hotel linen and towels, Novotel and ibis Tainui have significantly contributed to this project, which was inaugurated in 2023 with a plaque acknowledging the hotels' support.

"We also work with local community groups to help those in need, such as contributions to the SPCA" Philip says.

Novotel and ibis Tainui are also pioneers in implementing energy-efficient practices and waste minimisation strategies.

"One of the examples in our rooms is that we have gone plastic-free. We have removed the individual shampoo and conditioner bottles and replaced them with pumps on the wall, as well as taken out the plastic rubbish bags," Philip says.

Plastic water bottles have been replaced with a filtered water tap at the hotel bars, offering still and sparkling water for guests to fill their room jugs, significantly reducing plastic waste.



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The hotels have also adopted a unique solution to reduce plastic waste in their dining areas, partnering with Ōhaupō-based business Kaipaki Dairies to supply milk in vessels similar to beer kegs to significantly reduce the use of plastic milk bottles.

"This initiative alone saves approximately 90 bottles of milk per week," Philip says.

Energy efficiency is another focus area for the hotels, and they are aiming to reduce their usage by 5% this year.

"We have had LED lighting upgrades at both hotels and offer guests complimentary EV charging stations, underscoring our commitment to reducing carbon emissions. We're exploring various avenues, including solar energy, to achieve this target."

To promote sustainability in guest rooms, guests are encouraged to reuse towels to save water and to take extra care to place anything recyclable into the recycling bins provided.

"Additionally, QR codes have been introduced for accessing hotel compendiums and menus, reducing paper waste."

Owned by local iwi Waikato-Tainui, Novotel and ibis Tainui are deeply connected to Māori culture, which is reflected in the design and operations of the hotels. The hotels feature traditional Māori carvings, designs and art pieces, such as the pou (carved posts) and waharoa (gateway), symbolising guardianship and welcoming guests.

"We're proud of our connection to the local iwi and strive to share Māori culture with our guests," Philip says.

"During Māori Language Week, we organise cultural activities, including performances by local kapa haka groups and workshops for staff."

The commitment to cultural heritage extends to daily operations and guest interactions. The staff often greet guests in Te Reo Māori and incorporate Māori language and customs into their service.

This embrace of Māori culture is yet another way the hotels demonstrate their dedication to the Tiaki Promise. From reducing waste and energy consumption to fostering strong community ties and celebrating cultural heritage, they exemplify how visitor sector businesses can contribute positively to their environment and community.

"Our commitment to the Tiaki Promise is about more than just business today," Philip says. "It's about ensuring that we protect and preserve our beautiful surroundings and vibrant community for future generations."



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