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## Smokin'

Charles Travelwell was a sustainability pioneer in Aotearoa in the 1920s, but his efforts went largely unnoticed in an era when corporate business wasn't even a twinkle in New Zealand's eye. Although cars had arrived a couple of decades earlier, Travelwell shunned them in favour of his penny farthing and the preservation of clean air. Onlookers were quick to point out that pipe smoking was undoing this good work — and making it harder for him to climb hills.

*\*Travelwell is a fictional character. Pictured riding a penny farthing in 1929 is Phil Mansell. See page S6 for this year's Sustainable 60 winners*

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## CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Peter Tait has been on an entrepreneurial journey since he dreamed up a system that could track students' progress at school. Tait taught new entrants in England, where children couldn't help but call him 'Miss', then at Auckland's Waitakere College. But for more than a decade he's been developing the Orbit online platform that lets students see how much they're improving.

"I've always looked at the world from a systems point of view. My degree was in sociology and stats which is why most of my teaching career was in maths.

"My interest was about progress. It seemed that for any kid if their focus is on where they are in the class, those are comparative grades. I don't consider that particularly helpful in giving kids a sense of where they are now and where they need to be next."

Like any entrepreneur worth their salt, he's had to be doggedly determined when people tell him his idea won't work — and form partnerships outside the sector he knows.

A Ministry of Science and Innovation (MSI) regional partner — the Hawke's Bay Regional Council's economic development unit — has given Tait's company AdaptED two funding rounds worth more than \$50,000. That allowed him to enlist web designers GardyneHolt to develop an online prototype and Datamine to interpret education data.

"With the money spent on analysis in the commercial sector there was a whole pile of skill sets we could use in education, but we didn't because we were siloed. The entrepreneurial side of me crossed that boundary. I didn't follow the rulebook that says, 'if you're analysing education data this is how you do it.'"

Tait's platform is being used by about 40 schools and he's been excited about forming development partnerships since he first dealt with MSI.

"As a teacher I would have said, 'how dare you take credit for something I thought of?' As an entrepreneur I don't care. The nature of the development is often you're throwing around ideas and people tried to claim tiny aspects of the idea. But the fact I've crossed boundaries has released me from my own worst enemy."

— Amanda Sachtleben