



**IN THIS ISSUE**

- Top 5 places to swim in the district** – see page 2.
- The Shape of Water – the full story of our water supply** – see page 6.
- Soldiers soak up our roading crews' expertise** – see page 8.



# All Council offices and libraries are **cash-free**

**Waikato District Council offices and libraries are cash free from 17 February 2018.**

The move follows on from the Huntly Library and Council Office being cash-free since its refurbishment in 2016.

The decision to be cash-free across all Waikato District Council sites was made in February 2017.

“There are significant benefits to being cash-free which include freeing up our staff time to focus on engaging with customers in our libraries. There will also be substantial savings of time and money on managing security requirements,” Customer Delivery Manager Angela Parquist says.

“We can concentrate on building our libraries and offices into a safe hub for community activities, which is what people tell us they want.”

We believe that the majority of our customers will not be affected by this change.

“Across our sites we know that a small percentage of people pay in cash. We recognise that, for some, this will require a change in behaviour but we have taken steps to ensure that the inconvenience to residents is minimised,” Mrs Parquist says.

Once cash-free, sites will be able to take credit card and paywave over the counter. Credit cards will incur a 2% surcharge.



Council offices and libraries are cash free from 17 February 2018.

**“ There are significant benefits to being cash-free ... There will also be substantial savings of time and money on managing security requirements. ”**  
Customer Delivery Manager  
Angela Parquist.

Otherwise, Council offers a full range of non-cash payment options including eftpos to online banking options. Banks are also able to assist customers to set up payment options.

For customers still wanting to pay their rates or dog registration fees in cash, they can use a number of other places throughout the district. Council refuse stickers can also be purchased at a range of other businesses across the district. A full list of these businesses can be found at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/stickers](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/stickers).

**WELCOME TO YOUR NEW LOOK LINK.**  
Inside you'll see the look and feel is a little different and we're making an effort to make the content more enjoyable. We hope you like it.

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the first Link of 2018. It's been another "classic" kiwi summer with decent amounts of sunshine and a fair share of inclement weather to muck with many of your camping plans! It has certainly kept our hard-working field staff busy.

We were so pleased to receive some great feedback on our Summer Edition of Link, which included a feature on the Top 5 walks and Top 5 free things to do in the district. These seemed to really resonate with many of our readers, so thanks for the feedback.

We're continuing this with our Top 5 swimming spots in the district on this page. Why don't you grab a mate and check out one of these swimming spots – maybe one you didn't know about – while the weather is still hot. If you've got a Top 5 idea that you'd like us to cover you can email us at [news@waidc.govt.nz](mailto:news@waidc.govt.nz).

Finally, I'd like to draw your attention to an article about the future of our district on page 3 of this Link. A consultation document will soon be available in print and online to help guide you on how to provide feedback on our Long Term Plan which is our vision and high level plan for the next 10 years. It's really important that the community has their say.

**Allan Sanson**

Mayor, Waikato District Council

# TOP 5 PLACES TO SWIM

With summer heating up, a dip to cool down might be in order. Check out the top five swimming spots around the district as chosen by Council staff.



# 1

### Lake Puketirini – Huntly

A newly formed lake that has been developed from a disused coal-mined pit, and is now part of Puketirini, a Waikato District Council park and facility. Access is off Rotowaro Road or Weavers Crossing Road. While the swimming is good, be careful as the lake is very deep.

# 2

### Raglan Harbour – Raglan

Head out towards Kopua Holiday Park and build sandcastles on the beach. When it gets too hot, pop into the water to cool down. Kayaking and paddle boarding in the harbour is also lots of fun.

# 3

### Maraetai Bay – Port Waikato

Head out to Port Waikato for a swim and explore the black sand. Here we also have a car park, toilet block, BBQ area and playground. Access is off Maunsell Road and the Maraetai Bay Walkway.

# 4

### Waikato District Council pools – Tuakau, Huntly, Ngaruawahia

The Waikato district has three community swimming pools located in Tuakau, Huntly and Ngaruawahia. The Huntly pool is open year round, but the Tuakau and Ngaruawahia pools are only open during summer. For more info including entry fees, check out [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/swimming-pools](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/recreation/swimming-pools).

# 5

### Ngaranui Beach – Raglan

If waves are more your style, pop out to Raglan's main beach for a dip. Swimming between the flags is always recommended and if you're feeling brave, why not go for a surf? The only downside - the steep hill you have to walk down, and then up again, at the end of the day (but it's great for those glute gains... right?).

# District Plan open days a success



Thank you to all those who attended the District Plan Roadshow open days throughout November and December.

The open days in Tuakau, Mangatangi, Pokeno, Te Kauwhata, Huntly, Raglan, Te Kowhai, Tamahere and Ngaruawahia provided an opportunity for the public to discuss the draft District Plan with Waikato District Council staff.

The events were well attended with more than 520 people turning up to discuss the draft plan options. The policy planning team collected feedback on a wide range of matters. Key topics of interest included: zoning (country living, village, deferred), subdivision, minor dwellings, home occupations and many more.

Feedback on the draft District Plan closed in late January 2018 and staff are now working through that feedback before the Proposed District Plan goes out for formal consultation in mid 2018.

For further information on this process visit [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/districtplanreview](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/districtplanreview).



A large number of people turned out to the Te Kowhai District Plan Review open day in December 2017.

## Have your say on our future plans for the district

Over the past few months your elected representatives, including those on Community Boards and Community Committees, have spent time considering how Council should plan to meet the needs of our district over the next 10 years.

The Waikato district is expected to continue to grow rapidly, especially in our northern and coastal townships, as our proximity to Auckland and Hamilton make us attractive for both business and residential development. In recent years we've worked to develop our infrastructure – our roads and waters services – to keep pace with growth while seeking to keep a balance between the cost of this infrastructure growth and affordability for our ratepayers.

Getting the planning right is crucial to ensure we invest in assets and infrastructure at the right time, in the right place and of the right size so that our investments deliver real value to our community, in an affordable way and in a way that supports community development and not just growth.

**On Wednesday 14 March we will be opening a month-long consultation on the Council's 'Long Term Plan 2018-28' that provides the blueprint for works, budgets and proposed rates increases over the next 10 years. A consultation document will be available in print and online to help guide you on how to provide your feedback.**

We have slowed down some projects to free up capacity for better future planning and we are also offering different options in our waters services.



There are some serious funding challenges ahead which will mean significant rates increases for some across the district so it's vital that the community gets engaged in the process.

We'd like to work with you to develop liveable, thriving and connected communities in our district. So please take time to read and consider our plans for the future, and the options on offer to balance growth with affordability, and **we look forward to your feedback by 9am, Monday 16 April 2018.**

You will soon be able to find supporting material for the Long Term Plan 2018-28 on our website at [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/longtermplan](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/longtermplan).

# THIS IS WHO I AM

*Jan Sedgwick*

The first in the series, This is who I am is a feature that tells us a little bit more about our elected members.

**Name:** Jan Sedgwick      **Ward:** Whangamarino

**Family:** John, two retired guide dogs, two free range doves and the occasional visiting kingfisher.

**What is your favourite thing about the Waikato District?**  
It's in the middle.

**What is the biggest issue facing the Waikato District in 2018?**

More than one, unfortunately. Pressures of growth. That means making sure our communities are ready, people feel included and we have the right things in the right place at the right time - not always easy. Managing water; delivering it safely and removing 'used' water equally safely. Managing expectations; we can only do so much with what money we have.

**Use three words to describe the Waikato District?**  
Friendly, green, growing.

**Favourite holiday destination and why?**  
Singapore. It's also in the middle - we've got a theme going here! Seriously, a great halfway place to catch up with UK-based family and friends. And cruising in the Mediterranean, because you just can't have one favourite place... that'd be boring.

**Worst holiday you've ever been on and why?**  
Not worst but interesting; walking across Stewart Island in summer, with every piece of clothing on because it was so cold. Seriously, every holiday has something going for it.

**If you could go to one place in the world that you've never been to before, where would it be and why?**  
A cooking school in Vietnam, to perfect my pho recipes.

**Worst job you've ever had and why?**  
Cleaning houses when I was a uni student (why did that family of 6 have to leave all their dinner and breakfast dishes?).

**What annoys you the most?** Indecision and negativity.

**What is your favourite album of all time?**  
Gotta be something by Queen...Freddie Mercury rules!

**Best film?**  
Not a great movie goer... anything on Air NZ long haul flights that keeps me awake, and preferably doesn't scare the living daylight out of me. More of a book person.

**Best thing on TV?** The off button.

**What radio station do you listen to?**  
National. Nine to noon and Afternoons with Jesse Mulligan are great driving companions and you always learn something.

**Worst thing on TV?** See above!

**Your favourite meal?**  
1. Anything quick I can make after a long day and before heading out again. Usually fish and John's famous kale salad.  
2. A really beautiful Japanese bento box with sake marinated salmon - a favourite weekend meal.

**If you could meet any celebrity, who would it be and why?**  
Well, I've chatted with Robbie Williams, Don McLean, Bob Dylan, and shared a dinner table with Rod Stewart and Andrew Lloyd-Webber, so it's not going to be a musician. I reckon Michael Palin or Bill Bryson would be all round good chaps to chat with over coffee.

**What's your favourite sports team and why?**  
Any person who will be my doubles partner in tennis.

**You've got a day off, so you...**  
Do all the stuff I need to do, at a sensible pace not warp speed. Like walking the dogs, dead heading the roses, actually sitting down for lunch, or even playing actual golf instead of paying golf subs.



**Councillor Jan Sedgwick describes the Waikato District as friendly, green and growing.**

# THIS IS WHAT I DO

*Gavin Ion*

**Name:** Gavin Ion

**Role:** Chief Executive

**Family:** Married to Maureen for 31 years, two boys – Josh 21 and Caleb 17

**How long have you worked for Waikato District Council?** Two stints – 17 years in total.

## What does your role involve?

Advising Council, providing leadership and direction to staff, setting the standard for health and safety in the organisation, ensuring the Council has a presence regionally and nationally. Setting the strategy and direction for the organisation and champion of the 2020 challenge, to make our community the most engaged in New Zealand by the year 2020.

## What's the most rewarding aspect of your role?

Being able to make a difference in my community.

## What's the most challenging aspect of your role?

Trying to meet the often conflicting needs of a diverse and growing community.

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

My favourite community to work with is Meremere. Anything you do to help Meremere – no matter how big or small, is valued.

## Why is Waikato District Council a great place to work?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata (it is people, it is people, it is people).

**What's the weirdest customer complaint you've dealt with?** A lady who moved into a property opposite a school (which had been in operation for 75 years) and complained about the noise.

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

Attending the opening of the Meremere Community Facility and seeing and hearing what a difference the facility has made to the community and having my role in it recognised (noting that many other people did more than I did and they were recognised as well).



*Waikato District Council Chief Executive Gavin Ion is a swimming official outside of work. Here he is pictured at the World Championships in Canada in 2016.*

**The first in the series, This is what I do is a feature that tells us a little more about Waikato District Council staff and what they do.**

# BRINGING THE WORLD TO THE WAIKATO

*Madelina del Carmen*

*Baena Escamilla*

**Name:** Madelina del Carmen Baena Escamilla

**Job title:** Continuous Improvement Analyst

**Country of origin and how long you lived there:** Colombia, I lived there for 32 years.

**How long have you been in NZ?** 8 years and 7 months.

## What do you love about the Waikato district?

There are really nice landscapes. We have beaches, waterfalls and really nice walks. There is something to do every weekend with the family.

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

Life here in New Zealand is more peaceful. Back in Bogota (Colombia's capital city) people are always in a hurry.

## What do you miss most about home?

My family and the warm climate. We don't have seasons back there, in some cities the weather is always like spring and in other cities it's like summertime.

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

Maybe that when we celebrate we always dance. Dancing is a big part of our culture.

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

Go to Colombia, it is a mix of different cultures. We have amazing food and really beautiful places to visit. Cartagena, my hometown, is on the Caribbean Coast. We have great beaches with warm water. Cartagena is a world heritage site for its port, fortresses and group of monuments. The coffee region in the centre of Colombia is another place to visit so you can taste the best coffee in the world while looking at the coffee cultural landscape, it is really stunning.



*Julian Ramirez-Luna, Susana Ramirez-Baena, Lucas Ramirez-Baena and Madelina Baena-Escamilla pictured in Cartagena-Colombia. In the background you can see "The spur of El Espigón" and the Caribbean Sea.*

**The first in the series, 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.**

# The Shape Of Water - the full story of our water supply

At Waikato District Council we monitor our drinking water supply very stringently. It is one of our most crucial areas of focus because of the possible health implications involved with poor quality drinking water. We are confident that our water supply is fully compliant with Drinking Water Standards of New Zealand (DWSNZ).

Our Acting Waters Manager **Karl Pavlovich** outlines what is done to make sure Waikato District Council-supplied water that comes out of your tap is safe to drink.

## Is Waikato District Council's water supply compliant with national drinking water standards?

Yes, all water treatment plants meet Ministry of Health standards. The water sources in the Waikato district have always been capable of producing water that is compliant with DWSNZ. Historically, the difficulty has been meeting the strict data requirements present in the DWSNZ in order to prove compliance. Improvements to our data monitoring in 2015/16 has allowed Council to prove this compliance.

## How often are tests carried out on drinking water?

Instruments at the treatment plants work 24/7 and take measurements as frequently as every minute for critical measures such as UV doses or chlorine concentration. These measurements are able to control the plant, shutting it down if the water being produced is not at drinking water standard.

The exact frequency of network testing varies from network to network and is dependent on the number of people connected to that network. In general, larger networks are tested more frequently. All sampling undertaken is compliant with the requirements set out in the Drinking Water Standards of New Zealand (DWSNZ).

### What do Council staff do to make sure water is safe to drink?

We use various methods when treating water from the source to make it potable (safe to drink). These include:

#### Coagulation and sedimentation

– This process is used for sediment removal from the water.

**Filtration** – removes small particles that could be harmful to a high level of confidence.

**UV treatment** – disinfects pathogens including bacterial and protozoa.

**Use of activated carbon** – for the removal of algae which can cause taste and odour in the water. Activated carbon also attracts and holds other unwanted chemicals.

**Chlorination** – provides additional bacterial disinfection as well as lasting protection as the water is distributed to households.

**Testing** – We're always checking bacterial, chlorine and chemical levels at the treatment plants and in the network to ensure they meet drinking water standards.



### What is the water tested for?

**Bacteria** – E. coli is found in the intestinal tract of animals and therefore is a useful indicator of contamination. Monitoring for faecal contamination is important as harmful bacteria are much more likely to originate from within another animal than from the environment.

**Protozoa** – Protozoa are single-celled animals, some of which can cause waterborne disease in humans. They are difficult and expensive to test for and that's why a "log removal approach" is taken. A "log removal approach" involves treating the water with a proven method to a high standard. The effectiveness of the treatment process is continuously monitored. For example, filtration to remove protozoa particles is monitored minute-to-minute by the turbidity (cloudiness or haziness) measurement.

**Algae** - There are many different types of algae and some will produce toxins when they are stressed. Testing for toxins regularly is not practical. As an alternative, biovolume is monitored. Biovolume is a measure of the potential for the algae present to release enough toxins to become a health issue should the ideal stress conditions occur. Council uses a stepped response approach and will test for toxins in our water should there be a great enough risk.

**Chemicals** – Drinking water supplied in the Waikato district is chlorinated and most supplies in the district are also fluoridated. Both these chemicals provide health benefits when used in low concentrations. The concentration of chlorine and fluoride in the water leaving the treatment plants is continuously monitored to ensure concentrations of both are safe. Tests are also carried out on a quarterly basis to ensure the levels of naturally occurring elements like lead, manganese and iron are within the Maximum Acceptable Levels as set by DWSNZ.



### If I am concerned about my drinking water supply, what can I do?

Please contact Council on 0800 492 452 or go to our website, [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz) to log a service request.

# Plastic surgery required

Countries around the developed world are grappling with the fact that there's been a major shift in plastics recycling and the vast majority of it stems from China. Our Waste Minimisation Officer Pat Cronin explains.

In the last couple of months you may have read or heard that China is enforcing new regulations with regard to receiving waste (recycling) products from other countries.

This simply means that China has introduced lower acceptable levels of contamination as well as reducing the number of the different types of plastic it will accept.

## What does this mean for New Zealand when it comes to plastic recycling?

Well, for a small country like New Zealand, most plastics go offshore for processing and get made into other products.

China's crackdown on what it will accept from other countries, and this is a worldwide issue, means that the market for certain recycled plastics is shrinking. This leaves a potential vulnerability in the recycling system.

If we can't send our recycling to China we may need to look for other countries to send it to, or improve the quality of our recycling by reducing contamination. This would be expensive.

China has been by far and away the biggest destination market used by the waste industry both here and worldwide. This market has been long-standing and there is a high degree of confidence that this market has integrity.

It's early days to know how China's crackdown will affect the plastic recycling industry in New Zealand, but we will keep you informed.



Number 1 clear PET, number 2 and cardboard separated and baled ready for shipping.

## There are a number of things that the public can do to help combat this issue. These include:

1. **Avoid plastic when you can** – a tough ask, but not impossible. There are plenty of amazing Kiwis that are doing this with no major upheaval to their everyday lives, except the conscious decisions they choose to make. If you want examples of this check out [therubbishtrip.co.nz](http://therubbishtrip.co.nz), [1yearoplastic.blogspot.co.nz](http://1yearoplastic.blogspot.co.nz) or singer Jack Johnson's website [www.allatonce.org](http://www.allatonce.org).
2. **If you can't avoid it, try to reduce** the amount of plastic you have in your life – Numbers 1 and 2 are the easiest to be recycled. Try reducing the use of the other numbers that are more challenging.
3. **Choose clear over coloured plastic** – clear plastics have more value in the overseas market because they are the most versatile.
4. **Contamination is an issue** - ensure the plastic you put out for recycling is washed and only the numbers specified are put out.
5. By reducing your use of plastic and making sure recycling is clean, you are **supporting local businesses**. Two of our refuse and recycling contractors are local, providing local jobs in our communities.

But for now, after taking the above points into consideration, the pick-up of your plastics recycling at the kerb continues.

Look for the recycling numbers 1, 2 and 5 within the arrowed recycling symbols on the bottom of your plastic containers. If those numbers are there, they will be picked up.

The exception in our district is Raglan, where our contractors will pick up numbers 1 through to 7.

However, there is a challenge that we as good citizens do have to grapple with. That is, how to deal with the quantities of plastic that make it into our everyday lives.

The convenience of plastic is undeniable. Even when you think you've avoided it, it unwittingly slips in – from the straw in your soft drink, to the microbeads hiding in your exfoliating cleanser to the single-use plastic bags that hold your weekly shopping.

At some stage, sooner rather than later, we will have to take the plunge and work out how we can reduce our dependency on this ubiquitous product.

It's time to stop putting it in the 'too hard basket'.



# Soldiers soak up our roading crews' expertise

The New Zealand Army is benefiting from the skills of the Waikato District Alliance in an innovative work rotation programme.

Four soldiers have been out with specialist roading crews from the Alliance for two weeks to improve their plant equipment operating competency and skills.



**“It’s been really fast-paced and the traffic management side has been interesting – Sapper Robin Goomes**

“The majority of what we do down in Waiouru is on unsealed roads in a closed-off environment. It’s been great to work on different machines under real project timeframes,” Sapper Goomes says.

“It’s been really fast-paced and the traffic management side has been interesting – all we have to deal with at Waiouru are horses.”

It’s also been good experience to be exposed to the survey, design and financial management of roading projects, according to the soldiers.

“Because you are running to a budget, you’ve got to be careful about the amount of metal used and to be mindful of costs involved with the project,” Sapper Puketapu says.

The soldiers said they had learned a great deal from the Alliance teams.

“They’ve been really good and helped us along the way. We’ve worked with some great teams and we have learnt a great deal which we can benchmark against and take what we’ve learnt back to Waiouru.”

WDA Manager Gary Dela Rue says the initiative with the NZ Army is clearly helpful to both parties.

“It’s all about knowledge transfer. They can gauge what they are doing against our quality practices and we can benefit hugely from the leadership qualities displayed by the NZ Army. It’s a win-win for us all,” he says.

**i** *Sapper is an army rank in the NZ Army’s Corps of Royal NZ Engineers equivalent to Private.*

Sapper Trent Puketapu and Sapper Robin Goomes thoroughly enjoyed their time with the WDA working on roading projects in the Waikato district.

Waikato District Alliance (WDA) is a joint venture between Waikato District Council and Downer NZ formed in 2015 to manage and maintain the roading assets of the Waikato district.

Plant operators Sapper Trent Puketapu and Sapper Robin Goomes say the experience gained from working on projects in a “civilian environment” had been invaluable.

## Perfect place for pooches to play



Looking for a place where your dog can run and play without a lead? Kowhai Reserve in Tuakau is now an off-leash dog exercise area. We’ve also made Centennial Park an off-leash dog exercise area again, after hearing that was what the community wanted. Council will be working with the local community board on fencing so the playground and the exercise area can be separate. There are approximately 15,000 dogs in the Waikato. We have 7 fenced parks that are designated as off-leash dog exercise areas and another 14 unfenced areas where dogs can be run off-leash, but they must be under control. You’ll find these listed on our website.

### Join our team!

Looking for a new job or even a change in career?

Check out our new careers website [www.joinourteam.co.nz](http://www.joinourteam.co.nz) and see what job vacancies are available here and at other Waikato councils. If there isn’t a job currently listed that interests you, then you can register your interest online and we will alert you when there is a vacancy that you might be keen on.

#### GOT A QUESTION ABOUT COUNCIL BUSINESS?

/WaikatoDistrictCouncil

[twitter.com/WaikatoDistrict](https://twitter.com/WaikatoDistrict)

[waikatodistrict.govt.nz](http://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 16-21 April. If you don’t receive your Link during this period please contact [news@waicd.govt.nz](mailto:news@waicd.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.