

# NEWSLINE

2 MAY 2024



**Waimate**  
District Council

## MAYOR'S COLUMN



Hello to you all and welcome to this month's edition of Newsline.

As Mayor, attending several of our Anzac Day services last month was a profound honour and solemn duty. It is a time when our community comes together to honour the courage, sacrifice and spirit of those who served our nation.

Each passing year does not diminish the sense of occasion and only reinforces the legacy of the men and women who served.

Thank you to all who attended.

Mayor Craig Rowley

This month is an important one for our district. The draft Annual Plan 2024/25 has been published and we are seeking your feedback.

There is no easy way through the challenges we are facing. We still need to provide essential services and look after our existing assets amid escalating costs.

We do have options about how we manage these challenges in the short term, and I encourage you all to read the Annual Plan 2024/25 Consultation Document and make a submission.

Until next time, take care.



## CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Congratulations to Juan, Julieta, Santiago, and Helena from Argentina; Sajin and Sarala from Nepal; Galina from the Russian Federation; and Lyn from Australia on officially becoming New Zealand Citizens.

## PROJECT WATCH

The past month has seen some great progress being made on several projects.



### Library Extension and Council Chambers Refurbishment

The roof going up means the exterior of the extension will soon be completed. The interior of the library and council chambers refurbishment will take place over the coming months.

### Swimming Pool Relining

The Norman Kirk Memorial Swimming Pool's lining has been stripped and prepared for a new PVC layer.

This project will save on operating costs for the pool, and vastly extend its lifespan. It will be completed before the pool re-opens in the spring.



### Winter Plants

Cooler weather and shorter days do not mean our gardens are left to look sad. Parks and Reserves staff spent last month swapping out the summer flowers in our gardens and hanging baskets with winter varieties, ensuring the town remains colourful all year long.



### Seddon Square Picnic Tables

Three picnic tables have been installed in Seddon Square, replacing two old ones.

These have already proved popular with visitors and locals alike. A fourth table will be added when the new public toilets are installed later this year.



## ANNUAL PLAN CONSULTATION OPEN



Consultation is open, and residents are encouraged to have their say on Council's draft Annual Plan 2024/25.

This year's Annual Plan is a little bit different. It was scheduled to be the first year of the Long Term Plan 2024-34, however due to uncertainty around Government reforms and direction, Council is producing an Annual Plan for 2024/25 and a nine-year Long Term Plan will be created next year. This re-scheduling was something offered to, and accepted, by many councils in New Zealand.

Council is proposing an overall rates increase of 13.8% in 2024/25 and is seeking feedback on how we manage the increase. We are aware this will not be welcome news to our ratepayers and members of the community.

When the budget was first drafted it showed an overall rates increase of 19.6%. This was not due to any ambitious projects, but a reflection of the increased costs to our core business. Council has been working hard for the past few months to reduce that number and produce a budget that meets the needs of the district while considering affordability in the face of current cost of living pressures.

Mayor Craig Rowley said there was no 'magic fix' to reduce rates rises. "We are aware this comes at a financially difficult time for some people, unfortunately we are not immune to inflation and bear many of the same cost pressures as everyone else."

"Costs have increased on all fronts. Water, roading, waste management, and Government compliance, are some of the services which Council needs to provide and have all become much more expensive. This draft plan is one that allows us to maintain current levels of service and prioritises looking after our existing assets. We cannot allow our existing assets to fall into a state of disrepair. We must take care of what we have."

The consultation document and full draft Annual Plan is available to view online at [waimatedc.govt.nz/annualplan](http://waimatedc.govt.nz/annualplan)

**Submissions close at 12pm on Friday 24 May.**



# REPRESENTATION REVIEW SURVEY CLOSING SOON

You have one week left to have your say on the district's representation review arrangements for the next six years. The short survey is to gauge public opinion about the current system used for electing councillors and the mayor, and asks two questions.

The first – should we have more, the same or fewer elected members? Presently, the Waimate District Council is made up of eight councillors and the mayor. Legislation allows for between five and 29 elected members.

The second question asked is should councillors be elected by wards, at large, or by a mix? Currently, councillors are elected from the Waimate Ward (four representatives), Pareora-Otaio-Makikihi Ward (two representatives), Hakataramea-Waihoarunga Ward (one representative) and Lower Waihao Ward (one representative). If the system was 'at large', there would be no wards, and everybody would be elected from the same ballot. At present, each councillor represents approximately 1,050 people.

All local councils are required to carry out a representation review every six years.

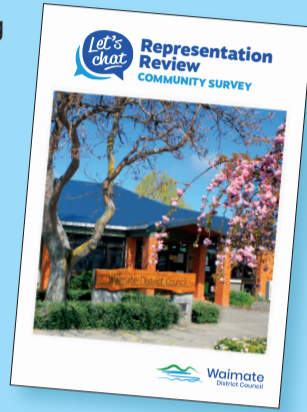
Waimate District Council Mayor Craig Rowley said it was a good opportunity to reach out to the public and make sure residents feel fairly and effectively represented.

"Our district covers a large and diverse area, and we want to make sure we have the best system we can. Your input is crucial in shaping the future of our local government. Take a few minutes to complete the survey and have your voice heard."

Council decided last year not to establish a Māori Ward. This was because the district's Māori population of 320 equates to less than a third of a representative.

The survey is available online at [waimatedc.govt.nz/repreview](http://waimatedc.govt.nz/repreview), or you can complete the one on the back of the brochure in your letterbox and drop it off at the Council reception. Council will consider the feedback received and will make an initial proposal of the representation arrangements for the 2025 and 2028 local elections, which will be publicised on 6 June.

**The survey closes at 12pm on Thursday 9 May.**



# EXTRA FUNDING FOR POPULAR TRACKS

Two groups have received a funding boost from Council to support the development and maintenance of tracks in the district.

Through the Recreational Track Grant, Council has awarded \$2,726 to Friends of Studholme Bush and \$7,274 to Waimate Trackways Inc. Friends of Studholme Bush will use the funding to purchase native riparian plants for three strategic places along the old railway track in the Waimate Gorge.

Waimate Trackways is using its allocation to create way-finding signage for the various walking and cycling tracks from the Point Bush carpark to the White Horse Monument.

Mayor Craig Rowley said the ongoing development of recreational tracks was both important for the wellbeing of residents and an attraction to visitors.

"We are pleased to be able to support these groups, which are run by volunteers who put in a lot of effort to make our district beautiful."

"Our tracks are a drawcard for visitors, and a real asset to all who live here. They provide a boost to the physical and mental health of everyone who uses them."

The Recreational Track Grant has \$20,000 per year to put towards groups to develop, maintain and improve tracks. Council accepts applications on a six-monthly basis in February and August each year with \$10,000 available for each round.

# CREATIVE NEW ZEALAND GRANT FUNDING AWARDED

Successful applicants for the latest round of the Creative Communities Scheme funding have been announced for Waimate. Funded by Creative New Zealand and delivered in partnership with Council, the grants go towards local arts and culture projects.

A total of \$17,872 of funding for eight projects was awarded in April. The full list of recipients is shown below.

- **Waimate Savage & Entertainment Club:** \$680 (singing workshop)
- **Alistair Boot:** \$1,500 (photography lighting workshop)
- **Waimate Community Church:** \$6,079 (Waimate Christmas in the Square)
- **Hunter Women's Institute:** \$242 (Lip sync performance)
- **Waimate Embroidery Guild:** \$3,945 (Trout embroidery workshop)
- **Claire Forbes:** \$1,645 (Watercolour painting workshop –beginner/intermediate)
- **Kate Low:** \$3,168 (Theatre workshop for primary school pupils)
- **Lindsey Willoughby:** \$613 (Introduction to needfelting workshop)

Council receives applications on a six-monthly basis, typically in March and September each year. Each funding round is advertised when it becomes available.

# TRANSPORT WORKSHOP ABOUT MORE THAN JUST CLIMATE

An 'audit of the district' is how Council's Climate Change Officer Andrew Oliver is describing the series of workshops which are taking place this year as part of the creation of the district's Climate Resilience Strategy. While they are fundamentally based around adapting to climate change, they are wide-ranging and have also highlighted several opportunities for the district, he said.

At the Transport Workshop last month, the attendees discussed the future of transport in the district, covering topics such as whether rail could be better utilised, public transport be extended and the possibility of developing a freight hub in Waimate. "The savings from being more efficient with fossil fuel use could be captured in our retail and service sectors, leading to more employment and money circulating in our local economy," he said.

"The key theme to all of this is long term thinking. We need to be thinking about what our district will look like in 30 years' time, and for the next one, two, three generations. The point of these workshops is to get people in the room together and get the conversation going."

The next workshop is on Water Management and will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 14 May at the Waimate Event Centre. A survey covering the topic is live on Council's website.

**Waimate District Climate Resilience Strategy**

**Water Management Action Plan Workshop**

Tuesday 14 May, 6pm  
Waimate Event Centre, Paul Street, Waimate

How important is water security to our district's economy?

How might population growth impact our water security?

Is our infrastructure flood resilient?

How should we manage water shortages?

# DISTRICT ADAPTING WELL TO KERBSIDE RUBBISH COLLECTION CHANGES

Waimate District residents have adapted well to Government's new kerbside rubbish and recycling collection changes, according to Council's Waste Management Officer Michael Macbeda. The changes, which came into effect on 1 February 2024, mean that all rubbish and recycling collection is now standardised throughout New Zealand.



The only exception to this was in some places, like Auckland, where glass goes in the yellow recycling bin. Michael said this was a mistake some households had begun to make in Waimate, perhaps due to advertising done on a national level.

"There was some advertising suggesting that glass goes in the yellow recycling bin, but that is specific to places like Auckland."

"We have a different recycling system here, so please only put glass bottles and jars in the blue glass bin. These should be rinsed and have their lids removed."

Other changes, such as paper and cardboard not going in the green organics bin, and aluminium trays and foil no longer going into the yellow recycling bin, have been well adhered to.

Michael said there had been a few people opting for larger red rubbish bins, a process which can be completed through Council's website, or through the Waimate Bins App, which you can download through the app store on your phone.