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I turned 40 and started a new life abroad

■ **Geoff Taylor, 51, formerly from Chester, had always wanted to emigrate to New Zealand. But turning 40 pushed him to move.**

"As a young man, it's fair to say I struggled to find my true vocation. With a degree in international relations and a postgraduate degree, I left university feeling a bit aimless. I took a job as an assistant product manager in Dixons, but it all felt too corporate and I could see it taking years to get anywhere.

"I always had an inkling that I wanted to work for myself, but it wasn't until I hit my 30s that I began to really get to know myself, what motivated me, and what I really

wanted. It was then, at the age of 35, that I started my migration company, The Emigration Group. Little did I know at that point that hitting the big 4-0 would give me the incentive I needed to emigrate.

"I was in the mortgage broking industry and that industry had fallen through the floor, so I was looking for a change that would get me out of the UK in winter. I realised that there was a need for emigration advice.

"A good friend of mine had just come back from Australia and New Zealand and told me how much he'd enjoyed it. That started me thinking. Brits ➡





had long gone to New Zealand and Australia but there was no professional industry to help them.

"I started travelling back and forth to New Zealand for work and fell in love with the place. I would be on the plane home reading articles on kayaking or outdoor sports thinking, 'I'm in my 30s now, when will I be able to do all these things?' The thought of staying in the UK forever

wasn't really an option once I had experienced life in New Zealand, but it was difficult because my livelihood was based in the UK.

"Turning 40 made me reflect on what I had achieved so far and the longing I had to move to New Zealand, and I became determined to emigrate. I eventually found a UK manager and in 2004 I, my wife at the time, and three year-old son, Aidan, moved out permanently. It was the best thing we ever did.

"These days, home is Warkworth, a coastal town an hour from Auckland. It is a beautiful place to live with fantastic beaches, cafes and picturesque views. Although I split up from my wife three years ago, living in such a vibrant place with great weather has given me a new lease of life – I have so much

more energy and I feel younger than ever. I don't have to do all the commuting I did in the UK, I get to enjoy the outdoors a lot more, and I spend more quality time with Aidan.

"He enjoys it here too – he loves New Zealand and every weekend he's down on the beach, enjoying the sun and playing in the ocean.

"Business-wise, living in the place I'm advising people about definitely has its benefits, and since I've been here I've also set up a specialist firm to find jobs for emigrating Britons.

"I see pictures of people in the UK in the rush hour, and it makes me feel so lucky with what I have. I knew I'd emigrate one day, but it was turning 40 that reminded me that life is too short to waste time dreaming of the life you want – you have to go and get it."