

Thames Connect Website

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| TO | Thames Community Board |
| FROM | Marlene Perry - Community Development Officer |
| DATE | 22 March 2017 |
| SUBJECT | Thames Connect Website |

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update the Board with the current situation regarding costs for ongoing maintenance and support of Thames Connect community asset website www.thamesconnect.org.nz
- 1.2 For the Board to consider handing over the hosting of the Thames Connect website from Guru Digital Media to Inlet Technologies.

2 Background

After community discussions and consultation a Community Asset Mapping (CAM) project was endorsed by the Thames Focus Group (sub-committee of the Thames Community Board) in 2012.

The CAM project aimed to:

- Provide a database that stores information on community assets including personal skills and interests, business listings and community groups etc.
- Provide an easy-to-use and engaging website (run by the community) that captures and shares information from the database including map-based views and listings
- Integrate with social media tools (e.g. Facebook & Twitter) to allow the community to post comments and discuss interests and local news (e.g. a digital notice board)
- Provide a local splash page (home page) for Thames with lighter engaging elements (e.g. photo of the day)
- Create an email database of interested parties
- Create a mobile application to enable on the road, simple data collection and maintenance of the database
- Create a brand and marketing plan for the asset mapping tool and website

Transition Town Thames and Wintec initially took the lead with the first stage of CAM project which included the design and specification of a database schema, and collection of community asset data. Guru Digital Media (GDM) led the second stage of the project which involved the design, development and implementation of the Thames Connect website and provision of the hosting environment.

The original contract to build the Thames Connect website was signed between TCDC and GDM in June 2013. It contained the following proviso:

Thames Coromandel District Council own the intellectual property for the Thames Asset Mapping Tool concept. For clarification this excludes ownership of an intellectual property in the GDM 2010 Ltd Content management system or Cloud Collect Services Ltd products with which the tool has been constructed. In the event of TCDC moving the hosting away from GDM 2010 Ltd then GDM

2010 Ltd will arrange to make the relevant tools available to TCDC to continue to utilise the service.

A further contract for the annual domain registration, hosting and maintenance support was signed with GDM in November 2014. To date a total of \$7,492.40 has been paid to GDM for maintenance and hosting costs:

\$2,523.00 2014: Finalising website and website support, maintenance and hosting
 \$5,750.00 2015: Website support, writing the manual, and hosting
 \$219.00 2016: Maintenance and hosting costs

Since its inception the Thames Connect website has been low key marketed to community groups via listing the website URL in meetings, reports, etc., i.e. with Transition Town Thames and with Thames Heritage Network, CAN DO, to name a few. TCDC has mentioned the website within the TCDC page of the Hauraki Herald.

The Thames Connect website has had 7395 hits as shown below:

| Summary by Month | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------|-------|--------|----------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Month | Daily Avg | | | | Monthly Totals | | | | | |
| | Hits | Files | Pages | Visits | Sites | kB F | Visits | Pages | Files | Hits |
| Mar 2017 | 728 | 597 | 58 | 11 | 103 | 72653 | 81 | 412 | 4185 | 5100 |
| Feb 2017 | 785 | 657 | 61 | 19 | 425 | 379294 | 536 | 1713 | 18405 | 22005 |
| Jan 2017 | 709 | 593 | 55 | 17 | 425 | 379294 | 536 | 1713 | 18405 | 22005 |
| Dec 2016 | 339 | 318 | 137 | 28 | 469 | 519447 | 898 | 4265 | 9885 | 10518 |
| Nov 2016 | 344 | 321 | 106 | 22 | 525 | 384628 | 660 | 3182 | 9632 | 10327 |
| Oct 2016 | 308 | 294 | 45 | 16 | 436 | 276004 | 510 | 1411 | 9116 | 9558 |
| Sep 2016 | 260 | 221 | 61 | 16 | 323 | 281801 | 493 | 1847 | 6637 | 7823 |
| Aug 2016 | 233 | 218 | 53 | 17 | 450 | 240984 | 547 | 1649 | 6760 | 7238 |
| Jul 2016 | 606 | 540 | 137 | 27 | 472 | 514167 | 860 | 4276 | 16770 | 18809 |
| Jun 2016 | 379 | 330 | 73 | 20 | 365 | 251659 | 629 | 2201 | 9929 | 11399 |
| May 2016 | 276 | 256 | 53 | 18 | 529 | 255146 | 581 | 1667 | 7953 | 8563 |
| Apr 2016 | 246 | 199 | 49 | 13 | 322 | 217005 | 401 | 1485 | 5981 | 7395 |
| Totals | | | | | | 3772082 | 6732 | 25821 | 123658 | 140740 |

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3 Issue

As of 1 April 2017 GDM have advised that while they can continue to run and host the Thames Connect website they will no longer offer support meaning that they cannot guarantee a resolution to any problems that may occur, and will not develop fixes or any new features. They are happy to discuss options if TCDC chooses to upgrade the Thames Connect website but an upgrade will incur further cost.

While the Community Board expected that the Thames Connect website would be community driven and administered this has not happened. At present the Area Office Community Development Officer (CDO) uploads information onto the website and communicates with GDM if functionality hasn't been up to par.

4 Discussion

For some time the Thames Area Office has been looking for a community administrator to take over running and maintaining the Thames Connect website.

The Area Office CDO recently introduced Transition Town Thames to Inlet Technologies who are new to Thames and experienced in the field of web design. Both parties have been in discussions and indicated that they are willing to work together on the website on behalf of the Thames community.

Inlet Technologies have also advised that they would not be using the same technologies as GDM and would like to offer website improvements and community access at no cost to the Thames Community Board.

TCDC's IT Manager Rob McNaughton sees no risk of 'Intellectual Property' issues with the GDM website transfer or any fishhooks in the contractual documentation, specifically as GDM are the ones instigating the change.

Guru has sent in a final invoice to package up the website to hand over to community group provider (\$150 plus \$40 domain name until 2018 - already initiated)

5 Options

Option One - Close down the Thames Connect website

Faced with the additional costs to upgrade or alternatively continuing with an unsupported website, the Area Office has considered recommending that the website be closed down.

Transition Town Thames however have expressed that they are opposed to this and want to progress a fully integrated local website

Option Two (Preferred Option) - Hand over the hosting to Inlet Technologies

Thames Area Office would like to hand the Thames Connect website over to the community through an entity (Inlet Technologies) that can technically support the website, both in rejuvenating the content and marketing the website.

The opportunity to hand over the website to a professional web company who also wishes grow its potential at no cost to the Thames Community Board is of benefit to both the community and the Council.

6 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Thames Community Board:

1. Receives the report.
2. Approves the handover of the Thames Connect Website from Guru Digital Media to Inlet Technologies.