



## You can't miss our new district and town billboards!

Over the past couple of months, residents and visitors to the South Waikato would have seen new town and district billboards installed at all district entranceways and the roads leading into our four towns Tīrau, Putāruru, Tokoroa and Arapuni. More on the project on page 4 inside.

## Route 32 is coming to you!

We've received some exciting news from our friends at Busit... a bus route to Hamilton is finally making its way to the South Waikato as of Monday 13 February!

This is an awesome option for students who want to still live at home and travel to Hamilton!

Where the bus route takes you: The bus departs from the Tokoroa Bus Hub at 7.10am, Lichfield, Putāruru, Tīrau, Cambridge, The Cambridge Velodrome, Tamahere, Waikato University and the final stop is at the Hamilton Transport Centre at 8.50am for Wintec students and any other passengers.

Fares are purchased using the Bee Card system.

The card works by tagging your card on/off at a machine to pay your fare. It automatically works out where you hop on/hop off and charges you the correct fare. Using a Bee Card is cheaper than paying cash, which is still an available option.

Bee Cards are \$5 each, and can be purchased from the Tokoroa Library or online at [beecard.co.nz](http://beecard.co.nz). Once you have created an account, you can add money and/or concessions on to the card to be debited each time you use the bus.

All under 5s travel free and do not need a Bee Card. A SuperGold Card concession is available on a registered Bee Card. This entitles the card holder to free travel on all services.



## WELCOME TO THE NEW LOOK IN TOUCH

Council produced its first ever community newsletter, called In Touch, in January 2013.

The newsletter was originally four pages long. It has since grown to eight pages as a standard; but more often than not it is 12 pages and sometimes 16 pages.

Packed with Council and community news it has brought you, on average, 72 pages of news each year!

Our community newsletter is now 10 years old... so we went back to the drawing board for a refresh. Same size and same name (we didn't want to change too much, lest you didn't recognise it)... this new look In Touch you're reading has a fresher more modern look, but the same great content.

Enjoy.

## IN HOUSE

Produced in-house for South Waikato residents by the Marketing and Communications Team.

Editorial: Kerry Fabrie and Brooke Sullivan

Print: GASP Designs



## BLAST FROM THE PAST

New Zealand beats England in a cricket test for the first time on **15 February 1978**. New Zealand suffered many test defeats at the hands of England's cricketers before finally winning for the first time at Wellington's Basin Reserve in February 1978.

Needing only 137 in their second innings to win, England was dismissed for just 64. Richard Hadlee took six wickets for 26 runs and went on to become one of the world's greatest wicket-taker in tests. This first victory against England – at the 48<sup>th</sup> attempt – was enthusiastically welcomed as proof that New Zealand could at last compete with the inventors of the game.

# SOUTH WAIKATO WELCOMES NEW CITIZENS TO THE DISTRICT



## THE SOUTH WAIKATO IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS MULTICULTURALISM, AND THIS WAS CERTAINLY EVIDENT AT OUR MOST RECENT CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

This was the first Citizenship Ceremony that has been able to be held in a public setting since the COVID upheal on previous events.

The public ceremony is the last stage in becoming a New Zealand citizen. It is an opportunity for our local South Waikato community to welcome everyone on behalf of New Zealand after they have publicly declared their allegiance to the country through an oath or affirmation.

At the ceremony all those receiving citizenship stand together before the Mayor and take an oath of affirmation of allegiance to New Zealand. They are also presented an official citizenship certificate.

This ceremony was also Mayor Gary's first ceremony to officiate since being sworn in as the South Waikato Mayor. Mayor Gary asked Councillors Sandra, Hans, Kerry and Bill to help him out on the stage to present the various declarations, certificates and native trees to our newest citizens.

Mayor Petley commented that welcoming our new citizens into the South Waikato - a place that they have chosen to make their home, is an honour. We welcomed ten New Zealanders from South Africa, Philippines, Korea, England, Scotland and India. Kia Ora. Talofa Lava. Kia Orana. Welcome. We are so happy you're here!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Elite Road Cycling Championship: Friday 10 February - Sunday 12 February

For the first time since 1978, Tokoroa will host the Elite Road National Championship. The championship is New Zealand's premier national road cycling event, attracting New Zealand's top professional and amateur road cyclists, all vying for national jerseys. Tokoroa's very own pro cyclist, Rylee McMullen, will also be competing in this event!

### South Waikato Supersports: Friday 17 February - Sunday 19 February

This is the 37<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of Supersports running in the South Waikato. A sporting competition held around multiple venues in Tokoroa, where teams compete to be the overall sports people of the South Waikato!

### Putaruru Food and Water Festival: Saturday 25 February

Held at Glenshea Park, the Putaruru Food and Water Festival is set to be a terrific day for you and your whānau to enjoy. This is a popular event in Putaruru with lots of stalls, entertainment and activities for all to enjoy. Visitors can expect a jam packed day and to leave with a full tummy full of yummy food!

### A Ladies' Night Out: Friday 31 March

A Rotary Putaruru run event that showcases what's on offer in Putaruru for ladies. Doors open 6.30pm, through to 9pm. Tickets are \$25, available from The Plaza and Van Dyks. Ladies are treated to a complimentary glass of bubbles or orange juice on arrival. Stalls, holistic health, demonstrations, fashion show, entertainers, hobby crafts and beauty choices all on show!

## A PLUG FOR PLUMBOSOLVENCY

The Ministry of Health has identified that some New Zealand waters are naturally acidic and can dissolve minute traces of metals such as lead, nickel and cadmium from plumbing materials while standing in plumbing fittings for several hours.

Tests show that residents in the South Waikato District are supplied with such water. Purely as a precaution, all households are advised to flush pipes for ten seconds before using their water for drinking, food preparation or cleaning teeth. This will ensure corrosion products that may have accumulated are washed away.

**Do residents need to be concerned?** No, there are no lead fittings anywhere in the South Waikato District Council water reticulation system and there is no health risk related to this requirement. The requirement is to raise community awareness to flush pipes.



# SANTA'S PICNIC BRINGS CHRISTMAS CHEER TO SOUTH WAIKATO

The South Waikato were finally able to celebrate Christmas as a community again post COVID at Santa's Picnic in December at the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre.

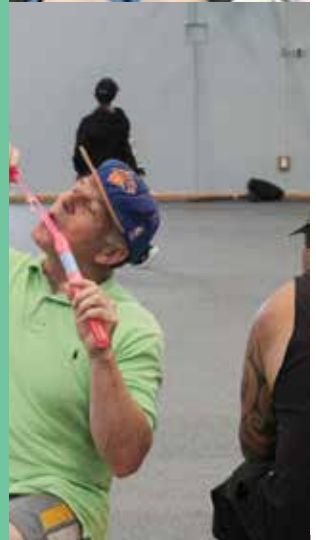
On what was supposed to be a rainy gloomy day, the sun managed to fight through the clouds and warm the town up for a fun-filled day with whānau.

The event included lots of games, sports and competitions for the children to enjoy. There were also creative stalls, food stalls, bouncy castles and a concert that ran throughout the afternoon.

Santa managed to fly in on his sleigh and make a magical appearance that included a lolly scramble that sent the young crowd wild!

The day finished up with two movies in the Rotary Room. Event attendees were able to sit back and relax with some popcorn to watch two movies - The Grinch and Ticket to Paradise.

Check out some pics of the awesome day!



# We love it here!

When South Waikato decided it needed a new campaign to attract more visitors, the first step was to ask the 25,000 people who call the district home what makes it special.

Their answer was loud and proud: "We love it here". That's now the over-arching slogan for the whole district, with catchphrases and colour themes chosen for each of the four towns of Arapuni, Tirau, Putāruru and Tokoroa.

The new signage is all about presenting a fresh new image for South Waikato... that is positive, forward-looking, welcoming and aligned with all the exciting growth happening in the district.

The catchphrase for Tirau, **Refresh in Tirau** was chosen. Putāruru's slogan is **Families thrive, futures grow**. Tokoroa's slogans include several cultural greetings and for Arapuni, the slogan **Take it slow, enjoy our village** was chosen.

The colours for each town's signs were chosen to represent something special. The pink for Arapuni represents the gorgeous sunsets they get. The blue for Putāruru represents the Blue Spring [Te Puna]. The red ochre for Tokoroa is significant to the local iwi, Raukawa. The green for Tirau represents its strong farming roots.

The new signs are all about people and community – and that's why Council asked the people of South Waikato to put their names and faces forward... and 22 locals answered the call to be the face of their town and now feature on the town entranceways.

SWDC digital marketing coordinator Michaela Coffin said the local faces would make the signs "really special".

The 16 new welcome signs spread across Tokoroa, Putāruru, Tirau, and Arapuni complement brand new South Waikato district entry signs. The signs provide an over-arching district brand, while maintaining a focus on each town's unique identity.

South Waikato District Council's head of economic development Paul Bowden said the sign refresh is part of a strategy to put the district on the map and highlight how friendly and welcoming the community is to visitors, businesses, and potential new residents.

There will also be welcome signs from local iwi Raukawa alongside each district entry sign.

The signs gained national attention as they were featured on Breakfast TV in December after the Waikato Herald earlier reported on the re-branding project being under way.

Michaela said because the four towns were "very diverse", the Council was looking for a single unifying idea that "truly reflected" the district and the towns.

Paul said Council research from 2019 had shown that many people outside the district could not place South Waikato on a map.

"Some have negative perceptions of our towns - but the locals love living here, and we needed that to shine through."

The signs are part of a wider strategy to put the district and its four main towns on the map for visitors and investors.

South Waikato District Council Mayor Gary Petley says the signs were about presenting a fresh new image for South Waikato.

"[One] that is positive, forward-looking and welcoming and is aligned with all the exciting growth happening in the district. The new signage will build pride in the district among locals so they can advocate for it, and welcome new investors, residents and visitors."



### Pictured on this page:

Tirau - Kiri and Jacob

Putāruru - Dave and Shep

Arapuni - Teri

Tokoroa - Alberico and Rachel



## NEW ARAPUNI BORE IS UP AND RUNNING... WITH WATER

The Arapuni bore project that started mid-last year is just about complete, with just a few tidy-ups to left to go. Arapuni residents' water has been processed through the new system since mid-January.

This \$600,000 project started mid-last year and encompassed drilling a new drinking water bore and installing modern support infrastructure to connect the system to the treatment facilities.

While there will be no noticeable day-to-day difference for residents, the project is part of Council's investment into water supply reliability by ensuring long-term security of supply.

Council would like to thank the neighbouring farmer for working with us on land access.



## GRANT SCHEMES AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Are you or your community group looking for funding and don't know where to look? Do you need that extra bit of help to get your event or programme the kickstart it needs?

Council has two Community Grant schemes available for applications. Community groups can apply to either the Council funded Community Development Grant or the Creative NZ funded Creative Communities Scheme (administered by Council) for the March or September granting round.

More information and application forms are available on our website at [www.southwaikato.govt.nz](http://www.southwaikato.govt.nz). Click on the menu bar. Click on Our Council and then go to Grants and Funding.

Applications are currently open with assistance and more information sessions scheduled:

- Tokoroa Library: Tuesday 14 February, 10am-12pm (*may already have happened, at the time of reading - check out the sessions below*)
- Putāruru Library: Wednesday 22 February, 10am-12pm
- Tirau (The Dog): Thursday 2 March, 10am-12pm

Applications close Friday 17 March at 4pm.



## PUTĀRURU SKATE PARK UPDATE

The Putāruru Skate Park development has been underway over the past couple of months. With landscaping complete we can look forward to seeing the park really take shape over the coming months.

During the last LTP Council proposed to either refurbish the Putāruru skate bowl only, or to refurbish the bowl and enhance the park. The bigger and better option was supported by 78% of submitters, so that's what Council decided to deliver.

The project started in November of 2022 with the team removing all of the topsoil and laying down all of the gap metal.

In January the bulk groundworks and pre-fabrications were completed and the contractor is beginning to build the features of the Skate Park.

Check out the updated photos of the upcoming park.



# HOT HOT HOT TIPS FOR YOUR SUMMER... when it gets here!

In the hope that the sun is finally starting to bless us with its rays by the time you read this (!) we have some hot hot hot tips to keep you, your whanau, and pets safe and having the best time in the South Waikato during the summer.

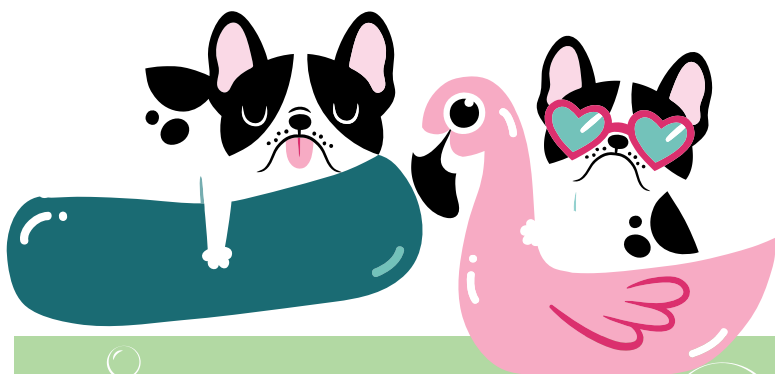
With so much to see and do, the South Waikato is the perfect destination for freedom camping this Summer. We have several beautiful reserves that are ideal for camping. Our reserves not only boast stunning scenery, they also offer a range of basic facilities for freedom campers and grey water disposal sites are available in all three of our towns.

All of our reserves are within a short distance of many other attractions with the South Waikato, such as Te Waihou Walkway and Blue Spring, the Waikato River Trails, Lake Moananui, South Waikato Indoor Pools, Jim Barnett Reserve and so much more!

## IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE HEAT, THEY CAN'T EITHER!

If you can't walk bare feet on the concrete because it's too hot, your pets should not be walking in their bare paws either! Walking on hot concrete or tar can seriously burn your pets' paw pads. This also applies to hot sand at the beach!

It is an absolute NO to leave your pets in the car whilst parked in the hot summer. Even with the windows down and the vehicle in the shade, a car can rapidly heat up - as much as 10 degrees in 10 minutes (!), putting the pet left inside at risk of heat stroke, irreparable brain damage or even death. Again, if you can't handle sitting in a parked car in the heat, neither can they!



## OUR FAVE SOUTH WAIKATO SWIMMING SPOTS!

The South Waikato has lots of amazing swimming spots to cool you down in this warm weather! Here's a list of places you can take a dip in the South Waikato!

- South Waikato Indoor Pools, Tokoroa
- Putāruru Outdoor Pools
- Tirau Outdoor Pools
- Jones' Landing, Arapuni
- Lake Maraetai
- Lake Whakamaru
- Little Waipa



Former mayor Jenny Shattock has been made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to local government and sustainable economic development. Jenny is Putāruru born and Tokoroa raised and says that the South Waikato is in her blood. After 24 years in local government she stood down from the mayoralty last year. Jenny has served seven consecutive terms on Council as Councillor, Deputy Mayor and Mayor. Jenny has been a strong voice for the district, advocating for greater regional equity for investments and opportunities for South Waikato. Jenny was humbled to accept the accolade on behalf of the South Waikato, saying "when someone gets an award like this, it's not just for that one person, it's for the Council, for the staff and the South Waikato community."



The Tokoroa High School Alixia Tricking Group was a joint winner for the 2022 Commitment to Youth Engagement Award at the Waikato Sport & Active Recreation Awards. Tricking is a sport that combines gymnastics, martial arts, capoeira and breaking dancing into a hybrid movement. The group of 25 students were coached by Misha Parkinson who is a teacher at Tokoroa High School.

## WHAT'S HOT WHAT'S NOT

The unprecedented number of dogs our Animal Control team impounded over the Christmas break. Dogs left at home unsupervised by owners for days, sometimes weeks at a time. Unusually high this year, which is sad.

Tagging on public property is never hot, tagging rude stuff even less hot! Tagging costs money, time and effort to remove!

## EVER STARED AT PACKAGING AND WONDERED WHERE IT GOES?

When it comes to recycling and rubbish, it can be difficult to decide what goes where. Does it go in the rubbish? Can it be recycled? Can it be re-used?

And perhaps the biggest questions of all... where is the recycling symbol and why is it so small!!!?

Well, unfortunately Council has zero control over the size of the recycling symbol nor the placement... but we do advocate in waste circles for this to be standardised and BIGGER!

What we can help with is what goes where. Council's What Goes Where Guide to Waste provides an alphabetical listing for a wide range of household and commercial products and what to do with them. Find the product you want - and it gives you the answer! It's that simple.

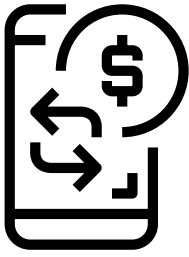
The tool is based on the urban household collection system so refers to rubbish wheelie bins and recycling wheelie bins and crates or other like e-waste recycling, op shops, scrap metal dealers etc. But it's easy to interpret for our rural residents.

The function is also searchable and users can suggest additions to be included too. Visit our website and follow the WASTE GUIDE link below the space bar.

## A few reminders

### AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

If you pay your rates by automatic payment (AP), you need to check that your AP covers your new rates amount. Due to the property revaluations, your rates may have changed. Please call Council on 07 885 0340 to check on this.



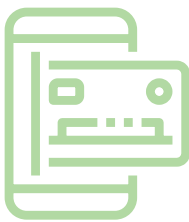
It is your responsibility to ensure your AP amount covers your rates by the due date.

We encourage ratepayers to move from automatic payments to direct debits to avoid a shortfall; and a possible rates penalty.

With direct debits (see below), Council deducts what is needed so that your rates are always covered. Automatic payments can sometimes not cover the amount owing per quarter because of the timing of incoming AP payments vs outgoing rates payments.

### DIRECT DEBITS

Council has weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly and annual direct debit options.



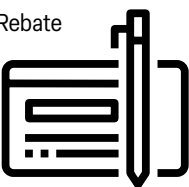
Weekly and fortnightly direct debits operate on Thursdays or Tuesdays. Direct debits are adjusted annually by Council to ensure that the correct amount of rates is paid, removing the need for ratepayers to change their automatic payments themselves every year.

It's a really great option.

Contact Council on 07 885 0340 for more information or for a direct debit form.

### RATES REBATE SCHEME

The government's Rates Rebate Scheme assists low income home owners to pay rates.



Applications for rates rebates can be made through Council offices in Putāruru or Tokoroa.

Applications for the 2022-23 year can be made anytime, until Friday 30 June 2023, but we encourage qualifying ratepayers to apply as soon as possible; and not leave it to the last day.

For more information and to see if you qualify visit: [www.ratesrebates.govt.nz](http://www.ratesrebates.govt.nz) or call us on 07 885 0340

Scheme applies to owner occupied homes only.

## NEWS FROM THE PLAZA



**Sunday movie:** Mrs Harris Goes to Paris, 26 February, 2pm. Tickets \$10 adults and \$5 students. *About the film:* In 1950s London, a widowed cleaning lady falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress, deciding she must have one of her own. After working to raise the funds to pursue her dream, she embarks on an adventure to Paris that changes the very future of the House of Dior.



**Waikato Country Music Awards,** Saturday 11 March, 7pm. Tickets will be available soon. Check out their facebook to keep up to date with event development - [www.facebook.com/countrymusicawards](http://www.facebook.com/countrymusicawards).

**Sunday movie:** Seriously Red, 26 March, 2pm. Tickets \$10 adults and \$5 students. *About the film:* Fired from her real estate job, Red pursues her dream of becoming the world's greatest Dolly Parton impersonator with fascinating consequences.



**Ladies Night Out,** Rotary Putāruru, Friday 31 March, 6:30pm. Tickets \$25 each, available from Van Dyks. Showcasing what's on offer for ladies in Putāruru.

**Arts on Tour:** The Boy with Wings, Sunday 9 April, 10am. *Using puppetry, songs, storytelling and exquisite hand-crafted sets that magically unfold out of boxes, award-winning theatre company 'Birdlife Productions' promise laughter, tears and thrilling adventure. Designed specifically for children ages 5 to 9 years, but loved by all ages!* Tickets \$10 adults, \$5 children, free for under 5 years and \$30 family ticket (2 adults and 3 children). Tickets available via phone booking or email (see below).

### CONTACT THE PLAZA

Phone: 07 883 8596/0276 559 715  
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 Email: [theplaza@plaza.org.nz](mailto:theplaza@plaza.org.nz)  
 Facebook: [theplazaputaruru](https://www.facebook.com/theplazaputaruru)

## ROAD SAFETY

With the school holidays over there will be a lot more children travelling on our roads and footpaths to and from school. Among these will be tamariki who will be going to school for the first or starting at new school.

Here are few tips to make their journey safer and to help parents/guardians:

- Walk on the footpath, close to the houses and away from the road.
- Look and listen for traffic at driveways.
- Use pedestrian crossings.
- If you normally drive your child to school, park your car further away from school and then walk some of the way, using the walk to teach your child about road safety.
- If your child is going to be cycling to school, always ensure they wear a helmet. It should be the right size, with little movement when fitted correctly, if the helmet tips sideways, backwards or forwards it is too loose.
- Check also that their bicycle is safe and everything is working the way its intended.
- If you are driving your child to school always let your children in and out of the car on the footpath side only.
- Park on the same side of the road as your destination.
- When collecting your child, meet them at the gate and walk with them to the car.
- Ensure your child is in the appropriate restraint for their size.
- If your child is travelling by bus, make sure they know to stand well back from the road when waiting for the bus.
- When picking up your tamariki or dropping them off, wait on the same side as the bus stop.

Back to school can be safe for everyone if we all remember to take extra caution!



# Council ticks off on LTP Amendment



On Tuesday 13 December, Council resolved an amendment to the Long Term Plan (LTP) 2021-31.

It is planned to deliver several significant infrastructure projects to support growth in the South Waikato for our communities' current and future needs.

The projects, branded **Building BIG Empowering GROWTH** lie in the three waters areas across the district.

Through its LTP and Annual Plans, Council has confirmed with our community that economic growth and resilience is a priority.

"Economic growth has gained momentum in recent years. Our community is starting to flourish as we benefit from economic opportunities," said Mayor Petley.

"If we choose not to invest at scale and at pace, there is a risk we will miss out on economic growth and employment opportunities for our people."

Modelling work over the past years has enabled Council to identify the infrastructure improvement projects we need to deliver to take advantage of growth.

Currently we are constrained in what we can offer businesses because we don't have adequate supporting infrastructure.

"These projects will allow us to unlock land to prepare for housing and business growth throughout the district," said Susan Law, Council's Chief Executive.

"We will prepare a change to the district plan so there can be residential, industrial and business development in Tokoroa, Putāruru and Tirau."

The projects will be loan funded to minimise rate impact.

Council's proposal was out for public consultation during October and November, with hearings in early December.

"We're grabbing the future with both hands so that we can lead growth in the district," said Mayor Petley.

OUR DISTRICT OUR FUTURE  
TĀ MĀTOU TAKIWĀ TĀ  
MĀTOU WĀ Ā MUA

# READ IN TOUCH? PROVE IT...

... and be in to win a lucky dip \$50 supermarket voucher.

We will be running this competition every issue. The answers to the five questions below are in this issue – Jan/ Feb 2023. You have to get them all correct to be in the draw.

Text your answers and your name to 0274 472 664 or private message our Facebook page by 28 February 2023.

1. **How many years has In Touch been produced?**
2. **At a recent citizenship ceremony, new residents came from how many different countries?**
3. **How much does a Bee Card cost?**
4. **What recent accolade did former mayor Jenny Shattock receive?**
5. **What movie is showing at The Plaza on 26 February?**

Congratulations to Sandra of Putāruru who was drawn as the lucky winner for the December In Touch competition. Thank you to all those who entered. Try again this issue!

The correct answers were:

1. 10, 2. Women in Farming, previously known as Women's Division of the Farmers Union,
3. 14, 4. 9 January 2023,
5. South Waikato Connector



Antenno is a mobile phone app that is FREE for users to download from Google Play or the App Store.

Install the app. Input your specific address(es) - home, work, play, and we send you messages relevant to your address. Users can also use the app to report icssues or ideas to us.



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