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Letter: How times have changed



Dave Stewart

It was good to read the report on Whakatāne District Council's processes and adoption of its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy. (Beacon, March 13)

As expected in the conservative corners of our social media pages, there was the predictable condemnation of the values of diversity, equity and inclusion.

As is now "normal" when conservatives see something they don't like, they call it "woke". It seems that if conservative politicians want to rattle the dags of their

followers that's all they need to say, and the flock will "baaaa" as one.

Isn't it funny how times change.

I remember when women weren't equal enough to have a bank account in their own name, let alone have a mortgage to buy a house of their own.

Remember when All Black teams to South Africa couldn't include Māori. There was no disabled access to buildings, let alone toilets.

It wasn't that long ago that loving someone who was the same sex as you was an offence that carried prison time and only recently are same sex couples allowed to marry.

As we hear ignorant people attack diversity, equality and inclusion, don't be fooled into thinking this bigotry is something new. It's not. It's as old as time.

And just as old is the attack lines used by conservatives.

"Woke" is the new "PC", which replaced "trendy lefty", which was the new "bleeding heart liberal", which replaced "pinko", which replaced "commie rat".

It's worth remembering that as the world has campaigned for people's rights, conservatives have always lined up on the wrong side, and lost. This is what happens when you abandon empathy.

If you hear a bigot attacking diversity, equity and inclusion, ask them what it is they are against. Is it diversity, is it equality, or is it inclusion?

And then ask them to tell you what they have against any of these things.

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