

Elections. ENROL. VOTE.

Elections for local authorities are held once every three years. The next elections for our local Council are coming up this year on 12 October 2019. For our South Waikato community, the elections are for South Waikato District Council, Tirau Community Board and Waikato Regional Council. This year there are no elections for the Waikato District Health Board.

Local election turnout has been declining since the 1980s.

In the South Waikato, 44.4% of voters cast their ballot in 2016 which was slightly higher than the national average of 42%. This was also an increase of 2.9% over the 2013 elections.

However, 44.4% of eligible voters casting their vote is

still not very high and we can certainly do better as a community. After all, it is our opportunity to have a say in who leads our Council in the coming three years.

Research shows a significant number of people are interested in the local government process but don't vote, or want to vote

but say it's too hard to find the information to make an informed decision.

While Council can't hold 'Meet the Candidate' evenings, we encourage service and community organisations to do so, as they have in the past. These sessions are a great way for voters to hear from candidates.

KEY DATES

16 August
Nominations close at 12 noon

Electoral role closes – after this date, anyone who is entitled to vote and who is not enrolled, or whose details are not correct, will have to cast a Special Vote.

21 August
Election date and candidates' names are publicised

20-25 September
Voting documents are delivered to households. Voters can post the documents back to the Electoral Officer as soon as they have voted.

Saturday 12 October
Polling day - the voting documents must be at the Council before voting closes at 12 noon. Preliminary results (ie once all 'ordinary' votes are counted) will be available as soon as possible afterwards.

17-23 October
Official results declared

Date to be advised
Inaugural Council meeting where new Elected Members are sworn in to office. This is a special event and successful candidates are encouraged to bring along their family and friends.

Want to vote? Not on the electoral roll?

You have to be on the electoral roll if you want to vote in the local body elections.

And your details need to be correct.

Check your electoral details at the link below.

Visit www.elections.org.nz/voters/enrol-check-or-update-now

If you want to vote and you're not on the roll, you will have to make a Special Vote. This can only be done at the Council offices or a form can be mailed to you by calling Council on 885 0340.



www.southwaikato.govt.nz - First feature link - Elections 2019

IN brief

- 503 building consent applications were received during the 2018-19 financial year, valuing a total of \$41.89 million.
- Council staff continue to participate in Civil Defence training to ensure we can respond appropriately in times of emergency.
- Council staff are working closely with business owners in Putāruru regarding the removal of stockpiled tyres.
- Compliance staff are also working with property owners around the district on derelict buildings.

IN side

- 2-5 - CBD upgrade
- Environment & People
- 6-8 - New facilities
- Managing waste
- 9-11 - Revals and rates
- Community news
- 12 - Home for toanga
- Community news

IN house

Produced in-house for the South Waikato community by the SWDC Communications Team.

Editorial: Kerry Fabrie, Renee Renata and Anthony Momoemausu, 07 885 0340

Print: GASP Designs

Leith Place project - an update on the Tokoroa CBD Upgrade

The eagerly anticipated Tokoroa CBD Upgrade continues to make strides since construction began back in March. The project has maintained a significant amount of engagement on social media from people in our community, some good, some bad. This update below is as of July 26 and the Downer team would have made more exciting progress since.

With Stage 1(a) now complete the focus of the Leith Place project now turns to Stage 1(b).

The Downer team has been hard at work still with the stormwater works on SH1 proving to be the next big task along with pouring the footings for the Talking Poles.

Council had taken note from our retailers, visitors, workers and businesses that they wanted our CBD to be a good public space that attracted visitors and other businesses and it's fair to say this is coming along fairly nicely.

While faced with challenges earlier in the project we've now seen the southern part of the current parking lot being partially opened for public use, while footpath work continues.

There had been discussion on the size of the parking spaces in the parking lot, but these were tested by staff and the issue addressed on Council's Facebook page which has helped ease doubts.

The stormwater works that occurred on Swanston St have now also been completed.

Currently the team is working on pouring footings for the Talking Poles, removing all existing paving bricks in front of shops and installing a valve on the fire main and filling the line with water.

On SH1 the Downer team continues to lay the stormwater line and install the mega pit stormwater drains.



Pictured above: Part of the carpark in Leith Place is now open for users.

Pictured below: The various works going on in the Tokoroa CBD Upgrade as Stage 1(b) progresses.

Over the upcoming weeks the public can expect to see the base course in Stage 1(b) imported and the kerb and channel for the bus stop prepared.

With more still to be done in the upcoming months we will continue to keep our community updated on the progress in future In Touch issues, the weekly Tokoroa CBD Upgrade newsletters, our website and through social media.

For more information and detailed progress updates head to our website

www.southwaikato.govt.nz - second feature button - Tokoroa CBD Upgrade - go to the Progress Updates

Digging in: The team from Downer is hard at work looking to complete the stormwater repairs on SH1.



Tirau farmers named New Zealand's top environmental farmers

Tirau farmers, Adrian and Pauline Ball recently won the Gordon Stephenson Trophy, for New Zealand's top environmental farmers.

The Tirau couple own and operate Dennley Farms and were also named supreme winners of the Waikato Farm Environment Awards.

Mr Ball said the win surprised him. As an ambassador, he said they would keep pushing the message of environmental sustainability. "It gives us a chance to learn a little bit more and look at some overseas markets and try and come up with a few more solutions to make New Zealand farming the most trusted."

"It's an honour for sure, it's good for dairy and it's good for Waikato," Adrian Ball said. They take on the role at a time when farmers are under scrutiny to lower their environmental footprint.

The Ball's farm also has 1.7km fenced and riparian planting along the Waihou River thanks to funding from South Waikato Environment Initiative (SWEI) for the native plants. They also received funding support from the Waikato Regional Council, through a WRC/SWDC co-funding initiative. This is a great boost for the South Waikato rural community using the SWEI fund to protect and improve South Waikato waterways and indigenous biodiversity.



Photo credit: Luke Kirkeby, Stuff

South Waikato Enviroschools embrace sustainability

The Enviroschools programme is an action-based education programme run through our local schools where young people plan, design and implement sustainability projects.

Enviroschools engages with children and the wider community through the formal education system. It is a collaborative approach between Waikato Regional Council, our Council and the schools.

The programme was first introduced in 2001 and has grown steadily since, with over 1,100 schools involved nationally.

There are eight Enviroschools in the South Waikato, including Kuranui, Putāruru, St Mary's, Strathmore, Tainui, Te Waotu, Tirau and Tokoroa North.

Over the years, students in our local schools have introduced a range of sustainable projects

including stream quality testing, riparian protection planting, recycling and upcycling, litter pick-ups, worm farms and composting, keeping chickens for free range eggs and creating vegetable gardens for a garden to table philosophy.

This programme is about giving our young people the skills and passion to live sustainably; and often this passion is transferred into the family home, broadening a communities' sustainable impact.

All photo credits: Enviroschools

Below left: Tainui Primary School students doing a stream study.

Below right: Te Waotu School students on potting up day. They have their own growing unit and the whole school pots up and plants out.

Right: Strathmore Primary School students making improvements to the school's worm farm.



New walkway welcomed by the Tirau community

The Tirau Walkway was officially opened on Wednesday 24 July with more than 80 local residents on hand to witness the occasion.

Well it's finally complete.

After years of hard work and planning the new Tirau walkway was met with delight by the community after the official opening took place last month.

Over 80 Tirau residents attended at the ceremony as a local kaumatua provided a blessing over the site, followed by a tour of the new track.

For Mayor Jenny Shattock it marked a special occasion for the northern most town in our district and further acknowledged that Tirau remains a vital part of our district.

"We at the South Waikato District Council are thrilled to have finally reached this stage of the project," Mayor Shattock said.

"Truthfully, it has taken a long time to reach this point with many 'I's needing to be dotted and 'T's having to be crossed off. However, we've finally made it. Today is the culmination of years of hard work and planning coming to fruition."

"Now we have completed this stage, we are certain to see Tirau residents take full advantage and utilise the walkway and beautiful recreational reserve once again," she added.

The plans for this new walkway initially began back in 2014 when the Tirau Community Board (TCB) envisioned a walkway that would link the township to the Tirau Domain for residents and visitors - while

also addressing the pressing need for another open space within the town.

The purpose of the walkway is to promote exercise, enhance the health and wellbeing of local residents and provide another public open space to walk, play and relax in.

"...we are certain to see Tirau residents take full advantage and utilise the walkway and beautiful recreational reserve once again."

- Mayor Jenny Shattock on the opening of the new Tirau Opening

There are further plans ahead for the Tirau Walkway with the construction of the pedestrian bridge across the Oraka stream set to begin within the next 12 months joining the two halves of the domain.

In the 2020-21 financial year, there will be exciting additions set for the Tirau Domain with a permanent carpark, playground, toilets and pay showers as well as landscaping all proposed for the SH1/SH5 roundabout end of the Domain.

Mayor Shattock also paid tribute to the many groups and individuals who were integral



Let's walk: Local residents take a tour of the new walkway in Tirau.

in this project. The TCB and Domain Advisory Group both played an important part in ensuring the walkway came to life.

The significant financial contribution by NZTA and the work done by Kiwi Rail were noted too.

Among the acknowledgements made by Mayor Shattock, she also expressed her thanks to the many people who volunteered with the working bees which included the planting of the kauri grove at the start of the walkway.



What's next...

Construction of a pedestrian bridge across the Oraka stream will begin this financial year 2019-20, joining the two halves of the Domain.

The majority of Council funding for the Tirau Domain is planned for the next financial year 2020-21, with major new development at the SH1/SH5 roundabout end of the Domain.

This includes:

- Permanent carpark
- Hardstand area for community events such as markets, shows.
- Playground
- Toilets and pay showers
- Tree planting and landscaping





New skate park in Tirau is proving to be popular for locals

Skaters and scooter riders are enjoying the new ramps that have been installed at the reserve on the corner of Okoroire Street and Prospect Avenue in Tirau.

The idea of the new skate and scooter ramps eventuated after the local youth group and Tirau Community Board came together to look at viable options to better utilise the reserve space and bring some much needed life for youths.

Previously there had been a wooden halfpipe there, although upon further inspection it was deemed to be unsafe and suited for more skilled skateboarders.

After the basketball court was constructed, locals saw the addition of exercise stations before the finishing touches were made last month with the new ramps being installed.

Council were pleased to see positive remarks from local residents about the new features to the reserve with one local saying, "It's looking good down there now that the new skate ramps have been installed."

"My kids and the neighbourhood kids love it. It's good to see that area being used again," she added.

Another resident mentioned, "I regularly see kids playing there [at the park] which is great to see."

Overall, it is fantastic to see and hear that the youth of Tirau are enjoying the refurbished area which we hope will continue for years ahead.

Fast and furious: Skaters and scooter riders are sure to catch some serious air on the new ramps that have been installed in Tirau.

Dogs prohibited on Waikato River Trails

Just a reminder to Waikato River Trail users that dogs are not permitted on the trails, not even leashed.

Signage is in place at the Trail entry points. Council's Animal Control and Compliance team do patrol these Trails. \$300 infringements are likely for repeat offenders.

We need to remember that the land on which the wonderful 107km of Waikato River Trails cover is a combination of ownership including Crown land, Council reserves, Department of Conservation land, Mercury core sites and importantly some private ownership.

In many cases it is only the farm fence that separates Trail users from neighbouring farms; and uncontrolled dogs can cause disease and harm to stock.

Access to some sections of the Waikato River Trails is at the goodwill of private land owners. We all need to respect that farming, their pasture land and their stock is their livelihood.

Outbreaks of the disease Neosporosis in affected cattle can cause abortion storms and huge economic loss for the affected property owner. An outbreak would also place the Trails at risk of closure. This would be an extremely bad outcome for our district as the Waikato River Trails is a significant attraction.

Council appreciates that there has been significant criticism regarding this; however we continue to remind all residents and WRT users that the proximity of dogs to stock can cause a serious disease outbreak and harm. This is simply not fair on our farming families as this is their livelihood.

We are also aware that many dog owners are both respectful and responsible and we acknowledge that.

However some dog owners simply let their dogs roam off leash onto neighbouring farmland.



Free dog rego!



Four lucky dog owners in the South Waikato got free registrations this year for signing up for email notices.

Council ran a promotion encouraging owners to change to email. Dog owners already receiving dog notices by email, were automatically entered.

Well done to the four lucky winners.

If you want to receive your notice by email, please email info@southwaikato.govt.nz. Write 'dog notice' and your owner number in the subject bar.

Understanding the increased cost of rubbish bags

There has been a significant discussion in our community regarding the cost of Council rubbish bags increasing as at 1 July. The cost of the bags has indeed increased.

From 1 July, Council bags from the Council offices cost \$10.70 per five pack of bags. This is an increase of \$4.30 over the current year.

In the past Council only sold packs of five bags but due to the increase, we are now selling individual bags.

Council bags can also be purchased from supermarkets and other retailers.

Why the increase?

In order to manage our community's waste so that it does not harm the environment, Council is subject to stringent waste management practices, regulations and requirements. Covering these costs has to come from somewhere.

Council has two sources of income when it comes to waste. We can either put the increasing costs on rates (so that everyone pays more) or we can increase user charges through increasing the cost of rubbish bags.

Council opted to increase the cost of the bags so that the increasing costs of waste management are borne by the user.

It is important to remember that the cost of the bag includes a portion of the waste management processing cost,

including the collection from kerbside. They are not just really expensive bags! The cost of the bag includes a portion of the cost of the service too.

If you reduce the amount of waste you put in your bag, then you can reduce the number of bags you use and you can reduce the amount you spend on rubbish bags.

This can be done by composting food scraps (keep an eye on rodent harbourage), changing your buying behaviour (avoiding products that use excessive packaging) and recycling plastics 1s and 2s.

We know this conflicts with the plastics 3s to 7s that can no longer be recycled; and should be put in the rubbish.

We encourage our community to be very mindful of what they purchase and to stand up and put pressure on manufacturers to change their packaging methods.

And the future?

We also want to remind our community that Council is currently investigating options for waste management including possibly moving to wheelie bins for recycling and rubbish.

When this comes out for public



consultation (later in the year), we encourage our community to make submissions and let us have your feedback.

Taking responsibility

As a final note, the cost of waste management is ever increasing, not just here in the South Waikato, but across New Zealand and indeed the world.

As consumers, we have the power to pressure

manufacturers to change their packaging practices.

We have the power to put pressure on Central Government to change legislation.

We have the power to make small changes at our household level.

We all need to start thinking about the life of the products we buy, and that includes the packaging it comes in.

New containers at recycling drop-off zones

In order to improve the standard of service at the recycling drop-off zones across the district, our new contractor has introduced new containers.

For Putāruru, Tokoroa and Tirau there is a **large bin** for tins and plastics 1 and 2; **cages** for cardboard and paper and **three smaller bins** for glass (one for brown, one for green and one for clear).

At the rural drop off zones at Kuranui and Te Waotu, the same applies, except for glass – where only one bin will be provided and glass can be co-mingled, not sorted by colour. Our contractor will sort these.

There are a number of ways facility users can help keep our recycling drop-off zones clean and tidy. Here's three handy tips!

- Please fold and flatten cardboard, don't just put the boxes in still constructed – they take up far too much space like that and contribute to the facilities overflowing.
- Please rinse plastic containers and bottles. And remember we can no longer process plastics 3 to 7, please put these in your rubbish, not in the recycling.
- Tops for most bottles and jars

aren't recyclable, and need to go in your rubbish bin too.

Thank you for your efforts towards keeping our recycling drop-off zones neat and tidy for other users.

If the drop off facility is overflowing, please contact Council on 07 885 0340 or report it via Antenno. **Not got Antenno? Download for free from Google Play or the App Store.**





Single use plastic bags ban

A number of people in our community have contacted Council regarding the single-use plastic bag ban. Your concern over the use of single-use plastic bags is awesome.

Some interesting facts:

- The ban is enacted by Central Government and it is regulated by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE).
- You can report concerns to the MfE on its website.
- Council is not responsible for monitoring, enforcing or infringing under this new piece of legislation.
- Bags that are banned are those made of any type of plastic under 70 microns in thickness, either new or unused and with

handles. Specifically light-weight plastic bags commonly found at supermarket, takeaway food and other retail checkouts; and heavier boutique-style plastic shopping bags commonly found at department or clothing stores.

- The ban does NOT include bin liners, doggie poo bags and barrier bags for meat, fruit and vegetables.
- The ban also does not include Council refuse bags. However, Council is currently looking at options for rubbish and recycling, including wheelie bins. We will consult with our community on this later in the year.

For more information visit www.mfe.govt.nz.

Important rubbish and recycling collection changes



Collection will now start from 7.30am

South Waikato District Council has introduced three changes to its rubbish and recycling service from Monday 29 July.

Change 1

From Monday 29 July, Council moved to a five day a week collection for urban waste collections. This change only affected Arapuni and Tirau urban residents. Arapuni and Tirau moved to a Monday collection for both rubbish and recycling collections. Putāruru and Tokoroa are NOT affected by a zone/day change.

Change 2

However, ALL collection areas are affected by a change to the collection start time. This has changed to the earlier time of 7.30am (previously 8am).

Change 3

The new recycling contractor EnviroWaste is running two recycling collection trucks. One truck is dedicated to glass only. The second truck collects plastics, tins/cans and cardboard/paper.

Don't be concerned if only some of your recycling goes, the second truck will be along.

Also don't be concerned if the crew on the ground sort through your recycling. They're just taking the items that belong in the the truck they're on!

Download Antenno to get reminders!

It's free to download.

Google Play or the App Store.

Log your address(es) of interest.

We will send you messages!



Property revaluations and the impact on rates

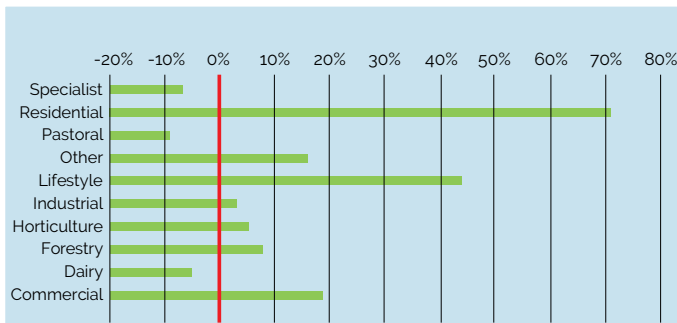
All properties in the district were revalued last year and impact on a property's rates from July 2019. The revaluations are done by Opteon, an independent company. There has been a significant increase in most residential property valuations. While increased property values are good news for owners, they also impact rates; and consequently may cause concern within the community.

To simplify the valuation sectors in the South Waikato, we have focussed on our five main sectors: dairy, lifestyle, residential, industrial and commercial.

Other sectors include forestry, mining, pastoral, horticulture, specialist and other.

The bar graph below shows the increase/decrease in the ten sectors relevant to our district.

Residential properties increased in value a massive 71% from the 2015 valuations; with lifestyle properties showing a 44% increase and commercial a 19% increase. Industrial increased by 3% and dairy decreased by -5%.



What does this mean for most property owners?

The majority of properties in our district are residential or lifestyle properties and these sectors saw the largest value increase.

This means that residential property valuations have increased substantially which is a good thing from an investment perspective.

However, the value of your property does impact on how much rates you are charged, so significant increases in property values can mean substantial increases in rates on some properties.

Some individual rates increase and others decrease, but Council

collects the same total amount of rates regardless of the changes in valuations.

Increases in residential property prices was anticipated by Council and in order to reduce the impact of the valuation changes, we reduced our Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) by approximately \$115.

How does Council set rates?

Rates are made up of different components including General Rate, UAGC and Targeted rates.

- The *General Rate* portion is charged on the capital value of properties.
- The *UAGC* rate portion is the same charge to each property, regardless of property value.
- *Targeted rates* are charged to specific properties for specific services. A good example is water supply which is only charged to urban properties connected to Council's water supply network.

Council also funds services through fees and charges, subsidies and grants (largely roading) and financial

contributions (development costs), however these are not relevant to a discussion on rates.

How does my property valuation affect my rates?

Part of a property's rates are based on the capital value of the property. Changes in the valuation can result in changes to the rates on an individual property. Council does not collect more total rates across the district as a result of increased property values or less rates if values decrease. But your property's new value will help determine the share of the total rate revenue you pay.

Why we revalue properties

- Revaluations are a legislative requirement; we have to do them.
- Revaluations help us work out everyone's share of the rate revenue required to operate Council activities and services.

The aim of rating valuations is not to provide values for property owners to use for marketing, sales or any other purposes - it is only used for fairly distributing rates.

Check your AP amount... or move to direct debit

All properties in the South Waikato were revalued last year and new valuations were provided to ratepayers in mid-November.

We wanted to highlight that your rates may have changed significantly. Rates are set annually using the latest revaluation data. Revaluations are done every three years.

The revaluations in our district, especially for residential properties, increased substantially; which is great news for homeowners. Please read the article above this one.

However higher house values impact rates charged; so we wanted to highlight this to you, our ratepayers and encourage ratepayers to check their automatic payment amount!

If you are on automatic payment, you need to check that your AP covers your new rates amount. Please call us on 07 885 0340 to check on this. It is your responsibility to ensure your AP amount covers the charge. You may need to top up the account to cover the first instalment too.

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

With direct debits, Council deducts what is needed so that your rates are always covered. This may be something to consider.

Automatic payments can sometimes not cover the amount owing per quarter because of the timing of

incoming AP payments vs outgoing rates payments.

To further assist, Council has now added Tuesdays as an option for direct debits.

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

Weekly and fortnightly direct debits now operate on Thursdays or Tuesdays to suit more people. 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.

Direct Debits are a great option.

Contact Council on 07 885 0340 for more information or to set up or amend a direct debit.

Are you eligible for a rates rebate?

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 2019-20 year can be made any time between now and 30 June 2020, but we encourage qualifying ratepayers to apply now rather than leave it to next year.

For more information and to see if you qualify: call Council on 07 885 0340 or visit www.ratesrebates.govt.nz.

Please contact Council to discuss this and other options to pay your rates.

New playground for our tamariki

The new playground at the Tokoroa Memorial Sporsground was opened recently.

Kids all ages have been spotted enjoying the new facility. This area has opened up pedestrian access to the Memorial Sportsground and is now well used by our tamariki.



When it's already happened and the danger over... call Police 105

To help keep New Zealanders as safe as possible, the Police have introduced a new way to contact them for non-emergencies: call 105 or go to www.105.police.govt.nz.

Until now people either called their local Police station or they called 111 if they wanted to get hold of the Police.

Remember in an emergency, always call 111.

Call 105 to report things that have already happened that don't need urgent Police assistance.

You can call 105 from both mobile and landline phones. It's a free nationwide service available day and night for New Zealanders and overseas visitors.

Use 105 to report incidents that have already happened to the Police.

If you have discovered you have been burglaried, but the burglar is long gone, call 105. If you find your fence tagged in the morning, call 105. If you discover your car was broken into during the night, call 105.

You can also call 105 to get an update on an existing report that is already being handled.

But always call 111 if a crime is happening now - and the offenders are still there or just left.

Also call 111 if someone is in danger or badly injured, if you see a major public hazard like a tree blocking a road, or something that could cause serious risk to human life or property.





The Plaza continues to be a hive of activity with numerous community groups using the venue as well as performing arts events and movies.

They have availability to host more community groups, events, movie screenings and private functions. Get in contact to discuss your event – you'll be surprised at what the team can offer and their competitive rates!

Upcoming Shows:

Jan Preston Trio - 88 Piano's I Have Known - Sunday 18 August, 2pm. Tickets online at Eventfinda \$25.



Chris Greenslade – South Waikato Music Society – Sunday 8 September, 2pm. \$25 non members, \$20 for members, students FREE.

St Mary's Wearable Arts – Friday 20 September 2019, (time TBA).

Aspire Arts Junior Production -The Enchanted Garden – Saturday 21 September, 11am

The Kugels – Arts on Tour NZ – Saturday 28 September, 7:30pm, tickets \$20 from The Plaza or Eventfinda.

Movie Screenings:

Top End Wedding (PG) - Sunday 22 August, 2pm

Rocketman (M) - Friday 13 September, 8pm

Poms (PG-13) - Sunday 22 September, 2pm



07 883 8596/0276 559 715
www.plaza.org.nz
Email: theplaza@plaza.org.nz
Facebook: theplazaputaruru

WHAT'S HOT

The theatre sound upgrade at The Plaza is complete with thanks to the Southern Trust, Trust Waikato and the South Waikato Arts Trust. With professional service from ACLX the team has ensured a well distributed and high quality sound experience across the theatre. Go along to an event to hear the difference!

Swan babies at the lake, little cuties.

There have been some really awesome works presented to by children enrolled in the S.T.A.R.S. library programme.

↓The Putāruru main pool covers have been replaced with an under-bench system and will be easier, faster and more manageable than before. These new pool covers can be operated by an auto wind system which will make it easier for staff and users to get the covers on and off at the start and end of the day. We look forward to showing them off at the opening of the summer swimming season later in the year on 16 November.



Elections – this is your opportunity to vote for candidates. If you are not enrolled, enrol now. You can't vote if you're not enrolled. <https://vote.nz/enrol-to-vote/enrol-check-or-update>

The Putaruru Community Gardens are settling in well at their new home in the Grey Street Reserve. The team are experimenting with frost cloth to give vegetables enough protection to keep growing through winter, even if more slowly. The organisers are grateful for the help and donations they have received during this massive shift. In about three months they hope to have an open garden event so that people can visit and see what it is all about. Over the past months compost bins have been built, the driveway upgraded, soil from the old site transferred, garden beds constructed and fruit trees pruned and uplifted.

The Sport Waikato team's Work for Good programme is sure to be pretty cool.



↑Antenna, Council's mobile phone app is hot, according to 110 users who participated in a survey recently. 86% of users strongly agreed or agreed that Antenna kept them more informed about what is going on in their community. 44% of users felt more positive towards Council after they installed Antenna. Antenna can be downloaded free from Google Play or the App Store. Log your specific address(es) of interest; and do nothing else. If something comes up that could affect your location, we will notify you.



↕The craft and activity sessions that libraries ran during the holidays were pretty hot – especially the Science Matters sessions. Best turnout yet from the Tirau Community and over 25 kids in Putāruru.

WHAT'S NOT

→Couches in our recycling containers is pretty disappointing, costing effort, time and money to remove and dispose of properly.

←Vandalism. Putaruru toilets, mirrors broken. What a waste of money fixing what vandals break.



Meet Council's Civil Defence Controller – Sharon Robinson

In a Civil Defence emergency the Controller is responsible for coordinating and controlling the event rather than the Chief Executive of Council.

As Controller, Sharon takes the lead for the event, working behind the scenes with the coordination team by setting objectives and action plans for all to implement, keeping a handle on the developing situation, responding to changes, preventing the event from getting worse and managing critical resources. The Controller maintains communications with emergency services and lifeline utility agencies to allow them to get on and do the job they need to do on the ground.

In preparation for Civil Defence emergencies, the Controller collaborates with a trained team of Council staff. The team work together regularly to prepare for emergencies and form relationships within the community.

"He tangata, it is the people," said Sharon. "We will need your help to help each other in a significant emergency. Building relationships with neighbours is important. In an emergency it is immediate neighbours who are often each other's first point of contact for help."

When not planning for emergencies, Sharon's business as usual role is Regulatory Group Manager which includes the building, planning, health, sale and supply of alcohol, animal control and compliance teams, in addition to the emergency management function. She has 27 years' experience in local government with a resource management planning background and has been at Council for 24 years.

Sharon was appointed by Council and the Waikato Civil Defence Emergency Management Joint Committee after an interview process and subsequent three stage Massey University development programme endorsed by the Director of the Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management. In addition to the Controller role, Sharon is also Council's appointed representative on the Waikato Coordinating Executive Group which determines work programme priorities and works together with other councils across the region.

While we are fortunate in our district to not have had a significant emergency, Sharon volunteered in Kaikoura after the Hurunui earthquake, supporting the planning team.



She supports and indeed encourages our local Council staff to obtain experience during emergencies in other areas in New Zealand, such as the Christchurch, Hurunui/ Kaikoura and Edgecombe events.

Not only has Sharon been with Council for 24 years, she is also Tokoroa born and bred. She completed her schooling at Strathmore, Cargill, Tainui and Tokoroa High schools, married a Waotu/ Putāruru local and her

two teenage boys were also schooled in Tokoroa.

"The South Waikato is home and I love our understated uniqueness and hidden local gems," Sharon said.

If you want to know more about Civil Defence call Stuart Aston our Emergency Manager on 07 885 0340 or visit Council's website: www.southwaikato.govt.nz.

Never Happens? Sometimes Happens...

Emergencies can happen anytime, anywhere. It's up to you to take steps to make sure you're prepared. Tē mōhiotia āhea, ki hea rānei te ohotata. Whakaritea tō whānau. Kia mataara.

In an emergency, you may be stuck at home for several days. Figure out what supplies you need and make a plan to work out what is required to get your family through.

At home

You probably have most of the things you need already.

- Water for three days or more — at least nine litres of water for every person.
- Food that doesn't need cooking (unless you have a camping stove or gas BBQ)

- Food for babies and pets.
- Toilet paper and large plastic buckets for an emergency toilet.
- Dust masks and work gloves.

In a grab bag

Have grab bags ready for everyone in your family. Each bag should have warm clothes, a bottle of water, snacks, copies of important documents and photo ID.

Remember any medications you might need and keep your first aid kit, torch, radio and batteries

somewhere you can grab them in a hurry.

In your car

Plan ahead for what you will do if you are in your car when an emergency happens. A flood or natural disaster could leave you stranded in your vehicle for some time.

Keep essential emergency survival items in your car. If you are driving in extreme winter conditions, add a brush, shovel, windshield scrapers and warm clothing to your emergency car kit.

Store a pair of walking shoes, a waterproof jacket, essential medicines, snack food, water and a torch in your car.

Keep up to date with weather and road information when planning travel.

Get your household ready

It's up to you to make sure your family, and the people you care about, know what to do and that you all have what you need to get through on your own.

Not got an emergency kit? Start putting one together today! Find out more: www.getready.govt.nz



IN brief

- There are currently 3,886 known dogs in the South Waikato, owned by 2,627 people. In September the team will start their door to door programme.
- The newly formed carpark in Galaxy Road will make community access to the Mokaihaha ecological area easier.
- Logging at the Whakamaru Reserve is now complete and stump-grinding is the next step.
- Hand rails have been installed along the length of the Oraka Reserve Walkway project.
- Parks staff installed a bench seat at Matarawa Park donated by the Waikato Branch of the NZ Tree Crops Association in memory of former member the late Maurice Denton.
- The security fence at the Tokoroa wastewater treatment plant has been upgraded.
- Drug screening sampling of wastewater flowing into the Tokoroa wastewater treatment plant is being undertaken and is funded by the Police.
- The stormwater upgrade project is underway in Okoroire Street, including cesspits and pipes.

IN the know

You can keep up to date with Council information via:
www.southwaikato.govt.nz
[www.facebook/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil)
Download Antenna FREE
info@southwaikato.govt.nz

IN view

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

Mānawatia te kura pae a Māhina

On Monday the iwi of Raukawa held a pōwhiri to welcome a collection of taonga named 'Te Toko Tokoroa o Matarawa'.

The collection has been under the care of the South Waikato District Council for many years and Council recently gifted the

collection to the iwi of Raukawa.

A number of staff from Council and Raukawa participated in the ceremony.

As kaitiaki, Raukawa will endeavour to preserve, maintain and care for these taonga guided by our mātauranga, tikanga and kawa.

The collection will be housed within the Huia Kaimanawa room at Te Whare o Raukawa for both iwi members and the general public to view.

Extracted from Raukawa's Facebook page



New birthing unit opens

South Waikato's new birthing unit is open and it's full of aroha

The newly refurbished South Waikato Primary Birthing Unit was opened on 17 June at Tokoroa Hospital.

Hundreds of people gathered to celebrate this beautiful space that was officially blessed by Raukawa's Kaunihera Kaumātua chairperson Nā John-Thomas (Hori) Deane with presentations by Raukawa's general manager Maria Te Kanawa and Mayor Jenny Shattock. Local MP Louise Upston was also present.

Proud of the effort invested into the new birthing unit that has transformed an old theatre block at Tokoroa Hospital where Mayor Shattock used to work over 40 years ago, she said, "It's absolutely fantastic to see it's still in use."

In 2018, there were 60 births in Tokoroa and during a time of population growth there is potential for up to an estimated 200 births to happen locally.

The space was co-designed with midwives and the community, including Pasifika and Māori to ensure mums and whānau have a safe and happy experience as they welcome their new babies into the world. And it's fair to

say the space will deliver this and more.

The unit has a birthing pool and post birth whānau space. It has two delivery rooms, three posts birthing rooms and one antenatal room.

"It's a far cry from our old unit," says Jill Dibble, Waikato DHB's director of Southern

Community and Rural Health who is focussed on improving community-based maternity services.

"There are many people to thank, but a special mention must go to local health providers, Raukawa and South Waikato Pacific Islands Community Services," she said.

Extracted from a DHB media statement

