

“We couldn’t be happier!”

Words: Liane Volsey

Above, the couple love living close to the sea.

Embracing the Kiwi way has been the secret to a successful move to Wellington, New Zealand for **Jonathan Seaton**

Meet the mover

NAMES

Jonathan (62) and Gwyneth (54) Seaton

OCCUPATION

Jonathan used to work in database and system design in the UK, an occupation he hopes to pursue in NZ. Gwyneth worked in the voluntary sector in the UK and hopes to explore new opportunities in NZ

MOVED FROM

Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

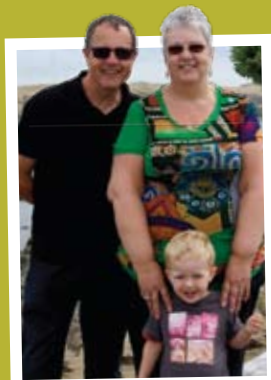
MOVED TO

Porirua, Wellington, New Zealand

FURTHER INFORMATION

Migration Associates: (tel) 0148 355 0920;
(web) www.migrationassociates.com

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Images (from top to bottom), Gwyneth in their new house; the couple making the most of Wellington's famous coffee culture; the chance to see their grandchildren grow up has been the best part of their move

Faced with the prospect of not seeing our children (or grandchildren) my wife Gwyneth and I decided to seriously investigate moving Down Under.

In January 2008 our middle daughter Anna took up a job with a charity in Wellington. We visited Anna in October 2008 and enjoyed our three-week visit and tiki-tour of the South Island.

She brought her future Kiwi husband to the UK to marry him in December 2009, and we again visited New Zealand in January 2010 for a repeat wedding.

During 2010, our youngest daughter, Sally and her husband Craig, announced that they were moving to Sydney, Australia. They emigrated in November 2010.

As we had planned a holiday in Fiji to celebrate my 60th birthday in October 2011, we thought it would be an opportunity to dip our toes in New Zealand properly.

We met with our eldest daughter (Jenny) and her husband Simon in Milton Keynes and talked it through with them and they gave us their blessing.

We decided to rent out our Milton Keynes home for six months, and after our holiday in Fiji we flew down to Wellington in the hope that we could rent a property on the Kapiti Coast. We secured a rental in Raumati.

In March 2012 we set out on our return to the UK, via a visit to



Gwyneth and Jonathan have embraced their new outdoor-orientated lifestyle

Sydney, with the intention of applying for residency in New Zealand and selling up in the UK.

Just before our Fiji trip, the husband of our eldest daughter Jenny applied for a job as a pastor at a church in Wellington.

He was successful in applying for the job and so he, Jenny and their

New Zealand (INZ) announced that they were closing their Family Category stream while they introduced a policy change. Our application had to effectively be put on hold, which was somewhat disappointing for us.

In August we started talking to Borey again about the criteria we

We also investigated our pension status and obtained some advice from Global Qrops.

We took the decision to take most of our belongings with us. Our children had saved money by shipping less but had then found that the cost of replacement was beyond their means.

We arrived in Auckland in September and flew straight on to Wellington. We set ourselves a two-month limit on living with our daughter and this spurred us on each day to do what was needed.

During our first week we bought a new car and we started house hunting. We were the proud owners of our new home towards the end of October.

We had three criteria for a house; it must have a view, a wood burner and if possible a 'self contained' guest area. We also wanted some land for a veggie patch.

We bought our home outright using the money raised from our house sale in the UK. We used Smart Currency to effect the money transfers from our UK bank to our New Zealand bank.

We live in a traditional cedar-clad, timber-framed house, with four bedrooms, a study, a large kitchen diner and large lounge. We are close to good local amenities. A local shopping centre is three minutes away by car.

We set out on our return to the UK, with the intention of applying for residency in NZ

three daughters moved out to New Zealand 15 months ahead of us. Their visa application got processed in two days, and we were the last to make it here!

VISA PROCESS

Borey Chum at Migration Associates was our migration agent. We made a visit to Borey Chum's office in Guildford in May 2012 having met him at a Down Under Live expo in Birmingham.

We found the whole process quite logical. Borey gave some invaluable insights into health issues and enabled us to put some actions in place that we believe led directly to a less-problematic and successful visa application.

Within days of our visit to Migration Associates, Immigration

would use for our application under Tier 1, and at the end of August our Expression of Interest (EOI) was accepted. Exactly three months later, our EOI was selected by INZ for consideration.

On 13 February 2013 we were invited to apply for permanent residency and our application went in one month later. Although we were quoted 4-6 months to get a response, we were given the approval, in principle, just three months later, in late June 2013.

SELLING UP

We sold our house privately in the UK just a week after receiving confirmation of our permanent residency status.

We financed our migration from savings and the sale of our house.

Share your story!

If you are heading Down Under to start a new life and are willing to share the story about your move with us, we would love to hear from you! Simply email us at editor@australiamagazine.co.uk

We can see Pauatahanui Inlet from our bedrooms, and the old Whitby golf course is behind us. The house was completely renovated by the previous owner and it was like moving into a brand new house, even though it was built in the mid 1980's.

We love the style of Whitby. It's probably as close to 'little England' as you'll get north of Wellington. It has all the beauty of Pautahanui Inlet but is elevated, avoiding the dangers of tsunamis. It has lots of walks and recreational areas and it is

with a very positive attitude and knew that we couldn't delay in getting our lives organized.

We have not been shy and people here have responded positively. We miss some of our special friends in the UK but we're of an age when many will be celebrating their 25th wedding anniversaries and may be making the effort of getting to NZ.

As for the future, we're hoping to get fulltime work in Wellington for a few years and build up some savings. We're also looking forward to seeing the growing-up of our

We came with a positive attitude and knew that we couldn't delay in getting our lives organized

just 12 minutes from our daughter Anna in Aotea.

FEELING SETTLED

We couldn't be happier since moving here. The scenery is stunning. I am slowly beating the garden into shape!

Over Christmas recently the whole family stayed with us for two nights. There were 14 of us in the house. We visited the beach on Christmas Day and went surfing, but we also had roast turkey and all the trimmings.

We are much happier than we were in the UK. New Zealanders seems to have a more positive outlook on life. There are less crowded shops, it's easier to get to see a doctor, parking is easier and we love watching films amongst an audience of only 60 people on comfy two-seater sofas.

There are lots of sporting opportunities here, such as horse-riding, sailing and tennis. Kiwis take their personal fitness much more seriously than Brits. We live on a seriously steep road and we often see runners, joggers, fast walkers, cyclists, and families taking an evening walk.

NO REGRETS!

We wouldn't change anything about the move here. We came

grandchildren and trips to Sydney when Air New Zealand are offering deals.

Our advice for other British people wanting to move to New Zealand is to do your prep! There are loads of resources available on the internet. If possible, come and try it out at least for two months.

When you're here, embrace the Kiwi way! 🇳🇿



The family enjoy spending quality time together

"OUR NZ PROS AND CONS"



PROS:

- Back with family.
- Better lifestyle.
- Locals are used to having Brits around.

CONS:

- Earthquakes.
- Incessant wind.
- Miss the breadth and depth of BBC broadcasting.

WHY MOVE TO...

Porirua

It's easy to enjoy an outdoors lifestyle in this beautiful coastal city...

WHAT IT'S LIKE

Porirua is a city located on the northern edge of New Zealand's Wellington region. There are plenty of lifestyle perks here for those who enjoy the outdoors.

The city has a sea inlet, which is great for swimming in the summer and a range of watersports can be enjoyed here. There are beaches on the Cook Strait, and the abundance of sea life here is great for snorkelling.

There are plenty of walking tracks and cycling trails too. Commuting from Porirua is easy as it has good road and rail links into Wellington city.

EDUCATION

Porirua has a polytechnic, five

colleges, 28 primary schools, two intermediate schools, a huge range of early childhood options, and a Maori-focused tertiary education institute.

Pre-schoolers are well catered for, with a choice of kindergartens, childcare centres, pre-schools, playcentres, Montessori, creches and play groups.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Just 20 minutes drive from Porirua lies Wellington city, the Hutt Valley and the Kapiti Coast, which means that there are plenty of employment opportunities across a wide range of sectors, all within an easy commute.

The industry employing the largest number of people is the

Porirua has a sea inlet which is great for swimming



education industry. The city is home to a number of schools and colleges.

The business services industry employs the next largest number of people (which includes business administration, scientific research, contracting staff, accounting, data processing, legal services, among others), followed by health services and construction trade services.

HOUSING

Porirua has 25 suburban areas, with over 16,500 dwellings

that cover the full gamut of housing options, with small seaside villages like Pukerua Bay and Plimmerton, the bush-clad hills of Kenepuru, the rural enclaves of Pauatahanui and Judgeford, and the pleasant hillside suburbs at Papakowhai, Ascot Park and Aotea.

Most of the housing here tends to be family orientated, with two to four-bedroom homes on offer, ranging in price from NZ\$300,000 (£147,559) to NZ\$750,000 (£368,897).

Homes in Porirua



MANICURED GARDENS

NZ\$245,000 (£120,506)

This home boasts manicured gardens at the front and back, with the section partially fenced and complete with vegetable garden and outdoor barbeque area. Airy and light, the home comprises of three bedrooms, separate dining and living rooms and updated bathroom. The property backs onto a park.

CONTACT: Harcourts

WEB: www.harcourts.co.nz



ALL-DAY SUN

NZ\$199,000 (£97,880)

This two level, three bedroom weatherboard home attracts all day sun and is ideally located near public transport, schools and shops. All of the spacious bedrooms have built-in wardrobes. It has an open plan living and dining area and a separate laundry room. It has all the potential to grow in value.

CONTACT: Harcourts

WEB: www.harcourts.co.nz



STREET APPEAL

NZ\$549,000 (£270,033)

Located in a quiet cul-de-sac, this home in Whitby has great street appeal, warmth and character. Features include four bedrooms, open plan kitchen, formal dining room and lounge and modernised bathroom and ensuite. It offers excellent outdoor living space that is easily accessed from inside the house.

CONTACT: Professionals Real Estate

WEB: www.professionals.co.nz