

# NEXT EXECUTIVES PAY TRIBUTE to Founders Neal and Annette Plowman - Winners of the 2018 Kea World Class New Zealand Supreme Award

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NEXT founders Neal and Annette Plowman say an important part of their philosophy and success is team work – they surround themselves with a small group of trusted advisers and friends. Today that team have paid tribute to Neal and Annette – Supreme Award winners of the 2018 Kea World Class New Zealand Awards.

## FOUNDING CHAIR CHRIS LIDDELL

"I am immensely proud of Neal and Annette and thrilled they have momentarily (albeit somewhat reluctantly) stepped into the spotlight to receive this award. They are so worthy of the recognition for the positive impact their generosity is having on New Zealand.

I first met Neal and Annette 34 years ago in 1984 and was immediately struck by their warmth for people and their passion for New Zealand. They are undoubtedly the most humble, generous, loving couple that I know and I have learnt enormously from them – both professionally and personally.

One of the traits I admire about them most is their commitment to the long term. The establishment of NEXT was the culmination of a life of giving back. It started with contributions to numerous very worthy established organisations such as Lifeline and Auckland City Mission, then moved to initiating and funding multi-year projects – like Rotoroa Island and Project Janszoon (the restoration of Abel Tasman National Park). Strategic philanthropy through NEXT grew from those beginnings.

One aspect of Neal that is perhaps less appreciated is his incredible business instinct. To give away a fortune, you have to make one first, and he has been well ahead of his time in a number of business ventures.

Annette has been beside him every step of the way, and they approach everything as a partnership. I think she may even have the "last word" on a few of the key decisions, especially around people. They have a wonderful ability to read people, and bring out the best in them.

It is an honour to be with them and see their lifetime of contribution recognised, and my wife Renee and I offer our sincere congratulations."



NEXT Founding Chair Chris Liddell with Annette and Neal Plowman at the launch of NEXT Foundation.



Annette and Neal Plowman with Chris Liddell - they met in the 1980's.

NEXT Board and CEO with Neal and Annette at an environmental hui in Tekapo. From left Barrie Brown (Chair), Annette Plowman, Bill Kermode (CEO), Carol Campbell, Scott St John and Neal Plowman.



#### CHAIRMAN BARRIE BROWN

"Neal and Annette are a great kiwi couple – passionate, selfless New Zealanders who want to have their wealth spent wisely and effectively for the benefit of New Zealand, not themselves.

I have enormous admiration for the discipline they have applied in using their wealth strategically. NEXT has \$100 million upfront and they want it spent in ten years so the environmental and educational projects invested in can have maximum impact.

They are also great listeners – they are not scared of asking for advice and then they assess options rigorously before making a decision. They are experts in challenging their team to find the best way of tackling an issue.

In my profession I have had many wealthy clients but Neal and Annette set the benchmark on how to achieve remarkable outcomes yet not let this affect their family or normal everyday life.

It has been an absolute privilege to be a Trustee for them over the past 16 years and I congratulate them on this prestigious recognition."

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BILL KERMODE

"I hugely admire Neal and Annette's generosity, their passion for helping other New Zealanders, and their humility. Those are things that are easy to understand, but not easy to do. But Neal and Annette live them all every day.

Not so easy to see and understand is the clarity of thinking and purpose they bring to everything they do. They are very focused on making a difference in the most effective and powerful ways they can, and they set up very clear lines in going about doing that.

NEXT is an obvious example - \$100 million to commit in ten years is clear cut. But they also purposely did not put themselves on the NEXT Board – to ensure the Trustees have unambiguous clarity around their role.

And one of their attributes is their appetite for the big issues. They do not want to just "help some people out". They want to address the root causes, and change systems. They are after breakthroughs, not band-aids.

Congratulations Neal and Annette on an award so thoroughly deserved."



#### NEXT BOARD MEMBER CAROL CAMPBELL

"Congratulations to Neal and Annette Plowman, two very worthy recipients of this award. It has been an absolute privilege to be part of the team guiding the NEXT Foundation – made possible through the generosity of a couple who share a passion and vision for a better New Zealand. NEXT has brought together like minded people who as individuals may not be able to make a difference – but together with NEXT, are making a real impact on our land and our people."

#### NEXT BOARD MEMBER SCOTT ST JOHN

"Annette and Neal are stellar examples of the power of teams - which they are in every sense of the word. Over the decades I have observed from a distance and at close quarters their passion, humility and ability to facilitate extraordinary outcomes. Annette and Neal are an incredibly special and highly effective team and we are so fortunate that they are New Zealanders.

My sincere congratulations to them on this honour."

#### FORMER BOARD MEMBER GEOFF HARLEY

"There has been great team work in guiding the disciplined architecture of NEXT, but it has resounded only because of two people with wonderfully generous and shared outlooks for their country and the people who live in it. Remember: these folk did not just talk about doing something. They wrote the cheque. Within that deep personal spirit of generosity has been an embracing of risk, curiosity, the contest of ideas, with the sustained backing of informed judgement, decision making and real focus on achieving outcomes that are measured against prediction.

Sir John Logan Campbell as pioneer for New Zealand in philanthropy would smile at what Annette and Neal Plowman have undertaken about 180 years later. From Sir John's Cornwall Park and medical research, on to the re-creation of Rotorua Island, Abel Tasman and Egmont National Parks, Annette and Neal have been presented with extraordinarily difficult challenges that are being met by money matched with brains. Lord Rutherford of Nelson is said to have observed "we have got no money, so we've got to think".

NEXT is the power of the two, in both senses, New Zealand's stellar example in the 21st century, hopefully for others to consider too. No one can doubt the need, nor the ability of others to contribute some of their fortunes to better the people.

The Kea Supreme Award fits Annette and Neal perfectly, made all the richer by the happy coincidence that the beautiful and powerful native parrot is NEXT's emblem."

#### NEAL AND ANNETTE PLOWMAN'S SONS: PETER, MARTIN AND SIMON

"As brothers we were raised in a house where business was very much a part of our every day. Mum and Dad always included us in the major decisions that were made once we were able to understand it all. Our upbringing encouraged us to be humble and engage with as many different people from as many different backgrounds as possible. Success was defined by our parents as setting goals, working hard and 'being the best that you could be' at whatever you did. The family culture was shared by Mum and Dad with everyone that they met whether it be our friends, employees of the business or the wider community.

We could not be more supportive of the decision by Mum and Dad to set up NEXT Foundation to support New Zealand and New Zealanders in 'being the best that they can be'. It is an extension of how we were raised and our family culture. Their generosity comes from a genuine desire to make New Zealand a better place for everyone particularly in the areas of education and the environment. As brothers we support and encourage all that NEXT is doing.

The KEA award is well deserved recognition that will hopefully inspire other New Zealanders to think about how they can support and contribute to making their country a better place."



NEXT Chair Barrie Brown (left) and NEXT CEO Bill Kermode (far right) with Neal and Annette Plowman.