

April 2018

LINK



WAIKATO DISTRICT NEWS

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Poppies are blossoming on trees around the district and along the Te Awa Cycleway and Perry Bridge ahead of ANZAC Day.

ANZAC Poppy Tree project blossoms again in Waikato

Community groups across the Waikato district have picked up their knitting needles again this year to decorate trees with thousands of red woolen poppies in a district-wide 'yarn bombing' street art project to commemorate ANZAC Day.

In a special salute to the centennial year marking the last year of WW1, Te Awa Cycleway and the Perry Bridge is also being decorated with 1,500 handcrafted poppies this week.

Groups in 21 towns and communities - Eureka, Glen Massey, Glen Murray, Huntly, Mangatangi, Mangatawhiri, Maramarua, Matangi, Naike, Ngaruawahia, Pokeno, Port Waikato, Raglan, Tamahere, Taupiri, Te Akau, Te Kauwhata, Te Kowhai, Tuakau, Waingaro, and Waitetuna – have taken up the challenge to drape one or more local trees with festoons of woolen poppies. Knitters from school age to retirement age joined forces with local Community Houses to create knitted or crocheted poppies to cover the trunk of at least one tree in each town and community centre for the month of April.

Waikato District Council again provided wool to help all groups to get started on their projects and worked in partnership with Ngaruawahia Community House to coordinate the efforts in communities throughout the district.

Mayor Sanson says, "This project seems to have caught our community's imagination. Our grandmothers knitted garments to help to keep our ANZAC troops warm, and so we're bringing history up to date by following the latest international trend to use wool to create community-friendly street art."

The idea to knit poppies originated from a small project started by two Australian women that ballooned into a massive carpet of 300,000 red knitted poppies created by 50,000 volunteers for the Chelsea Flower Show in the UK in May two years ago. That project spawned local Remembrance Day projects throughout the UK the same year to decorate churches, trees and graveyards.

Working with the Ngaruawahia Community House, the Waikato District Council's Placemaking Team set the ball rolling as an ANZAC commemoration project starting last year.

ANZAC services

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

The annual ANZAC Day Civic Service, attended by the Mayor, will be held in the Ngaruawahia War Memorial Hall, Galileo St, Ngaruawahia on Wednesday 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 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.

Information about other services being organised across the district are available on the Waikato District Council website www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz.

Check out times and details of dawn services and other remembrance services taking place in Gordonton, Huntly, Maramarua and Districts, Ngaruawahia, Raglan, Taupiri and Te Kauwhata.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



We have just completed consultation with you on our future vision and plan for the Waikato District, the Long Term Plan. A realisation for me, through this process, is that we simply cannot continue to deliver the services and infrastructure that our growing community needs with the amount of money we have been collecting through rates.

The cost of delivering local government has gone up, construction costs have soared, and we are one of the fastest growing districts in the country. Something has to change if we are to keep pace with that. If I can be blunt, we've been running the organisation on a shoe string for too long and it's starting to catch up with us.

As Mayor of Waikato district, I understand that rate increases for a lot of people in our district are going to make life more difficult. But I do believe that our rate payers and residents get, and will continue to get, value for money.

We've had feedback since this decision was announced from people who have said they would no longer be able to afford to live in the district and question what they actually get for their money.

In terms of living costs, Council rates are, on average, similar to the amount many households spend each year on power, and less than what you'd spend on car running costs.

But for your rates you get dozens of services; thousands of kilometres of roads, neighbourhood reserves and parks, community halls, libraries, dog parks and animal control services, sport parks, swimming pools, rubbish collection and recycling, many crucial regulatory functions that keep our businesses and communities safe, civil defence planning and response, not to mention support for numerous community groups and causes.

About half the increase in the general rates this year is going to roading and largely because we have added a new annual budget of \$1.1m for emergency repairs to cope with storm damage. It cost \$1m for temporary repairs after the storm damage of March/April last year and will cost a further \$2.58m for permanent repairs. We are likely to get more big storms of this nature in the future and we want to be prepared.

The biggest factor in targeted rates is the \$125 increase in the targeted rate for wastewater that was agreed with the community during our consultations on this subject last year. I'm happy to say that we expect future rate rises will be lower.

Increasing rates is hard for us as Elected Members – we know our communities will struggle and making the decision to increase rates is certainly not something we take lightly. It's not about the luxuries, it's about meeting your expectations and needs.

I believe that through our Long Term Plan we will deliver our new vision for the future, of building thriving, liveable and connected communities in the Waikato district. That is something we can all be proud of.

Allan Sanson

Mayor, Waikato District Council

TOP 5 COFFEE SPOTS

With autumn well underway, a stop off for a hot coffee might be in order. Check out the top coffee spots around the district as chosen by our Facebook followers.



1 The Village Café, Whatawhata

The Village Café in Whatawhata was one of the most popular suggestions as voted by our Facebook followers.

2 Raglan Roast, Rock-it or The Shack in Raglan

The Waikato district has so many top coffee spots, including Raglan Roast in Raglan.

3 Nikau Cave and Cafe

As well as awesome coffee, Nikau Cave and Cafe offer great food too.

4 Sugar Plum Kitchen, Tuakau

A favourite with those in the north of the Waikato district, Sugar Plum Kitchen offer yummy food to go with your hot drink.

5 Prof's at Woodlands

Enjoy a stroll around the gardens at Woodlands and stop off for a cuppa - what could be better?

Special mention must go to the Pancakes are Delicious trailer which parks up at the Tuakau Pony Club. A number of our Facebook followers recommended the coffee here and we're guessing the pancakes are good too!

New walking track in the district!



Lake Kainui is the latest outdoor destination for walkers in the district. A new 3km track around the beautiful lake located in Horsham Downs was installed in February this year. The lake is open between 6am and 7pm daily and is closed in May for duck hunting season. Dogs are allowed but must be on a lead.

Thank you for your submissions on our Long Term Plan

We're cataloguing all your submissions on our Long Term Plan 2018-28 in time for hearings and deliberations next month before the final plan is adopted by the Council on 27 June.

We were glad to see so many people interested in the future of our district when our Councillors and staff attended 15 information sessions throughout the district over the past month.

We are the third-fastest growing district in the country, so we are trying to find the right balance between spending on the infrastructure and services we all need while also keeping rates at an affordable level. At the same time we want to ensure that, as our district grows, we are creating liveable, thriving and connected communities – communities that we can really feel we belong to.

The first major item for consideration is: how we manage our waters services in the future for the good of our community. Options for your feedback ranged from the status quo to the Council's preferred option to save \$28.3m over the next 10 years by contracting Watercare Services Ltd through a Council-appointed Waters Governance Board.



The second major item for consideration is: should we reduce the fixed charge portion of the general rate (the Uniform Annual General Charge) to lessen the rates burden on lower value properties.

Your views on these consultation matters will now be carefully considered by the Council before we finalise our 10-year Plan in June.

THIS IS WHO I AM

Janet Gibb

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

Name: Janet Gibb

Ward: Ngaruawahia

Family: I'm married to dairy farmer Murray Gibb from Taupiri. I have two adult children, one dog and one cat, 380 jersey cows, 110 calves etc and our home is 105 years old this year. We live in the country but are very close to towns and easy access to beaches and cities within one to two hours drive.

What is your favourite thing about the Waikato district?

I love the makeup of the district with the variety of small towns and villages and country areas, as the people are down to earth, friendly and real. The Hakarimata range, Taupiri Maunga and Waikato River are special features that I enjoy seeing every day. It is so easy to take these amazing natural places for granted, so I always take a moment to really look at them and remind myself how lucky we are to live here.

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

Our growth – looks like the rest of New Zealand sees what we have to offer and they all want to come and live here. It means we as a Council have to find ways to fund the infrastructure – it is a challenge to get the balance between funding existing and new services and to keep rates affordable.

Use three words to describe the Waikato district?

River, Culture, People.

Favourite holiday destination and why?

Cooks Beach in the Coromandel – my extended family have gathered for holidays there since 1973.

Worst holiday you've ever been on and why?

Making the mistake to book a central city hotel with no opening windows – it felt very claustrophobic so we had to book ourselves out and try our luck elsewhere.

If you could go to one place in the world that you've never been to before, where would it be and why?

I'd like to see the Northern Lights in Norway in real life and not just on TV. I love natural sights more than man-made. I have been lucky to have already seen Iguacu Falls in Argentina and Niagara Falls from the American side. I have also seen many UNESCO World Heritage sites and keen to add more to my list however waterfalls are a favourite and this year I have been lucky enough to see Victoria Falls in Southern Africa.

Worst job you've ever had and why? My first job was as a bank teller for the Waikato Savings Bank and the worst job was manually folding bank statements and putting them into envelopes for posting – so glad for bank staff that this is now done by machine.

What annoys you the most and why? People who are pessimistic – I always look for the positives in every situation and in every person, so I find negative people hard to be around.

What is your favourite album of all time? Love Fleetwood Mac but many others from the 70s era which was in my teenage years.

Best film? I enjoy re-runs of films like Ghost, Sleepless in Seattle, Dirty Dancing – great to just chill out and be entertained.

Best thing on TV? I really enjoy Country Calendar...

What radio station do you listen to? National Station for the news and interesting interviews and Coast for the older music.

Worst thing on TV? Reality TV shows – they are so manipulated to get ratings.

Your favourite meal? Seafood – any kind.

If you could meet any celebrity, who would it be and why? This is a hard one – Nelson Mandela would have been top of my list but unfortunately this will never happen now.

What's your favourite sports team and why?

All Blacks – it's a good way to spend time with my husband who is a rugby fan – every game!

You've got a day off, so you...

Read, garden, see friends, catch up on my work as Vice President for Business and Professional Women NZ – advocating for equality and working toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Through this role I have had the opportunity recently to attend an international congress in Cairo. The venue was in Giza right by the Pyramids and the Sphinx. This country was a real eye opener and reaffirms how lucky we are to live in New Zealand. There were over 600 women from 70 countries in attendance and the resolutions presented and discussed were predominantly brought by the Kiwis – advocating for equality worldwide. In March I also attended the Commission on the Status of Women in the United Nations in New York and got to work alongside women of all countries for a better world. This voluntary work fits very well into the experiences I deal with in my role as Councillor – advocating on behalf of people who I represent locally.



The biggest issue facing the Waikato district in 2018 is our growth.

THIS IS WHAT I DO

Sue O'Gorman

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

Name: Sue O'Gorman

Role: General Manager
Customer Support

Family: Husband of 32 years Brendan and two girls Sian and Stacey, one lives in London and the other is travelling.

How long have you worked for Waikato District Council? 8 months.

What does your role involve? I look out for most of the staff who have a direct relationship with our customers and ratepayers i.e. our integrated customer service and library staff, the Resource Consents team, the Building Consents team, Environmental Health, Monitoring and Animal Control and also Civil Defence for the Waikato district. I am also the Exec rep on both the Onewhero-Tuakau Community Board and the Pokeno Community Committee.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your role?

Working with my teams, getting to know what makes them tick, why they get up in the morning and come to the Council offices and helping them get through the many serious issues they deal with on a very regular basis. Also working with our North Waikato communities, this is challenging but rewarding.

What's the most challenging aspect of your role?

Getting the balance right. We are charged, through many pieces of legislation, to do our jobs. On the other hand we want to be easy to work with, responsive and create great customer experiences and great communities. We actually don't want to be seen as the blocks and barriers and killers of people's dreams.

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

That I actually love to get constructive feedback on customer experiences – how can we improve and make things better if we don't know where we are going wrong? Wherever possible we will try and make things better.

Why is Waikato District Council a great place to work?

It is a huge and varied district with many different communities so there is always a challenge and heaps of variety. The people who work here are great, they are dedicated to their communities, most are residents and ratepayers of the district so they absolutely relate to all the people we interact with.

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

There are so many – probably illegal dumping and the variety of things that people think is OK to just dump in a reserve or on the side of the road – a dead pig, a couch, electrical appliances, etc. We are trying to get the message out there that this is not actually OK.

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

The compliments about our staff doing a fantastic job and people being really appreciative of our services. You know when you get one of these that they are really genuine because the customer has made an effort to let us know.



BRINGING THE WORLD TO THE WAIKATO

John Brown

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: John Brown

Job title: Senior Communications Advisor

Country of origin and how long you lived there: Zimbabwe – born there and left for the UK when I was 25.

How long have you been in NZ? 18 years

What do you love about the Waikato district?

We live in the Te Kauwhata area so enjoy the rural lifestyle and open spaces while being close to the amenities of an awesome little village like TK. There's a good bunch of people in the district too. It's an excellent home away from home.

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

Basically first world v third world. It takes a while to get used to the comparatively rigid structure of first world living.

While it has its obvious downsides, there's a lot to be said for the chaos of third world living – fewer restrictions and rules on what you can or can't do and it's a lot more spontaneous. And you can learn harsh lessons of the consequences of your own actions.

What do you miss most about home?

The people and the wildlife. I still find it very strange to go into a national park and go on a fantastic bush walk with spectacular scenery and not see, or come across, anything beyond a bird or two!

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

The people of Zimbabwe are the friendliest in Africa and by nature a peaceful bunch. The fact that recently tens of thousands of people took to the streets of the capital city Harare to celebrate the removal of ex-president Robert Mugabe and not one shop was looted, there was no violence and no arrests made is testament to that, considering what they've all been through for the past couple of decades.

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

Google search Mana Pools, Kapula Camp in Hwange National Park or Lake Kariba - the three best places on Earth in my opinion. Mana Pools is particularly special – a wildlife area with no fences in the Zambezi Valley where a lion or an elephant can stroll past your tent at night within touching distance – a massive adrenaline rush and, as long as you keep your tent closed, you're as safe as houses.



Family friends Cheryll and Bella Hayes, left, with John Brown, Emily Brown, Alex and Megan Brown on the banks of the Zambezi River.

Visit your local library these school holidays

It's school holiday time and if the young ones are itching to get out and about, why not pay a visit to your local library.

Our libraries are great places to visit. Not only can you find a good book or two, you can grab a DVD to watch or surf the internet.

During term time, our Dogs in Libraries programme runs at a number of our libraries around the district. If you're interested in this programme, make sure you mention it to your local librarian.

Our libraries can be found at the below locations:

Huntly library

142 Main St, Huntly

Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am - 5pm, Thursday 9am - 8pm. Saturday 9:30am - 12:30pm.

Meremere library

Te Puea Ave, Meremere

Opening hours: Monday and Friday 9am - midday, Wednesday 2pm - 5pm

Ngaruawahia library

4 Jesmond St, Ngaruawahia

Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am - 5pm, Wednesday 9am - 8pm and Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Raglan library

7 Bow St, Raglan

Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9am - 5pm, Wednesday 9am - 8pm and Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Te Kauwhata library

1 Main Rd, Te Kauwhata

Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am to 5pm. Thursday 9am - 8pm and Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Tuakau library

72 George St, Tuakau

Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am to 5pm. Thursday 9am - 8pm and Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm.



Our libraries are great places to visit.

Design our new library cards

Fancy having your design on our library cards? We want you to design our new library cards as part of our Matariki celebrations.

The Waikato District Libraries Matariki competition will open on 14 May. People will need to submit their library card designs or a poem by 15 June. The age categories are 5-9 years old, 10-15 years old and 16 years and over.

- The winning designs will be used as our new library cards.
- The winning poems will be displayed in our libraries and offices.
- Each winner will also be given a Prezzy Card.



Customer Delivery Officer Jess Steiner with our current library cards.

You can pick up an entry form at any one of our libraries or offices – Huntly, Meremere, Ngaruawahia, Raglan, Te Kauwhata, Tuakau – from 15 May, or download a form from the Waikato District Council website:

www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/matariki

A special prize-giving will be held in the Council Chambers in July.

Building or renovating? Check first

If you are planning to build or renovate, it pays to check with council.

There's been an increase in the number of unauthorised building works in the Waikato district, which is a big concern and Council intend to start addressing this.

This year Council has issued:

6 infringement notices	2 insanitary building notices
3 dangerous building notices	6 notices to fix

"We know that all the rules and regulations can be really daunting for people so our advice is to do your planning, gather the information, talk to the right people now and it may save time and money in the future," says Waikato District Council Building Quality Manager Merv Balloch.

Even if you don't need a building consent or a resource consent, it's important to be aware that all building work must meet the requirements of the Building Code.

"If you've carried out building work without getting the consents you need, you are liable for a hefty fine which Council are now starting to issue, you may not be insured and you may have trouble selling your property down the track. If property is damaged or destroyed because of a fault occurring in the unauthorised work, an insurance company may refuse to pay you."

Merv says the main question we get from customers is 'what do I need a consent for?'



Talk to the right people now and it may save time and money in the future
- Waikato District Council Building Quality Manager Merv Balloch

There's been an increase in the number of unauthorised building works in the Waikato district, which is a big concern.

"If you're planning to build or renovate we suggest you start by looking at the Build Waikato website for guidance however it's still wise to speak to one of our building inspectors to make sure, as it can be easy for people to misinterpret the information. Give our building inspectors a call on 0800 492 452."

'A beginner's guide to resource and building consent processes' is a really useful guide which you'll find on www.mfe.govt.nz/publications.

You can also pick up your copy of MySpace, a new free building and renovating magazine, from our offices, which features a handy article outlining some of the things you need to know.

Make your voice heard – make a submission on the Proposed District Plan

The Proposed District Plan (Stage 1) will be formally notified at the end of next month.

So what does that mean for you? Once the Plan is notified, the public have the opportunity to make submissions. During this time you will be able to read the Plan and see how the changes in the Plan will affect your property and the community you live in. Information about how to make a submission and when you will be able to will be available soon. A letter will also be sent to all landowners which will identify the changes to your property in the Proposed Plan. Stage 2 (Natural Hazards and Climate Change topics) will be notified once key data to inform the planning provisions has been received.



What is the District Plan?

The District Plan controls the way land is used, developed and subdivided in the Waikato district. It also promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the Waikato district, primarily through strategic management

of growth and by managing the effects of land use on the environment. The effects are managed differently around the district to reflect local environmental issues. The Plan responds to the issues in terms of community needs and aspirations.



Speed limits on a number of roads in the northern part of Waikato district changed earlier this month.

It follows the Councillors' adoption of the amendments to the Waikato District Council Speed Limit Bylaw 2011 earlier this year.

The amendments address high risk roads and were made under guidance from the NZ Transport Agency's Speed Management Guide.

Assessment criteria used to determine roads that fall into the high risk category include: alignment; carriageway width; roadside hazards; land use; traffic volume; crash history and the suitability of the existing speed limit.

All speed limit changes to be made are reductions, the majority of them being on rural roads with the decrease being from 100kmh to 80kmh.

There will also be a reduction of speed limits to 40kmh on roads in the Pokeno Village Estate.

Other areas where speed limit reductions are to be introduced include Pukekohe South, Onewhero, Pukekawa, Tuakau, Mangatawhiri and Te Kauwhata.

The only rural road from the list on which the speed limit remains the same is the Tuakau Bridge-Port Waikato Road.

The speed limit on that road stays at 100kmh.

However, Waikato District Council staff and NZ Transport Agency staff maintain that the road remains high risk with a speed limit of 100kmh.

For this reason, a series of interim safety improvements are planned for the road this year and the road will be looked at again in future amendments to the Waikato District Council Speed Limit Bylaw 2011.

Council will re-engage with the Port Waikato community to discuss any future speed limit changes on the Tuakau Bridge-Port Waikato Road.

"Many rural roads in New Zealand are not fit for purpose with a speed limit of 100kmh. Any measure to control speed on roads is crucial," says Waikato District Council Road Safety Engineer Gareth Bellamy.

"Excessive speed not only causes crashes but can also determine the outcome of a crash in terms of potential human casualties.

"You are much more likely to survive a crash at 80kmh than 100kmh and this is one of the main reasons why amendments to the bylaw are taking place."

The new speed limits came into force on 2 April 2018.

A list of roads with speed limit changes is at www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/speedlimitamendments

Because of the sheer volume of roads assigned for speed limit amendments, roads in the Huntly, Hukanui-Waerenga and Ngaruawahia Wards will be addressed later this year, followed by the Tamahere, Raglan, Eureka and Newcastle Wards next year.

Rates notices in April

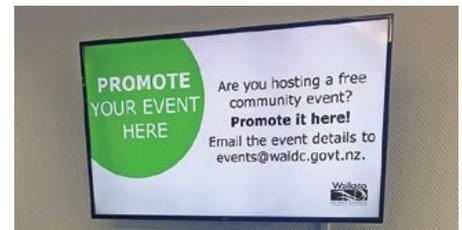
All ratepayers who choose to pay their rates by instalment or direct debit through the year should receive their final rates notice for the year shortly.

Thinking about adding to your family?



If you're thinking about adding to your fur family, make sure you check out the dogs available from our Pound. The latest dogs available for adoption can be viewed on the digital noticeboards in our offices and libraries and on the Waikato Pound Pups Facebook page.

Digital noticeboards



You may have seen digital noticeboards in our offices and libraries. These are available for community groups to place notices of interest. We'll also be displaying news we think is relevant to you. Pop into your nearest office or library to have a look and speak with the Customer Delivery team, or email events@waidc.govt.nz, to find out about how you can put up your own notice.

GOT A QUESTION ABOUT COUNCIL BUSINESS?

/WaikatoDistrictCouncil

twitter.com/WaikatoDistrict

waikatodistrict.govt.nz

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

Dates for the next Link:

Our next edition of Link will be distributed from 25-30 June. 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.