

Tirau Domain - almost there...

As the new and improved Tirau Domain edges closer to completion, there's a sense of excitement in the Tirau community and rightfully so.

Council has worked closely with the Tirau Community Board and Domain Action Group on the Tirau Domain and Walkway project. Despite the challenges we've all faced we can see that everything is beginning to fall into place.

This project is an important part of Council's commitment to improving Tirau's liveability through new community infrastructure and green spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy.

After an initial blessing of the Domain back in September 2021, work on the project got underway with the demolition of some structures on site.

Vegetation was removed in preparation for the work on the footpaths to begin.

Prior to Christmas, the team was focused on completing the entrance for the carpark, finishing the Upper Domain footpath and some concreting works. To cap off the Stage 1 works, the team from Downer invited Year 6 students from Tirau Primary School to assist with planting.

With the addition of the bridge linking the walkway to the Domain, Stage 1 was done, essentially meaning the Tirau community could now walk from town, across the bridge and into the Domain – which was a big step!

Attention then turned to Stage 2 of the project, earlier this year. This included toilets

and the family fun items – pump track, play equipment, picnic tables and shelter, which will turn the area into a space for everyone to enjoy.

The development of the pump track was met with excitement and approval and by the time this issue of In Touch reaches mailboxes it would have had its final coat of asphalt.

As well as the work on the pump track, a tidy up of the banks, seeding and installation of the picnic tables (which are wheelchair accessible) will follow.

Overall, it's getting there. We have no doubts some in the community are already enjoying the new space. We're so excited to see this space become one of the more lively spots in our district.

Welcome new CE Susan Law

At the time of sign off to print, Susan Law hadn't quite joined us, but by the time you read this, Susan will have been with us several weeks.

Susan has a wealth of experience in local government. She has worked in New Zealand and overseas largely in the public sector space.

Susan believes that people get to do great things in the local government sector.

"I am looking forward to helping position the South Waikato in the best possible place for the future and to navigate through all the reform processes facing us," said Susan.

Susan has tremendous passion for managing change and connecting people - ideal strengths for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

We will bring you a more detailed introduction in the next issue of In Touch.



Want to win \$100? See inside.

IN the know

DID YOU KNOW... Council staff process around 14,500 service requests each year. And we receive on average, almost 27,000 phone calls over a 12 month period.

** Internal phone and service request system stats*

IN side

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IN house

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

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South Waikato team wins the Waikato region's first-ever Climathon event

A platform designed to inspire and connect a new wave of climate action volunteers has proven to be a winning formula at the Waikato's first-ever Climathon Ideathon.

Spanning the week of 28 March to 3 April, the virtual Climathon event provided locals with an opportunity to develop tangible solutions to some of the Waikato's greatest climate challenges.

After a week of developing, validating and testing ideas under the guidance of local climate heroes and experts, the online volunteer platform - Enviro Story, beat teams from all over the region, and walked away with \$2,000 to help turn their idea into reality.

Organised by Impact Hub Waikato, the inaugural Climathon event saw 60 changemakers - from students, entrepreneurs and young professionals, to architects, engineers and data scientists, come together to co-create innovative solutions that will pave the way to a greener future.

Enviro Story - a South Waikato based team made up of Meena Sharma, Colleen Litchfield, Cherie Pascoe, Tracey Numanga, Nanise Ginnen and Honey Smith, and mentored by Camilla Carty-Melis, aimed to counteract the barriers that prevent people from becoming engaged as climate action volunteers via a website featuring inspirational stories and videos to empower and enable action.

"The initial idea came from our experiences with groups doing amazing conservation work, and these groups proclaiming that nobody knows about what they do. With our individual skills we realised that between us, we likely had the tools to do something about this, to get the word out there and connect keen but apprehensive volunteers with worthwhile projects," says Cherie Pascoe.

The team is already collating thoughts around potential collaborators or benefactors and is planning on using the \$2,000 prize money to ensure that the project engages regional volunteering networks to ensure the widest impact.



Climathon Waikato Project Lead, Emma Sinclair, says that the co-designed challenges represent the environmental concerns that youth have, and reflect what the community sees as important - and she was inspired by the solutions participants developed in response.

"Everyone showed up with a smile on their face - willing to collaborate, challenge their thinking, validate their beliefs, test their theories, knuckle down and address these challenges. It was awe-inspiring to see and hear the participants'

ideas for climate action. I'm grateful that so many people gave up their evenings and weekend to focus on fighting climate change," says Sinclair.

Over 30 experts working in the sustainability sector, were there to guide participants. After the success of this year's event, the project team is already planning on bringing to life another Climathon.

Climathon is an international movement that has been uniting changemakers in more than 50 countries since 2015.

Lake Whakamaru Reserve blessing of new infrastructure



New infrastructure installed at Lake Whakamaru Reserve includes two shower blocks, three BBQs, shelters, three picnic tables and three waste stations installed by Downer.

The project cost almost \$315,000, but the good news is that it was part funded by the Government's Tourism Infrastructure Fund (close to \$160,000) with the remaining funding from Council, but again not from rates! It was funded from the proceeds of the sale of the pine trees felled in the Reserve several months ago.

A karakia to open the facilities was conducted by Kaumatua, braving the cold and windy weather, along with a number of people from Raukawa, Downer, Council staff and Elected Members.

We hope the public gets years' of use out of the new infrastructure. Our reserves are just getting better and better!

WHAT'S HOT

RIGHT - The Kiwi-as build made by judge Robin Sather for the LEGO Masters New Zealand® show. Robin had travelled around New Zealand and made a combination lego build of a number of Kiwi icons including an impressively high Sky Tower; but also The Dog in Tirau! Pretty cool!

The South Waikato Environment Initiatives Committee met in April to assess the record number of applications that were received. There was a total of \$164,491.25 allocated between 37 applicants.

BELOW - Great headline on *Stuff* and awesome opinion piece about house price savings for a family when they moved from Auckland to the South Waikato.



READER REPORT

Moving to Tokoroa from Auckland saved us \$700,000 on a house 🇳🇿

Council will be participating in an exciting joint project with Raukawa to promote and celebrate Te Reo in Tokoroa. The programme has been developed by Aotearoa Reorua to support New Zealand's Te Whare o te Reo Māori Language Revitalisation Strategy. It is currently being piloted in Te Wairoa, Rotorua, Ōtaki and Ahuriri (Napier). The goals of the programme are to 1, enhance relationships between mana whenua and Council by developing a joint rautaki reorua (bilingual plan) and 2, to create more spaces to see, hear and celebrate Te Reo alongside English. Funded by Government to the tune of \$225,000, the initiative won't cost ratepayers. This project is a great opportunity to promote Te Reo in Tokoroa. We're looking forward to working with Raukawa to develop and achieve our collaborative whāinga (goals).

WHAT'S NOT

RIGHT - Skids on our reserves... the damage this behaviour causes is unsightly and costs ratepayer money to fix. What a waste of time, effort and money!

People who don't take responsibility for their own litter and waste. Littering in our streets is horrible – use the bins or take it home with you!

Stop dumping unwanted rubbish outside our wonderful OpShop operators' businesses. These are charity shops. Every time they have to take dumped rubbish to the transfer station, it takes money away from the people in need who they are trying to help!

Getting your dog seized or infringed because you have still not paid your dog registration for a current year tag.

BELOW - A disappointing increase in tagging across the district. Argh! Mounting costs of poor behaviour.



\$200 million 254 villa retirement village planned for Putāruru

Putāruru born and bred property developer Tim Bartells is returning to the South Waikato town with plans to build a \$200 million 254 villa retirement village starting in October this year.

The Putāruru Country Estate will include 254 mixed size villas from 95m² to 185m². A 2,000m² five-star resort quality recreation and community facility incorporating a heated swimming pool, spa, gym, picture theatre, restaurant and café, library, doctors' rooms, snooker and pool tables, grand piano, Menz shed, bowling green, virtual golf and more will be available for residents.

"It's important to us that our residents have outstanding facilities to enjoy with other residents, friends and family," says Bartells. "The 16-hectare site on Kennedy Drive is a very attractive rural setting bordering the Putāruru Golf course, rugby and soccer clubs. Putāruru Country Estate will also have an aged care facility which will provide rest home hospital and dementia care," said Bartells.

Mayor Jenny Shattock said the planned investment was great

news for Putāruru and for the South Waikato district. It follows on from other multi-million dollar investments in the district including the Toi Ohomai Trades Training Centre currently being built at the northern entry to Tokoroa and the OLAM dairy facility being developed south of Tokoroa.

"There are real economic benefits from a big project like this for the community. Apart from creating a lovely place for retirees to live, there are a lot of work opportunities for everything from earthworks and civil engineering, building and construction and numerous subcontractors which in turn will attract new business into the area. There is also the continuum of work as this project will be ongoing for many years."

Putāruru Country Estate will be Bartells' third large retirement village complementing Longridge Country Estate in Paeroa and Amberley Country Estate in Christchurch.

Bartells was born in Putāruru Maternity Hospital, and went to school at St Marys and then Putāruru High School where he met his partner Jenny Wilson



Mayor Jenny is pleased to hear of Putāruru-born Tim Bartells investment in the township.

who is a full partner in Putāruru Country Estate and Bartells' other villages.

Bartells has been very pleased with the support he has received from South Waikato District Council.

"From my initial contact with Interim Chief Executive Miriam Taris and all members of the executive team I have been impressed with their willingness to work with me to streamline the compliance journey. I believe we have

the opportunity together to create some industry leading processes to optimally manage the regulatory process for a large project."

Bartells sees the Putāruru Country Estate as complementary to the existing 85-unit Rangiuira Retirement Village and Rest Home in Putāruru and is in discussions with Rangiuira Chair Jos Van Loon about how the two businesses can work together.

Tokoroa dairy factory update

Olam Food Ingredients (OFI) has made sustainability a real focus in the construction of the new Tokoroa plant on Browning St.

Plant construction is progressing well, and the plant remains on track for opening at the start of the 2023 season.

The addition of Warren Landles, who joins as the Sustainability Manager, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience. Landles will be tasked with implementing OFI's sustainability initiatives on-farm and in its operations. He will also build its sustainability team and enhance a sustainably minded approach at the plant.

Mr Landles joins OFI from Miraka, where he held senior sustainability and on-farm excellence roles. He brings a wealth of international experience in farming and sustainability to OFI.

"At a global level, OFI works to a comprehensive sustainability framework that is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Global Compact.

"All aspects of our new plant are being designed to maximize renewable energy use, minimize pollution and water use and ensure waste is handled in the most sustainable way possible. One of the key commitments is that we will operate a biomass boiler that will be fueled with sustainably sourced wood fibre. This will help us ensure our milk processing is energy efficient and low impact," he said.

On farm, Landles said the focus will be supporting existing efforts and partnering with OFI farmers to help them achieve their goals under He Waka Eke Noa, the industry blueprint



for reducing emissions and building resilience to climate change.

"At a farm level, one of our focus areas is methane, so we are looking at tools and technologies that can support farmers to achieve meaningful on-farm emission reductions through methane mitigation.

We will also help them with riparian planting by providing cost-price native plants that we will grow in a nursery facility on site, using treated wastewater from our milk processing operations in the nursery," Mr Landles said.

OFI is also exploring ways to repurpose ash waste from the wood fibre burning process in commercial compost.

Choose Local - lucky winners!

You may have seen them featured in the local newspaper, heard their ad on the radio or maybe you were scrolling through social media when you watched a video about a local business in South Waikato – these were the winners of the choose local advertising package, nominated by a member of our community.

It's been great seeing the nominations come in and hearing the wonderful things people have said about the businesses they nominate.

A regular comment has been the friendliness of the staff and the incredible service they receive. But that comment goes both ways with local business owners regularly mentioning the friendliness and support of their customers.

The winners of the advertising packages so far have been Ironic, Prince Bakery & Roast, Tucker Bar & Eatery, Canton Takeaway, Coffee & Cakeaway and Strong by Blood.

There are still a few winners left to be announced so keep an eye out for the local newspaper to see who will be featured next.

This is a Space to Grow initiative.



**SPACE
TO GROW**
www.swnz.co

ANZAC DAY celebrations

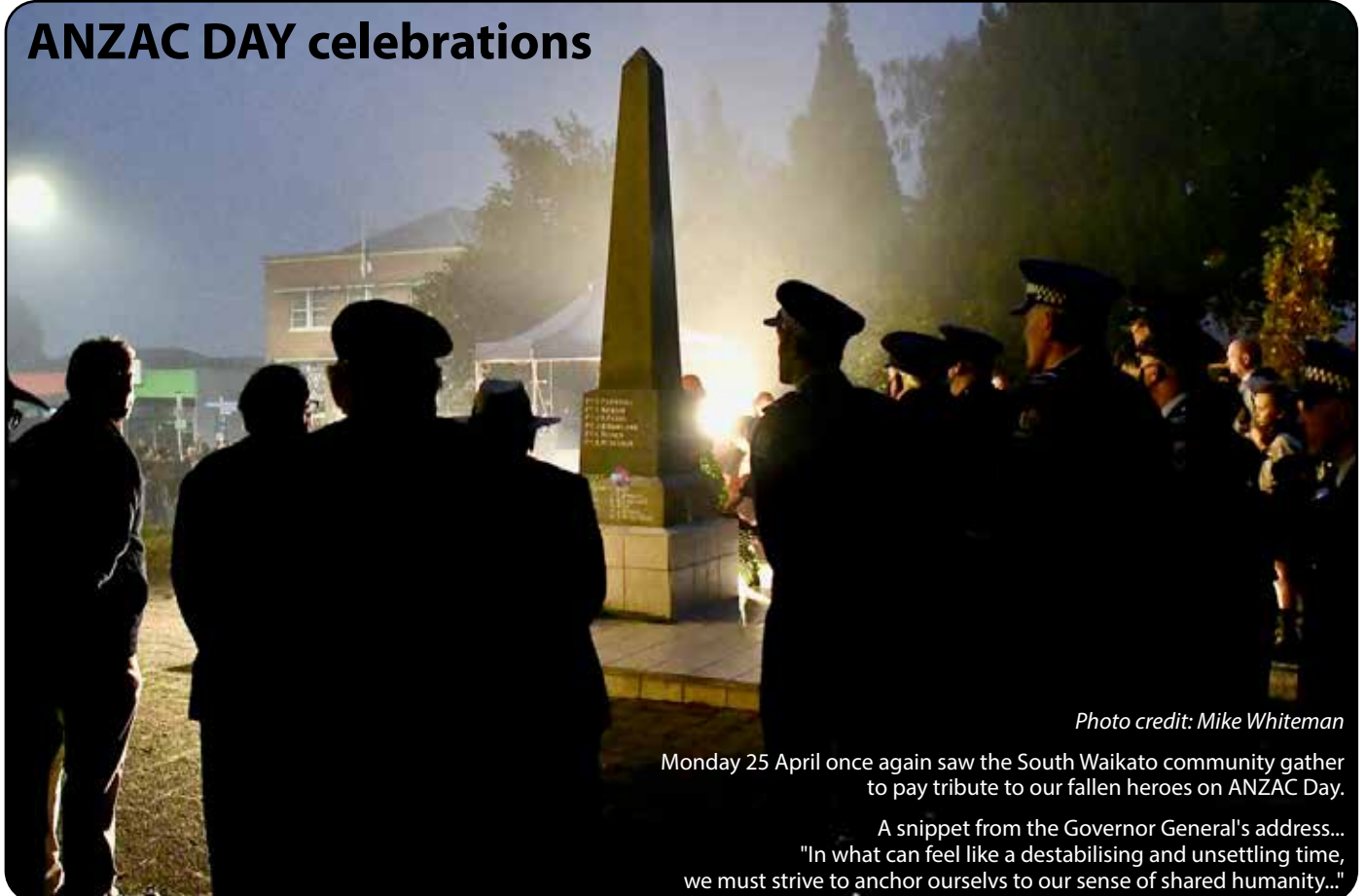


Photo credit: Mike Whiteman

Monday 25 April once again saw the South Waikato community gather to pay tribute to our fallen heroes on ANZAC Day.

A snippet from the Governor General's address...
"In what can feel like a destabilising and unsettling time, we must strive to anchor ourselves to our sense of shared humanity..."

Tokoroa Host Lions win award for Tokoroa basketball court



The Tokoroa Host Lions recently won the Pat Ryan Youth Award for its work on the Tokoroa basketball project that opened in December 2020. The project was judged the best Youth Project in NZ and Pacific Islands.

“Council had intended to construct a half court size basketball court alongside the recently opened skatepark (which is adjacent to the Tokoroa Youth Park and South Waikato Indoor Heated Pool facility), thereby creating an indoor/outdoor activity hub for a range of age groups,” said Ted Anderson, Council’s Assets Group Manager.

“We had obtained several quotes in order to assign a budget, when the Tokoroa Host Lions put its hand up to deliver this project as part of its community project work. When the Lions’ quote came in, we decided to approach the project as a Council/Community group

collaboration,” continued Mr Anderson.

By working with the Tokoroa Host Lions we were able to deliver a three quarter size court area within the original budget. The tremendous number of volunteer hours that Tokoroa Host Lions members put into this project is yet another example of how much Host Lions invest into the South Waikato community.

COVID-19 related delays complicated delivery but we got there in the end and hosted an official opening in December 2020, just in time for the summer holidays.

Host Lions is fortunate that its members have a wide range of skills and machinery, and all were utilised when and where required. The first on site works were the excavation and levelling of the court area by one of Hosts’ farmer members, using his farm tractor.

Fortunately, Host Lions also has builders and concrete contractors as members and their expertise was critical to satisfying requirements.

The project started in mid-2020 and opened on 8 December 2020.

Not only did Host Lions deliver an outstanding community asset, it saved ratepayers tens of thousands of dollars, and Host Lions member contributions delivered a \$25,000 profit to the club. This has since been spent back on further community projects, donations or support.

Host Lions has a very strong relationship with SWDC. Over the past three to four years, Lions has delivered facilities which have not only benefitted the youth in Tokoroa, but provided outstanding Council and ratepayer/community assets too.

HOT tips for better burning

- Start the fire with newspaper and kindling (pine cones and firelighters work well).
- Keep the air vent open so that your fire burns brightly.
- Only use larger pieces once the fire is well established.
- Split wood to ± 15cm thick.
- Don't overload your wood burner.



- Before winter have your flue/ chimney cleaned.
- Banking, damping or turning down your wood burner overnight creates more air pollution and clogs your flue.
- Leave a bed of ash of about an inch at the bottom of the fireplace at all times for better burning and to protect the firebox.
- Only burn seasoned dry wood!

Warm Homes Clean Air - clean heat schemes



Council together with partner Waikato Regional Council offers home heating schemes to people living in the South Waikato to replace old non-compliant wood burners with new clean heat appliances. The schemes are:

On the House - entitles Community Services Card holders in the Tokoroa airshed to a full subsidy.

Split the Bill - entitles Tokoroa properties to a 50% subsidy capped at \$2,000 to replace non-compliant woodburners with a new clean heat appliance.

Buy Now Pay Later - entitles anyone living in the South Waikato to replace non-compliant woodburners with clean heat appliances with the full cost being placed on rates at a low interest rate paid off over nine years. No capital outlay!

Eligibility for these schemes varies. Best to check your eligibility here: <https://www.southwaikato.govt.nz/our-services/air-quality/warmhomes-scheme-selector>.

At the time of writing, of our \$150,000 subsidy budget, \$83,700 is spent, with an additional \$39,200 committed, leaving \$27,100 still to spend. This reflects how people tend to wait for cold weather to think about their home heating.

We have completed 75 installs, with 21 awaiting install on the **Split the Bill** scheme and on the **Buy Now Pay Later** scheme, 14 installs are complete with six pending.



Putāruru Waterpark Stage 1 complete...

After our first update in March, it's a joy to say we've reached the conclusion of Stage 1 of the Putāruru Waterpark refurbishment project.

To say we haven't had any challenges would be a lie, but there's a sense of accomplishment at seeing and hearing the delight of our tamariki enjoying the new refreshing space outside the iconic Food Court.

What's even more exciting is that Stage 2 is yet to come and further information around this part of the project should become available in the upcoming months.

Here's what's happened:

- the timber retaining walls were built and concreted into place

- the original seats were removed for refurbishment
- topsoil and fill were imported and levelled
- the bubble jet fountain system was installed
- new paving blocks that were to come from Australia proved difficult to secure, but the team finally did, so as not to hold up works
- preparation for the installation of the children's playground
- development of a new riverbed which is cast in concrete with nearby river names in stainless steel to further tell the story of our connection to water and to highlight the amazing attractions near and around Putāruru.

To see a number of kids run in amongst the water jets was excellent to witness! It's worth noting too, the water from the jets is being recycled as this is of importance to us and to many in our community.

One area worth pointing out, has been concerns by members of the community around safety near the playground and its proximity to the road. We have installed temporary fencing near the playground on the Kensington St end as discussions are ongoing around pricing and other aspects for a permanent enclosure near the playground.

In a nutshell, that is basically the wrap up of what has happened over the last nine weeks.

It was encouraging to see the feedback from the Putāruru community echoing the delight of our tamariki's enjoyment.

While the majority of comments were supportive and showed excitement, we're aware that there is still plenty more to come and we're sure Stage 2 will be met with excitement by many.

Be sure to stay updated on Council's website, social media platforms, right here in In Touch and from your representatives at Pride in Putāruru regarding the next stage of this remarkable project which is set to happen in the coming months.



Local Body Elections - need to know

The Local Body Elections for the South Waikato District are held every three years. These elections decide who will become Mayor of the district, Councillors for each of the three Wards and local Community Board Members for Tirau.

STAND

If you're thinking of standing for Council, it's time to get serious.

Find out more on our website (address below). Our website details key dates, nominations, what being a Councillor means and more. Over time, the pages will include the necessary forms, Candidate Information Handbook and other relevant information. Keep an eye out.

If you are keen to stand, you are encouraged to attend the Candidate Information Evening: Wednesday 13 July, 6.30pm, South Waikato Sport and Events Centre.

VOTE

Council delivers over 20 services to the community.

Your local Council has a huge impact on your daily lives.

You WANT to have your say in who represents you.

You have to be enrolled to vote. Not enrolled? Visit: <https://enrol.vote.nz/app/enrol/#/enrol-online>.

If you are enrolled, voting papers are mailed mid-September.

Election Day is Saturday 8 October. Voting closes 12 noon.

WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

SHAPE YOUR COMMUNITY. STAND FOR LOCAL GOVT.

VOTE 2022

www.southwaikato.govt.nz

ELECTIONS 2022 (just under the search bar)

STAND FOR LOCAL GOVT

// VOTE2022.ORG.NZ



Putāruru skatepark design is finalised

The Putāruru skatepark construction is set to start soon.

Council had funding of \$155,000 in the budget to refurbish the Putāruru skatebowl but we had received feedback from users that they wanted something bigger and better. During last year's Long Term Plan process we presented two options to the community. The options were to just refurbish the bowl or to increase the budget to \$550,000 and design and build enhanced skate features in a wider park area.

It was a resounding bigger and better so that's what Council funded.

And after all the engagement with users, planning and design,

things just got exciting. The Steering Group signed the final design off in early May. The Contractor, J Stone Skateparks, is an expert in skatepark design and construction and we can't wait for the plan below to become reality!

The facility will be multi-use and suitable for various age groups with kiddie tracks, a freshly refurbished bowl, ramps and rails, surrounded by a fence for safety.

The site will be closed and off-limits during construction. We know some users will be disappointed by this but there will be hazards on site and for safety reasons, it is necessary to cordon off the area.

It is anticipated to have the new skatepark open in December ready for the summer holidays, weather and material supply permitting.

Steering group members:

- Raewyn Whiteman (Pride in Putāruru)
- Stacy Taylor (users and schools)
- Teri-Anne Petley-Rata (users and schools)
- Councillor Sandra Wallace
- Marama Tahapehi (Council, community)
- Phil Parker (Council, parks and reserves)
- Ebony Curtin (Council, customer services)

Jones Landing septic update

It's not news that Jones Landing is one of our more popular reserves here in our own backyard.

Locals and visitors from near and afar can't get enough of the place especially in the summer months, but issues with the Reserve's effluent system has caused problems in recent years.

Due to the high volumes of users at Jones Landing it meant issues only worsened and the toilet block was not coping and blocking frequently - not a good look for this popular spot.

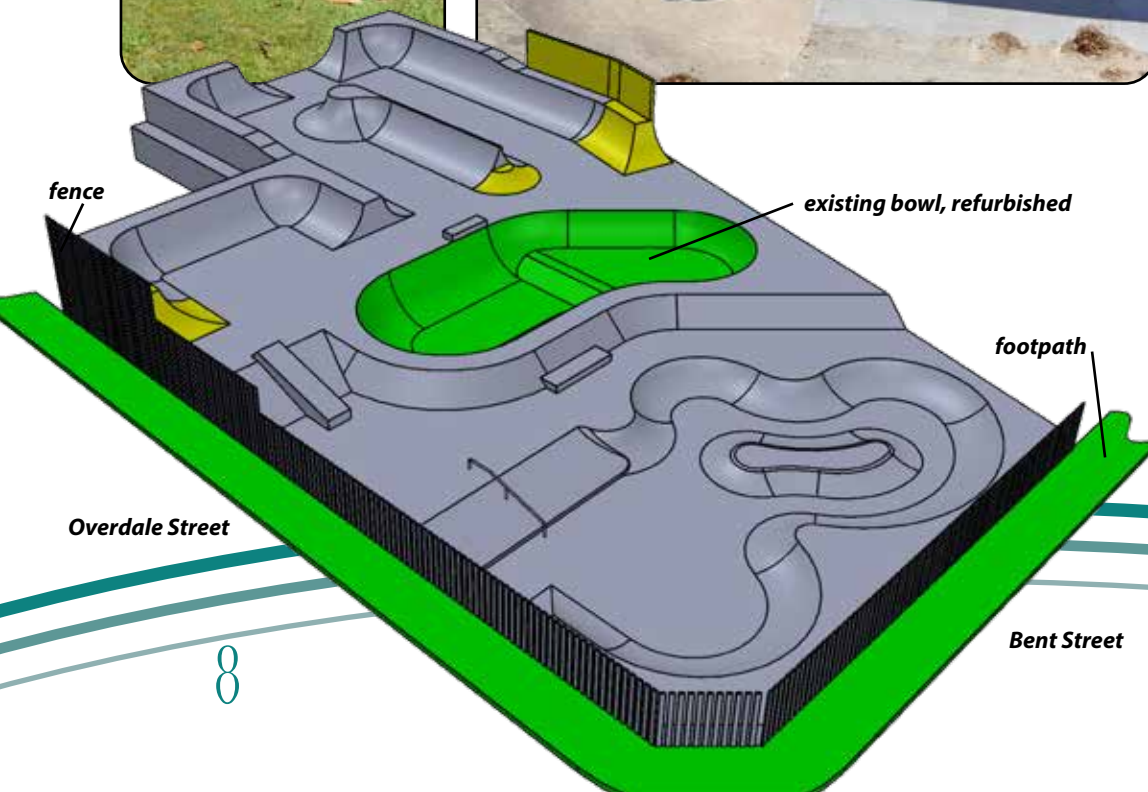
In 2021, Council closed Jones Landing to visitors as we attempted to make the necessary repairs.

The project proved to be bigger than initially anticipated so we opened the Reserve, locked the toilet block and installed porta-loos as a temporary measure.

Fast forward to May 2022 - the team is close to completing the required maintenance, including a new septic field, native plantings, signage and a fence demarcating the area to keep people out.

By the time this issue hits mailboxes, Jones Landing will be back to normal with the toilet issue a thing of the past.

Any updates will be made via Council's platforms should things change.



Making the most of Mokaihaha

A little-known conservation area of ancient original forest intact with rare and endangered species is a mere 15-minute drive from Tokoroa.

Located on the southern end of the Mamaku Plateau, and accessible from Galaxy Road, the Mokaihaha Ecological Area contains one of the country's few natural populations of Kōkako, a forest bird endemic to New Zealand.

Following an intensive programme of predator control, the first survey was conducted in 2018 in which eight singles and 46 pairs were counted.

The success of the ongoing predator control programme is now evident with an increase in birds recorded in the 2022 survey, to 71 pairs and ten singles.

As the Kōkako are a flagship species for this project, a significant increase in population bodes well for the other biodiversity in the forest. DoC (Department of Conservation) aims to increase the Kōkako population by 10% each survey and to maintain rat numbers below 5% to allow birds to breed successfully.

The Mokaihaha Kōkako Trust works with local organisations, businesses, iwi, local government and the community to ensure that the Mokaihaha's ecosystem thrives while also strengthening community wellbeing.

"We are working hard at present to get local people involved in helping with predator control," says Trust chairman Robin Black.

"We are also aware there are schools that are keen to get its pupils involved, and once the COVID-19 situation settles we will be looking to develop partnerships with local schools to use the area for studies and perhaps get more involved in monitoring and

pest control. This will be even more rewarding with a good population of birds and other fauna in the bush."

The community is represented on the Board of Trustees and is open to anyone to apply to go on the Trust and have input into the activities of the Trust. Because the whole block is DoC land, the area is generally open to public usage, accessible from the car park in Galaxy Road.

Below - Council's Community Team was fortunate to join a group venture, from left Cherie Pascoe, Tracey Numanga, Kiri Diamond, Honey Smith and Meena Sharma.

Far below - beautiful forest.



Above - stock photo of the illusive Kōkako . Photo credit - Cheryl Marriner





Matariki Glow Show - Friday 17 June at 10am and 11.30am. Tickets available through Eventfinda.

Sunday Movie - House of Gucci - Sunday 26 June at 2pm. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$8 for adults. *Synopsis: When Patrizia Reggiani marries into the Gucci family, her ambition unravels their legacy and triggers a spiral of betrayal, revenge and murder.*

The Golden Ass by Michael Hurst - Saturday 2 July at 7pm. Tickets are \$15 each available at The Plaza. *Synopsis: Michael Hurst is Lucius Apuleius, a young Roman man who is obsessed with magic. A beautiful Roman classic.*

School holiday movie: Space Jam: A New Legacy - Wednesday 13 July at 10am. Tickets are \$5 general admission, children under 5 years are free. *Synopsis: LeBron James and son, Dom find themselves trapped in a virtual world. In order to get out, LeBron must team up with the Looney Tunes Squad and defeat an algorithm.*

School holiday movie: Tom & Jerry: Cowboy Up - Wednesday 20 July at 10am. Tickets \$5 general admission, under 5 years are free. *Synopsis: Tom and Jerry are in the Wild West where they help save a ranch from the hands of a greedy villain.*

Bluelight NZ - FREE MOVIE - TBC - Thursday 21 July at 10am. Supported by Kbeez & The Plaza.

Sunday movie: Elizabeth: A Portrait in Parts - Sunday, 31 July at 2pm. Tickets \$5 for students and \$8 for adults. *Synopsis: A documentary on the life of Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-lived, longest reigning British monarch.*



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TALKING ROAD SAFETY



With winter firmly upon us, the subject of this column is about one of the most important parts of your vehicle and we don't mean the heater!

Remember the only thing keeping you on the road is four pieces of rubber!

Your tyres are an essential part of your vehicle but are often only thought about when they cause you to fail a warrant.

Some pointers:

Tread depth must be at least 1.5mm around the whole circumference of the tyre.

Regularly check your tyre tread. The more tread you have the better the grip and the safer you will be.

Waka Kotahi has provided Council with a limited number of tread depth gauges. These are available at the Putaruru and Tokoroa offices.

Check that your tyre pressure is correct once a month. This can be found on the inside of the driver's door, in the handbook or you can ask a mechanic.

Maintaining correct tyre pressure ensures balanced braking, maximum grip, longer tyre life and improved safety, handling and fuel efficiency. Correct tyre pressure can help reduce fuel consumption by up to 4%! With the price of fuel these days, it's worth the time to check!

Don't forget to make sure your spare wheel or space saver wheel is inflated to the correct pressure too.



Meet the Engagement Team... building trust through public consultation

Introducing Community Programme Planner, Marama Tahapehi, who sits within Council's Strategy and Engagement team.

Council carries out a range of activities and services throughout the district from animal control to the airfield, caring for our cemeteries and community halls to ensuring that our solid and liquid waste is well-managed in the interests of our health and a sustainable environment. There is housing for the elderly, roads and public transport, subsidised clean heating in our homes and much, much more.

Some of the services Council provides are mandated by law and many others occur because the community has chosen them as priorities.

Did you know that there is a team of people who are regular touch points with the community through a number of our engagement sessions to improve public participation in decision-making? This is the function of the Strategy and Engagement Team within Council.

"Some aspirations may not fall within what Council is able to do, but some do," says dream-catcher Community Programme Planner, Marama Tahapehi. "If there are



aspirations that aren't a part of Council's role then Council may be able to advocate on behalf of the community if it aligns to its strategic direction."

Ms Tahapehi says her role is to weave these expectations and wishes into what Council is able to do, enable the community to have a voice and for Council to provide feedback on how the rates are being spent.

"Rather than just ticking a box, our engagement with the public must always be meaningful. Above all, our public must feel safe when engaging with Council and that is what we strive to do," said Ms Tahapehi.

Reading this?

Text the phrase written in turquoise below to 0274 472 664 or private message our Facebook page www.facebook.com/SouthWaikatoDistrictCouncil. We need your full name and contact phone number for your entry to be counted.

VOTE2022

Entries close strictly at 4pm on Friday 1 July 2022. The winner of a \$100 voucher will be drawn randomly from all eligible entries.

Parking limits, disability spaces and fines...

While we don't have parking meters in the South Waikato we do have time-restricted parking bays. These are demarcated by signs that indicate the parking time restrictions.

We put time limits on parking bays so that locals and visitors have easy access to high traffic areas, largely to access services and spend money in our CBDs. If people take up these short-term parking bays for extended periods, it limits availability for other users.

And while we're on the topic of parking bays, we have a number of disability parking bays around the district that are for disability users only.

It is more difficult for disability persons to exit vehicles and get to shops than for the many of us



who can get around with ease, so be respectful of this... even when you're only going to be a few minutes or when it's raining!

Our Compliance Team do parking infringements across the district as part of its role, so be aware of time limits and disability parking spaces at all times... they are there for a reason. Disregard, and you could pick up a fine...

Tamariki show environmental care and design flair



Some pieces of mail make your day... and this is one of them.

Council recently received a letter from a school teacher at Moanataiari School in Thames describing a school trip she had made to Te Waihou Walkway and the Blue Spring with her year 6 and 7 classes. The students were studying the history of Te Waihou because the mouth of the river is in the firth of Thames.

So the students took off on a road trip to see the beautiful Blue Spring first hand.

As their homework task the students had to design a brochure promoting the Blue Spring following a set of criteria. The teacher felt they were too good to just glue in their workbooks. So, she mailed them to Council. We're super pleased she did. Amazing work from the young tamariki.

REVALUATIONS Need to know...

This article refers to the next rating year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), not the latest rates invoice.

All properties were revalued in 2021 for rating purposes. This occurs every three years. Given the current property market, most properties had large valuation increases.

Increasing property values do not result in Council's total rates revenue increasing, but changing values do impact the rates on individual properties.

Rates are collected by a mixture of charges such as:

- *General Rate (GR)* – based on property value.
- *Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC)* – regardless of property value, the charge is the same.
- *Targeted rates* – targeted to specific locations (such as water supply).

By law, the UAGC (+ some targeted rates) mustn't exceed 30% of the total of all rates charged.

During the Long Term Plan (LTP) last year Council resolved to set the UAGC for Year 2 at 16%. This decision is unchanged resulting in a lower UAGC and a higher GR.

Although a lower UAGC reduces the impact of the 2021 valuation changes, it does not eliminate it.

Some properties' rates will increase substantially more or less than the proposed rate revenue increase of 7.6%. This proposed average increase was adopted last year through the LTP and is unchanged. As a result Council didn't consult on the Annual Plan 2022-23.

However we felt it important to remind ratepayers about the revaluation process, substantial valuation increases and the impacts of a lower UAGC.



GET NOTIFICATIONS

Download Antenno for free. Log specific addresses that are important to you - home, school, rental, mum etc.

We will send you important messages that are specific to your address, like recycling collection reminders, road closures, weather warnings, events, consultations, among others.

SEND REPORTS

Also you can use the app to report issues to Council, such as water breaks, potholes, streetlighting, flooding, trees down.

These reports are inputted into Council's Service Request System where the issue is allocated to the relevant staff member, team or contractor to action.

We have specific response and resolution timeframes depending on the seriousness of the issue.

In due course Antenno reports will be automated through the Service Request System.

IN brief

- Dog owners should be receiving their registration notices for their dogs in June, ready for the 2022-23 registration year. Dog registrations need paying by 4pm on Monday 1 August or a penalty will apply.
- A travel editor from Stuff visited the district to see some of the amazing things on offer. Their experience featured in Stuff and Sunday Star Times.
- The door to door programme looking for unregistered dogs is complete. Total known dogs in the district is 4,110.
- During March there were 49 noise callouts. Of these 92% were attended within the required timeframe, with 8% outside the timeframe and consequently billed at 50%.
- 441 building consents have been issued over a ten month period with an average processing time of eleven days, and at a total value of \$82.1million.
- Currently, Council's mobile phone app Antenna is installed on 2,123 devices with 3,0001 places saved by users. We receive around 50 reports from users during a six month period. These are inputted into our Service Request System for action by relevant staff.

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.

Councillor Column - Bill Machen

At the time of writing, outside it is cold and wet, but my heart is warm because of the outstanding projects being undertaken in the South Waikato district.

In Tokoroa, the OLAM factory in the south is stretching upwards and outwards. In the north the Hancock Forest and Toi Ohomai Trades Training Centre buildings are now taking shape.

In Putāruru, the new residential areas are being developed and new houses are being constructed.

In Tirau, the Domain has been substantially completed and is an excellent area of parkland. Some of the projects might seem to take a long time to come to fruition, but "good things take time".

All of these things have been accomplished by your Council. Its staff have been outstanding in supporting all developments and in the case of Tirau Domain volunteers have also assisted.

But there is more exciting news coming for the district which will strengthen and build upon what we see already.

Employment in the district is on the rise. Population is increasing. These things will increase the prospects for retail outlets, other businesses and Council. Its economic development team is also working on more options.

Exciting times are ahead for this part of New Zealand and the South Waikato is still the friendliest and most connected area to live in.



Tirau Domain

Councillor Column - Alex Jansen

Kia Ora, I hope you have all enjoyed the first few months of 2022.

It's been a busy year since my column last year and many new projects are well underway!

The Tirau Domain upgrades are well on track, giving the Tirau community an upgraded play and walk area they deserve.

Stage 1 of the Putāruru Waterpark refurbishments have been completed. The Waterpark refurbishment is a collaboration between Raukawa, Pride in Putāruru and Council and the goal is to make a statement for travellers passing through the Putāruru township.

The construction of the OFI dairy processing plant and the Toi Ohomai Trades Training Centre are both underway in Tokoroa.

At the start of the year, we said goodbye to our Chief Executive Ben Smit, who has taken up a new position. I would like to welcome Susan Law as our new Chief Executive. I look forward to working alongside her as Susan settles in to her new role here in the beautiful South Waikato.

I would also like to thank Mayor Jenny Shattock for all the work she has done for our district throughout her 24-year career in local government.



Putāruru Waterpark



Mayor Jenny Shattock

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