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## BP INVESTS IN BLENHEIM AND EXPANDS LOCAL OFFER

The BP in Blenheim re-opened this morning with a brand new look and a brand new offer.

The grand opening at 14 Main Street in Blenheim was held at 6am, with the first customer through the doors just moments later and 800,000 more customers expected over the next 12 months.

This is the second BP Connect Wild Bean Cafe to open in the Tasman region and follows the recent re-refurbishment of BP's Richmond store.

BP Head of Retail Frank van Hattum said the company had owned the site for more than 20 years and had decided to invest a bit more and convert it to a full BP Connect offer.

According to van Hattum, BP invested in the area because the local community "deserves the best".

"We're thrilled to be able to deliver an upgraded offer to the area and we hope Blenheim locals are as happy with it as we are," he said.

"We want to make the experience better and better for our customers and we're always trying to raise the bar on quality – we take a lot of pride in our great products and our fantastic people," he said.

Mr van Hattum said BP's expanded offer meant new employment opportunities, with roughly 15 positions available in the new store.

"But it's not just about everything that is shiny and new – it's really fantastic to see a number of friendly faces transitioning over from the great team at the previous store as well," van Hattum said.

The new 24-hour operation has additional storefront parking, a carwash and three fuels across every pump; Unleaded 91, Ultimate 98 and Diesel.

BP Connect Blenheim customers will also benefit from BP's brand new, best ever dirt-busting BP Ultimate 98 fuel that was launched last month after five years of research and testing.

BP Ultimate fuel now contains ACTIVE technology – a unique formulation that is designed to actively fight dirt, protect against dirt build-up and help engines run as the manufacturer intended.

"But it's not just our quality fuel that sets us apart from the rest... our famous Wild Bean Cafe has also opened here, so we've got quality food and coffee available for our customers too."

The store also offers updated bathrooms, free WIFI and free newspapers to read while you are waiting for your barista-made coffee.

"It's a one-stop shop for the folks of Blenheim – day or night," he said.

Wild Bean Cafe is the number one retailer of barista-made coffee in New Zealand but van Hattum insisted that their quality coffee didn't come "just by chance".

"We spend a significant amount of time training and re-training our staff to ensure that we deliver consistently great coffee time and again...we've been doing this for a long time, so we think we've gotten pretty good at it."

To drive engagement and ensure Wild Bean Cafe baristas maintain their focus on quality, BP runs an annual barista competition which will enter its 14<sup>th</sup> year in 2016.



The Barista Competition is a major highlight on the Wild Bean Cafe calendar, with keen baristas from all over the country competing for one of three titles – Rookie of the Year, Manager Barista of the Year or Supreme Barista.

Baristas are judged on process (the technical elements of heating the milk, tamping and extracting the coffee), customer service and presentation (how the coffee looks and how quickly it is made).

Gina Bowman from BP Connect Wild Bean Cafe Pacific (Auckland) took out the coveted Supreme Barista title and Shannon Radcliffe from BP Connect Wild Bean Cafe Dallington (Christchurch) won Manager Barista of the Year in 2015.

“Our staff are a pretty competitive bunch so hopefully we will see some Blenheim baristas up in lights this year, van Hattum said.

He also said BP was committed to delivering sustainable and efficient operations every day by educating staff, making conscious supplier and partner choices and through more sustainable construction decisions.

Along with quality barista-made coffee, what many people don’t know is that Wild Bean Cafe has also been using Fairtrade Certified coffee beans since 2008.

“We’ve offered Fairtrade coffee for almost a decade and we are really proud of the positive impact it has had on cooperative communities overseas,” van Hattum said.

“This is our 94<sup>th</sup> Wild Bean Cafe to open in New Zealand, so as we grow, the benefits for cooperative communities overseas continue to grow too.”

As part of a Wild Bean Cafe coffee recycling programme that has been operating for five years, customers can also take used Fairtrade coffee grinds to use in their gardens at home.

The store will also be added to a national recycling programme which saves approximately 90 tonnes of waste from landfill every month.

BP Connect Blenheim will also be added to the company’s national carwash network that recycled more than 70 million litres of carwash water in the past 12 months alone.

“This is an initiative that other retailers are yet to implement to this level or scale,” van Hattum said.

Sensor taps have also been installed to reduce water wastage and, to reduce BP Connect Blenheim’s power consumption BP has invested in bright energy efficient LED lighting, lighting sensors and refrigeration controls including door alarms.

BP celebrated its 48<sup>th</sup> year as a partner of Surf Life Saving New Zealand last month – this is believed to be the longest unbroken corporate partnership in New Zealand history.

Nelson Surf Life Saving Club President Marcus Gardner said the Club was involved in a lot of call-outs around the Nelson-Tasman region and was extremely grateful to have received a brand new Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) from BP this year because their old one had been “pushed to its limit”.

“Our old IRB has taken quite a battering over the years, so this new one will make a huge difference,” he said.

- **ENDS** -

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