



## NZPI MEDIA RELEASE

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### Four Planners win Distinguished Service Awards

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The woman who led the development of Auckland's controversial unitary plan is one of four planners honoured in the New Zealand Planning Institute's (NZPI) Distinguished Service Awards for 2013.

Auckland Council's Penny Pirrit joins fellow Aucklander John Childs, Hamilton's Dave Burton and Dean Chrystal from Christchurch as this year's award winners, announced this week to coincide with World Town Planning Day.

The NZPI Distinguished Service Awards recognise individuals who have made a significant contribution over many years to the image and practice of planning, undertaken original research which has advanced the theory and practice of planning in New Zealand and overseas, made a major contribution to the affairs of the NZPI, or achieved national or international recognition as a leader in the planning profession.

NZPI Chair Bryce Julian says all four 2013 Award recipients are leaders in their fields and deserving winners.

"Planners in New Zealand have a critical role in shaping our communities by developing solutions to many of this country's key issues, such as population growth, infrastructure needs, pressure on natural environments and resources, demographic change and transport. This year's award winners have shown how planners can make a positive difference to New Zealand's cities, towns, communities and natural environments."

Penny Pirrit's award citation noted that the Auckland Unitary Plan is one of the most significant planning initiatives in New Zealand's history.

"The complexity of the task is unsurpassed in New Zealand due to the sheer breadth of issues and Auckland's political governance structure. The innovative enhanced engagement process that saw a draft Unitary Plan produced for public feedback prior to the notified version has been recognised as international best practice," the award citation says.

## **2013 NZPI Distinguished Service Award winners**

### **Penelope (Penny) Pirrit**

Penny has played a leadership role in Auckland local government planning over many years. Throughout her career at Auckland City Council and Auckland Council she has been a thought leader in planning practice and innovation, including the areas of community engagement, spatial planning, place-making and the Auckland Unitary Plan. She has led the development of place-making practice which emphasises an integrated approach to planning, designing and building places with communities.

### **John Childs**

John is well known and highly regarded as a planning consultant in Auckland. He has been involved in town planning, resource management and related fields since 1970. His career includes the position of Principle Planner at Auckland City Council from 1976 to 1987. In recent years he has served as a Planning Commissioner, often as Chair, on more than 200 planning hearings. One of his most significant roles was being part of the Britomart development hearings panel for the Auckland Regional Council.

### **William (Dave) Burton**

Based in Hamilton, Dave is a planning consultant who works primarily across the central North Island. His public and private sector planning career has touched on many high profile projects including geothermal power station developments near Taupo, the Mokauiti and Wairere dams, aspects of the Waikato Expressway, quarry consenting and gold mining developments within the Hauraki District. He has also been a planning advisor for both the Waikato District Health Board and Wintec (Waikato Institute of Technology).

### **Dean Chrystal**

Now based in Christchurch, Dean's 25-year planning career includes roles in the United Kingdom and around New Zealand. He has worked in planning roles for a number of other local authorities in both the North and South Islands overseeing plan change and resource consent hearings and decisions, including wind farms, rural residential development and district wide landscape provisions. Recent highlights include involvement in the Te Rere Hau Wind Farm, the Darfield Milk Powder Plant and Christchurch City's Retail Distribution Strategy.

For further information on the 2013 Distinguished Service Award winners visit [www.planning.org.nz](http://www.planning.org.nz).

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