



A bi-monthly newsletter from your local Council - Issue 12 - September/October 2013

Council's Investment Fund has grown by \$2.6million

"Council is delighted with the recent performance of our capital investment," said Council's Chief Executive Craig Hobbs. "The sound investment decisions over several years, has grown the fund for future economic development."

The fund grew during the 2012-13 financial year by \$1.5million; the gain coming from overseas share investments. Additionally the fund received \$1.1million from interest and dividends.

This performance means that our strategic objectives of increasing jobs through economic development and encouraging district promotion can come to life.

In 2006 Council made the bold decision to take \$4.5million

from the investment fund and other reserves to finance several projects that would benefit the community in the long term. Three key projects were the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre, Waikato River Trails and Warm Homes programme, that together received \$3.3million of the total amount available. The success of this investment is now being realised.

Council's commitment of \$2.3million from the investment fund, \$1.55million from Lotteries, Trust Waikato and the Lion Foundation and fundraising of a further \$700,000 of by the local community has brought the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre to life. The centre has been operational for a year now with fantastic support from the community.

Council invested \$800,000 into the Waikato River Trails for trail development and marketing. This funding leveraged additional funding from the NZ Cycle Trail Fund, an amount of \$3.5million; which was critical in completing the project.

Close to 30,000 people walked, ran or biked the trails over the past year. The inaugural Taniwha held in November 2012 is another trail success story. Aiming for 500 competitors, an overwhelming 841 entered. People visiting the South Waikato for events such as this brings money into the district; an estimated \$144,000 over that weekend!

As part of the Warm Homes Clean Air programme Council committed \$200,000 from the investment fund to help

combat the poor air quality we suffer during winter. While we are far from achieving our goal in Tokoroa, we have made improvements to the quality of many lives by installing insulation and more sustainable heating appliances in hundreds of South Waikato homes.

"Council is committed to ensuring our investment funding continues to work for our community," said Mr Hobbs. "Our new economic development body will look for ways to use this funding to leverage initiatives that will create positive economic benefits for everyone in the district through business development, job creation and district promotion."

Photo courtesy of the Waikato River Trails

IN brief

- To date this financial year Council has received 76 service requests for roading compared to last year's 124 service requests for the same period. Of these 76 requests, 95% were closed within their required timeframe. The most frequent type of request was streetlighting followed by signs and footpaths.
- The Community Development team will soon be contacting schools to establish a Working Youth Party for the popular annual School of Zen event, due to be held on 3 December.

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IN house

Produced in-house for the South Waikato community by the South Waikato District Council.

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Historic signing of Joint Management Agreement at Ngātira

The journey of collaboration, mutual respect and understanding between South Waikato iwi Raukawa and district councils South Waikato, Taupo, Waipa, Otorohanga and Rotorua was celebrated recently with the signing of Joint Management Agreements (JMA) to enhance efforts to accelerate the restoration of the Waikato River.

The signing took place at Ngātira Marae in Putāruru.

“The hui at the Ngātira Marae was historic in that it formalises the collaborative partnership between Raukawa and five District Councils. It was an honour for the signing to take

place in the South Waikato and as important as it is to recognise the aim of restoring the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River this signing also enables Raukawa and particularly our Council to discuss all matters of mutual concern and plan a way forward for all our people. Credit to all those who have worked to bring the agreement to this point, Councils, Raukawa Trust Board and staff from all partners. It really is collaboration in action”

Raukawa Settlement Trust Chair Vanessa Eparaima said Raukawa is passionate about restoring the Waikato River to its former pristine glory. “Today I applaud

the commitment and shared vision of local councils who are working constructively with iwi to halt the decline and turn the tide on the pollution of the river’s waters”.

All organisations have committed to continued collaboration to fulfil the JMA and ensure that the restoration of the Waikato River remains a key priority, protected for the future benefit of all our people.

“Our Council is proud to stand with Raukawa in their vision to achieve a clean, environmentally productive and sustainable Waikato River,” said Mayor Sinclair.

South Waikato on the map with China

The People’s Republic of China and New Zealand have an excellent relationship which keeps on improving. This collaborative association has grown to become one of New Zealand’s strongest and most important international relationships.

Council has set two very clear objectives; create more jobs and promote the district. The opportunity that China presents for the South Waikato as both an investor and export market has great potential.

“With this in mind, on Friday 13 September, Mayor Sinclair and I had the privilege of meeting with the Chinese Consul-General Niu Qingbao at the Consulate in Auckland to discuss the South Waikato and present investment opportunities available in our district,” said Council’s Chief Executive Craig Hobbs.

Potential District investment opportunities relating to dairy, agriculture, forestry and tourism were presented.

“Consul-General Niu was very impressed with our natural and economic resources; our central location with road, rail and port links; our willing and able labour force and affordable housing. He committed to passing the information that we left to interested investors in China and was positive it would be well received and considered,” continued Mr Hobbs.

Consul-General Niu accepted our invitation to visit the South Waikato later in the year to see for himself what a great part of the world we live in.

China is the world’s fastest growing major economy and the world’s largest exporter and importer of goods. The population of China is approximately 1.35 billion or around 20% of the world’s population. Wouldn’t be great if we could leverage this relationship and the opportunity China presents to create more jobs and promote the district!



Photo by Chris Williams

Residents are reminded that burning of tyres is illegal. One recent incident resulted in a \$20,000 fine.

Tyre burning should be of particular concern to the community as it discharges highly toxic pollutants, including cancer-causing dioxins into the air. Burning tyres is banned throughout New Zealand by a national environmental standard because it is so hazardous. Tyres can be disposed of at landfill sites for a fee; between \$6 and \$20 depending on the size of the tyre. For more information go to Fees and Charges/Landfill fees on Council’s website: www.southwaikato.govt.nz.

Burning of tyres is illegal



Trade Training Centre success!

Council is exceptionally proud of the Trade Training Centre in Tokoroa. And a recent visit has again highlighted the fantastic success of this initiative started five years ago.

Did you know that last year 17 students enrolled in the Trade Training Centre, 17 completed the course and nine students found employment here in the South Waikato.

We're training our people and we're keeping them here! Wow!

A bit of history

The facility was established in 2008 through collaboration between Council, Waiariki Institute of Technology, Work & Income and the South Waikato Engineering Cluster to promote trades training and provide practical work experience in our district.

The project came about when industries in the district voiced concern about the lack of skilled labour available locally to support their expanding businesses. Youth issues also gained momentum around the same time when research indicated there were no avenues available for youth to move into employment in the district. Further research clearly indicated that a skills gap was severely affecting a number of important sectors that the community depended on for district growth and economic stability.

As a result of the findings, a skills gap strategy was established; and ways of retaining youth in the district and training them with skills

that matched the gaps local industry had were investigated. The district's engineering sector was an early enthusiastic supporter of the Trade Training Centre concept. The team visited a number of facilities including one in neighbouring district Otorohanga. Various aspects evaluated and incorporated.

And so was born a highly successful three-way collaborative relationship. Council funded \$90,000 towards the equipment and Waiariki developed a training programme and course model to match the engineering sector's requirements.

An addition

Later, in 2009, the course was re-evaluated by the Steering Group, resulting in an automotive component being added; and two new members representing the local automotive industry being included on the Group. This combined course brought a wider scope in terms of work experience and employment for the students. School leavers are provided training free of charge and the engineering and automotive firms are committed to employing local youth from the programme.

And more growth was on the cards. The scope was further broadened through the commitment of Waiariki, led by Kevin Uncles. Today the Trade Training Centre focusses on engineering and automotive, with carpentry and agriculture training also offered.

The annual Nuts and Bolts newsletter produced by the South Waikato District Council aims to attract more engineering and automotive firms into the programme. The publication is delivered to all industry sector firms in the district, high schools and interested students.

Growing in success

From the first course in 2008, more than 35 students have successfully graduated from the programme with a number of them now employed with participating engineering firms. All students have gained valuable hands-on work experience in local engineering and automotive workshops and have the opportunity of being employed in apprenticeships based on their individual results.

And one such individual result? Mark Strange, a graduate through the programme, won gold in Machining at the New Zealand Nationals in July 2012 and is competing in WorldSkills 2013 in Germany. What a fantastic outcome for this young man, and a real success story for the Trade Training Centre.

The model created for the Trade Training Centre can be duplicated for any industry where specific issues are better solved by working on them collaboratively.

"There are so many different options and paths to take once you have your trade."

Mark Strange

"Trade training in engineering has opened up opportunities all over the world."

Ashley Hayward

"I'd say to young people to do it now while you're young, straight out of school... but it's never too late to start."

Mike Allen

Past student comments extracted from the 2013 Nuts & Bolts



Annual Roothing Projects

Council thought residents would be interested in reading about our planned roading maintenance and renewal programme for the year.

Council has every road in the district mapped with relevant details like age of road, maintenance history, traffic counts and so forth. Using this information, as well as visual inspections and information from our contractors, Council develops a roading programme for planned maintenance. These general maintenance jobs are prioritised, and working within budget, actioned during the year.

Once general road maintenance costs become too high or required maintenance periods too frequent, the road is either scheduled to be resealed or completely rehabilitated depending on factors including age and traffic usage. A newly rehabilitated road has no or very little maintenance costs for several years than the early one. When you have an aging car and the maintenance costs start to climb, and you start to think about trading it in or selling it and getting a newer one... the question of 'continue to maintain' or 'completely rehabilitation' works much the same way.



Part of the road rehabilitation process is when the roller compacts the road metal to form a hard surface.

Road name	Type of work	Location	Length	Duration
TIRAU Urban				
Okoroire Street	Kerb and channel replacement (subject to funding)	Okoroire Street from State Highway 1 to 19 Okoroire Street	265 metres	1 month
TIRAU Rural				
Horahora Road	Pavement rehabilitation	1.3km south of State Highway 1 intersection	390 metres	1 month
PUTARURU Rural				
Old Taupo Road	Corner realignment	700m north of Tomalin Road intersection	440 metres	2 1/2 months
Old Taupo Road	Pavement rehabilitation	2.1kms south of Wiltsdown Road intersection	360 metres	1 month
Dukeson Road	Pavement rehabilitation	Starts at Lichfield Road intersection	780 metres	1 month
Waotu Road	Pavement rehabilitation	Starts 850m west of Old Taupo Road intersection	880 metres	1 1/2 months
Waotu Road	Pavement rehabilitation	Starts 4.3km west of Old Taupo Road intersection	790 metres	1 1/2 months
TOKOROA Urban				
Baberton Street	Kerb and channel replacement	Starts State Highway 32, finish Pentland Terrace	300 metres	completed
TOKOROA Rural				
Matanuku Road	Pavement rehabilitation	Starts at Paranui Road	380 metres	one month

Spring time job

There's an important job for everyone to do in Spring time... and that's collect your firewood for NEXT winter.

Air quality problems are caused by woodburners in winter. One of the main causes of poor air quality is when people burn wet wood... not 'wet' as in wood that has been rained on; but 'wet' as in unseasoned.

Wood needs to be cut down at least six months prior to it being used in your woodburner; and for some woods that seasoning time is even longer - nine, even 12 months.

What's going on in Council?

Ever wonder what's going on in Council? Wonder no longer! There are several ways you can read about what's happening, what projects we have on the go, what we're consulting on and what the important issues are:

- Right here... in your bi-monthly community newsletter In Touch.
- We do some radio advertising.
- We also advertise in the South Waikato News. Our regular advert is called The Bulletin and appears every three weeks.

- We write regular press statements that are sent to all local media and uploaded on to our website.
- Why not make Council's website www.southwaikato.govt.nz a favourite. Our website lists Council services, Council information and news about the district. The home page is updated regularly with new features, announcements and links. You can also do several actions like book events, pay rates and fines, sign up to newsletters, ask questions or provide us with some feedback.

- Why not 'like' Council's facebook page. We post links to press statements, advertisements and announcements, as well as other news and happenings from across the district. Like us at: www.facebook.com/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil.

- We've just very recently generated a Twitter account too so if you follow us, you'll be one of the first! Follow us @SouthWaikatoDC.

As you can see there are heaps of places to find out what is going on in Council... first hand.

Waratah's Community Day

In early September Waratah NZ, Tokoroa held a Community Project Day where staff members volunteered their time to go around the community and lend a helping hand on various projects in our district. One of these projects was the new Learn to Swim hand rails at the South Waikato Indoor Pools. Council would like to thank Steve Piper, Sean Small and Todd Cameron from Waratah for all of their hard work in designing, creating and installing the hand rails down at the pools.

The Learn to Swim instructors are finding them invaluable in helping to teach our young swimmers the important swimming basics.

"The bars are fantastic, they have been a great help in teaching the littlies how to extend out and learn how to

push their bottoms up and their legs out. The kids really enjoy the bars as they have made them feel more comfortable in the water," said swimming instructor Tammy Tautari.

As well as installing the Learn to Swim bars, Waratah staff also painted the soup kitchen interior, cleared some overgrown tracks in the Cougar Mountain Bike Park, planted trees around Mangakino and Atiamuri area of the Waikato River Trails, laid a new floor in the shed at the Tokoroa Community Gardens, waterblasted the exterior of the Anglican Church in Tokoroa, and tidied gardens at the Rangiura Rest Home in Putaruru.

The day was such a huge success that Waratah are planning on making it an annual event.



Talking safety with our Police



'Down' with crime!

It seems we are "down" with crime in the South Waikato... and we should be 'rapped' about it!

Hot off the press statistics to date are:

All crime

- Putaruru - down 24.6%
- Tokoroa - down 3.9%

Family Violence

- Putaruru - down 52.4% (60 in 2012-13 compared to 126 in 2011-12)
- Tokoroa - down 31% (336 in 2012-13 compared to 487 in 2011-12)

Dwelling Burglaries

- Putaruru - down 35.2% (46 in 2012-13 compared to 71 in 2011-12)
- Tokoroa - down 14% (154 in 2012-13 compared to 179 in 2011-12)

It's great news that crime is decreasing, but residents still need to take precautions.

- Lock your vehicles.
- Ensure your home is secure at all times.
- Put away easily removable items like lawn mowers, ladders, garden tools and any other items of value.
- Be part of a Neighbourhood Support Group in your street. To find out more email nstokoroa@hotmail.co.nz.
- Record serial numbers of appliances, electronics, tools and valuable goods. They can be registered with SNAP - Serial Number Action Project on www.snap.org.nz.
- When you are aware of a crime or other activity you think may be illegal, please contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

For urgent assistance or to report a crime in progress dial 111.

What's on at The Plaza?

Over the past few months, the Plaza has been well utilised with some very exciting events.

A near capacity audience attended The World Vision Kids for Kids concert with Nathan King. The acoustics at The Plaza provided a superb setting for over 200 children from many SW schools in the mass choir.

The same venue appreciation was received when the Operatunity Concert was performed for the first time at The Plaza. The show entitled "At your place" was different from what some enthusiasts may have expected; future shows will include their more traditional full length performance.

St Mary's Wearable Arts evening saw the Plaza transformed into a Nursery Rhyme setting. The children with their costumes and masks were the hit of the night.

With over 400 performers and 1,200 spectators, the six hour superbly organised SW Cultural Festival was a big hit.

Coming up:

- OPERA BRAVO, 20 October, 2.30pm, featuring Dame Malvina Major. Tickets prices: \$35, Students \$10.
- SW Dance Festival, 25 to 27 October. Aged 4 to 18 years from across the Upper North Island compete in Ballet and Jazz, Musical Theatre and Contemporary dance. Gold coin, contact Shirley McPherson 027 499 3262.
- New Zealand Ballet, 5 November. The Royal NZ Ballet again included The Plaza Theatre in its Touring Schedule for their "Tower Tutus on Tour Show". Ticket prices Adults \$35, Senior \$30, Child \$12, three children (with adult) \$10 per child.
- Christmas At The Plaza, 16 November. Try the Plaza for your christmas function. An entertaining evening has been planned - two course meal with entertainer Guy Cater from Tokoroa. Please call 886 8596 for additional details.



Happy Birthday!

*"We need a venue for indoor sport and functions."
 "We need a new community town hall."
 "We need a place for people to gather."*

The concept of a sport and events facility started as a dream for our community more than 20 years ago. Many groups, many hours and many concepts have been investigated over the past two decades.

And so the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre was born...

Fit for purpose

The multi-functional, 'fit-for-purpose' facility boasts two function rooms, two court sports arena and a flat floor gym area. It is situated at the Tokoroa Memorial Sports Ground overlooking 16 hectares of greenspace, and other sporting facilities, including the town's popular oval... an oval that saw All Blacks like Kevin Mealamu and Richard Kahui play on during their school days.

Manned by three permanent staff and five casual staff, the centre opened its doors in October last year (official opening was 1 December) and has since seen 15,800 adults, 4,183 youth, 2,887 children, 1,582 seniors and 500 pre-schoolers participate in sporting and other events.

A total of 97 functions, including weddings, funerals, parties, meetings, ceremonies, courses and conferences have been held in the function rooms. The main arena has been used for sports leagues, club nights, casual bookings, sporting clubs and school groups a massive 178

times; and the arena has been used six times for large events including a wedding reception, charity balls and award ceremonies.

For the South Waikato district with a population of 23,000 (and Tokoroa community of just 13,000) these figures show solid community support and regular use.

Feedback from users

Feedback has been fantastic and the centre is a hive of activity on many days of the week.

"This is a fantastic venue for us and affordable which is awesome," said Margaret Hejl of the Tokoroa Ladies Badminton Club*. "The staff who run the centre are absolutely fantastic; friendly, efficient and helpful. It's just a wonderful place to play; we have actually finished our season, but we will continue to play for another month because it has been so enjoyable."

It was particularly pleasing to read a glowing Letter to the Editor in the South Waikato News last year regarding both the venue and the staff.

How it all came together

The \$6.3million facility (including services and surrounds) was designed by Pete Bossley Architects and built by Argon Construction ahead of schedule and under budget. Over 20 expressions of interest,



And it's a busy week...

three from overseas companies, were received to do the design/build tender.

It was the capital commitment from Council in 2008 that pushed the dream through concept stage and into reality. But not without the tremendous driving force that was the Steering Committee. A team of tireless volunteers who spent countless hours on research, community liaison, draft designs and concepts and visits to existing facilities; before stepping back and handing it to Council with an enthusiastic, "this is what the community needs, deserves and wants, can you build it please."

Council took the project on. A \$2.3million kick-start contribution from its healthy investment account and loan-funding additional capital costs ensured the project was about to turn into reality without a major financial impact on ratepayers.

Getting other funders involved in the project was the next challenge; but the project took on a life of its own and Mayor Neil Sinclair had little trouble convincing funders just how important this project was for the Tokoroa and the wider South Waikato community; obtaining a further \$1.55million from Lotteries, Trust Waikato and the Lion Foundation.

Fundraising by local individuals, businesses and community organisations district-wide has amounted to a further \$700,000; hugely significant and indicative of high levels of community support.

Council thanks the business community, service organisations and individuals for their contributions.

Together we certainly did make it happen!

*The Tokoroa Ladies Badminton Club has 25 regulars and a number of casuals who travel from Taupo, Morrinsville and Rotorua to play at our Centre. The clubs has held three tournaments over the past six months attracting around 60 people. They are always looking for new members, if you are interested contact Margaret on 886 6884. For more information on other South Waikato sporting and community groups, visit www.communityconnect.org.nz.



Tackle the Taniwha!

Council invites everyone in the South Waikato to get up and out there, and register for The Taniwha event.

The event is held on Saturday 9 November and entries are open now!

The Taniwha was held in the district for the first time last year. Event organiser Total Sport aimed for 500 competitors and got over 800! And we expect even more this year.

The Taniwha event takes place on our very own and very beautiful Waikato River Trails. You can run, walk or bike the event and there is a range of distances. Distances vary from a short fairly easy 7km for those just starting out to the more adventurous 83km!

The event caters for everyone; those who are just starting out with a spot of exercise and those who are more experienced and want to step up and try one of the longer distances.

The Waikato River Trails extend the length of the district along the mighty Waikato. What better way to experience the trails than to register for this event and start your training.

Go to www.thetaniwha.co.nz to register... but wait South Waikato, there's more! If you live in the South Waikato, scroll all the way to the bottom of the website and send them an email through the 'contact us' button. They will send you a code for a special South Waikato discount on your entry fee!



How are the Waikato River Trails doing?

In simple terms, fantastically! The trails are growing in popularity, which aligns well with Council's strategic goal of District Promotion and celebrating our strengths.

The Waikato River Trails Trust and our District Information Centres have been out there promoting our local attractions at a number of regional events.

Promoting the Trails and other attractions like Te Waihou and the Blue Spring and Cougar Park Mountain Bike track to domestic tourists is showing strong results. Over the past few months over 850 new email addresses have been added to the WRT's database.

The focus at each event changes:

- The Hamilton Home Show attracted about 15,000 visitors and the team showcased Waikato River Trails, Te Waihou and Blue Spring and Cougar Mountain Bike Park.

- The National Agricultural Fieldays attracted 125,127 visitors and there was considerable interest in the Trails.
- The Tauranga Women's Lifestyle Expo saw 5,557 visitors and provided the opportunity to showcase Waikato River Trails and Te Waihou Walkway and the Blue Spring.
- The most recent event the Covi Motorhome Show in Auckland was visited by 5,048 visitors. The focus for this event was the opportunity for camping in the many high quality reserves in our District including Little Waipa Reserve, Jones Landing, Jim Barnett Reserve, Whakamaru and Dunham's Point Reserves all of which are connected by the Waikato River Trails.

We have world class attractions on our doorstep. Get out there and active South Waikato and enjoy them!



Council supports national TV TakeBack campaign

Do you have an old TV that you don't use anymore?

Are you going to buy a new TV to replace your old one prior to the digital changeover on 1 December?

Then the Ministry for the Environment's TV TakeBack Recycling Scheme is just the thing for you.

"Council is supporting this campaign and has been offered a quota to subsidise 1,024 TVs under the scheme," said Mick Jones, Council's Senior Services Engineer. "This means that we are able to reduce our landfill fee for old TVs to just \$5! This special offer will be running from the end of October until our quota of TVs is reached."

TVs can be dropped off at the Putaruru Transfer Station or the Tokoroa Landfill site. The scheme only applies to televisions; it does not include computer monitors. Televisions contain hazardous substances that can have harmful long term effects on the environment. Diverting old TVs away from landfill through such schemes so that they can be recycled responsibly is important; and supports Council's obligation to promote effective and efficient waste management.

The TV Takeback scheme will be promoted nationally, so keep an eye open or visit www.tvtakeback.govt.nz for more information and details on your nearest drop-off site.

DON'T DUMP OLD TVs

If you love New Zealand, find out why you need to recycle your old TV.



IN brief continued...

- The Speed Indication Device was deployed at Arapuni Village to monitor any changes in speeds that may have occurred as a result of the new signs and kerbing. Vehicles travelling over 60 kph reduced from 29% to 20% for calculated on 2,600 vehicles. It was also deployed on Thompson Street where only 1% were travelling above 50kph and at an average speed of just 33kph.
- On 1 November the rules regarding the use of child restraints will change. One of the key changes will be that a child must be in an approved child restraint until they are seven years old. An information campaign and police checkpoints will be run in November.
- The two batches of smart water meters have been installed, the first in Lichfield and the second in Dumfries Road, Amisfield. The Lichfield meters were in place before the last meter reading round, and took just 10 minutes to read. It normally takes about half day to read these meters!
- The Tirau Information Centre toilet block refurbishment is near completion and only requires the final fit out once the new flooring product has had time to cure. This is expected to take a couple of days and the toilets should be open and operational soon after.
- More than 60 local school children planted trees recently in celebration of Conservation Week, including 28 new specimen trees at Lake Moana-nui.

IN the know

The Blue Spring is internationally acclaimed, with water from the Mamaku Plateau taking over 100 years to reach it. Particles are effectively removed from the water, leaving it with a very high clarity and characteristic blue-green colour.

This column features a snippet about Council. Got a question, drop an email to kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz.

South Waikato District Council gives back

For two years in a row now South Waikato District Council staff members have volunteered their time to plant trees on the Waikato River Trails. Last year SWDC helped plant 2,800 trees along with people from other local organisations and individuals.

Some staff enjoyed the work so much that a number of them decided to go back out there and do it again. This year the planting took place at the Atiamuri end of the trails and over the two days Council staff volunteered, just fewer than 2,000 trees were planted. The contributing staff members brought with them energy and enthusiasm and had their gum boots on!

"We are very grateful for Council's contribution and hope we can have similar support again next year," said Glyn Wooler, Waikato River Trails General Manager. "Planting trees along the trails is a never-ending job!"

The Waikato River Trails follow the Waikato River, meandering the length of the South Waikato District. The project started in 2004 and trails have been developed over the past years, with the last trail being completed in 2012. The trails now cover a distance of 100km and are suitable for walking, tramping, running and biking.

The trails take visitors anywhere along the 100km track from

Karapiro to Atiamuri. These trails have created access to previously inaccessible land. The tracks wind their way along a path that encompasses the magic and beauty of New Zealand native bush, exotic forest, historic landmarks, interesting rock formations and geological delights.

"It's nice feeling knowing that you've contributed to something like this," said SWDC Communications Officer, Sina Tolovae, "So many people, local, regional and international visitors really enjoy visiting the Waikato River Trails for so many reasons, and just knowing you've helped to create a part of the wonder is great!"



involve '13

The Involve Festival this year was scheduled for the month of September and saw a whopping 210 events listed.

"Popular activities included Senior Net computer classes, boxing, community garden tours and line dancing classes on Wednesday evenings," said Community Resource Officer Lynne Hazelgrave.

The Involve Festival is about promoting what groups exist in the district so people can try something new; meet new

people; network with other groups who share similar interests.

This year, events ranged from volleyball and basketball leagues, girl guide activities, indoor bowls to zumba, muay thai classes and fun pool sessions.

Involve is held every September; so look out for next year. Council would like to thank those groups that participated in the 2013 Involve Festival.

IN touch

Councillor contact details normally appear on the back page. This issue was signed off prior to Election Day and distributed after Election Day. The new 2013-16 Councillor contact column will be reinstated next issue.

IN view

If you would like to receive this newsletter in electronic format please email kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz.