

October 2018

LINK



WAIKATO
DISTRICT
NEWS



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Snapshot of 2017/18
Check out our Annual Report Summary included with this issue of LINK!

Nearly 40 little libraries are now installed across the Waikato district, in communities such as Tamahere (above) and Whatawhata (below).

Little libraries

Visit the 'little libraries' installed in our district and win a book voucher

Nearly 40 'little libraries' are now installed across our district to bring books and a focus for social interchange to small communities in our far-flung rural areas.

Holding 20-30 books that can be borrowed and exchanged, each little library has been installed and will be kept stocked by local residents to enhance a local gathering place and boost residents' enjoyment of their towns and villages.

We're running a competition for two \$50 book vouchers to help you get to know where your little libraries are installed and get started exchanging books. All you have to do is take a selfie with one of our little libraries, tag a friend and share it on our new Waikato Placemaking FB group 'Creative Spaces Waikato' and you'll go into a draw for one of our two book vouchers. (You have to live in the district to win.)

Find out where the closest little library is to you by checking our Placemaking website at www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/placemaking.

The 'little libraries' project is part of a publicly-acclaimed Council 'Placemaking programme' designed to help communities reclaim their public spaces with seating, planting, art installations



Cr Noel Smith, far right, with Whatawhata School Principal Matt Stockton and students Curtis Fox and Lachie Collins with the Whatawhata Little Library.

and other projects and activities that bring people together.

The very first little library – now installed in Pokeno's main street – was built by the Council's Chief Operating Officer, Tony Whittaker, in his home workshop two years ago and donated to the Pokeno Community Committee. The Committee augmented it with attractive seating and historic photos in a sheltered area, and it's become a popular stopping place for local residents.

Next the Huntly Friendship House and MENZshed collaborated to build and install six little libraries dotted around Huntly last year. Then Spring Hill Corrections Facility at Hampton Downs took up the idea to allow prisoners the opportunity to contribute back to their community. Prisoners built and decorated 30 'little libraries' for our small rural communities to enjoy.

Communities who have now installed and stocked their little libraries include Aka Aka, Kariotahi, Otatau, Port Waikato, Glen Murray, Te Akau, Waingaro, Glen Massey, Pukekawa, Onewhero, Waerenga, Hukanui, Mangatawhiri, Mangatangi, Maramarua, Rangiriri, Te Kauwhata, Glen Afton, Pukemiro, Te Kowhai, Whatawhata, Puketaha, Tauwhare, Eureka, Matangi, Tamahere, Te Uku and Waitetuna.

Tony Whittaker says "we are a district of small communities, and this has turned into a popular idea as a way of providing a local destination, especially with book lovers who do not have a local public library."

The project was recognised with a 'highly commended' in the 'Best Creative Place' category at the Local Government NZ Excellence Awards in 2017.

The total cost of the project has been about \$4,500 – less than \$125 per little library – thanks to the many people happy to donate their time and their books to turn the project into a real investment for the district's rural communities.

Information about Placemaking, the philosophy behind it and the advantages it brings to the community can be found at www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/placemaking, or by contacting the Waikato District Council Community Placemaking team: Betty Connolly (Betty.Connolly@waidc.govt.nz) and Lianne Van Den Bemd (Lianne.VanDenBemd@waidc.govt.nz).

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Thanks to everyone who made a submission on the Proposed Waikato District Plan. Over the three month period that submissions were open, staff received over 500 enquiries and held 17 drop-in sessions around the district to answer questions about the Proposed Plan. We'll now be

looking through all the submissions before a request for further submissions is issued.

We look forward to a determination by the Local Government Commission by April next year on our final proposal for representation arrangements for the next local body elections. We listened to community objections to boundary changes that would have relieved population pressures on our largest and most northern Ward Awaroa ki Tuakau. However, as this means we will not meet Local Government Commission guidelines for fair representation of voters on a population basis this triggers an automatic appeal to our proposal that requires a final decision by the Commission.

For those of you interested in the Hamilton to Auckland start up passenger rail service that the Government is setting up, you will be interested to hear that our Council is supporting train stations in Tuakau and Huntly. We have committed cost share funding for this which will enable Council share the cost with the NZ Transport Agency.

Our staff has undertaken a review of the Council organisation this year, which we have called Gearing for Growth and Greatness. This has been a full organisational review aimed to gear our organisation up for the significant growth our district is facing. It is also about improving our internal process and capability to deliver on existing community needs. The review has led to the splitting up of our corporate services group into two groups; one to focus on internal operations and the other on growth and strategic planning.

Tony Whittaker, formerly our Strategy and Support General Manager, has now taken on a broader role as Chief Operating Officer. This review has led to some additional roles being added to our organisation to try and keep pace with the growth of the district.

The new roles are being funded in the next two years from existing budgets and efficiency savings. We hope that over time you, our community and our customers, will start to see a positive difference from this.

Allan Sanson

Mayor, Waikato District Council

TOP 5 PICNIC SPOTS

The top 5 picnic spots around the Waikato district as voted by our Facebook followers...

1 The Point, Ngaruawahia



2 Les Batkin Reserve, Tuakau



3 Lake Kainui, Horsham Downs

"Exploring and discovering while walking around the lake, finished off with feeding the birds and morning tea" – Kovo MacDonald



4 Overlooking Ngarunui Beach, Raglan



5 Woodlands Estate, Gordonton



Your Summary Annual Report is enclosed

The past year has been marked by a series of major initiatives to prepare for a long period of growth and change in our District as we plan to accommodate population growth of more than 12,000 over the next 10 years.

Managing growth through 'liveable, thriving and connected communities' will continue to occupy us for the foreseeable future as we work with the Government and other agencies to maximise opportunities for integrated growth management along the Hamilton to Auckland corridor.

Our Summary Annual Report (enclosed with this issue of Link) outlines what we have been doing in the community over the past year together with a summary of our financial performance. Among the highlights of the past year we have:

- Agreed a new vision of building 'liveable, thriving and connected communities' with 10-year budgets to support it,
- Prepared a Proposed District Plan with a new village zone and more opportunities for papakainga (multiple dwelling) development,
- Found a way to save about \$28.3 million or more on how we manage our waters services in the next 10 years,
- Committed more than \$800,000 in grants to 174 organisations and charities throughout the district,
- Helped secure fast internet for a total of 17 district towns and mobile blackspot areas,



Your Annual Report Summary is included with this copy of Link.

- Diverted 123 tonnes of food waste from landfill to compost by supporting a kerbside food waste collection in Raglan,
- Upgraded our streetlights with LED to improve lighting levels and save \$70,000 a year,
- Expanded our online services and attracted a 9.4% rise in online (website) visits and a 10.7% rise in users (to nearly 193,000 unique visitors).

Our Summary Annual Report is designed to provide you with a shorter and more user-friendly version of the Annual Report of our activities and financial performance.

The Annual Report and the Summary (both available on our website) compare what we did with what we planned to do when we developed our Long Term Plan (LTP). This year we also report on how we performed on the changes we made to the LTP – in consultation with you – through our Annual Plan for the 2017/18 year.

Thanks for having your say

Thanks to everyone who made a submission on the Proposed Waikato District Plan.



Council held 17 drop-in sessions around the district to answer questions about the Proposed Plan, including this one in Tuakau.

The period for submissions closed on 9 October. Staff received over 500 enquiries and held 17 drop-in sessions around the district to answer questions about the Proposed Plan. Council is now in the middle of summarising the submissions. This summary will then be published and a request for further submissions will be made. Following this, the hearings process will begin.

What is a further submission?

After submissions close, Council will prepare a summary of submissions and make this available to the public.

It is important to consider other people's submissions: they may seek changes to the Proposed Plan that will affect you in a way not mentioned in the original document. When you read the summary of submissions, you may see some that you agree or disagree with.

The following people are able to make further submissions:

- Anyone representing a relevant aspect of the public interest
- Anyone that has an interest in the Proposed Plan greater than the interest that the general public has
- Waikato District Council itself

A further submission is a written statement that allows you to support or oppose other people's submissions. It also gives you the opportunity to consider how a submission may impact you, and to have your views considered by the hearings panel along with the original submission.

THIS IS WHO I AM

This is who I am is a feature that tells us a little bit more about our elected members.

Shelley Lynch

Name: Shelley Lynch **Ward:** Huntly

Family: I am happily married to my Brian (well, mostly), we have three adult children who think they know so much more than me, and so far 1 ½ grandchildren and looking forward to more.

What is your favourite thing about the Waikato district?

My favourite thing in the whole of the Waikato is Huntly, the town I live in. I've lived here most of my life and never intend to leave.

What is the biggest issue facing the Waikato district in 2018?

Our biggest concern is growth, this has hit us as a Council with a speed and volume that we were not fully prepared for. Huge pressure has been put on staff to satisfy customers wants and needs but to also show caution in not getting too big too soon.

Use three words to describe the Waikato district?

Don't be daft, how can you describe the epicentre of the North Island in three words?

What do you think is Waikato's best kept secret?

Lake Puketirini Huntly, is a beautiful spot for walking, running and water sports.

Favourite holiday destination and why?

I think home is the best place to stay. I don't enjoy packing, queuing, strange beds, funny money. I am lucky enough to have a great view, a good fridge and my Brian, who is always prepared to have the jug on the boil and an argument ready when I need one. What more could I want from a holiday?

Worst job you've ever had and why?

De-heading prawns in a prawn factory in Aussie. The smell could be pretty overwhelming after working a 10 hour shift.

What annoys you the most?

Negative people really frustrate me. And littering, who does that?

Your favourite meal? Anything I don't have to cook. My children have all somehow turned out to be great imaginative cooks which is strange as all I ever remember serving up to them as kids was sausages and mince.

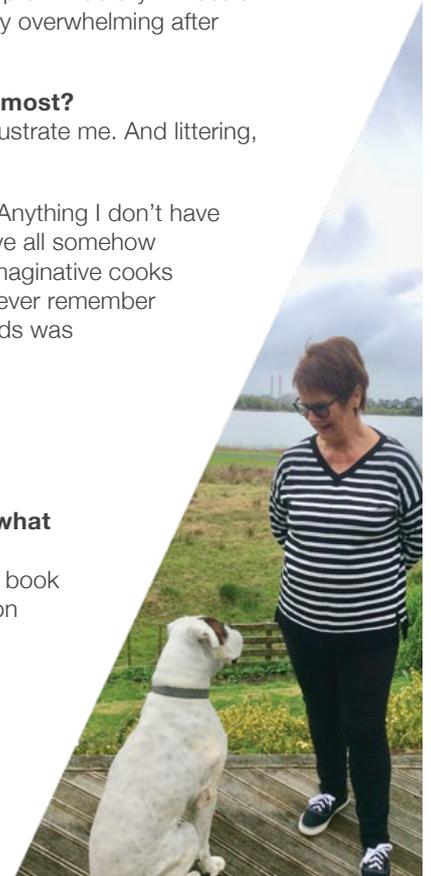
What's your favourite sports team?

Go The Mighty Warriors!

You've got a day off, what do you do?

Crack a stubbie, open a book and enjoy the activities on Lake Puketirini.

Councillor Shelley Lynch's favourite thing about the Waikato is Huntly, where she lives.



THIS IS WHAT I DO

Jordan Godfrey

This is what I do is a feature that tells us a little more about Waikato District Council staff and what they do.

Name: Jordan Godfrey

Role: Contact Centre Team Leader

Family: My partner Michael

How long have you worked for Waikato District Council? 3 years.



What does your role involve?

I manage a team of seven awesome Customer Delivery Officers handling customer enquiries via phone, email and electronic (website) requests. We also handle additional processing for other Council teams whenever our support is required.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your role?

Seeing people in my team and the wider organisation grow and develop. It's really great to see people who start in the Customer Delivery Team move into roles throughout Council and take with them the customer experience and perspective, that we really champion and value within our team.

What's the most challenging aspect of your role?

Achieving positive resolutions for our customers while aligning that with Council policies and procedures, as we are often restricted in terms of what we can offer and how much we can assist. However it's a very rewarding feeling when you can still

BRINGING THE WORLD TO THE WAIKATO

Abbas Safa

Bringing the world to the Waikato is a feature that tells us a little more about Waikato District Council staff who are from around the world.

Name: Abbas Safa

Job title: Operations Engineer

Country of origin and how long you lived there:

I was born in Iran and left the country when I was about 20 years old.



Abbas Safa loves the peaceful residents and majestic Waikato River, among other things.

How long have you been in NZ?

I arrived in Christchurch in 1987 to continue my studies at Canterbury University. I have been in New Zealand as a permanent resident since 1990. I have been away for work related reasons (working for United Nations and Tehran Water Company) in the last few years. For now, I live in Hamilton.

What do you love about the Waikato district?

Open, green and clean spaces, wonderful and peaceful residents, early morning fog, crisp air, clouds and strangely - rain. The majestic Waikato River and all of those walking and cycling paths, the Hakarimata Range and of course my work at Waikato District Council!

What is the biggest difference between life in New Zealand and life in your country of origin?

Life in Iran is full of contradictions! Extremes are next to each other, in a single day the temperature difference of close to 50 degree Celsius (e.g. +40 degree at south and -10 degree at North-West), snow and ski in high mountains of north-west while beach crawling and ocean swimming at south-east, tramping in semi rainforest and tall mountains and camping in star covered

achieve an outcome for a customer, particularly one who may have already been unhappy, and turn their experience around.

Tell us something about your role that most people won't know about:

People often imagine contact centres to be large teams; however our team is quite small – until recently only six staff (now seven). This team is responsible for all calls made to Council, as well as email requests which is on average over 10,000 interactions a month.

Why is Waikato District Council a great place to work?

The people; my team is one of the main reasons I enjoy coming to work every day. The incredibly supportive and caring people that I work with make the environment a really enjoyable one. Also the people in the sense of our customers, when I support my team on the phones a lot of the time the people I speak with are friendly and understanding, and it creates a sense of positivity going into the rest of the day.

and untouched deserts, noisy, crowded and polluted cities with crazy traffic alongside a nomadic ancient, peaceful unique culture. Cheap energy (gas is piped to every house where ever it might be), economic development of the country being held back due to sanctions and mismanagement. Life for some is full of glitters and in contradiction, for some there is misery.

Everything is in one place; good and bad, beauty and ugliness, hot and cold, you name it!

What do you miss most about home? I miss my old friends, family, mountains and snow which is next to home. I miss also pomegranates, figs, many varieties of sweet melons and berries. As such, I do not miss much!

What's one thing about life in your home country that most New Zealanders would not know about?

It is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic country with distinct differences with its many neighbours. Life is not what is being portrayed by media. The cultural roots are stronger than the present and recent past political upheaval the country is facing.

You need to convince someone to go on holiday to your country of origin. What do you say?

By all means go. There are many friendly people who value guests and friendship enormously. They welcome people irrespective of their origin. Visit old cities and sites. Avoid smoke-choked, heavily commercialised centres. Due to the exchange rate variation, and the present political situation, it will cost almost next to nothing. Your dollars will go miles with smiles! You will experience extremes and everything in between in one go.

What's the weirdest customer complaint you've dealt with?

Not long after starting at Council (so I can't remember all the details!), a customer I spoke with believed a UFO had landed in Raglan – apparently it visits quite frequently.

What the best compliment you've received from a customer?

When I was working in the Contact Centre as a Customer Delivery Officer, a customer said the service was exceptional and the best that she'd received particularly from her experience with councils. A lot of the time customers don't have a choice whether they want to contact us or not, and it's a great feeling to leave a lasting impression that means a customer looks forward to the next time they need to talk to us.

It's the people that makes working at Waikato District Council great.

Blueprint workshops get great community engagement

After a successful first round of Blueprint workshops in August, Waikato District Council has visited more towns in the district to hear further from its community.

Waikato District Council General Manager Community Growth Clive Morgan says the first round of workshops in the north of the Waikato district had nearly 200 in attendance. "It was fantastic to see so many from our communities come to a workshop to tell us what they see their towns being like in the future."

The second phase of workshops in early October saw Council visit Tamahere and Matangi, Raglan, Te Kowhai and Whatawhata and Ngaruawahia, Horotiu and Taupiri.

"We needed to hear from a large cross section of the community so we can ensure our community's aspirations are included in Council's key strategic and planning documents going forward," Mr Morgan says.



Nearly 200 people turned out to the first round of Blueprint workshops in August.

An iwi workshop will be held in late October, followed by a technical staff workshop in early November to combine all local area blueprints into a holistic vision for the entire Waikato district.

Draft outcomes will then be distributed over the summer period where we'll be needing your feedback, before a report goes back to Council in February with the final Blueprint for the Waikato district.

For more information on Blueprints, visit www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/blueprints.

Time for toilet talk

As we head in to summer, our water savings advisor Chris Parker shares his first of a series of tips on how you can save water... and money.

Tip 1 The toilet leak test.

Is your toilet constantly filling up? Can you see water dribbling into the toilet bowl?

A leaky toilet can waste up to 700 litres a day so don't delay, do the toilet leak test today.

If you can't see water dribbling down the bowl, here's Chris' step-by-step guide to make 100% sure there are no leaks in the cistern.



1. Take a piece of toilet paper and place it at the back of the toilet above the water line.
2. If the paper starts to get wet – you have a leak.
3. Contact a registered plumber to fix the leak.

Placing a piece of toilet paper at the back of the toilet can help you detect a leak.



Pro tips!

Chris Parker can help you save water in the home

Or as an alternative to the leak test, you can do the dye test.

Put several drops of food colouring into the cistern and wait 20 minutes. If the water in your toilet bowl becomes coloured, you have a leak and will need to get it fixed.

If you have an old single flush toilet, it may be time for an upgrade. Look for models with stickers that have 4 or more blue water-efficiency stars.

For more tips and information on saving water visit www.smartwater.org.nz

Don't let \$\$\$ go down the drain!

If your water usage is higher than it should be, let us help! Use our FREE water savings service! Chris will check your household appliances and show you how to use and spend less on water.

To book a home visit call **0800 492 452** or send an email to waters@waicd.govt.nz

Talk to us about speed limits in your area

The social cost of car crashes in the Waikato district is estimated to be between \$73 and \$77 million every year.

There are, on average, eight deaths and 219 injuries (59 of them serious) caused by accidents on our roads every year.

Those stats alone highlight the need for a safer road system in our district.

Safer Journeys is the Government's strategy to guide improvements in road safety over the period 2010 to 2020. The strategy's vision is a safe road system increasingly free of death and serious injury and introduces the Safe System approach to New Zealand.

Part of that Safe System is managing speed on our roads and to address inappropriate speed limits.

Our community overwhelmingly wants safer speeds around where we live, and safer speeds where our children go to school.

To this end the public is invited to attend community drop-in sessions to discuss Council's 2018 Amendments to the Waikato District Council Speed Limits Bylaw 2011.

We started a three-year programme to address speed limits through this bylaw last year and Year 2 sees us focusing on high risk rural roads and roads affected by rapid growth in the district.

Early engagement with community boards and committees throughout the district led to the following places being identified as areas of focus for this year's amendments – Ngaruawahia, Tamahere, Tuakau, Horsham Downs and Te Kowhai.

But other roads in the rest of the district have also been earmarked for a proposed speed limit reduction.

Amendments to the bylaw are out for consultation now. We'd love to hear your views and staff will be available to answer any questions about the proposed speed limit changes at the upcoming drop-in sessions which will be held at:

Tamahere Community Hall, Wednesday 31 October, 1.45pm – 6.30pm, **Ngaruawahia Memorial Hall**, Thursday 1 November, 3.30pm-7.30pm, **Tuakau Memorial Hall** (Supper rooms) – Monday 5 November, 3.30pm – 7.30pm

You can find out if a road near you has been earmarked for a safer speed limit this year by going to www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/speeditlimits

There's an interactive map here where you can see a proposed new speed limit and the reason why it's been considered. This webpage is also the place to submit your feedback.

Feedback forms are also available at all our Council offices and libraries. Submissions close on 9 November 2018. Should you wish to present your submission to Council, a hearing has been scheduled for 12 December 2018.

For more information please call **0800 492 452**.



We're looking at speed limits on the district's roads.

Be fatigue-free on our roads



People often think that driver fatigue means falling asleep at the wheel. Falling asleep, however, is an extreme form of fatigue.

Fatigue is tiredness, weariness or exhaustion. You can be fatigued enough for it to impair your driving long before you actually 'nod off' at the wheel.

When you are fatigued:

- your reactions are much slower;
- your ability to concentrate is reduced;
- it takes longer to interpret and understand a traffic situation.

The most common effects of fatigue on driving are:

- difficulty keeping your car within a lane;
- drifting off the road;
- more frequent and unnecessary changes in speed;
- not reacting in time to avoid a dangerous situation.

These effects lead to a high number of single vehicle crashes involving a car striking a tree or other objects off the road, and severe head-on collisions.

Driver fatigue is difficult to identify or recognise as contributing to a crash. This means driver fatigue is under-recorded and contributes to more crashes than we realise.

While all drivers are likely to experience fatigue to some degree, it is more likely for young people, shift workers and people with sleep disorders.

There are many ways to improve your alertness on the road and minimise driving while fatigued.

They include:

- getting plenty of sleep before a long journey and driving during times of the day you're normally awake;
- scheduling a break at least once every two hours;
- eat sensibly throughout a long journey and stay hydrated;
- have fresh air blowing into your vehicle;
- share driving duties where possible;
- avoid taking medication that makes you drowsy.

Fatigue is taken very seriously in the commercial vehicle industry where drivers are required by law to fill out log books about the hours they drive and breaks they take.

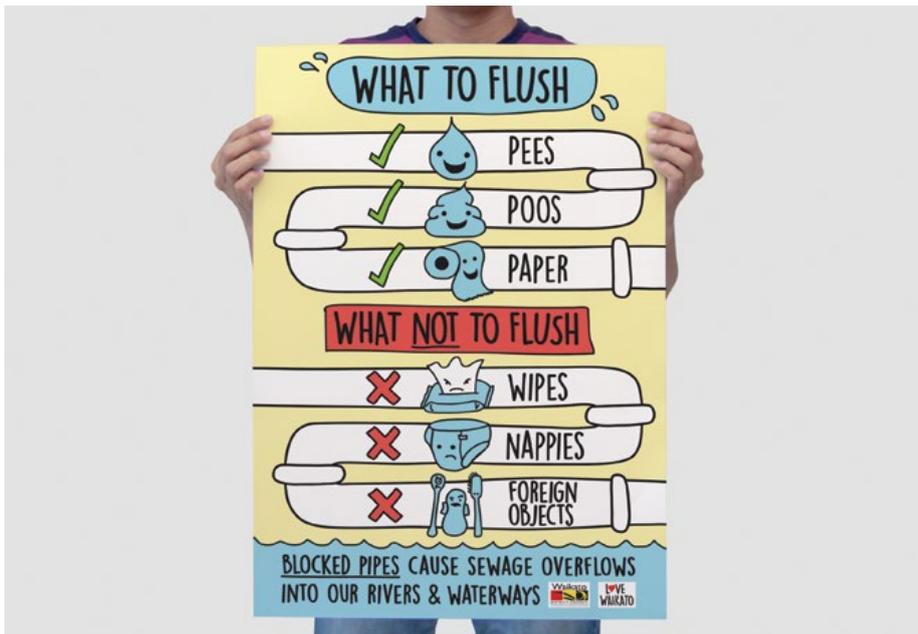
That degree of seriousness needs to be taken by everyone to keep people safer on our roads.

Spreading the word

If you're a frequent flyer at any of our public toilets, keep an eye out for these neat posters.

We're spreading the important message of only pee, poo and paper down the loo. Anything else and you run the risk of blocking our wastewater network and nobody wants to deal with that!

These posters will be popping up in all of our public toilets (we have more than 50 toilet blocks around the district) to remind everyone about what is safe and what isn't safe to put down the loo. #3Ps #peepoo&paper



These neat posters will soon be up in all of our public toilets.

Freedom camping issues addressed

Pressure on toilet facilities at Onewhero and Te Kauwhata Domains will be relieved following our successful funding application to the Government of \$91,680 to address freedom camping issues.



We're addressing freedom camping issues at Onewhero and Te Kauwhata Domains.

The money will primarily be used to replace the wastewater treatment and disposal system at Onewhero.

Other plans there include additional rubbish bins, an outdoor sink, a washroom, additional signage and replacement of damaged hardware.

Money will also be used to maintain facilities at Te Kauwhata.

Staff patrols will also be introduced this summer when both sites will be more regularly inspected and staff members will educate freedom campers on appropriate behaviour.

Security of drinking water supply boosted in the Waikato District

The completion of a \$6.6 million project has improved the security of the Waikato district's drinking water supply.

Four new reservoirs at Ngaruawahia, Hopuhopu, Huntly and Pokeno mean that Waikato District Council's drinking water storage capacity has increased by 9.75 million litres.

A range of contractors and collaboration with key stakeholders were instrumental in the successful completion of the work, within budget.

The reservoirs build resilience in the water supply network. As well as an increase in storage volume, these reservoirs also provide pressure improvements to parts of the network and enable further residential development in the district.



Four new reservoirs at Ngaruawahia, Hopuhopu, Huntly and Pokeno mean that Waikato District Council's drinking water storage capacity has increased by 9.75 million litres.

GOT A QUESTION ABOUT COUNCIL BUSINESS?

/WaikatoDistrictCouncil

twitter.com/WaikatoDistrict

waikatodistrict.govt.nz

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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

Dates for the next Link:

Our next edition of Link will be distributed from 17 - 22 December. If you don't receive your Link during this period please contact news@waidc.govt.nz with your address details so we can look into the non-delivery. Please note that if you have a 'No Junk Mail' sign on your mailbox we can't deliver the newsletter.