

# LINK

## WAIKATO DISTRICT NEWS

February – March 2017

Waikato  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato

## Wastewater rates are rising in July

If your property is connected to the district's wastewater network, you should receive a consultation document by post within the next week asking for your feedback on proposed changes that will affect the rates you pay for wastewater services.

These changes will mean that the single district-wide targeted wastewater rate planned for introduction in 2017/18 of \$752.68, and agreed in our last Long Term Plan 2015-25, will rise.

As we have still not finished the transition from five different sets of wastewater rates to a single district-wide rate, this means the rate you pay now could rise by between \$47 and \$254 from 1 July depending on where you live and the choice we make together through this consultation. This is in addition to other rate increases included in the Long Term Plan 2015-25. If you have a septic tank and do not pay a targeted wastewater rate, these changes will not affect you.

We are responding to the widespread discontent expressed by the community over the number of wastewater overflows we reported last year - especially the spills into Raglan Harbour that forced us to close the harbour temporarily for swimming, fishing and seafood collection.

We are proposing a significant expansion to our wastewater works programme in our Annual Plan for the year ahead (2017/18) to mitigate the key risks for overflows from our wastewater network, and to consider whether we plan to do even more work in the future.

We are offering different options for you to consider and look forward to your feedback by 8 May 2017. The Annual Plan 2017/18 Consultation Document and other supporting material on this issue can be found on our website at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/annualplan](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/annualplan)

## Who are we consulting with?

We are consulting with nearly 11,000 of our 33,000 district ratepayers who benefit from reticulated wastewater services and who pay a targeted rate for these services.

We are not consulting with ratepayers on any other parts of our Annual Plan since there are no other significant changes to the work programmes we agreed with you in our 2015-25 Long Term Plan. However we will still be out talking to you about the other work we're doing - and we look forward to engaging with you on relevant projects in your area as we start them.



*Ratepayers paying for wastewater should receive the 2017/18 Annual Plan Consultation Document within the next week.*

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# Mayor's Message



2017 is shaping up to be a big year for the Waikato District and for Council. Embracing the challenges of rapid growth will be a focus of the Annual Plan (2017/18) and Long Term Plan (2018-28). We will be coming out to get your thoughts on the Annual Plan very shortly.

The Waikato District has become the highest growth district council in the North Island, according to Statistics NZ. We are issuing more consents for new dwellings each year than any other North Island council apart from Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga. We are now dealing with more than twice the number of consents for new dwellings than three years ago as the district attracts new residents seeking a small-town or country lifestyle.

Water – in all its forms – continues to be a major focus in 2017. The rollout of water meters, a key part of the plan to ensure our district uses water in a sustainable way is happening now. Properties in Huntly, Ngaruawahia and Raglan connected to Council water infrastructure will switch to the water meter charging system from 1 July 2017. Trial meter readings have been sent out to owners of newly metered properties so those owners can learn how the system will work. Handy tips on how to read water meters and conserve water are included in the trial meter readings.

Improving our waste water network is another crucial focus in 2017. We are doing a range of things at the moment to better understand our underground pipes, including closed circuit television (CCTV) pipe inspections across the district. These activities are part of Council's commitment to improving wastewater infrastructure so that the negative impacts associated with overflows or leaks can be minimised.

Also water-related, the steady summer rains have allowed Council to stay at Alert Level One right into late summer. This might not have been great for some holiday makers but the farmers have surely welcomed it. Please keep being smart with your water!

A reminder that we entered a restricted fire season in late January. This means permits must be obtained from Council.

As always my Council wants to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me, your ward Councillor or your local community board or committee. Contact details are on our website.

**Allan Sanson**

Mayor, Waikato District Council

## ANZAC Day commemorated

**Waikato district residents and ratepayers are cordially invited to an ANZAC Day service in your community.**

Information about the services being organised across the district will be available on the Waikato District Council website ahead of the day.

The annual ANZAC Day Civic Service, attended by the Mayor, will be held in the Ngaruawahia War Memorial Hall, Galileo St, Ngaruawahia on Tuesday 25 April commencing at 11am. Members of the public are requested to be seated by 10.45am. Following the service and the march to the Point, you are also invited to attend the laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph.



A Commemorative Service organised by the Council will also be held at the Tuakau War Memorial Hall at 11am. Following the service, members of the public are invited to attend the wreath laying ceremony at the front of the Hall.

Watch out for details about other community-organised dawn services and remembrance services expected to take place (as in past years) in places like Ngaruawahia, Maramarua and Districts, Huntly, Gordonton, and Raglan.

## Town centre trees set to bloom with woollen poppies

**Town centres across the Waikato district will turn a shade of red this month as the community prepares to commemorate ANZAC Day.**

Groups have been busy with their knitting needles taking part in a "yarn bombing" street art project which will see knitted and crocheted poppies made of red wool covering the trunk of a selected tree in each town centre during April.

The project was initiated by Waikato District Council's Placemaking Team and they've joined forces with local Community Houses to come up with a project that evokes the way in which our grandmothers knitted garments to help keep our ANZAC troops warm.

"It's also inspired by the latest international trend to use knitted or crocheted wool to create community-friendly guerrilla art," says General Manager Strategy and Support, Tony Whittaker.

"The idea is to yarn bomb public places in ways that will surprise and delight you."

# Dumping your rubbish hurts everyone

**Dumped rubbish creates serious safety concerns, is posing a threat to our environment and costs ratepayers thousands of dollars.**

Over the past six months there have been 592 reported cases of illegal dumping and almost \$50,000 has been spent on the clean-up. Waikato District Council wants your help to stamp out this ongoing problem.

“That money could be spent on a new playground, used to upgrade public toilets or buy more books for our libraries. We’ve had seven beds in a pile of material, an old car set alight and left to burn, rotting animal carcasses, including 50 unskinned possums, dead pigs and, unbelievably, a dead shark in Tamahere last year.” General Manager Customer Support, Sue Duignan says.

It’s disappointing to see recyclable items dumped. There are free recycling services in our district which people can use. Transfer station details are on our website.

There’s a \$400 fine given to anyone caught dumping waste illegally but Council needs the community’s help to identify those responsible.

To take action, we need the community to be our eyes and ears. We urge people to report any dumping they see and to record any details of the vehicles involved, such as registration plate, colour, make and model of the vehicle. For safety reasons, and for us to investigate, we ask that people leave the dumped material



as it is and don’t touch it. All information is received in strict confidence.

You can report illegal dumping by calling freephone on 0800 492 452 any time or via the Council’s website.

## A plea to do the right thing

**There are many groups and individuals doing their bit to help to clean up our communities. One of those is Port Waikato BeachCare.**

This group regularly carries out clean-ups in the area and they’ve seen it all – dangerous chemicals, tyres, car parts, fridges, beds – most of it dumped in the sand dunes, where children play.

“Dumped rubbish can harm the environment,” says Karen Opie, from Port Waikato BeachCare. “Plastic waste can injure or kill bird and marine life, dumped food attracts rats which eat the eggs of nesting shorebirds, toxic waste affects ecosystems and green waste spreads pest plants. Dunes and coastlines are significant areas. It’s incredibly disrespectful.” Karen urges people to think about the consequences before they dump rubbish. “We should be protecting our environment and not putting it at risk.”

**Council is incredibly grateful to groups like Port Waikato BeachCare for the work they do.**



## Positioning Waikato district as a centre for the freight industry

**Waikato District Council is positioning our district as a centre for the freight and logistics industry sector.**

Waikato District Council General Manager Strategy and Support, Tony Whittaker, says two important developments – the Waikato Expressway due for completion in 2019 and the Waikato Freight Hub being built by Ports of Auckland at Horotiu - will boost Waikato freight efficiency and cement the district as a key location for the wider industry.

“We are promoting the district to the freight and logistics industry as the place to be, because of our strategic

position, the exporting industries that are located here, our transport infrastructure, and easy access to employment markets,” he says.

More than 50 per cent of New Zealand’s freight moves between Waikato, Auckland and the Bay of Plenty each year, and it is predicted to grow by 58 per cent in tonnes and 48 per cent in tonne-kilometres by 2042.

When completed, the Waikato Freight Hub is expected to generate about 300 jobs directly and facilitate many thousands more jobs by acting as an economic catalyst.



# It's all go at Waikato libraries

It has been a busy start to the year for Waikato District Council staff throughout the district.

Libraries at Tuakau, Meremere, Huntly, Te Kauwhata and Raglan celebrated Love Your Library Week from 8 to 14 February.

During the week there was a range of events including pyjama parties, book-folding sessions and an inter-library competition.

As part of the week, libraries wiped overdue fines in exchange for cans of food which were donated to local food banks. About 300 cans of food were donated, resulting in \$1651 of library fines being wiped.



About 300 cans of food were donated during Love Your Library Week.

"It was great to see so many people come along and get involved," says Customer Delivery Manager, Angela Parquist.

"We regularly hold interesting events and activities so we encourage people to keep visiting their local libraries and to keep an eye on our website for library news."

Council's popular Dogs in Libraries programme is also spreading its paws. The programme, where children practise their reading skills by reading aloud to a dog in a relaxed, friendly environment, is now being offered at all Waikato District libraries.

## Dogs in Libraries sessions are scheduled as follows:

**Ngaruawahia – Every Thursday, 3.30pm to 4.30pm**

**Raglan – Every second Monday 3.15pm to 4.15pm**

**Tuakau – Every Tuesday, 3.15pm to 4.15pm**

**Huntly/Meremere/Te Kauwhata – Wednesdays 3.30pm to 4.30pm (alternating between the sites, please phone your library for more details).**

Research shows that sitting down and reading to a friendly dog has been found to help a child's fear of being judged and over time, their reading ability and self-confidence improves.

The libraries section of the Waikato District Council website has also received an extensive revamp.

Information about Waikato District Libraries' clubs and classes, collections and library news can now be found on our website.

Looking for your next great read but not sure where to start? You can complete our new online 'Choose my next book' form and we will send you a personalised list of recommended reads.

Or if we don't stock the book you are looking for, you can now complete our online 'Request a new item' form and we will do our best to get it for you.

Go to [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/libraries](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/libraries) to check it out for yourself.



The popular Dogs in Libraries programme is now being offered at all Waikato District libraries.

# Preserving our archaeological heritage

A major Archaeological Heritage project will ensure that nearly 1,400 recorded archaeological sites, and about 150 previously unrecorded sites in the Waikato district, will be mapped and afforded some protection through the Waikato District Plan in the future.

Lead consultant on the District Plan Review project, Dr Alexy Simmons of Simmons & Associates Ltd, says, “Less than one per cent of the sites recorded by the NZ Archaeological Association are identified or scheduled in the current Waikato or Franklin District operative plans. This lack of knowledge has, unfortunately, resulted in damage to a number of sites over the years.”

All archaeological sites in New Zealand are protected under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, regardless of whether they are recorded or not, and site damage can result in prosecution or project delays, says Dr Simmons.

By creating a robust archaeological ‘alert layer’ in the geographic information system (GIS) that underpins the proposed new District Plan, the Archaeological Heritage Project will alleviate many of the problems that have occurred in the district with development-related destruction of recorded archaeological sites, prosecutions and construction delays. It will also help provide guidance for future development in urban growth areas in the district, she says.

The sites being mapped for the proposed new District Plan include pre-1900 Maaori cultivation sites along the banks of the Waikato River and archaeologically sensitive zones in eight town centres.

There are 10 sites that are currently scheduled for full protection under the operative District Plans and these include the Maaori Gardens at Horotiu, the World War II tank trap on Old Mountain Rd, Raglan, the former flour mill store on Old Taupiri Rd, Ngaruawahia, Puke I Ahua Pa, Ngaruawahia, the Maraetai Mission Station and burial site at Port Waikato, pioneer gun turrets in Ngaruawahia and Mercer, and redoubts in Tuakau and Pokeno.



*Sites being mapped for the proposed new District Plan include pre-1900 Maaori cultivation sites along the banks of the Waikato River.*



*A historic image of the flour mill that once stood entire on the banks of the Waikato River.*

## Service Delivery

# Council prepares community for water meters

Waikato District Council's public awareness programme ahead of the roll-out of water meters in Huntly, Raglan and Ngaruawahia has stepped up a notch over the past two months.

Properties connected to Council's water supply in those towns will switch to the water meter charging system on 1 July 2017.

For many years the property owners in urban areas of Raglan, Ngaruawahia and Huntly have been paying a flat yearly rate for their water supply. Under the water meter system, the bill is made up of two components – a fixed charge and a consumption rate.

All affected property owners have received a trial reading letter which was designed to help them understand how the user-pays system works.

The letter also included tips on how to save water in their everyday lives because under the water meter system the less water you use the lower your water bill will be.

Council's waters billing team have also hosted information days at Council offices, libraries and community events.

A second trial reading will be sent out to property owners in May, which should provide a reading of three months of water consumed.

The May sample reading will be in the form of how a water meter invoice will look, but will not need to be paid. A further set of information days are also planned for May.

General Manager Service Delivery, Tim Harty, believes the trial readings are a useful tool for the community to prepare for the new system when it goes live on 1 July and encourages property owners to go along to the information sessions.



Council's waters billing team has held Meet Your Meter information days during the past couple of months.

"The trial readings help people get a gauge on how much water they use. Under the water meter system the less water you use, the less you pay," says Mr Harty.

"So if they find their water use is high with the trial readings, it gives property owners time to put some of the water saving tips we provide into practice."

It is illegal for councils to profit from providing water so the charges for water by meter covers the treatment, distribution and management of water supply to ensure that when water reaches residents it is free from harmful organisms and meets water supply standards.

Property owners in Huntly, Raglan and Ngaruawahia can expect to get their first official bill under the water meter system from September 2017.

More information can be found at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/watermeters](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/watermeters)

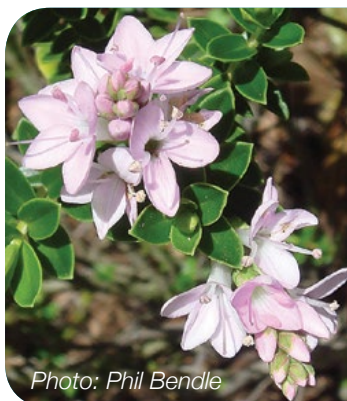


Photo: Phil Bendle

## Plan your plantings

The best time to get plants in the ground is in autumn because the plant has six to nine months to establish itself before the hot weather sets in. Even young drought tolerant plants need looking after, with a drink once every fortnight during the first summer. If you plant in spring they will need water once or twice a week. Established drought tolerant plants do need some care too, although they should be capable of surviving long periods without water, once they are mature with fully developed root systems. Hebe topiaria, pictured, is an example of one of these types of plants, and is named for its compact ball-shaped habit of growth. It can be clipped and used as low hedging. White flowers appear in summer. Check out [smartwater.org.nz](http://smartwater.org.nz) for a drought resistant plant guide to help you choose the right plants.

# Check out our new halls web page

If you're planning on holding a community event or a special celebration, it might be worth having a look at the Waikato District Council's website.

Whether it be for a wedding, fundraising event or community education class, there are a number of halls throughout the Waikato district that can be used. And it is now easier than before to find out all about your local hall.

Council's website has been upgraded to feature an extensive list of 39 halls available to use in the district.

The list includes details about the size of the hall, what facilities are available, contact details for hall committees, capacity and what they are generally used for.

There are also photos of the halls to give you an idea of what they look like if you have not used one before.

It's important that these halls are used by the various local populations they serve – a well-used hall is a strong indicator of a strong and vibrant community.



*Tuakau Memorial Hall is managed by Waikato District Council and is featured on a new-look community halls web page.*

The halls are generally managed by local committees however a few including Raglan Town Hall, Ngaruawahia War Memorial Hall, Tuakau Memorial Hall, and Huntly Civic Centre, are managed by Waikato District Council.

So take a look at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/community-halls](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/community-halls) to find out what's available near you.

## Reporting a crash can make a difference

Autumn is a time of year when driving conditions can vary and as the cooler, wetter weather sets in, it becomes even more crucial to take care out there on the roads. But if there is a crash on our roads, Waikato District Council's website has a tool which the public can use to play a part in ensuring that the roads and roadside conditions are maintained at a high level.

Council's crash reporting form can be used to inform our staff of minor, non-injury crashes that may have resulted in damage to roads or roadsides to the extent where an urgent repair would be needed to ensure other road users' safety isn't compromised.

Completed forms can also help to identify any issues on Council's roading network that might need looking at. For example if there were a number of crashes in one area or on one piece of road, then Council may need to look at the road conditions at that site.

New Zealand Police inform Council of more significant crashes around the time they occur and staff assess any road damage as part of that process, as required.

If a member of the public comes across a crash that hasn't resulted in an injury, the details needed on the form include: a description of where and when the accident occurred; a description of what happened; road and weather conditions; objects that were struck (for example fence posts, road signs or other vehicles) and a diagram of the incident.

Waikato District Council road safety co-ordinator Megan Jolly says it is important that Council knows where crashes are occurring on its road network.

"Local residents' knowledge of non-injury crashes along with police reports of serious injury crashes gives us a clearer picture of where and when repairs need to be carried out. In some instances the details provided by the public may also highlight factors that require additional investigation by Council staff," she says.

The crash reporting form can be found at [www.waikato.govt.nz/services-facilities/roads-travel-and-parking/roads-and-transport/road-safety](http://www.waikato.govt.nz/services-facilities/roads-travel-and-parking/roads-and-transport/road-safety)

You can print it out and either put it in your car's glove box or on your fridge at home.

# Just Briefly



## Did you know?

If you're planning to hold an event on a Waikato District Council reserve you'll need to fill out a reserve event application form. The type of event, number of people expected, where you plan to hold it and the potential effect on the environment are a few of the things you'll need to include. Reserve event notifications must be received by Council two months prior to the event. The form is at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/reserves](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/reserves)



## Additional bus services for Raglan

There will be extra public bus services between Raglan and Hamilton from April. Waikato Regional Council has signed a new nine-year contract with Go Bus for the Raglan service following a competitive tender process. Under the new contract, the number of weekday trips between Raglan and Hamilton will increase from four to five a day, and the existing Saturday timetable will be extended to Sundays and public holidays (excluding Christmas Day).



## Got a question about Council business?



/WaikatoDistrictCouncil



twitter.com/WaikatoDistrict



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



Robert Bremner of Ngaruawahia and his dog Monty are making the most of the new dog agility park at Horotiu.

## New dog agility park

Te Kowhai's old playground equipment has been put to good use with Waikato District Council using it to create a dog agility park at Horotiu.

The new dog agility exercise area was installed in February at the dog park on the corner of Horotiu Road and Great South Road on AFFCO land, and it's already proving to be a big hit with locals.

Waikato District Council staff came up with the bright idea when they were removing the old equipment at the Te Kowhai playground, as part of its playground replacement programme.

Animal Control Team Leader Megan May says staff were keen to make use of the old equipment. "The dog agility exercise area is a wonderful addition to the district and will give dog owners another great area to exercise their dogs. We will look at creating other dog agility parks in our district as other playgrounds are removed."



## Dates for the next Link

Our next edition of Link will be distributed from 5 June – 10 June. If you don't receive your Link during this period please contact [communications@waidc.govt.nz](mailto:communications@waidc.govt.nz) with your address details by 16 June so we can look into the non-delivery. Please note: If you have 'No Junk Mail' on your mailbox we can't deliver the newsletter.

### Postal Address

Waikato District Council  
Private Bag 544  
Ngaruawahia

### Huntly Office

142 Main Street  
Huntly

### Ngaruawahia Office

15 Galileo Street  
Ngaruawahia

### Raglan Office

7 Bow Street  
Raglan

### Te Kauwhata Office

1 Main Road  
Te Kauwhata

### Tuakau Office

2 Dominion Road  
Tuakau