



OUR PLACE

Ko Konei

Your Whakatāne District Council
Community Update - February 2020

OXFAM TRAILWALKER 21-22 MARCH 2020

VOLUNTEER AND CHANGE LIVES

Oxfam Trailwalker is coming to Edgcumbe, Awakeri and Whakatāne soon!

This charity event relies on the kindness of our local communities, and the Oxfam team is looking for people who are willing to donate eight hours of their time over the event weekend. You could walk parts of the trail, cheer people on as a trail marshal, drive as a courier or take on one of many various other roles. You choose!

If you are interested in supporting Oxfam New Zealand, want to change lives and have a great time, visit www.oxfamtrailwalker.org.nz/page/volunteer, email otwvolunteer@oxfam.org.nz or call 0800 600 700 to find out more.

Library on the Lawn

The unique 'Library on the Lawn' proved popular during January, with passersby able to browse pre-loved books and puzzles, relax in a bean bag under the gazebo and enjoy a cool drink. Library staff said the event was an enormous success, and the added incentive of being able to choose a free book to take home was the proverbial icing on the cake.



Pōhutukawa trees felled for safety reasons

Three mature Pōhutukawa trees on the cliff behind the Liberty Centre on Wairaka Road were removed for safety reasons.

The removal took place following a detailed assessment of large trees and potential hazards associated with these trees as part of a wider Council project.

Drone footage was taken before and after the tree removal so the cliff site can be monitored over time.

Mike Naude, General Manager Community Services, said it was unfortunate that the Pōhutukawa trees had to be removed, but the Council has a duty of care to act where safety is concerned.

"There are likely to be more large trees such as these that will need to be removed in future from some of the other sites studied. However, the Council recognises the value of trees to Whakatāne residents, our native wildlife and our overall environment, and will do whatever we can to minimise the impact from these necessary safety works."

Meters enable better leak identification



During February, water meters will be installed at all properties within the Tāneatua and Waimana town water supply. The project, which is budgeted for in the Whakatāne District 2019-20 Annual Plan, will enable better management of the water network and more effective identification of leaks.

The system for charging for water will not change in the short term. This means property owners will continue to be charged a supply fee included in the land rates, rather than per cubic metre of water used. If volumetric charging is introduced in the future, it will only be following a formal consultation process through the Long Term Plan.



HUE PAINTING WORKSHOP

A recent hue [hu-eh] painting workshop, hosted by local artist Tina Tangiweto, was heralded a success by Te Kōputu o te whanga a Toi staff. Hue, the Māori word for Polynesian bottle gourds, were used as the canvas, enabling workshop attendees to learn an insight into customary uses of hue and contemporary Māori use of colour.

The workshop was produced in conjunction with PUNA, an exhibition of emerging contemporary Māori artists from around Aotearoa.



Whakaari/White Island RECOVERY PROJECT



Message from the Group Recovery Manager

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi. Engari, he toa takitini. Strength is not that of an individual. But, that of the collective.

Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Group coordinated the multi-agency response to the Whakaari/White Island eruption event with NZ Police leading search and recovery operations.

On 20 December, we moved to the Emergency Management Recovery phase, which coordinates effort and processes to bring about immediate, medium-term and longer-term enhancement of a community after an emergency.

In the Whakaari Recovery we are looking at activities across three 'environments' – social, economic, and natural. We are working with more than 15 partners and support organisations, including Whakatāne District Council, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Awa Social and Health Services, District Health Boards, the National Emergency Management Agency, Tourism Bay of Plenty, Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – among six government agencies.

We will regularly update the community on progress through the course of this important recovery.

Craig Morris

Finfish OK - in moderation

The Ministry for Primary Industries has updated its advisory around eating fish caught near Whakaari/White Island.

Finfish caught in the 1 kilometre buffer zone around the island may now be eaten, but people are advised to limit consumption to one serving every one to two weeks. Other kaimoana should not be eaten however, due to higher levels of environmental contaminants entering the sea following the eruption and ongoing volcanic activity.

You should not eat the following seafood from the area:

- > crayfish
- > mussels, oysters, tuatua, pipi, toheroa, cockles, scallops, cat's eyes, kina and all other shellfish.

Cooking shellfish or crayfish will not remove the contaminants.

Kei te hiahia kōrero koe mo taua mea? Need to talk?

After a traumatic event, for people directly involved, who have family and friends impacted, who work in services that are part of the response to the event, and for the wider community, it is normal to feel distressed, and to experience symptoms of stress.

It could be that you felt you were managing at the time of the incident, but as the busy holiday period passes, children head back to school and things return to 'business as usual', some people may find delayed symptoms of stress start to surface.

WorkSafe team locally based

A team of WorkSafe staff is based in Whakatāne as investigators carry out a health and safety investigation into the harm and loss of life caused by the eruption.

As the workplace health and safety regulator, WorkSafe will be investigating and considering all of the relevant work health and safety issues surrounding this tragic event. This investigation could take up to a year from the date of the eruption to complete.

WorkSafe investigates incidents for a range of reasons, including preventing similar incidents happening again, identifying and responding to breaches of the law, learning from the incident and determining what actions they may want to take.

A WorkSafe investigation involves a number of steps and considerations; these will generally include:

- > examining the scene where possible and collecting evidence,
- > interviewing relevant people,
- > reviewing documents relating to the incident,
- > engaging experts to help us understand what's happened and why, and
- > liaising with other agencies and regulators.

More about WorkSafe is available at www.worksafe.govt.nz.

Remembrance ceremony discussions

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa Manahautū Leonie Simpson says they remain committed to caring for whānau affected by the Whakaari eruption and with that in mind any public remembrance ceremony will be held with the wishes of those most impacted being paramount.

"We will take direction from the affected whānau, at present discussions are signalling that such a gathering would be best timed around the anniversary of the event. Among other considerations, this will allow a period for the injured and bereaved to rest and recover.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa will work with our partners and whānau and looks forward to sharing details with the community in coming months."

Edgcumbe playground extensions

Generous external funding will enable the redevelopment of Riverslea Park next month, as part of the Edgcumbe reserves revitalisation programme. The Lion Foundation has granted \$112,000 toward the project, with an additional \$10,000 from the RSA and \$7500 from Edgcumbe Lions making the shortfall. Rotary Whakatāne also donated \$7500, which will fund a mini pump track around the park.

The playground upgrade is a collaboration between Whakatāne District Council and the fantastic efforts of EDIT (Edgcumbe Development and Improvement Team).



Courtesy Crossings installed

'Red carpet' courtesy crossings were installed at two pedestrian access points on Landing Road last month, as part of the Active Whakatāne initiative to improve travel routes for active modes of transport.

As these areas do not meet the criteria regarding the volume of pedestrian use relative to vehicle traffic, traditional zebra crossings weren't an option. Drivers are asked to be courteous to pedestrians using the 'red carpet' crossings, although it is not a legal requirement to stop.

