

Tokoroa Road Rail Terminal officially opened!

Drive, perseverance, two million dollars and above all exceptional public-private partnerships saw the Tokoroa Road Rail Terminal officially opened today.

Addressing around 100 invited guests from large corporates, potential investors, existing and prospective customers Mayor Neil Sinclair reiterated why it was easy for the South Waikato District Council to get involved in this project.

"With our central road and rail links, proximity to the Ports of Tauranga and Auckland and strong skilled workforce base this initiative ticks all the boxes," he said. "A key Council strategy is to grow our economy by taking advantage of economic opportunities that will foster more industrial and business development and create more jobs for our people."

The project was driven by locally owned and operated logistics business RJ Lincoln, partnered by South Waikato District Council and Kiwirail and supported by the New Zealand Transport Agency.

Mayor Sinclair paid tribute to RJ Lincoln's Owner Raymond Lincoln and General Manager, Gavin O'Donoghue for their passion, leadership and commitment to the South Waikato.

"It is business leaders like Ray and Gavin who get the 'doing' done," said Mayor Sinclair.

"The potential for this development is almost unlimited," said Gavin O'Donoghue. "Tokoroa is extremely well located to offer logistic solutions for both importers and exporters. This

presents opportunities for existing businesses both big and small. The Tokoroa Road Rail Terminal is a modern logistics solution that ticks all the boxes for exports or imports."

Representatives from NZTA and Kiwirail, Harry Wilson and Steve Muir were equally supportive and excited by the project; and the Honourable Louise Upston echoed sentiments, commending the partners for boosting rural small town New Zealand, before cutting the ribbon.

The Tokoroa Road Rail Terminal includes a rail siding, hardstand

area, local road connection and container loading and unloading facility that will be managed by RJ Lincoln under a public-private partnership agreement with Council that will ensure the facility is open to all businesses to use for export and import containers.

Cutting the ribbon, from left RJ Gavin O'Donoghue (RJ Lincoln), Mayor Neil Sinclair, the Honourable Louise Upston, Harry Wilson (NZTA), Raymond Lincoln (RJ Lincoln), Steve Muir (Kiwirail) and Ben Smit (SWDC).



IN brief

- Council completed 184 (87%) of its capital projects set for the 2014-15 year. Twenty two projects (10%) were started but not quiet completed and just five projects (2%) were held over for the current year.
- Keep an eye out in the local paper for more detail on the Chiefs' Road Trip in January next year. They will be in Putāruru and Tokoroa for some fun challenges on 26 January. Mark the date!
- Clean heat installations to date is 27, with 39 being assessed.

IN side

- 2&3 A 'hole' heap of trouble Tirau Walkway
- 4&5 Good dog ownership Watch that water
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IN house

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

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Potholes - a 'hole' heap of trouble...

Potholes have certainly dominated social and mainstream media over recent months. And it seems everyone has their view on how they form, why they form and the workmanship before, during and after... so we thought we would provide a few road engineering facts.

Roads age and deteriorate over time. Potholes are a type of road failure. Potholes are caused by a combination of water and traffic loading. Water seeps into the underlying pavement structures and weakens the supporting materials. Traffic puts pressure on the poorly supported seal surface and potholes result - the seal breaks completely and the weakened substructure is scattered over the road. Potholes commonly occur where there is poor drainage, at utility crossings under roads, joints with other roads and on old seals.

Pothole patching methods fall into two categories - temporary patching and semi-permanent repairs.

Temporary Patching

Temporary patching is done to make the pothole safer during weather conditions that doesn't allow for a semi-permanent repair. Temporary pothole repairs look unfinished and often leave people thinking - and saying - what a poor repair job it is. It isn't poor workmanship, it is just temporary. The contractor uses cold mix or road material to temporarily fill the hole and ensure user safety. During heavy rains, these temporary fixes can easily blow out again. This does not mean they were repaired to a sub-standard; it is simply now a weak point and until a more permanent repair can be done (in dryer weather) it will always be a weak spot. On a positive note, these temporary repairs are at no charge to Council (or the

ratepayer). The cost is carried by the contractor as part of the road maintenance contract.

Semi-Permanent

Semi-permanent repairs require good weather over a longer period (ie, the substructure material needs to dry out too). The contractor uses hot mix or other matching seal type. This repair requires clearing out the hole, reconstructing the underlying substructure in the failed area and blending the top seal to the surrounding area. Both the substructure pavement material and the seal are replaced. Semi-permanent repairs cost Council and the ratepayer under the road maintenance programme. This is a budgeted programme of works - budget for the 2015-16 year is \$80,000 and includes other general repairs.

There is no permanent repair for potholes. Once the cost of maintaining a stretch of road starts costing too much, the entire stretch of road is either re-sealed (just the top seal) to protect the underlying pavement or rehabilitated from the substructure material to the top seal.

Roads are a living asset and they succumb to weather conditions. Heavy rains cause potholes described above; in the same way that extremely dry hot weather can cause the seal to crack and substrate material to escape.

There are a number of ways to combat road deterioration:

- Conduct regular inspection of the network.
- Provide appropriate drainage and regular cleaning of the drainage structure (like stormwater systems).
- Ensure utility crossings are replaced to optimal standard.

And finally, the question of who is responsible for what. The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) is responsible for all state highways; including the portion that runs through townships. Council is responsible for all local and rural roads. NZTA and Council work collaboratively on projects when and where they can. Both NZTA and Council have contractors that carry out the work to the level of service that is outlined in the respective contracts. In the South Waikato, the roading contractor for both Council and NZTA is Downers; which could be why some people get confused as to which organisation - NZTA or Council - is responsible for what. NZTA is a central government agency funded by taxes. Council is a local government agency funded by rates. Residents are encouraged to contact Council to report potholes on local and rural roads. We are also happy to take calls about potholes on state highways - we simply pass these on; or you could phone 0800 4 HIGHWAYS (0800 4 44449).

Recycling crates reduced to \$10

Council has reduced the cost of the official maroon and green recycling crates to \$10 to encourage people to purchase additional crates.

Two issues cause concerns - which in turn are creating frustrations for Council, the community and contractors - overfilled crates and non-regulation crates.

The perception of what 'overfilled' looks like is subjective. If crates are overfilled the contractor will not empty them for safety reasons as crates are lifted above their heads to empty.

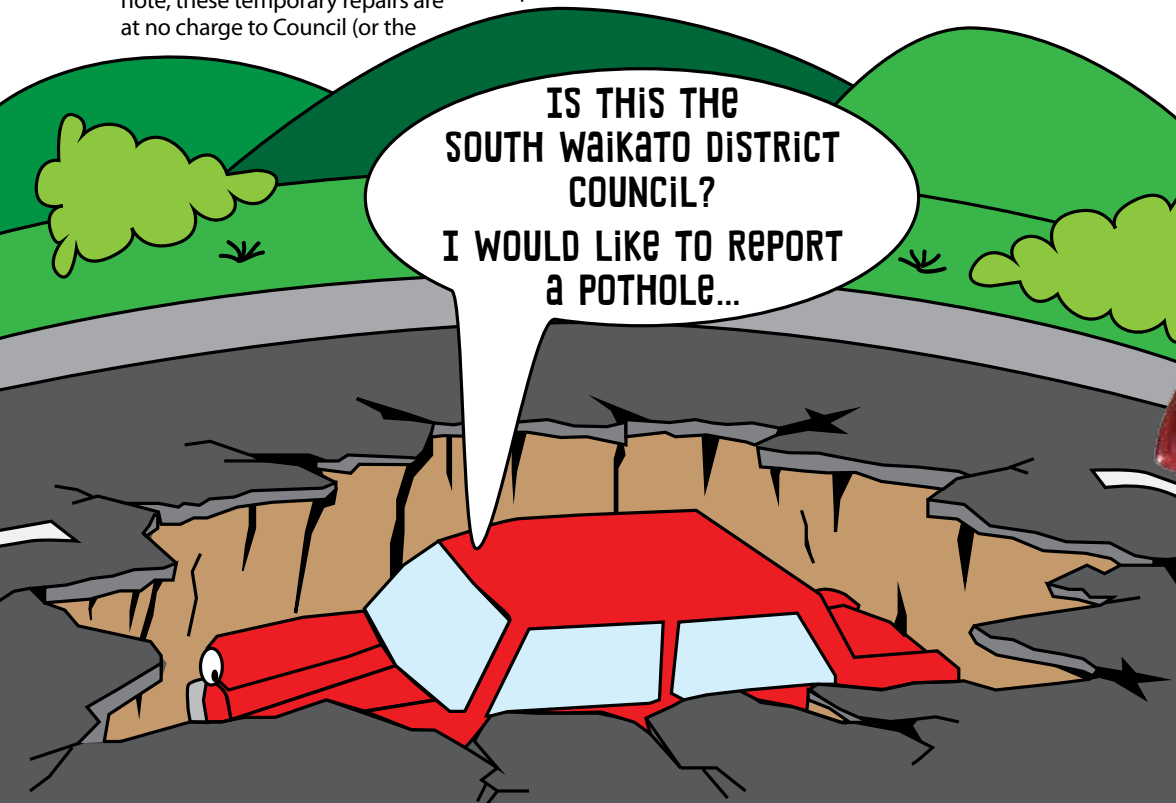
Council is also phasing out the use of non-regulation crates. The quality of some non-regulation crates are not up to standard, and with coming health and safety legislation changes it is important that we sort this issue once and for all.

The simplest 'one-rule-across-the-board' way to do this is to no longer permit non-regulation crates. That way there can be no misunderstanding.

There are several solutions to overfilling your crates:

- Purchase additional crates from Council.
- Drop excess recycling at one of the six recycling depots.
- Fold paper, flatten boxes and crush plastic bottles and cans - that way more material fits into each of the crates.

From Monday 2 November, only the official green and maroon crates will be emptied.



IS THIS THE
SOUTH Waikato DISTRICT
COUNCIL?
I WOULD LIKE TO REPORT
a POTHOLE...



WHAT'S HOT



Following the traffic calming measures taking in Arapuni Village, Council has recorded a drop in average driving speed.



The new jetty at lake Moananui.

WHAT'S NOT

With the continued heavy rain, Council faces an ongoing problem with potholes around the district. Looking forward to some sunny days!

Inputting a microchip number incorrectly in 2012, resulting in a lost dog and headache for the original owner and the adopted owner who kindly returned the dog after a whole year. Council has purchased microchip scanners to ensure this never happens again.

Council continues to renew sections of the footpath on Browning Street - becoming increasingly popular for both walking and cycling.

The Urban Connector - South Waikato's 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, usage has begun to increase. Remember this is a trial, use it or lose it.

Council's new Split the Bill air quality assistance scheme - so hot we're almost fully allocated. Keep the names coming, there's always next year.

The Tokoroa Library Team being nominated as a finalist in the Raukawa Māori Language Awards - Whakamihiri!

We retained our International Accreditation of New Zealand (IANZ) building accreditation which means Council can continue to provide excellent service to our community processing building consents.

A successful controlled purchase operation for off license liquor premises was conducted and not a single premise failed! Well done to South Waikato off-license retailers.

Tirau Walkway is back on track

Council received news recently that KiwiRail would conditionally approve the construction of a pedestrian at-level crossing over the railway line as part of the Tirau Walkway Project. The project has largely been on hold until we heard back from KiwiRail as the pedestrian crossing over the railway was an essential component.

"This is great news for the Tirau community albeit subject to acceptance of the design," said Tirau Ward Councillor Terry Magill. "The walkway will be constructed between the township and the Tirau Domain and we are looking forward to now making progress."

Council committed \$230,000 to fund the construction of the walkway project following the Tirau Community Board's (TCB) application to the \$5million economic and community fund last year. With the exception of the KiwiRail crossing and bridge over the stream, the rest of the walkway will be constructed and maintained by volunteers under the guidance of the Tirau Community Board.

Physical work won't begin until all the conditions identified by KiwiRail are satisfied, including signoff on the design and construction of the pedestrian crossing. The project is being managed by the TCB with assistance from Council staff on designing and building the pedestrian bridge across the Oraka stream.

Coupled to this project, Council will be kicking off a review of the Reserve Management Plan for the Tirau Domain to determine which activities will be considered at the domain - the community will be consulted on this as part of the 2016-17 Annual Plan in March/April next year.

There is still some reinstatement work to be done at the new roundabout on SH1 and 5 but this is not expected to delay the walkway project.

Mayoral Scholarship up for grabs

In early September Council put the call out to our districts ambitious secondary students to come forward and apply for the Mayoral Scholarship.

The Scholarship is available to South Waikato residents aged 21 years or under and are planning to study towards a degree in 2016.

Applications are now closed and the committee is getting ready to shortlist the students for the interview process.

"As always, we are looking forward to hearing from all shortlisted applicants," said Murray McAlister, Council's Human Resources Manager, "It's never an easy job to choose the recipient of the Scholarship as the applicants are always of such a high calibre, and we know this year is no different."

Council is now into its ninth year of awarding the Mayoral Scholarship, which is valued at

\$20,000 (\$5,000 per year for up to four years).

Last year the Scholarship was split between two students, Chloe Tupou-Fairoa Herman and Cameron Pearce.

"We had a tough time selecting only one recipient last year," commented His Worship the Mayor Neil Sinclair, "Chloe and Cameron were both outstanding students and we just couldn't chose between them. Who knows, it could be the same this year."

Council believes that we are the only Local Government body to offer a scholarship of this sort to aspiring local students. This initiative aligns strongly with Council's commitment to supporting local youth in furthering their education.

"Council is excited to provide opportunities for youth in the district. The Mayoral Scholarship Fund is one way we can assist in youth development and education by supporting our youth through their studies," said Mayor Neil Sinclair. "When students are finished their chosen studies job opportunities may be available in the South Waikato; and they can start their careers here, giving back to the community they grew up in."

Council will announce the recipient of the Mayoral Scholarship at the end of October.



Good dog owners register dogs

Council would like to acknowledge the 2,252 people who registered their 3,049 dogs on time. You are a great example of excellent dog ownership. We appreciate you paying your dog registrations on time. Indeed, many dog owners in our district have never paid late.

However, 329 people owning 387 dogs failed to register their dogs by the due date; kicking off Council's time-consuming, but **effective** door to door programme. At the time of writing, just three days of the door to door programme picked up 30 unregistered dogs!

The question has to be asked... what would you rather pay? Your dog registration fee on time OR your dog registration fee PLUS a 50% late payment penalty PLUS a \$300 infringement for failing to register your dog?

Council mailed out registration documents for 3,436 dogs to 2,581 owners. Registration by law needs to be paid by 31 July. Registration documents go out in June, giving people around six weeks to pay this bill. The registration deadlines are the same across the country and it is the same every year - pay by 31 July or you could incur a penalty and fine.

A massive 87% of dog owners in our district have done the right thing - major woof woof!

Sometimes dogs have sadly passed away during the year or have been given away, lost

You didn't register your dog on time?
Are you 'barking' mad...!!?
Woof... gggrrrrrrr!

or moved elsewhere and people simply bin the registration papers. If you let Council know within 14 days of your situation changing, then we can amend our records accordingly, plus you could be entitled to a refund. For instance, if you pay your registration for the 2014-15 year and your dog passes away in December of that year and you provide a vet death certificate within the 14 day period, we can reimburse six months of your registration fee AND we won't send you the next year's registration papers. How easy is that?!

Paying your registration is as much a part of being a responsible dog owner as feeding, watering and sheltering your dog. It is against the law to not register your dog.

Council also invites people to talk to us. If you are struggling financially and can't make the full payment at one time, talk to us. We are happy to set up a financial plan that can assist, by making weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments. We can't help if you don't talk to us first but you must speak with us BEFORE the due date!

Our Council offers urban dog owners a Selected Owner Policy (SOP). Under this regime dog registration fees are more than halved at just \$60 a year, however this reduced fee is not a right, it is a privilege and has set eligibility criteria. A couple of key criteria are:

- No valid complaints on file for the past 12 months and no infringements or prosecutions in the past 24 months.
- Full payment on time for the two years prior.
- Fully and securely fenced property. Your property is inspected by our Animal Control team.

And just a reminder to SOP owners, this special privilege can be revoked if justified complaints or other infringements occur, like being late with registration payments!

If you are a good dog owner and not yet on SOP, give Council a call and make an appointment with one of our officers and next years' registration could be just \$60! That is surely something to wag a tail about!

All dog owners must:

- Register your dog before it is three months old (or when you get it).
- Renew the registration for your dog each year before 1 July* (**our Council gives dog owners until 31 July to pay their fees, not all Councils do*).
- Notify Council if you change your address, your dog dies or has a new owner.
- Microchip your dog.
- Make sure your dog does not scare or injure any one or any other animal and is kept under control at all times.
- Care for your dog – exercise it and provide sufficient food, water and shelter and above all love it.



Winter is over, but our air quality problem remains

This past winter, Tokoroa exceeded the PM₁₀ air quality limit a total of 10 times, that's one more exceedance in comparison to last year's numbers.

"Although this is still far too many exceedances, the good news is the severity of these exceedances has steadily been coming down year by year," commented Council's Community Group Manager, Amanda Hema. "Without doubt, the schemes Council has introduced to help our community improve the air quality are making headway. The level of exceedance is lower. In years gone by exceedances could reach in to the 80s and even 90s, now the majority are under 55."

Waikato Regional Council measures the amount of PM₁₀ in the air for our district. PM₁₀ particles are small enough to get into your lungs and can cause serious health problems

So you can see why it is of concern that Tokoroa had 10 exceedances this winter alone, and both our Council and the Regional Council will remain invested in helping our community better the air quality.

"The health of our community is the main concern here," said Mrs Hema, "Together we need to make more of an effort to get the number of exceedances down to match the reduction in the level of the exceedance."

The schemes in place to help our community include Warm

Homes Clean Air funded programmes On the House and Split the Bill, which have been so popular amongst South Waikato residents that all funding has been allocated for the 2015/16 financial year.

"Although it's disappointing for those who have missed out this year, we are definitely taking this as a positive sign. It shows our community sees the benefit in replacing their old woodburners with new clean heating appliances, and it means we have warmer homes and cleaner air in our district," said Mrs Hema.

If you are still interested in having your old woodburner replaced through one of Council's WHCA programmes,

we are taking names for the 2016/17 financial year. However, if you are looking for a quicker solution, you can do so via the Buy Now Pay Later programme. This programme will see your old non-compliant heating unit removed and replaced, Council will foot the bill and all you need to do is pay the money back on your rates bill over a 10 year period.

"The warmer months are on their way around but it's important we don't forget about our air quality issue. Spring is the perfect time to start collecting your wood to insure it is dry and ready to burn come next winter," said Mrs Hema.

Watch that water use...

Council often receives a lot of questions about water restrictions when they are in force. Summer is not far away and to help everyone understand what water restrictions are all about, we have answered some of the more frequently asked questions below.

Why do we have water restrictions?

In summer, we get a lot less rain than the rest of the year and the amount of water people use increases (on things like watering gardens and filling up swimming pools). The combination of these things puts pressure on our water supply. Water restrictions are put in place to make sure there is enough water for everyone to use during this time.

What are the water restrictions?

There are different levels of water restrictions in place depending on what water alert level we are on. Official restrictions only relate to outdoor water use - but of course, we encourage you to be smart with water wherever you are using it!

Water Alert Level 1 means you can only use sprinklers between 6am-8am and 6pm-8pm.

Hand-held hosing can be used at any time.

Water Alert Level 2 means you can only use sprinklers between 6am-8am and 6pm-8pm on alternate days.

Hand-held hosing can be used at any time.

Water Alert Level 3 means you can't use sprinklers at all. Hand-held hosing only.

Water Alert Level 4 means you can't use any outside water systems.

Which water alert did we reach last year?

Last summer 2014-2015, we went to Alert Level 1, and were very close to Alert Level 2 but thankfully the community used water wisely and followed the water alert levels, so we didn't have to take that step for further water restrictions.

What would reaching Alert Level 3 and 4 be like?

With Level 3 you would not be able to use domestic sprinklers at all but you would be able to use a hand held hose.

With Level 4 there would be no outside non-essential water use by domestic, commercial and non-residential water users. This means no hoses, sprinklers or irrigation systems can be used unless it's essential. Alert Level 4 would require a significant reduction in our communities' water use.

Will we be fine if we get lots of rain?

Rain in the district will be great for our farms, gardens, parks and local waterways however, for the region's water supply we need the rain to fall in our catchment areas - places where our water comes from originally. If rain is falling in your town, then it is good for reducing how much water people use (we see big decreases because people aren't watering their gardens or lawns). However it doesn't mean that our water supply is topped up and that we can ignore the water restrictions.

Look out for more information on water restrictions in the next In Touch.

Te Ara Metua Punanga Reo helps Council Feed the Bees



September is Bee Aware Month and this year the National Beekeepers Association challenged councils across New Zealand to take part and help feed the bees. South Waikato District Council took up the challenge and got some of our local tamariki buzzing about bees too.

The theme of this year's Bee Aware Month was 'Feed the Bees' and the challenge for councils was to dedicate a patch of land in their district for a bee-friendly garden and mark it so the community know what the garden is for.

"We liked this idea so much we decided to plant bee-friendly gardens in all our four main towns; Tokoroa, Putāruru, Tirau and Arapuni," commented Council's Parks and Property Manager, Greg Shaw.

Children, parents and staff from Te Ara Metua Punanga Reo joined Mayor Neil Sinclair and Council staff to sow seeds in the prepared Tokoroa bee-friendly garden located at Lake Moananui.

"It was a fantastic experience for our tamariki and staff," commented Ani Maea, Manager of Te Ara Metua Punanga Reo, "We are looking forward to taking the children back to the garden to see how the flowers have grown and to see if we can spot any bees."

Planting a bee-friendly garden is a great way to ensure our kiwi bees have enough to eat so they can keep doing their job. The seeds planted were wildflowers and they were donated to Council by the National Beekeepers Association.

The bee-friendly gardens were planted in the South Waikato in late September to allow for the finer weather to give the flowers the best chance to grow.

"I used to be a beekeeper myself, so it was personally a lovely experience to help plant this garden with the children," said Mayor Neil Sinclair, "Well done to the National Beekeepers Association for organising another great Bee Aware Month."



Urban Connector update

South Waikato's public transport trial, the Urban Connector, is now more than half-way through the six month trial period nearing its four month review, and so far the results are looking promising.

"Since we introduced the changes to the Urban Connector the numbers have been rapidly climbing," said Public Transport Steering Committee Chair, Akarere Henry, "Council and the Steering Committee made a great decision to make changes to the service early on in the trial, so it could work better for our community."

The changes that were introduced included: changing the start and end point from the South Waikato Health Centre to the Tokoroa i-SITE; new sections and stops were added to the Tokoroa Circuit to include both of the local supermarkets; increasing the frequency from three Tokoroa Circuits a day, to six; adding a new stop on Glenshea Street in Putaruru on the District Circuit; and more recently adding an 'on demand' stop at Lichfield.

The changes were implemented in late July and since then the number of passengers who use the Urban Connector on both the Tokoroa Circuit and District Circuit has more than doubled.

Council is glad to see the community making use of this service and really buying into the Urban Connector.

There are, however, some concerns with the number of people using the District Circuit service. The Urban Connector travels the District Circuit twice a day every weekday. The bus

travels from Tokoroa to Tirau and back again, with stops in Putaruru and Lichfield (on demand).

"We are pleased to see that the number of passengers using the District Circuit is building. We don't expect the bus fares to cover the cost of running the service however the number of people using the District Circuit isn't enough to justify the service currently. We need more usage," commented Mrs Henry.

Council recognises the great social service the District Circuit provides, and we encourage our residents to get on board.

"This is only a trial to indicate whether there is adequate need for each of the services so it is very possible that if the numbers do not increase for the District Circuit, Council would need to reevaluate this service."

The statistics for the Tokoroa Circuit continue to impress Council and it is proving to be of great value to our community.

So much so that Council has teamed up with Waiariki to provide an added service of an extra two loops on the Tokoroa Circuit at 7.45am and 3pm to help students get to and from their courses at the Braeside and Ashworth campuses.

"Waiariki continues to partner with Council on many initiatives and this is one we believe our students will get significant benefit from," Maree Kendrick, Waiariki Regional Development Manager.

This service is tailored towards Waiariki students, and includes a stop at the Braeside Campus on

the 7.45am trip. The 3pm circuit departs from the Ashworth Campus and travels south to the Braeside Campus to collect students, then continues on the usual Tokoroa Circuit from the i-SITE.

"We've provided an extra bus for this added service so as not to interfere with the Tokoroa/Tirau Circuit, which runs around the same time, and although these new times were put in place to assist Waiariki students, the public are more than welcome to use it too," said Amanda Hema, Council's Community Group Manager.

The Urban Connector will be heading into its four month review at the end of October, but already the Steering Committee is confident that it will extend to the full six months.

"Before the six month trial is complete we will put forward a business case to NZTA. If the trial goes well Council could decide to secure the Urban Connector as a permanent service in the South Waikato, funded partially, by Council, NZTA and users," said Mrs Henry.

Weekly numbers for the District Circuit Weeks 1 to 12

A total of **139** passengers have used the District Circuit since the Urban Connector began.

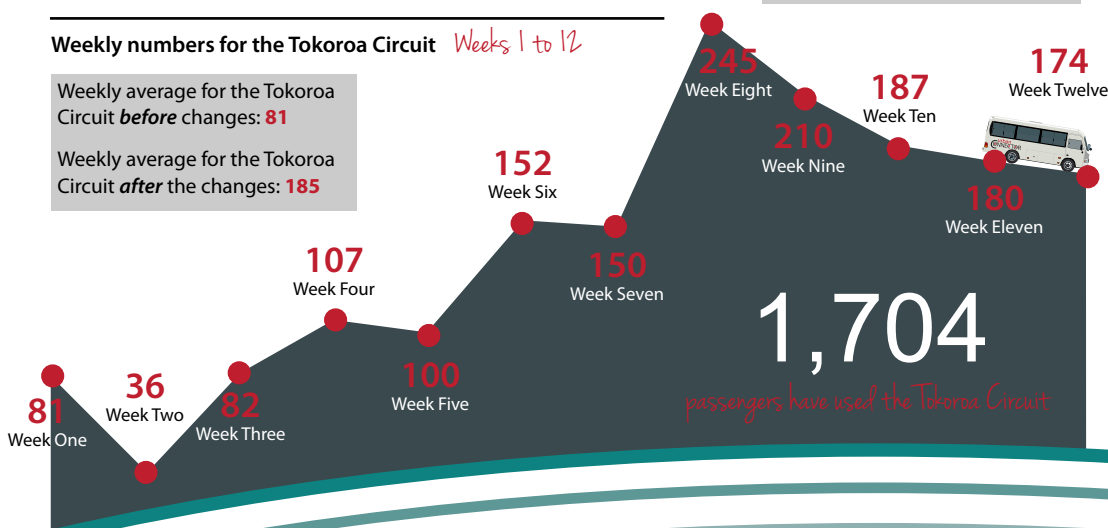
Weekly average for the District Circuit **before** changes: **6.8**

Weekly average for the District Circuit **after** the changes: **15**

Weekly numbers for the Tokoroa Circuit Weeks 1 to 12

Weekly average for the Tokoroa Circuit **before** changes: **81**

Weekly average for the Tokoroa Circuit **after** the changes: **185**



What's

Mark your calendar



Dog Agility National Championships

Labour Day weekend, Sunday 25 and Monday 26 October, Tokoroa Memorial Sportsground

The Taniwha

Run, walk or bike - distances from 7km to 80km to suit all ages and fitness levels, Saturday 7 November, visit www.taniwha.co.nz

Kinleith Fun Run

Saturday 14 November, Cougar Park, events for all ages, running and walking.

Our Neighbourhood Parties

The dates for these fun neighbourhood events are yet to be confirmed, kicking off in November.

Putaruru Christmas Parade

Friday 4 December

Tokoroa Big Weekend

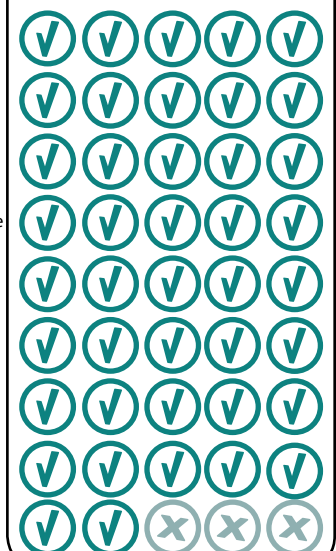
Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 December, Tokoroa Memorial Sportsground

Team Championship Cycling Series 2015

Sunday 13 December, finishes three race series in Tokoroa

Guess what... for the 2014-15 year...

we achieved **93%** of our Key Performance Indicators!



New retaining wall protects against erosion

Council has constructed a retaining wall at the Blue Spring along our award-winning Te Waihou Walkway to stop further bank erosion from users jumping and diving into the river for a swim.

"The area is a popular swimming spot," said Greg Shaw, Council's Parks and Property Manager. "Unfortunately the activity has resulted in some erosion."

The retaining wall incorporates a levelled viewing area including the seats previously there to continue to encourage users to stop and take a break and marvel at the picturesque Blue Spring. The viewing area includes steps into the river for those who wish to go for a swim. Once the construction work was complete, Council's parks team began the planting and beautification work.

The project forms part of the Te Waihou improvement work budgeted through the \$5million economic and community development fund. Other improvement work included a new toilet at the Blue Spring end of the walkway, car park extensions at both Whites Road and Leslie Road ends, plantings and track maintenance and improvements.



Adopt a Dog provides forever homes for pound dogs



This is Bella, the 12 month old pointer cross pup, who has found her forever home with Robyn and Paul Schoch thanks to Council's Adopt a Dog programme.

Council's Animal Control Team have been successfully rehoming dogs that come into the pound for well over 10 years now. Thanks to the recently developed Adopt a Dog programme, the process for rehoming has become a lot more efficient, seeing even more dogs who end up in the

pound find new, loving homes much faster.

Bella is just the latest success story in a long line of dogs who have been rehomed from our district.

"Through the Adopt a Dog programme, we rehome well over 40 dogs a year," said Senior Animal Control Officer, Kerry Beckett, "For me it's the best part of the job, it's hard to see dogs mistreated and end up in the pound, but being able to find them homes where they will be loved and cared for makes it all worthwhile."

All dogs that are put on the Adopt a Dog programme are first put through behavioural tests to make sure they are suitable to be rehomed.

"This process can take up to two weeks, sometimes more," said Mrs Beckett, "We observe their temperaments while they are in our care, we look for things such as food aggression or aggression towards people.

We spend time with the dogs personally and will bring them into the exercise area to make sure they have the ability to be sociable with other dogs."

If a dog passes all the test, they are given the go ahead to be placed on the programme.

"Sometimes we will find a dog has specific needs, and we always provide advice to ensure that both owner and dog find what they need in each other."

Mr and Mrs Schoch travelled all the way from Waiuku to adopt Bella.

A family member who lives in the district found out about Bella thanks to the Adopt a Dog programme and contacted them, knowing they were looking for a dog.

"We came down to visit her one weekend and just fell in love," commented Mrs Schoch, "Bella is our first dog, and we're so excited to take her home."



What an amazing few weeks it has been at The Plaza!

In late August the Mighty River Harmony Choir impressed a crowd of over 100 with their barbershop style vocals under musical direction of Jill Rodgers.

We hosted the Putaruru Charity Fight Night. The crowd of over 440 was treated to a full sized boxing ring with many local boxers fighting it out for charity. The Putaruru Volunteer Fire Brigade was the recipient of over \$6,000 raised at this event.

St Mary's Wearable Arts put on an amazing show. This was a successful fundraiser for the school.

Coming up at The Plaza:

South Waikato Dancefest Competitions. 24-26 October, 8am-late. Gold coin donation. Come along to watch various genres of dance.

Nathan King will return to host the Kids for Kids concert. Thursday, 12 November, 7.30pm. Tickets from \$19 available from The Plaza.

A night with one of New Zealand's most renowned Singers/Entertainers/ Master of Ceremonies, Frankie Stevens. Join us for a catered meal and a night of entertainment at The Plaza on Saturday 21 November.

Please phone The Plaza on 07 883 8596 for more information or head to www.plaza.org.nz or our Facebook page 'Plaza Putaruru' for more information about Movie Screenings and other events. Also sign up to the 'Friends of The Plaza' database to be kept up to date with events and offers.



IN brief continued...

- Seasonal swimming pools in Putāruru and Tirau open on Saturday 14 November. Last financial year 76,085 people visited our pools, including the South Waikato Indoor Pools that are open year round.



- Several capital projects to prepare our parks and reserves for summer are starting or underway. These include playground renewals in Arapuni and Putaruru (Overdale), public BBQ at Jones Landing, park furniture replacement, pathway link from the Arapuni Village Green to the BP station, summer plantings and exterior cleaning of property. Our parks and reserves are increasingly popular. Last financial year (1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015), there were 375 functions, games or events on our reserves.



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.

Councillor Column Terry Magill

Our Council has a major focus on assisting the growth of employment prospects and enabling the establishment of business and economic opportunities. It was great to see that the new rail road terminal officially opened on 11 September. I believe this will be of immense benefit to the District and will enable a large number of containers to be exported from the Port of Tauranga efficiently and will also substantially reduce the number of heavy traffic road movements (good for our roads).

I would urge our urban residents to spare (more than a thought) for our dairy farmers' current dire financial position. Over the last fifteen years there has been a very significant increase in the number of employment opportunities available on farms. This has led to direct positive flow on effects upon our rural communities in the district (including school rolls etc).

The increased rating base received by our district from these farmers greatly assists the ability of our Council to maintain and enhance the necessary infrastructure to our main towns of Tokoroa, Putaruru and Tirau. On average, dairy farmers are having to borrow an extra \$200,000 to \$500,000 (or more) this year simply to keep their operations going.

The financial and emotional stress this is causing is immense and, if the current low milk price continues, there will be many farmers and sharemilkers who will fail and have to exit.

If you are friends or acquaintances of any dairy farmers, sharemilkers or farm workers, I would urge you give them a friendly call, visit them (or better) bake a cake (for example) for them. Such a token will have immense benefit and can help reduce the emotional distress at this difficult time.

Councillor Column Thomas Lee

Well we're two years into our three year term as Councillors and what a very good time it has been. To start off, I wondered what I'd let myself in for, to now really enjoying the job immensely. There has been the odd disagreement, but collectively as a group, along with the staff, we work very well together.

I was lucky enough to be able to join Raukawa, Council staff and fellow Councillors in planting native rakau at the southern end of Lake Moananui to celebrate Matariki. The weather was terrible but the hangi more than made up for getting wet.

The Urban Connector is really starting to move ahead, with feedback being actioned to include extra stops and more frequent runs and being well used. Well done everyone.

The first train rolled into the new Rail Terminal on Tuesday 1 September at 6am. This was officially opened on Friday 11 September; have a look next time you cross over the rail crossing on Balmoral Drive.

Council brought land for the new skate park, next to the Youth Park and Indoor pool. The mountain bike club are building new tracks, which are getting good feedback from most people who are using them, either cyclist, walkers or runners. There are so many positive things happening within our District, with more still to occur.

There have been the negative things as well. Pot holes appeared almost overnight, with the really wet and icy conditions making footpath pavers a hazard to negotiate in the shaded areas and sometimes causing injuries.

If you come across anything visitors to the swimming pools that can have an impact on you, call the lovely ladies on the Council front desk and raise a service request which is then logged and will be acted upon as soon as practicable. Enjoy the positives within our District.

IN touch

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