

# IN touch



South  
Waikato  
District  
Council

A bi-monthly newsletter from your local Council - Issue 23 - July/August 2015

## Te Waihou receives TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence

The South Waikato's Te Waihou Walkway and Blue Spring has been awarded a TripAdvisor® Certificate of Excellence.

TripAdvisor® is the world's largest travel site for planning and booking trips. A feature of their service is user experience feedback. Travellers can rate attractions, accommodation, experiences on TripAdvisor® on a 1 to 5 star rating scale.

"Everything and anything can be rated from delicious ice creams from a parlour in France to awesome accommodation at a motel in Brazil," said Council's Communications Manager Kerry Fabrie. "Every year TripAdvisor® assess these ratings and issues Certificates of Excellence to those businesses or attractions that consistently achieve outstanding traveller reviews."

Council's Chief Executive Craig Hobbs is proud of the achievement.

"We have always known that Te Waihou is a fantastic attraction,"



he said. "I am particularly proud of our parks team who are exceptionally dedicated to making Te Waihou the experience it is today.

"Considerable credit also goes to the many volunteers who work countless hours on the walkway."

TripAdvisor® is a collection of user experiences who rate their experiences around the world. A collection of comments include:

- Samantha from Singapore: "Calm and quiet walk... the Blue Spring... the most beautiful waters we've ever seen. The water was impossibly blue, the sea grass impossibly green, the clarity of the water impossibly crystal, and it just made the whole walk work it. Parking at the

Leslie Road carpark meant we only had to take a short walk, which was good enough for us to stretch our legs mid-drive to Lake Taupo."

- Jenni from Tauranga, NZ: "Just amazing... a trip to the blue spring is a must as the water is so clear you have to see it to believe it. Take an inner tube and tube your way downstream or swim if you are brave enough. The water is really cold but great to drink. Well worth a visit."
- GouravNZ from Auckland, NZ "An amazing, serene and fairy tale destination... free... well to cut long story short, if you are passing by Putaruru and have extra four to five hours then you cannot miss this walkway :). Park your car at Whites road layby and enjoy

Council's Parks and Property Manager Greg Shaw (back right) with Parks staff from left Lawrence Warrington, Phil Parker, Maree Taimetua and Joe Taimetua at the award winning walkway they spend countless hours working on.

this beautiful, serene and picturesque two hour walk to the Blue Spring. You will be amazed to see the clarity of water."

- Rehlaci from Greece: "An absolute must... so blue and so relaxing. Just amazing! The water is very cold but you can get in if you are brave. We took a one hour walk but it was enough to fall in love with the river and the surroundings."

## IN brief

- In the first six weeks of this year, seven resource consents have been received and either completed or are being processed.
- 15 Liquor Licence Manager's Certificates have been issued and a further ten received.
- Council contractors attended 49 after-hours noise callouts in May and June. One noise complaint was dealt with during daylight hours. There was general good compliance.

## IN side

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## IN house

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

Editorial: Communications staff, Kerry Fabrie and Sina Tolovae, 07 885 0340

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# So what's happening with the Leith Place Project?

... by Project Manager, Julie Christensen

One of the most challenging aspects of the Leith Place Project is to ensure that whatever is undertaken in the short term fits into the overall footprint of what is trying to be achieved.

Working with the Steering Committee (Mayor Neil Sinclair, Deputy Mayor Jenny Shattock, Councillor Jeff Gash, Councillor Thomas Lee, Chief Executive Craig Hobbs, and Deputy Chief Executive Ben Smit) and with input from several local business owners, as a newbie to both Council and this project, I am recognising that this is not an easy piece of work.

So what is trying to be achieved with the project? It is not just about the toilets or Leith Place. This has been confirmed by all those I have spoken to so far.

The South Waikato needs economic growth and development for existing businesses and new business to set up in the district, new jobs to be created as well as passing traffic to stop and spend a little. In 10 years' time we would like to have increased the number of businesses based in the South Waikato. Referring to the diagram below, you will see the reference to the Tokoroa Concept Plan, which re-enforces

that the overall plan is about economic benefit for Tokoroa, which the Leith Place Project is a part of.

To achieve this, we must address out of towners' perception of Tokoroa - and in some cases our own perception too - so they too can see the uniqueness and opportunities our town can give them as a home for their business.

The first step to changing perception is to provide an inviting shop window to the town. As the saying goes, first impressions do count and our short term objective is to provide well thought out facilities and i-SITE, clear signage, easy entry and exits for traffic and an overall spruce up.

However, people stopping for a comfort stop and a coffee is not the key to success - it is just a small stepping stone.

We would prefer not to put a large rates burden on our community, so we will be leveraging existing Council budgets as much as possible (roading, signage, building maintenance, toilets etc). We are also building an economic business case (a bit like a business plan when you go to

the bank to open a business), to present to potential investors. The aim of this is to clearly outline the journey over time to economic development and to provide a shared vision that everyone wants to be a part of because they can see how it works, and how Tokoroa benefits from making it happen. Funding is not the only way to invest in this project - time, effort, experience and expertise are other investments that will be needed.

Leith Place will provide the link to food, facilities, rest, parking and retail, enable us to celebrate our forestry and wood history and feature our Talking Poles and diverse culture. It will have easy and safe access, and be a space that evolves over time.

We are still a while away from any physical plans, the future for our Leith Place toilets includes them being clean, dry, frequently serviced, family friendly with decent sized stalls, change tables, well lit, bright and colourful. Location is important not only for passing traffic, but also for our i-SITE customers, bus passengers and the people of Tokoroa.

Although we are still in the very early stages, we anticipate working with businesses and Council to spruce the place up a bit, including general cleanliness, tired and unused buildings, rubbish bins and ongoing maintenance.

We are working with NZTA and some traffic experts (internal to Council and external) to address the confusing entry and exit points to Leith Place, and our unusual roundabouts.

The Steering Committee has agreed to nine Development Principles, the overall Vision and a three phased approach to the project. Representing the Steering Committee, I would love to hear your feedback or input, either via phone, email or over a coffee.



**Got some feedback? Comments? Questions?**

**Contact Julie Christensen who is project managing Leith Place.**

**Email - [julie.christensen@southwaikato.govt.nz](mailto:julie.christensen@southwaikato.govt.nz)**

**Phone: 07 885 0340**

## Objectives and Timeframes

Tokoroa Concept Plan - 0 to 10 year vision

- a place of interest • open green spaces • simple and obvious • a place for locals to gather • "wow" factor
- links into business centre - food, facilities, fuel, rest, parking, retail • celebrate our forestry and wood history
- take Talking Poles tour • access easy and safe • diverse culture • can evolve over time

is a shared vision that everyone wants to be part of because they see how it works, and how Tokoroa benefits from making it happen

### Phase 1

Short Term  
0 to 2 years

#### OBJECTIVE

Leith Place invites people to stop from SH1

**'Shop window to Tokoroa'**

### Phase 2

Medium Term  
2 to 5 years

#### OBJECTIVE

Leith Place creates pride for locals and creates a positive perception

**'Showcase uniqueness of Tokoroa'**

### Phase 3

Long Term  
5 to 10 years

#### OBJECTIVE

Support and encourage local business

**'Economic benefit for Tokoroa'**

# WHAT'S HOT

Māori Language Week at the libraries - activities, story-telling, displays and competitions. Great way to get the community involved in Te Reo.

Safety improvements on the Hetherington and Okoroire Road intersection.



The great feedback from riders on the new mountain bike tracks at the Cougar Mountain Bike Park - well done to the Tokoroa Mountain Bike Club for its tremendous efforts.



Raukawa and Council staff planting together at Lake Moananui to celebrate Matariki.



Forestry to dairy farm conversions from Whakamaru north to near the Kinleith Mill.

New BP opening soon in Tirau - always good to see new business developments and great when a big business chain sees value in investing in our district.

Love Soup being featured on SevenSharp - let's hope the donations roll in!

The Urban Connector - South Waikato's new public transport trial. Feedback has been great, usage has been lower than we had hoped; but with the recent changes to the service - longer route, six trips around Tokoroa and a refocus on the CBD, let's hope use increases. Remember this is a trial, use it or lose it.

The completion of stage 1 of the Rangiura Rest Home development. Council's contribution of \$650,000, coupled with the fund-raising efforts of the Rangiura Trust and the fantastic support from the South Waikato community has successfully built a new wing.

Blue Pacific Minerals new development - more jobs, more positive profile, more prosperity for our district.

The South Waikato District Plan becoming operative on 1 July 2015 with the mediating all 14 appeals without the need for full hearings at the Environment Court. This has resulted in a considerable cost savings for ratepayers.

The provision of a Business Case Management service at Council to assist applicants through the regulatory processes.

The July school holiday programme was a huge success at the Tokoroa library - 93 kids enrolled, 67 of them did all the report-ins and a total of 149 report-ins were done during the 10 days of holidays.

# WHAT'S NOT

Euthanizing a dog in error - this dreadful error has caused huge upset. Council apologises to the owner and the wider community for this error. We are reviewing our systems.

Frosty mornings causing slippery roads and footpaths - an appeal to our community to drive and walk carefully, look for problem areas and let us know - call 07 885 0340. It is unfortunately difficult to find a solution that works in icy conditions; so great care must be taken.



Wet winter weather causing potholes. Local roads are managed by Council - call 07 885 0340 to report potholes. State Highways are managed by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) - phone 0800 4 HIGHWAY (0800 4 4444929).



# Urban CONNECTOR

South Waikato's public transport trial...

We heard what you had to say and we've made some changes!

The Urban Connector officially launched on Monday 22 June and has now been up and running for exactly one month. Over this period we have received a lot of positive feedback as well as suggestions for improvement to the trial service.

We heard what you had to say and now we've made some changes.

The initial major motivation for the trial was to help get our residents up to the newly consolidated South Waikato Health Centre on Maraetai Road, Tokoroa. However once the trial began, we very quickly realised that although getting people to the Health Centre was an important part of the service, more users were interested in getting to and from the Tokoroa CBD.

We've received lots of constructive feedback from our community highlighting this and a few other recurrent issues, such as the need for extra bus stops in Putāruru and more circuits around Tokoroa.

If you are looking at a map with a light grey background, you are looking at an old map. The current maps have a black background.

Here are the changes we have made to the Urban Connector:

- The start and finish point will move from the South Waikato Health Centre to the Tokoroa i-SITE
- An extra three loops around Tokoroa will be added so that the bus is leaving the CBD every hour from 9am to 2pm
- Include extra segments to the Tokoroa Circuit to include stops outside the two supermarkets
- Include an extra, small loop into Putāruru to include a bus stop on Glenshea Street

These changes started on Monday 27 July.

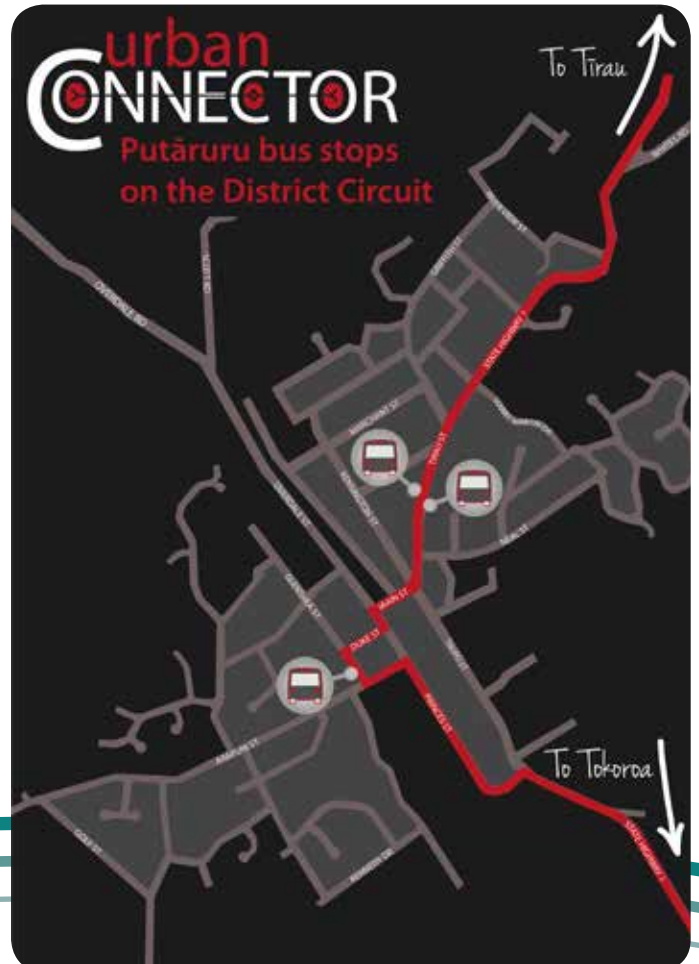
A new Tokoroa Circuit map has been provided on the facing page as well as a map of the stops in Putāruru for the District Circuit (right). The new stop for Putāruru is on Glenshea Street, the Urban Connector will still stop at the usual bus stops; outside Countdown on State Highway 1 when traveling north, and on the opposite side of the road outside the old i-SITE when traveling south.

But our great prices stay the same!

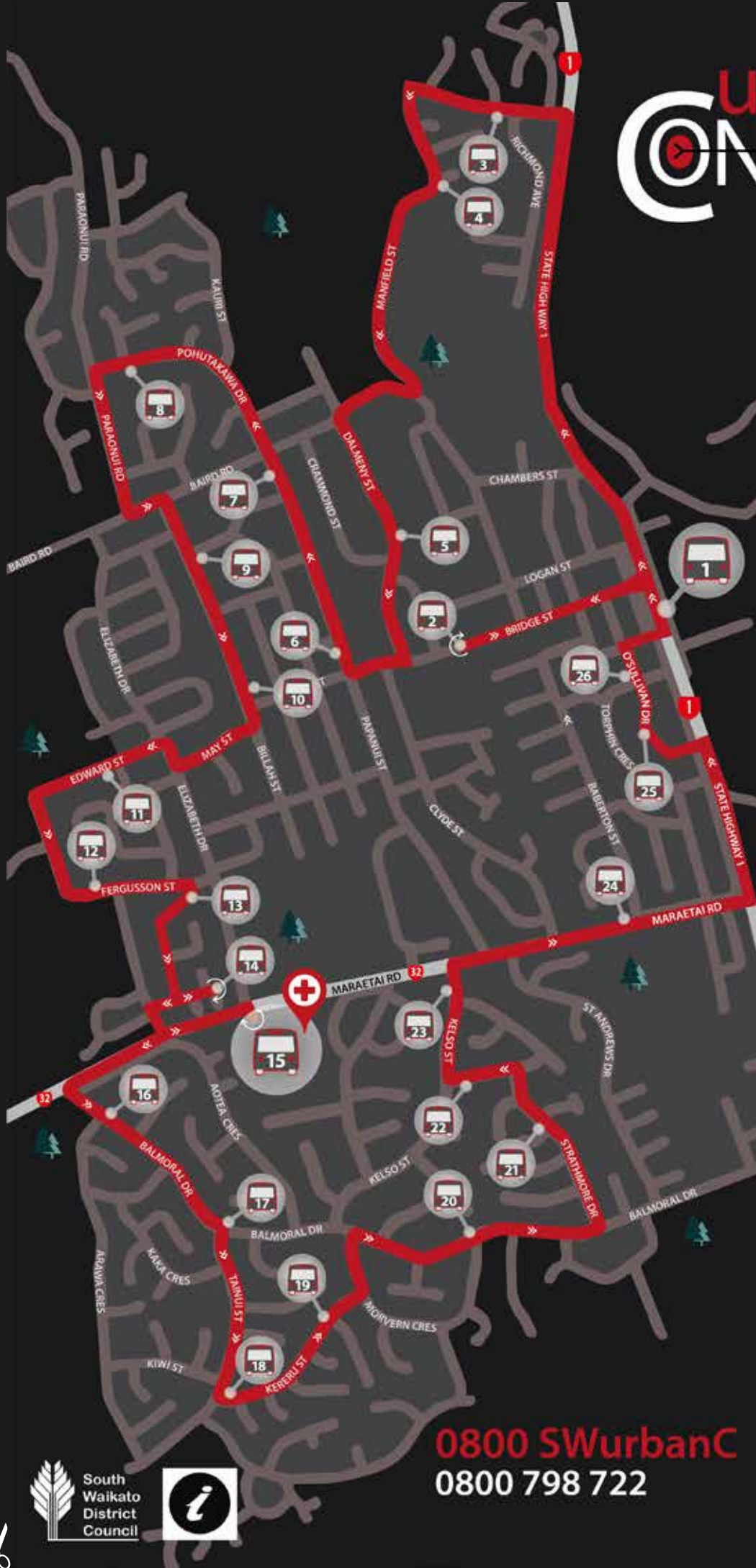
**Tokoroa Circuit** Pre-schoolers ride for free on all services.  
 • Adults - \$2.00 Fares on the District Circuit are one-way.  
 • Children - \$1.00 Payment made to bus driver when you board.

**District Circuit**

Tokoroa to Tirau	Tokoroa to Putāruru	Putāruru to Tirau
• Adults - \$8.00	• Adults - \$5.00	• Adults - \$3.00
• Children - \$4.00	• Children - \$2.50	• Children - \$1.50



# Urban CONNECTOR



## Tokoroa Circuit..

Departs from the Tokoroa i-SITE six times a day, Monday to Friday, at 9am, 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm and 2pm. It will be at:

**Stops 1 - 4** between the times of:

- 9am - 9.10am
- 10am - 10.10am
- 11am - 11.10am
- 12pm - 12.10pm
- 1pm - 1.10pm
- 2pm - 2.10pm

**Stops 5 - 8** between the times of:

- 9.10am - 9.20am
- 10.10am - 10.20am
- 11.10am - 11.20am
- 12.10pm - 12.20pm
- 1.10pm - 1.20pm
- 2.10pm - 2.20pm

**Stops 9 - 14** between the times of:

- 9.20am - 9.30am
- 10.20am - 10.30am
- 11.20am - 11.30am
- 12.20pm - 12.30pm
- 1.20pm - 1.30pm
- 2.20pm - 2.30pm

**Stops 15 - 20** between the times of:

- 9.30am - 9.40am
- 10.30am - 10.40am
- 11.30am - 11.40am
- 12.30pm - 12.40pm
- 1.30pm - 1.40pm
- 2.30pm - 2.40pm

**Stops 21 - 26** between the times of:

- 9.40am - 9.50am
- 10.40am - 10.50am
- 11.40am - 11.50am
- 12.40pm - 12.50pm
- 1.40pm - 1.50pm
- 2.40pm - 2.50pm

## District Circuit..

Departs Monday to Friday from the:

**Tokoroa i-SITE**  
*Leaving no later than...*  
**Morning trip:**  
 • 7.30am (North bound)  
**Afternoon trip:**  
 • 3.00pm (North bound)

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**Putāruru bus stops**  
*Leaving no later than...*  
**Morning trip:**  
 • 8.00am (North bound)  
 • 8.25am (South bound)  
**Afternoon trip:**  
 • 3.30pm (North bound)  
 • 3.55pm (South bound)

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**Tirau i-SITE**  
*Leaving no later than...*  
**Morning trip:**  
 • 8.15am (South bound)  
**Afternoon trip:**  
 • 3.45pm (South bound)

*Times are subject to change.*

0800 SWurbanC  
 0800 798 722



# warm homes clean air

Tokoroa has an air quality problem in winter that is affecting our health, and it's caused by woodburners and how we use them. But there is help! Take a look at Council's three new schemes that are available to help you make the positive change to cleaner heat! These schemes are supported by the Warm Homes Clean Air Programme...

## ON THE HOUSE

@warmhomes.org.nz

### What does it fund?

On the House looks at replacing your old non-compliant woodburner with a new compliant heating appliance. There are three replacement options: wood burner, heat pump or pellet fire. No gas. If you decide to install another woodburner you must have adequate wood storage.

### Are you eligible? Do you...

- Have a community services card or rates rebate in the last two years?
- Own your own home?
- Have high health needs?
- Live in the Tokoroa airshed?

### Yes? Then this scheme could be for you!!

No? Split the Bill could be for you...

## SPLIT THE BILL

@warmhomes.org.nz

### What does it fund?

Council will pay up to a \$2,000 subsidy on removing a non-compliant woodburner/open fire and then installing a clean heating option. The remaining balance can be paid off immediately or through the rating system to be repaid over a 10 year period.

There are four clean heat options available: woodburner, heat pump, gas or pellet fire.

### Are you eligible? Do you...

- Own your own home or do you rent?
- Earn a medium to high income?
- Live in the Tokoroa airshed?

### Yes? Then this scheme could be for you!!

No? Then Buy Now Pay Later could be for you...

## BUY NOW PAY LATER

@warmhomes.org.nz

### What does it fund?

The full cost of this work is met by the property owner and can be paid off through the rating system over a ten year period.

There are four clean heat options available: woodburner, heat pump, gas or pellet fire.

### Are you eligible? Do you...

- Own your own home or do you rent?
- Live anywhere in the district?
- Not have the capital to pay up front?
- Have the ability to pay us back on rates over a 10 year period?

### Yes? Then this scheme could be for you!!

To sign up for any of these schemes or for more information you can give us a call on 07 885 0340 or visit our website: [www.southwaikato.govt.nz](http://www.southwaikato.govt.nz).

We're in the middle of a particularly cold winter and by now you may have burnt through your supply of wood for the winter. If this is the case for you, Council has several Burnwise suppliers who are committed to providing good wood in the community, along with plenty of information on how to burn better.

Our Burnwise suppliers are:

Tokoroa Firewood Ltd  
0508 FOR WOOD (0508 367 9663)

Balmoral Firewood Supplies  
07 886 7550

South Waikato Achievement Centre  
07 886 8941

Central Bay Firewood  
07 886 6387

Tokoroa City Lions  
[www.tokoroalions.com](http://www.tokoroalions.com)

**burnwise**  
GOOD wood GOOD suppliers

## South Waikato Indoor Pool staff upskill to keep us safe in the water

Rest easy on your next visit to the South Waikato Indoor Pools in Tokoroa as staff have been working hard over the past couple of months to retain or gain their Pool Lifeguard Practicing Certificate.

The qualification is a mix of theory and practical work, including a variety of water rescues, theory, deep diving, swimming and treading water. Fitness and understanding of the facility's procedures and common sense are also a requirement but it doesn't stop there.

A good lifeguard also needs to stay alert, friendly and focused.

Key to a safe pool is communication and education to ensure users understand the rules and what is required of them. Under 8s must be accompanied by a caregiver and under 5s must have a caregiver within arm's

reach at all times. Having trained lifeguards doesn't absolve users from their responsibility as caregivers. Your children are still your charge, however lifeguards are there to proactively supervise and to respond to incidents and emergencies if they occur.

Assessor, Nigel Newbury, from the AC Baths in Taupo, was impressed with the high level of capability the crew displayed and confidently gave each of the lifeguards the thumbs up.

Training of lifeguards is a continual process and others will be following suit in the next couple of months as the need to revalidate their certificate comes up.

It's great to know that you and your family can all enjoy a safe and fun experience when visiting the pools in Tokoroa.



Joanna Tautari, Heather Gaby, Nathan Christie, Lesley Brown, Atai Daniela and Patricia Ngatai go over the swim requirements, rescues, treading water and retrieval of objects off the bottom of the pool, that are included in the assessment.



## What's

Mark your calendar



### NZ Off Road 1000

Thursday 24 September to  
Sunday 27 September

- Thursday 24 - Scrutineering and Display, Tokoroa Memorial Sportsground
- Friday 25 - Race Qualifying Sprints, Ngatira Forest Lichfield
- Saturday 26 - 500km Race, Ngatira Forest Lichfield
- Sunday 27 - 500km Race, Ngatira Forest Lichfield- Prize giving and dinner/dance, South Waikato Sport and Events Centre

### Pink Walk

Lake Moananui Charity walk

Friday 16 October, 5.30pm onwards, Lake Moananui

### Tokoroa East School Centennial Jubilee/Reunion

Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October

For more information contact John Carpenter, 0210 833 8410

### The Taniwha

Run, walk or bike - distances from 7km to 80km

Saturday 7 November

### Our Neighbourhood Parties

To be confirmed, kick off November

### Team Championship Cycling Series 2015

Sunday 13 December, finishes three race series in Tokoroa



The Plaza continues to be a place of action over the forthcoming months. Hopefully something for all residents of the South Waikato to enjoy.

Saturday 15 August, 7.30pm. Tickets \$25. **The NZ Blues Brothers Tribute Show.** The show features all the moves, songs, lines and gimmicks from the movie. You will not be disappointed.

Sunday 23 August, 2.00pm. Ticket \$8. Movie Screening: **The Theory Of Everything.** 2014 British biographical coming of age romantic drama. My Life with Stephen by Jane Wilde Hawking, which deals with her relationship with her ex-husband, theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking.

Sunday 30 August, 2.00pm. \$15 per person. **Mighty River Harmony Choir.** An award winning chorus of 50 men, mostly from the Waikato, singing in barbershop style.

Saturday 5 September 9.30am-2.30 pm. **Women's Expo.** Fashion, Beauty, Health, Wellness, Travel, Craft Stalls, Food and more.

Saturday 5 September, 5.30pm. **World Supermodel NZ.** Come along for a wonderful evening of beauty and glamour.

Sunday 13 September, 1.00pm. Tickets \$15. **The Legend Of Country Music.** With songs by Johnny Cash, Jim Reeves, Charley Pride, Patsy Cline and other legends.

Friday 18 September, 6.45-9.00pm. Tickets \$10 (over 14 years of age). **St Mary's Wearable Arts Show.** This year's theme is 'Lost in Space'. Please come and support the children for an evening that is expected to be "out of this world". Tickets will be available from the school in early September. Get ready For Blast Off!



## Keep up to date with Council news



[www.southwaikato.govt.nz](http://www.southwaikato.govt.nz)



[www.facebook.com/southwaikatodistrictcouncil](http://www.facebook.com/southwaikatodistrictcouncil)



@SouthWaikatoDC

## IN brief continued...

- 36 building consent applications were received and 42 were issued during June.
- The building team processed 433 consents during the 2014-15 financial year; with a value of \$62,040,175. This is significantly higher in value than the previous financial year of \$22,968,251. The increase is as a result of the Fonterra Lichfield development - which you can't miss now driving along SH1, looking impressive!
- 73 dogs were impounded in the first six weeks of this year. 31 were claimed by their owners, 27 were euthanized and five were rehomed; leaving 10 dogs in the pound on 20 July 2015.
- The Environmental Health Team conducted 1,055 food inspections during the 2014-15 financial year.
- 1,004 rate rebate applications were received by Council during the 2014-15 financial year. 779 were approved by the Department of Internal Affairs with 177 being processed; and 48 declined.
- Eight liquor licences were issued during June; ten others received and are being processed - these include special-, off-, club- and on-licences.

## IN the know

You can keep up to date with Council information via: website:

www.southwaikato.govt.nz  
facebook: www.facebook/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil  
twitter: @SouthWaikatoDC

## IN view

If you would like to receive this newsletter in electronic format please email [kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz](mailto:kerry.fabrie@southwaikato.govt.nz).

## Councillor Column Tua Numanga

Local Government is a beast and trying to control the beast is easier said than done. But there is an even greater beast out there that we cannot control, Social Media.

It can be a useful effective tool - used to share information quickly which is fantastic, but only if the information is correct. Incorrect or inaccurate information can lead to hurt, poor decision-making, false accusations and even fabricated stories with no truth. Agenda-ridden people take what is written on social media as gospel and instead of searching out further facts, become keyboard warriors, get vocal and wreak havoc.

In those cases Social Media is everyone's enemy. I know because I have been in both camps (not agenda-ridden but at times wrongly vocal). Council is not blind, deaf or stupid. We see, hear and feel just like you. We were elected by you, to make the hard calls for the community. Our decisions are based on the facts presented to us. There is robust - and at times feisty debate - before we decide on what we feel will be best for our community and its future.

Probably the most important lesson I have learnt since coming on to Council, is that we will never please everyone all of the time! For every person that disagrees with a decision we make, there is another person that agrees with our decision. We are open to discussion but not to abuse. Would you want to help someone that continuously abused you - I think not.

Positively, the Urban Connector is one month into its six month trial. While it has been used and feedback about the concept has been positive, there has been feedback about improvements. So several changes have been made - read about this in this issue. The trial still needs more people to use it to make sure it is worthwhile and sustainable. Use it or lose it.

## Councillor Column Anne Edmeades

Here we are right in the middle of winter and its cold with some really hard frosts. Just like it used to be when we were young, so the locals in Putaruru say - it also brings lovely sunny brisk days.

We are exactly two thirds of the way through this three year term and now is the time to start thinking about representing Council. Tirau has spoken and we are going to stay with three wards, ten Councillors and the Tirau Community Board. If you are thinking of standing for Council consider that it is a serious commitment on your time for three years; talk to the Mayor and current Councillors about what is involved.

As you may be aware I am your Council representative to Pride in Putaruru. Over the past six months PiP has met with Council staff about progressing the Putaruru Concept Plan. One of the issues we are grappling with is how do we get travellers on State Highway 1 into the other side of our CBD. PiP is working with an Auckland firm Visitor Solutions on this - residents may have seen the delegation that walked the business area noting features and areas that need looking at in the CBD.

In the last issue of In Touch we featured our new public transport trial service the Urban Connector. Feedback has resulted in some changes which again features in this issue. The Urban Connector now covers an even wider area in Tokoroa, the Health Centre on Maraetai Road, the CBD (including supermarkets) and a service through Putaruru (including a short detour into Glenshea Street) and on to Tirau. In my three terms as Councillor this type of service has been discussed often - it is a trial, use it or lose it!

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