

SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc
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Telephone 09 576 4500

MARCH 2024

Established in 1996 especially for Pakuranga, Howick and Botany residents



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- ◆ March Help days
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Our next Meeting,
Friday 1st March
at 10.00am

St Andrews Church Centre
Corner Ridge Rd and Vincent St



The main entrance is in Vincent Street with parking in the grounds and disabled parking near the basement entrance.

Visitors welcome

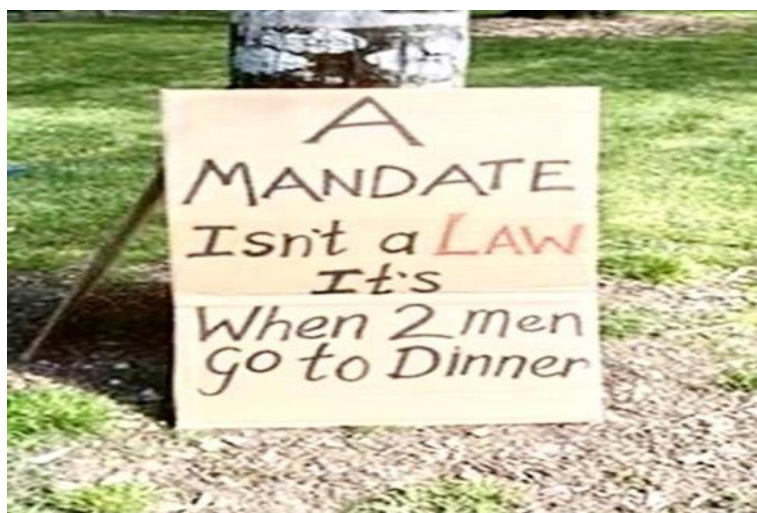
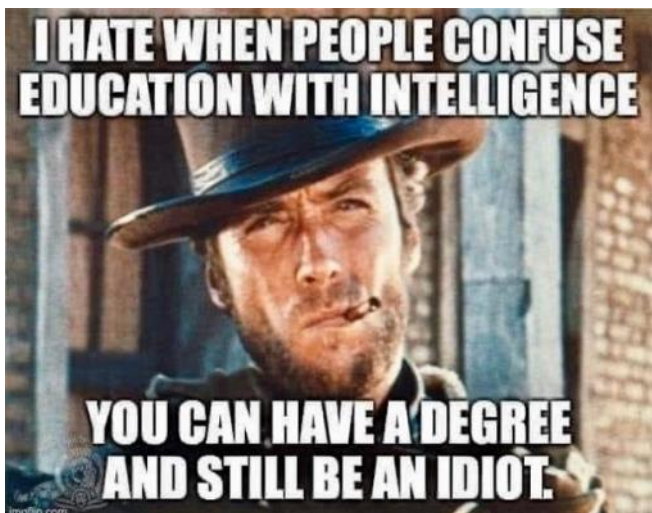
The early speaker will be Brian Erikson advising on **Converting your CD collection to the MP3 Format** which can be stored on a USB flash drive to play in say your car.

If you are more adventurous you can put your whole collection on a "local server" and run your private streaming service. Notes for this will be held at the Learning Centre and you can take a flash drive copy from that source.

Our main speaker will be Phil Sai Loui speaking on **'Around the World in 30 minutes'**, which covers how places around the world, especially the Americas, Africa, Pacific and Asia acquired their names, and the stories attached to them

MARCH HELP DAYS

Thurs	07 March	10am
Wed	13 March	1pm
Mon	18 March	1pm
Tues	26 March	10am



In past years we have had a small paragraph waiver on our website under the ABOUT tag. The SeniorNet Federation has sought legal advice on behalf of all SeniorNets as a result of joining together for a group insurance scheme which essentially covers only items owned or leased by a SeniorNet. In addition the Federation asked for advice encompassing the Privacy Act and our obligations under it. The result is printed in full below and we will consider it at the next committee meeting for adoption. If you wish to make a submission to the committee, please do so via pc9@senpak.nz

I acknowledge that in applying for membership.

By submitting this application, I am consenting to becoming a member of SeniorNet Pakuranga Inc. I am solely responsible for keeping my passwords secure and will not divulge them to SeniorNet Tutors or Officers.

In requesting SeniorNet Pakuranga Inc to provide services, including help with my device(s), I acknowledge and agree any such services will be provided by volunteers on a “all care, no responsibility” basis and that neither SeniorNet Pakuranga, nor any of its tutors, will be liable for any loss, damage or cost howsoever caused, arising out of, or in any way related to, such services or SeniorNet Pakuranga’s, access to or use of my device(s), including:

Loss, damage or corruption, of any software, files or data, on my device(s), or the cost of retrieving, re-storing or recreating such data, records or files; or

Loss or damage to my device(s), including the loss of functionality of my device(s)

Privacy

By providing my personal information to SeniorNet Pakuranga INC (SeniorNet):

- I acknowledge that this personal information will be collected and stored by SeniorNet;
- I agree that SeniorNet may collect, store, use and disclose my personal information:
 - * to provide information or services to me;
 - * for administrative purposes, including managing records of members;
 - * to contact me;
 - * for any other reason permitted by the Privacy Act 2020;
- I acknowledge that if I do not provide the requested personal information, then SeniorNet may not be able to process my membership application or provide information or services to me;
- I agree to advise SeniorNet of any changes to my personal information, so that SeniorNet can keep the information held up-to-date; and
- I acknowledge that I have the right to request access to, or correction of, the personal information held by SeniorNet.

Ramblings

Dawn Howarth

Well I have just survived a hair-raising and horrible 2 weeks. I decided to change computer providers and installed a Spark Wireless Broadband system at the recommendation of my neighbour. I didn't realise so much could go wrong. The Spark repair man said I should have got fibre but Chorus never turned up. I ended up with no computer or phone for 4 days, got that going but my TV wouldn't talk to the new modem, and Spark wouldn't talk to me, no matter how many phone calls and emails I sent. Then my computer died again. By now I was almost in tears and I rang the ever-so-reliable Rein, our SeniorNet saviour. Within an hour he had everything fixed and running perfectly, including some wireless Bluetooth headphones I had purchased a year ago for him-indoors to hear the TV better. Rein also showed me how to improve and use the volume on our TV which we have had for years and doesn't have Bluetooth.

Anyway now I feel in heaven, stress free and thrilled to bits. Honestly trying to fix technology or even read instructions, is beyond me. I know this sounds like an ad for Rein but it really isn't. It is relief from me that I can't help telling you about. Help is just a phone call away—when all else fails go to support@pchelpathome.co.nz. Thank you, thank you, thank you Rein. Sadly he isn't a member of SeniorNet so he won't see my thanks, but you will.

Hang in there and take care. (We don't bounce or repair very well so take great care.)

Chatbots and AI generated images from descriptive text

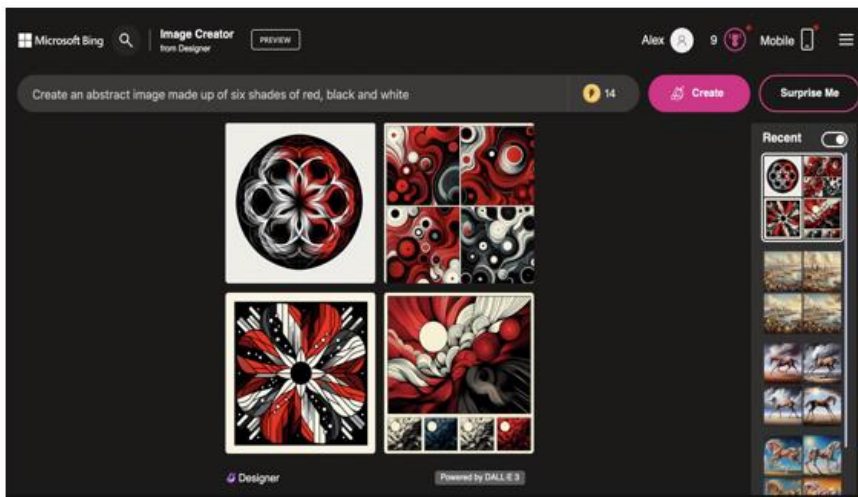
Last year we looked at **ChatGPT**, an AI tool from **Openai.com** that can formulate text:-

- Providing factual information by searching the internet on an infinite range of topics.
- Translating text into different languages facilitating communication across linguistic barriers.
- Creating text in many forms such as poems, essays and stories.
- Explaining complex concepts in simple terms as an aid to learning.
- Entertaining by creating text-based games, riddles and providing amusing interactions.
- **ChatGPT** can also offer comfort and encouragement in an empathetic way similar to that of a human.
- And create computer code.

The free version can only access information available on the internet up to January 2022.

Meanwhile all of the above functionality and much more can be accessed from Google and Microsoft as they now have their own AI chatbots. There is **Google's Gemini** and **Microsoft's Copilot** that runs **GPT4**.

ChatGPT does not generate images but **Openai.com** has created a separate AI image generator called **Dall-e 3**. We looked at two other image generator programmes, **Gencraft.com** and **Hotpot.ai**. All three of these programmes will generate a limited number of free images from a few words of descriptive text but **Dall-e 3** produced the most impressive images by far. The best way to access **Dall-e 3** is through the Microsoft portal. If you are an Apple user enter "Microsoft Bing Image Creator" in your search engine but if you are already running Microsoft 365, the image creator can be sourced directly from within the suite of programmes.



The descriptive text entered for the images on the left was, "Create an abstract image made up of six shades of red, black and white". Four images were generated with the ability for each one to be viewed and downloaded separately. The vertical column on the right shows earlier images generated by different descriptive text. These were images in the styles of well-known artists.



Images created from the descriptive text:-
"Create an image of a horse in the style of Salvador Dali."



Images created from the descriptive text:-
"Create an image of a horse in the style of Picasso."

Kate's Take continued ...

The final challenge presented to the **Dall-e 3** programme was to create an image of Auckland in the style of the 18th Century, Venetian artist Canaletto.



*A view of Auckland in the style of a Canaletto
(Generated by Dall-e 3)*



*Basin of San Marco, Venice by Canaletto
(An original oil painting for comparison)*

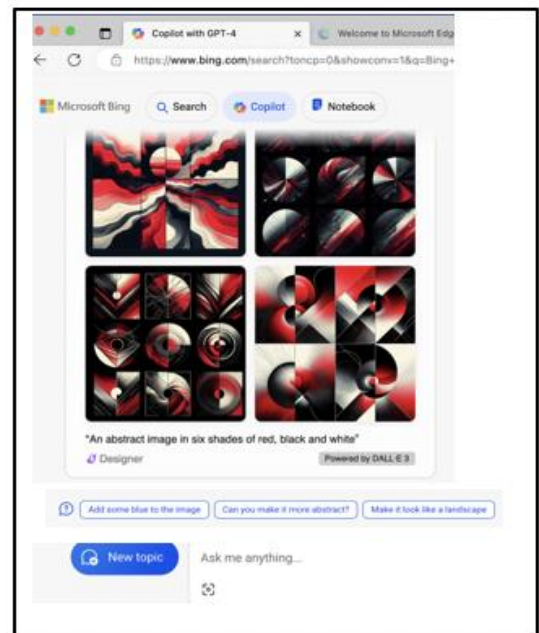


For a quick overview on working with **Dall-e 3** within the Microsoft suite have a look at the YouTube video shown in the image to the left. It explains how to set up the search engine and access **Copilot** with **GPT-4** even if you are an Apple user.

GPT-4 does have some advantages over **ChatGPT** because it can access more current information and it will also generate images from **Dall-e 3** within the **GPT-4** platform. (See below right)

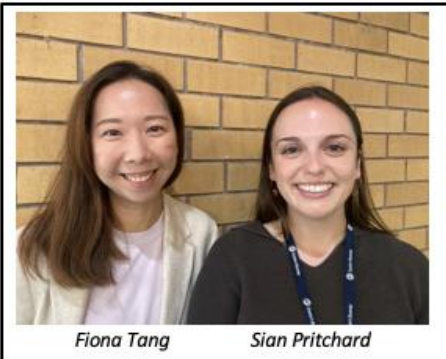
How does **ChatGPT**, Microsoft **Copilot (Bing AI)** and **Google Gemini (Bard)** (New names in purple) compare? Ref. zdnet.com

- **Copilot** and **Gemini** are free but work very well. The premium version of **ChatGPT** requires a monthly subscription.
- All free versions make basic maths errors.
- **ChatGPT** was the most creative.
- **Copilot** delivers more up-to-date information (April 2023) and will supply illustrations to support its answer.
- **Gemini** will include information from other Google products in its answer. E.g. Google Maps
- The free version of **ChatGPT** is powered by the GPT-3.5 model (175 billion parameters). The Microsoft **Copilot** GPT-4 model is said to have over a 100 trillion parameters.
- **Copilot** supplies links to sources.
- All chatbots are prone to **AI hallucinations**, a term relating to a chatbot making something up. (**SO, USER BEWARE**). **ChatGPT** does admit an inability to supply information at times.



Kate's Take continued ...

The Eastern Busway



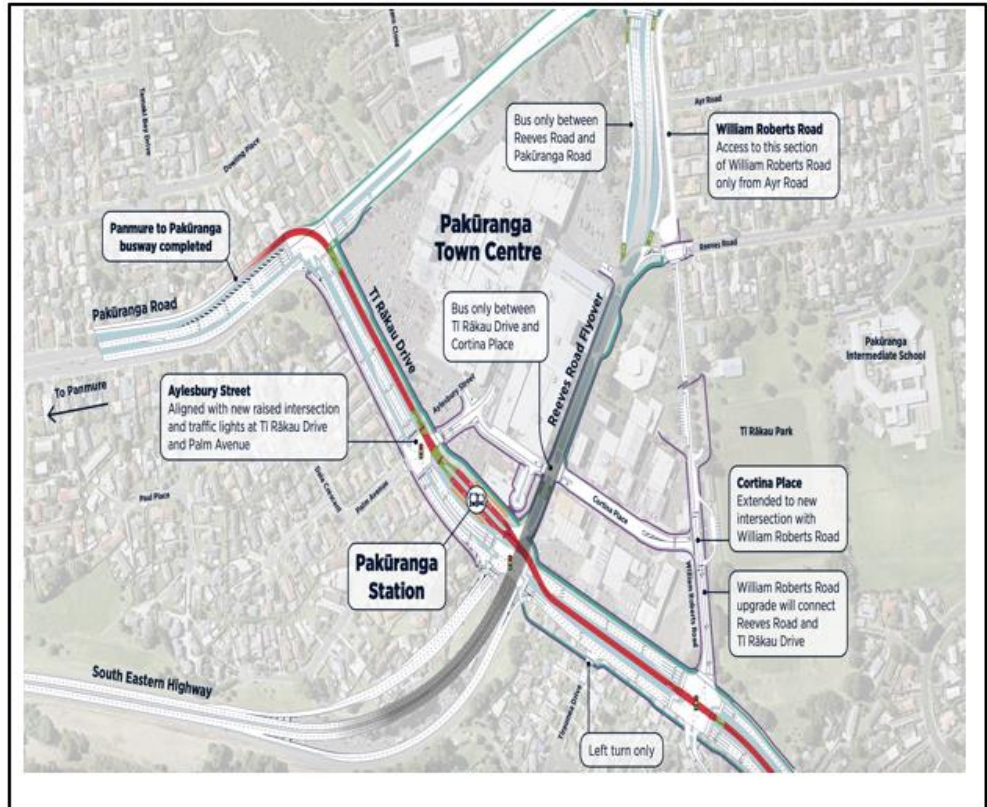
Fiona Tang

Sian Pritchard

A big thank you to Fiona Tang and Sian Pritchard from Auckland Transport who came to explain the “master plan” that is the Eastern Busway. We were assured that after all the cones, road closures, diversions and excavators are gone that our transport system will be second to none.

So, what are the hoped-for outcomes of all this disruption? The plan is that the Eastern Busway will connect Botany, Pakūranga, and neighbouring suburbs to the rail network in Panmure. The main road changes and realignments will be apparent with the construction of a flyover above Reeves Road. City bound

traffic will leave the Pakūranga highway adjacent to William Roberts Road then join up with the Reeves Road flyover creating a direct connection between the Pakūranga Road and the South Eastern Highway. This is hoped to reduce the vehicle congestion around Pakūranga town centre. A 5km, busway will be built between Pakūranga and Botany, fully separating the buses from other traffic, There are plans for 5 new bus stations and 12 km of safe, separated walking and cycling routes.

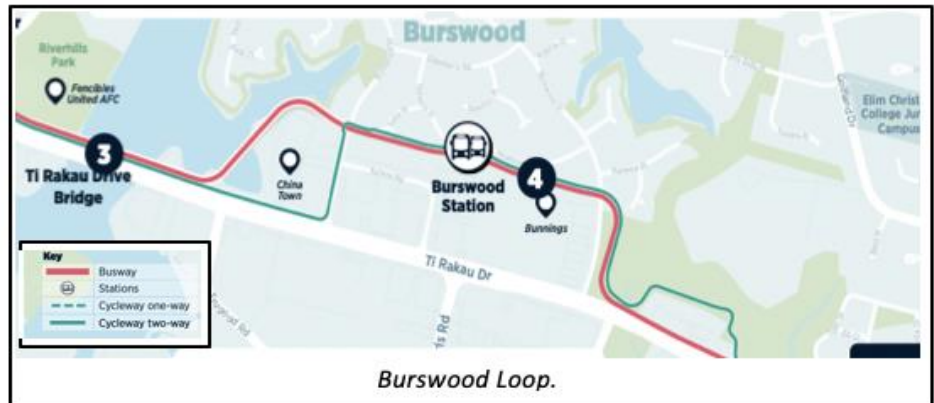


Now that Auckland's, 11.5% fuel tax has been removed it leaves a shortfall of \$3billion for Auckland's roading projects. The estimated cost of the Eastern Busway is \$1.4billion. With the construction time line extending out to 2027 and with no funding available for the work around Botany Town Centre anyway, one can only hope that there will be enough money to complete the project to reach Botany.

Kate's Take continued ...

In 2018 the Eastern Busway was planned to follow directly along Ti Rākau Drive from Pakūranga to Botany but after community feedback there were numerous issues identified along the commercial area of Ti Rākau Drive. These included the impact on businesses and the cutting off access to commercial properties.

By 2022, it was decided that the Burswood loop was a better option. It would be safer for all transport modes including walking, cycling, buses and road users. Placing the cycleway and walkway around the back of the commercial area removes them from Ti Rākau Drive and reduces the



risk of interaction between vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and busy commercial driveways. It would improve bus journey efficiency and reliability by removing the need for buses to go through 5 heavily congested intersections with traffic lights, as well as reducing the impact on general traffic and loss of access to the adjoining commercial properties.

It would be approximately 12-18 months quicker to build, reducing impacts to road users, freight operators and businesses along Ti Rākau Drive. There would also be no impact on the Transpower high voltage cable.

That change is likely to lead to a mix of building sizes along the busway, supporting an increase in households and population that usually follow improvements in public transport. There would be approximately 1800 people and 2050 jobs within 1km of the proposed station near the Burswood community.

Some land will be used for construction but will not be needed in the long term. The residual land will be transferred back to Auckland Council at the end of the project and areas such as the soccer field will be reinstated.

Ref at.aovt.nz



Artist's impression, Ti Rākau Drive showing lane separation and bus stations.



The shelters along the route will be equipped with seating, lighting and CCTV to enhance security. There will be safe pedestrian crossing points and drop off and pick up zones. U turns will be allowed at lights to allow vehicles easy access to either direction.

K Senner Feb 24

Responses to questions asked by members at the Eastern Busway presentation that Sian followed up:

Please find below, our response to the questions raised by the SeniorNet group in our meeting on 2 February 2024. Please do feel free to share the response with the wider group and let me know if there's anything else you need.

Auckland Transport buses

Some attendees noted that dark blue Auckland Transport buses can be hard to see in some weather conditions and requested design changes to make them more visible, including additional reflective strips. We've shared this feedback with Auckland Transport's Customer & Network Performance team and their response is as follows:

"Thank you for your feedback about the colour of AT buses, potential low-visibility and the accessibility and safety challenges this prompts.

The dark colour of the buses does raise challenges, especially against tar seal, or in low-light conditions. As a standard visibility measure to mitigate this, all buses are required to use interior running lights during the day.

The National Requirements for Urban Buses require that the lighting system control must be fitted with automatic sensors to ensure the interior lighting is automatically switched on/off to maintain the minimum requirements. This means that all buses should be running these by default.

Beyond that, AT are currently reviewing livery as a whole covering customer needs, with consideration to the various perspectives (brand, wayfinding, experience, operations, accessibility, current and future network connections, etc). This feedback will definitely be included as part of that review, although the timeframe and outcomes are yet to be decided."

The flyover above Reeves Road Reeves Rd

We were asked about the road arrangement around the new flyover which will be above Reeves Road in Pakūranga. The best way to demonstrate this is through our new future Pakūranga area artist impression [which you can find here](#).

Where are raised intersections proposed on Tī Rākau Drive?

Three raised intersections are proposed for at Pakūranga Station, Edgewater Station and Gossamer Station.

Where are crossing points proposed on Tī Rākau Drive?

The locations of crossing points along Tī Rākau Drive can be viewed in our detailed map, which is [here](#) under 'maps'. You may wish to have a look through the other resources on that page, as they're a great way of visualising the project.

When will the drainage work finish?

We anticipate that the drainage work adjacent to GAS on Pakūranga Road will be complete by mid-March 2024, at which point traffic management will be removed and the road will be returned to normal.

Disabled parking at bus stops

We are not proposing additional disabled parking spaces as part of our proposal, however the existing provisions and locations of disabled parking will not change at locations adjacent to future stations at Pakūranga Plaza and Botany Town Centre.

We trust the above is useful. We are more than
other information which you may need.

happy to provide any

Sian Pritchard
0800 BUSWAY (0800 287 929)
info@easternbusway.nz



For project information click easternbusway.nz

COMMITTEE

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Fay Mullins 021 527 762

When the doctor says you need to watch your drinking



COURSE TIMETABLES, HELP DAYS AND COURSE BOOKING INFORMATION

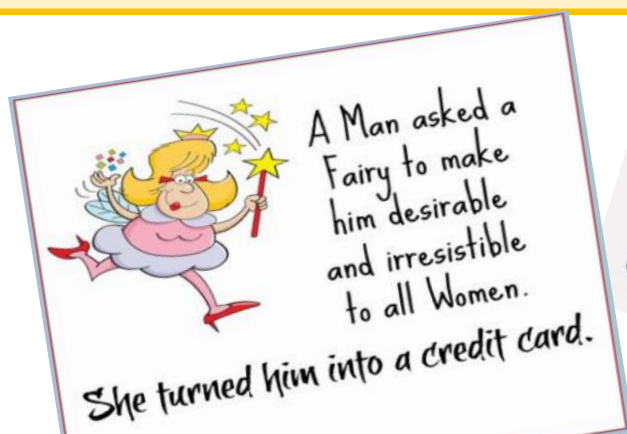
To view all SeniorNet courses and timetable, click here

<http://www.senpak.nz/courses/>

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NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY



Course Booking Information

- * You need to be a member of SeniorNet to take part in our classes.
- * If you need assistance in deciding on a course, please contact the Tutor who will answer any questions and also take your booking.
- * We require you to pay a course fee to cover the cost of notes and other expenses. Please bring the correct cash to the first session.
- * Our Courses are all held at our Learning Centre at
12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga.
- * Please park on the road or in the Gym carpark across the road as no parking is permitted on site. **If you use the gym parking (not available Monday or Thursday mornings) it is important that you park on the left, next to the gym. You can printout the parking advice from our website (under the Courses tab) or write your own and leave on the dashboard of your car.**

WAIVER: Some of our members voluntarily and willingly give help and advice to other members on matters relating to computers, associated equipment and software. This includes information contained in the columns of this newsletter and other publications including our SeniorNet Website. This help or advice is taken solely at the recipient's risk and imposes no responsibility or liability of any kind, either on those providing such help or advice, or the newsletter Editors or SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc.