



OUR PLACE

# Ko Konei

Your Whakatāne District Council  
Community Update - March 2018

## Trial water meter readings in Edgecumbe to identify leaks

All Edgecumbe properties with water connections have had a trial water meter reading undertaken as a preliminary step towards the introduction of water rates which are partly based on consumption.

Whakatāne District Council Infrastructure General Manager Tomasz Krawczyk says the readings will provide a base number and will be followed up with a second trial reading on 12 or 13 April.

“Edgecumbe property owners currently pay a flat rate of just under \$461 (plus GST) per year for each connection, but as indicated in the information provided prior to the development of the Otumahi (Paul Road) scheme, water charges from 1 July 2018 will be based on a connection charge and a consumption charge for the actual volume of water each property uses,” he says.

“We know that Edgecumbe’s average usage is higher than other parts of the District, which may indicate that there are leaking water lines on some properties. Property owners are responsible for the water lines on their properties, and this trial reading will allow us to identify properties where the volume of water being used is higher than expected. Where that is the case, we’ll follow up with advice to the owners concerned.”



## Murupara community’s ‘don’t treat our water’ message heard

**A special meeting of the Whakatāne District Council’s Policy Committee has agreed that Murupara’s water supply can remain untreated, as requested by the community, with work to be carried out to secure the reticulation system against potential “backflow contamination”.**

The committee met to consider a water safety report on the town’s scheme, which recommended that a full set of treatment contamination barriers be installed. That was based on advice from the Director General of Health and the Bay of Plenty District Health Board, following the findings of the investigation into the major Havelock North water contamination event in 2016. That would have involved the installation of chlorine and UV disinfection, as well as backflow prevention and real-time water quality monitoring, at an estimated cost of \$825,000.

The meeting was preceded by a public forum, attended by an estimated 100

community members. Committee Chairperson Judy Turner says those attending were unanimous in their opposition to chlorine treatment of the supply, or in fact any treatment at all. “Murupara people are passionate about their water, which they believe is best in the world. The town’s supply is drawn from a deep aquifer which is renowned for its water purity and the town’s doctor confirmed that in his 25 years of experience, he had not encountered any cases of water quality-related illness.

“Committee members considered the health officials’ advice, in the context of legal advice that Council has to take all practicable steps to ensure

that the drinking water it supplies complies with drinking water standards. We also recognised that this community considers its water as a taonga which should not be tampered with, and under the circumstances, we felt obliged to respect the town’s wishes.”

Councillor Turner says the committee unanimously adopted a recommendation that backflow devices be installed to prevent contamination entering the reticulation system from connected properties. Water quality monitoring will also be upgraded to provide early warning of any issues which might affect drinking water safety.

## SPORT NZ RURAL TRAVEL FUND

**Does your sports group cater for 5-19 year olds, and do you need to travel to compete in regular sporting competitions?** If so, we may be able to help. Sport NZ has recognised the need to assist rural communities and has provided councils with a grant to help rural sports clubs and rural school teams meet the transport costs required to participate in local sporting competitions. For more information, visit [whakatane.govt.nz/sport-nz-fund](http://whakatane.govt.nz/sport-nz-fund) or contact Janie Storey, Administration Officer Community on 07 306 0530. Applications close at 5pm on Thursday, 29 March 2018.



## Local Wild Food Challenge hits the spot

Under the shade of the pohutukawa trees at Mahy Reserve was the perfect spot to host what turned out to be a big day of wild food, music, workshops and cooking. The weather was beautiful and we saw people turning out from all over the area, filling the reserve and bringing a great energy to the festival. There were some amazing skills displayed throughout the event. We’re looking forward to next year’s event already!

## Parks Week 2018

The New Zealand Recreation Association and Parks and Leisure Australia have again teamed up to help organise Parks Week from **10 – 18 March 2018**. The week will see councils and other organisations on both sides of the Tasman running engaging events to raise awareness of the value of parks and open spaces, and to get people out of their living rooms and enjoying the outdoors.

Whakatāne District Council will be celebrating its places and open spaces with a series of activities and events across the District. Some of these will include:

- Magical Parks – augmented reality game at Mataatua Reserve
- Kids Yoga at Mahy Reserve
- Weekly Book-a-boo and Ika-boo story telling will be held outside
- Adults yoga classes, hula fitness lessons and tai chi at the Whakatāne Rose Gardens
- Teddy bears picnic in Whakatāne and Murupara
- Free music concert at the Whakatāne Rose Gardens



Visit [whakatane.com/events](http://whakatane.com/events) to find out more.

## Oxfam Trailwalker seeks volunteers

Oxfam Trailwalker is calling for volunteers to assist in a number of roles during the 50 or 100 kilometre walking challenge from 10 – 11 March. A number of volunteer roles are available, from road marshals to trail clearing and finish line support.

Oxfam Trailwalker Volunteer Coordinator Lizzie Quill says volunteering offers a rewarding way to get involved. “You can choose your role, whether this is being part of the infectious excitement

of the finish line, or out on the trail. You don’t need any specific skills to volunteer for Oxfam Trailwalker. You can do it as an individual, or we have roles available that are more suited for pairs or groups,” she says.

Oxfam Trailwalker is being held in Whakatāne for the third time this year. The event helps raise funds to support the work of Oxfam New Zealand to fight poverty in the Pacific.



For more information or to register as a volunteer, visit [www.oxfamtrailwalker.org.nz](http://www.oxfamtrailwalker.org.nz)

## MĀORI WARDS POLL WILL GO AHEAD



The petition demanding a poll of electors on the introduction of a Māori ward or wards in the Whakatāne District has been verified as meeting the requirement that it has been signed by at least five percent (1161) of registered electors. As a result, a public notice that a binding poll will be undertaken will be issued on 23 February and the electoral roll will then be open for inspection and enrolments through until 23 March. Voting papers will be sent to all registered electors on 27 April, with voting open until midday on 19 May.

If a majority of voters support Māori wards, that will trigger a representation review, which will see Council elected members decide on how the wards system should work, and then a period of community consultation before a final decision is made. Any objections to that decision would then be referred to the Local Government Commission for a ruling. If a majority of voters oppose Māori wards, the proposal will lapse.

You can enrol, check or update your details at [www.elections.org.nz/voters](http://www.elections.org.nz/voters)

HAVE YOUR SAY THIS MONTH

## BYLAW REVIEW

Consultation period **12 March – 12 April**

Bylaw changes include:

- Alcohol
- Beaches
- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Dog control
- Ports and wharves

## LONG TERM PLAN 2018 – 28

Consultation period **23 March – 23 April**

Key questions include:

- Should we put more money towards tourism and events?
- Are we getting the priorities right?
- What is a fair way of funding expensive upgrades needed for Murupara’s water and wastewater systems?