

NEW PLAYGROUND FOR TĀNEATUA

Work is underway on the first stage of a family-focused playground and recreation area on the Jack Knowles Reserve in Tāneatua and further stages will be undertaken as funding is secured. When completed, the playground will feature swings, seesaws, a climbing net, barbecues and picnic tables and a basketball half-court.

The \$200,000 initiative is a cooperative effort involving Ngāi Tūhoe, the Whakatāne District Council, Tāneatua School and Te Kohanga Reo a Tāneatua. The original seed money for the project came from Ngāi Tūhoe, who contributed \$23,000 that remained from public donations following the 2007 police raids in Rūātoki. Further

contributions from Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua, Te Kotahi a Tūhoe Trust and the Whakatāne District Council's playground renewal budget have lifted the available funding for the project to \$70,000, while Arrow Construction has donated furniture for the playground.

Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne says the playground will be a wonderful asset for the community and urges individuals, organisations and businesses to get behind the fundraising effort required to complete the project. Potential project sponsors should contact Paula Chapman at the Whakatāne District Council.

WANDERING STOCK A CONTINUING RISK

Wandering stock is a continuing issue in rural areas of the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and this poses a risk to all road users.

Eastern Bay drivers need to be aware of this and take care on the roads. Resulting accidents – often unreported – are common, and we can all play a part in preventing them. Everyone, including landowners, has a responsibility to help keep Eastern Bay roads safe.



Drivers should always expect the unexpected, particularly when driving on rural roads. When animals stray onto the road, it's hard to know what they'll do next. Slowing down and being prepared could prevent a collision and even save your life.

- Be aware. Animals are more active and harder to see at sunrise and sunset
- Reduce your speed when you see animal warning signs
- Stay alert. Animals are unpredictable, so expect the unexpected
- If you see an animal on the road, brake when it is safe to do so
- Avoid swerving. It is safer to hit an animal than to swerve and lose control of your vehicle.

Livestock owners are required to fence their animals in, but in rural areas this doesn't always happen. If you see stock wandering on the roads, phone the Whakatāne District Council on (07) 306 0500 as soon as possible. Immediate action will be taken.

TAKE CARE ON SHARED WALKWAYS

Many of Whakatāne's walkways are shared, which means they are used by walkers, cyclists and runners. In the interests of safety, all users are asked to be considerate of others and aware of their surroundings at all times.

Walkers should keep to the left side of any path, allowing cyclists room to pass, particularly on corners. And cyclists should give plenty of warning (by calling out or ringing their bell) when approaching walkers from behind.

In addition, be careful when approaching roads or driveways. Look out for motor vehicles and be prepared to give way at any time. Drivers also need to be vigilant for pedestrians or cyclists around these pathways.

Dogs are allowed on some walkways but must be kept under control at all times, and dog walkers must remove dog litter and use bins where provided.

Follow these simple guidelines and we can all be safe and sound on our shared walkways.

DON'T MISS OUT. HAVE YOUR SAY!

We are halfway through consultation on our draft Annual Plan 2014/15 and submissions have started to roll in, but there is still time to get involved.

The draft Annual Plan sets out our budgets for the year (from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015), the projects that we are going to undertake, and establishes how rates costs may change as a result. It's only a proposal though, so let us know what you think.

Also out for consultation is the draft Fees and Charges 2014/15 document, which specifies the fees and charges for Council services. We have already had several submissions regarding the



proposed reduction in dog fees.

Both documents, plus the draft Annual Plan summary and submission forms, are available from Council offices, libraries or online at www.whakatane.govt.nz. Submissions can support, oppose and/or make suggestions about any of the proposals outlined in the draft annual plan and

fees and charges documents. Submissions can also be completed online.

Have a look, and let us know what you think. Now's the time to 'have your say'! You have until 5pm, Tuesday 22 April 2014, to get your submissions to Council.

STRAND PLAZA DEMOLITION WORKS BEGIN

The demolition of three buildings on Whakatāne's Strand has begun in what is seen as the largest development in the town's CBD for many years.

Two of the buildings being demolished, from 136 to 142 The Strand, contain four shops and are being removed to make way for the recently announced Strand Plaza redevelopment - a pedestrian plaza that will provide access to the rear of The Strand and create a strong visual link between the town and the river-edge reserve and harbour. The Plaza will provide an attractive community space, including seating that can be removed to open up the area for special events, as well as decking, trees, and bicycle stands.

A major feature of the Plaza will be a glass and steel verandah designed to complement those of existing stores to



the east and west and to provide weather protection for pedestrians.

The demolition of the third building containing two shops at 132 and 134 The Strand, a privately owned site, will allow the redevelopment of the premises immediately to the east of the Plaza.

The demolition work is expected to take two weeks and the entire project is expected to be completed by 1 October 2014.

TE KŌPUTU SHORT-LISTED FOR AWARD

Whakatāne Museum's display and gallery spaces have been short-listed for another accolade. The development of the Te Kōputu displays undertaken by museum staff is a finalist in this year's Museums

Aotearoa Awards, sharing the spotlight with some much larger organisations with access to far greater funding. The awards were to be announced after Ko Konei went to press.

HIKOI STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIP

A recent hikoī in Te Urewera has strengthened relations between Council and iwi and helped raise the profile of some of the more remote corners of our district. Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne, Councillors Alison Silcock (Galatea-Murupara Ward) and Andrew Iles (Tāneatua-Waimana Ward), together with Chief Executive Marty Grenfell travelled into the very heart of Te Urewera, to the village at the foot of Tūhoe's sacred mountain, Maungapōhātu.



Maungapōhātu vista – Rua Kenana's house in right foreground.

The hikoī party received a warm welcome from Richard and Kiri Tumarae (the Marae Committee Chairman and Secretary respectively) and others from their hapū.



Mayor Bonne says the hikoī proved to be an emotional experience for those involved and has given the Council a better understanding of the needs of this remote and beautiful part of the District.

CONSERVE WATER NOW TO AVOID RESTRICTIONS

Whakatāne and Ōhope residents are being reminded of the need to conserve water in order to avoid restrictions on usage.

and tidal situation and the ability of households and businesses to make voluntary reductions in their water usage."

Whakatāne District Council Infrastructure General Manager Tomasz Krawczyk says the current low river flow means that salinity encroaches upriver on high tides, which restricts the amount of water the town's water treatment facility can extract from the river.

Simple conservation tips include bucket-washing cars or boats, not refilling or topping-up swimming pools, fixing leaking taps, cutting shower times and not taking baths, and catching the unused water produced while waiting for showers to warm up in a bucket for use in washing machines or for other purposes.

While there is no immediate threat, Mr Krawczyk says the Council has put in place a three-stage restriction process, which will be implemented if the need arises. "We hope that restrictions can be avoided, but that's entirely dependent on the river flow

Regular information will be provided to keep consumers up-to-date with consumption trends and the water treatment and storage situation.

Water Restriction Level

1

Voluntary Reductions

Sprinkler & Hose Restrictions

Sprinkler & Hose TOTAL BAN

2

3

REDUCE YOUR WATER USE!

3

www.whakatane.govt.nz

HI-TECH SURFACE FOR TENNIS COURT

The public court at the Rex Morpeth Park tennis complex has had a top-of-the-line surface installed.



The newly surfaced public court at Rex Morpeth Park.

In December last year, the Whakatāne Tennis Club approached the Council with a proposal to upgrade the public court and the Council agreed to offer financial

support. Plexipave New Zealand was then engaged to repair surface cracks and seams before three layers of hi-tech surface material were applied, followed by line marking. The new surface is not only more durable, but absorbs less heat and is easier on footwear.

The court will remain available to the public, and will also be utilised for club events. The Council appreciates the club's commitment to upgrading the public court and acknowledges that it will be a huge asset to the community.

SUBDIVISION LAND SALE CONFIRMED

The Whakatāne District Council has signed an unconditional agreement with Seascope Developments to sell 2.4 hectares of land at Port Ōhope for \$3.3 million.



View from the foredune adjacent to the Seascope development.

Mayor Tony Bonne has welcomed the agreement and says the high-quality, 30-section subdivision which will result in an extremely positive development for the Whakatāne District. "I'm very confident that we have achieved the best possible outcome for ratepayers," the Mayor said, "while ensuring that impetus will be added to the District's economic development efforts".

The land at 325-345 Harbour Road was the subject of a conditional sale and purchase agreement in late-2013. Following a due diligence process, which involved a comprehensive marketing programme throughout the early summer, Seascope Developments made adjustments to the asking price for rear sections in the development. As a result, variations were sought to the conditions in the original

agreement. Settlement will take place on 30 June, or earlier.

"I understand that Seascope now has sale contracts on close to two-thirds of the available sections and that the majority of buyers are from outside the District, which will bring new investment into the area," Mr Bonne said. "That provides strong confirmation that this development has been a major stimulus for the local property market, which can only be positive for our economy."

WATER RATES INVOICING

Residents of the Rangitāiki Plains and extension are advised that we've made some changes to your water rates invoices.

In the past, if you used in excess of your daily water entitlement, you were charged for this usage on a separate invoice.

To make things simpler, the excess usage is now combined with the standard water rates invoice; just check your next invoice for an itemised breakdown of all charges.

