SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Kia Reretahi Tātau

AGENDA

Environmental Sustainability Committee Meeting

Thursday, 26 November 2026

I hereby give notice that a Environmental Sustainability Committee Meeting will be held on:

Date: **Thursday, 26 November 2026**

Time: **2:30 pm**

Location: **Supper Room, Waihinga Centre, Texas Street Martinborough**

James O'Connor

Group Manager, Infrastructure and Community Operations

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1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA – OPENING

Kia hora te marino
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana
Hei huarahi mā tātou i te rangi nei
Aroha atu, aroha mai
Tātou i ā tātou katoa
Hui ē! Tāiki ē!

May peace be widespread
May the seas be like greenstone
A pathway for us all this day
Let us show respect for each other
For one another
Bind us all together!

2 APOLOGIES

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND TRIBUTES

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

6 ACTIONS FROM PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7 URGENT BUSINESS

8 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

8.1 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 JULY 2026

Author: **Amy Andersen, Lead Advisor, Democracy and Committees**

Authoriser: **James O'Connor, Group Manager, Infrastructure and Community Operations**

File Number: **N/A**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the minutes of the Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting held on 23 July 2026 are confirmed as a true and correct record.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 **Minutes of the Environmental Sustainability Committee Meeting held on 23 July 2026**

MINUTES OF SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE SUPPER ROOM, WAIHINGA CENTRE, TEXAS STREET, MARTINBOROUGH
ON THURSDAY, 23 JULY 2026 AT 10:00 AM

PRESENT:	Cr Rachel Clarke (Chair), Cr Collier Isaacs, Cr Rupert Watson and Deputy Mayor Rob Taylor.
APOLOGIES:	Mayor Fran Wilde and Cr Andrea Rutene.
IN ATTENDANCE:	Stefan Corbett (Group Manager, Corporate Services), Mandy De Ritter (Waste Coordinator), Melissa Stockley (Manager, Community Operations) and Amy Andersen (Lead Advisor, Democracy and Committees). Cr Quentin Duthie, Pete Huggins and Tash Styles (Greater Wellington Regional Council – GWRC). Sophie Wolland (Waste MINZ).
CONDUCT OF BUSINESS:	This meeting was held in the Supper Room, Waihinga Centre, Texas Street, Martinborough and via audio-visual conference. This meeting was live-streamed is available to view on our YouTube channel. The meeting was held in public under the above provisions from 10:00am to 11:35am.

OPEN SECTION

1 KARAKIA TIMATANGA – OPENING

All in attendance opened the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 APOLOGIES - 23 JULY 2026

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ESC2026/01

Moved: Cr Taylor
Seconded: Cr Isaacs

The Environmental Sustainability Committee resolved to accept apologies from Mayor Wilde and Cr Rutene.

CARRIED

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No interests were disclosed relating to items on the agenda or interests not already recorded on a relevant register.

4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND TRIBUTES

There were no acknowledgements and tributes.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

6 ACTIONS FROM PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

7 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

ITEM MOVED:

9 CHAIRPERSON REPORTS

9.1 CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN FEATHERSTON

Cr Clarke spoke to the report, outlining environmental concerns relating to air quality, water quality, soil contamination, traffic impacts, waste issues and Lake Domain management.

Members discussed the need to view many issues as district-wide rather than Featherston-specific; clarification of environmental reporting pathways and agency responsibilities; air quality impacts from domestic wood burners and rural burn-offs; and historic landfill and contaminated land management.

Cr Clarke foreshadowed an amendment to recommendation b to seek further information rather than advocate to GWRC at this stage.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ESC2026/02

Moved: Cr Watson
Seconded: Cr Isaacs

The Environmental Sustainability Committee resolved to the following, including the foreshadowed amendment (to recommendation b) which became part of the substantive resolution:

a) Receive the report Environmental Issues in Featherston.

b) Seek to improve an understanding of reporting pathways and responses relating to air and water pollution incidents; through engagement with Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC);

c) Request reporting from GWRC to the Environmental Sustainability Committee on unresolved environmental incidents;

d) Support a joint public information campaign on:

1. Permitted burning practices;

2. Waste disposal and recycling options;

e) Strengthen collaboration with the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board, DOC, iwi, and GWRC;

f) Request the Chief Executive to review local operational issues, including:

1. Lake Domain maintenance and clean-up;
2. Public facility maintenance;
3. Investigate road safety and signage improvements where pedestrians and cyclists share high-speed roads.

[Items a-f read together]

CARRIED

8 INFORMATION REPORTS FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND STAFF

8.1 VERBAL UPDATE FROM GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL

Cr Duthie, supported by Mr Huggins and Ms Styles provided an overview of Greater Wellington's environmental responsibilities, strategic priorities, funding allocation and current programme of work. The presentation is available to view on our website. Discussion included:

Regional Environmental Management

Representatives from Greater Wellington Regional Council outlined the broad scope of regional environmental management, noting that regional governance requires balancing environmental, social and economic outcomes across a diverse region. Responsibilities span a wide range of activities, including biodiversity protection, river and flood management, air quality monitoring, pest control and climate resilience. The presentation emphasised that successful environmental outcomes rely on strong partnerships between regional and local government, mana whenua, community organisations and other stakeholders.

Climate Resilience

The Committee heard that climate adaptation and resilience planning is becoming an increasingly important focus for Greater Wellington. Officers highlighted the close relationship between flood protection, infrastructure resilience and future land-use planning, particularly as communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. Discussion also touched on the uncertainty surrounding proposed Resource Management Act reforms and the challenges this creates for long-term planning while councils continue to operate under the current legislative framework.

Pest Management and Biodiversity

Greater Wellington reported a significant increase in investment in pest management following Long Term Plan decisions, with expanded activity occurring in areas including Wairarapa Moana and Pūkaha/Mount Bruce. The Committee heard that pest control programmes are being delivered alongside biodiversity restoration initiatives to maximise environmental outcomes. Greater Wellington reaffirmed its commitment to ongoing predator control, habitat restoration and other biodiversity projects throughout the region.

Bird Flu Response

Members discussed the emergence of avian influenza and responsibilities for managing dead birds found along the coastline. It was noted that MPI leads the national response and public

messaging; landowners are responsible for dealing with dead birds on their land; GWRC, territorial authorities and DOC are coordinating responses and public education; and reports of three or more dead birds should be referred through MPI reporting channels.

Environmental Compliance and Reporting

GWRC outlined its compliance and enforcement approach, based on: education, engagement, enablement and enforcement. Pollution hotline should be used for reporting these issues: 0800 496 734. Members requested improved visibility of environmental incident reporting trends and expressed interest in receiving summary information about compliance activities occurring within South Wairarapa.

Wairarapa Moana Collaboration

Discussion focused on greater collaboration between agencies involved in management of Wairarapa Moana; continued GWRC commitment to investing in reserve management and restoration; opportunities to strengthen relationships with the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board and its new General Manager; and the need to balance immediate operational issues with long-term strategic planning.

Public Comment

A member of the public reported additional plastic ducting material being found along the Lake Domain shoreline, potentially linked to railway infrastructure. The information was noted for follow-up.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ESC2026/03

Moved: Cr Isaacs
Seconded: Cr Watson

The Environmental Sustainability Committee resolved to receive the Verbal Update from Greater Wellington Regional Council report

CARRIED

8.2 WASTE MINIMISATION REPORT

Ms De Ritter spoke to the report and provided the Committee with an update on waste minimisation activities and progress toward the regional target of diverting 30% of waste from landfill by 2030.

Members noted that reporting does not capture waste collected through private operators, creating challenges in fully measuring diversion rates. Discussion also covered future capacity requirements at the Martinborough Transfer Station, with Tonkin + Taylor currently assessing infrastructure and investment needs. While recycling rates are improving, officers advised that overall waste volumes continue to increase. Preliminary results from a recent waste audit showed that organic waste remains the largest component of landfill waste (approximately 47%), followed by timber, highlighting the importance of locally focused organic waste reduction initiatives.

Members also discussed broader waste management issues, including landfill capacity and future planning. Officers advised that Bonny Glen Landfill has an estimated 30 years of remaining capacity, while Southern Landfill is expected to close around 2030, prompting regional work on

future disposal options. Updates were provided on government-led product stewardship schemes, including tyres, agricultural plastics and refrigerants.

The Committee also received an update on emergency waste planning, including work to identify temporary debris storage sites and update debris management plans.

In addition, members raised concerns about the growing risks associated with lithium batteries and discussed opportunities to expand community battery recycling facilities, promote safer disposal practices and investigate the costs of additional battery collection units.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ESC2026/04

Moved: Cr Taylor
Seconded: Cr Watson

The Environmental Sustainability Committee resolved to receive the Waste Minimisation report.

CARRIED

8.3 PRESENTATION - LOVE FOOD HATE WASTE

Ms Wolland presented on the national Love Food Hate Waste programme and opportunities for council participation. The presentation is available to view on our website.

Members noted the positive behaviour change results achieved nationally; alignment with waste minimisation and community resilience objectives; annual licence cost of $771 and potential regional collaboration opportunities; and potential use of waste levy funding.

Members expressed support for exploring participation, subject to staff capacity.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ESC2026/05

Moved: Cr Isaacs
Seconded: Cr Watson

The Environmental Sustainability Committee resolved to receive the Presentation – Love Food Hate Waste.

CARRIED

10 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA – CLOSING

All in attendance closed the meeting with a karakia.

The meeting closed at 11:35am.

Confirmed as a true and correct record.

…….. (Chair)

…….. (Date)

…….. (Chief Executive)

…….. (Date)

9 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

10 INFORMATION REPORTS FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND STAFF

10.1 WAIRARAPA MOANA STATUTORY BOARD UPDATES

Author: **Fran Wilde, Mayor**

Authoriser: **Janice Smith, Chief Executive Officer**

File Number: **N/A**

PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with an update on the establishment and work programme of the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board, outline the implications of the Board's role for South Wairarapa District Council, and seek a recommendation that Council provide feedback to the Board on its proposed Overarching Vision and Desired Outcomes for Wairarapa Moana and the Ruamahanga River catchment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board is developing its long-term vision for Wairarapa Moana and has requested feedback from Council.
- The Board's work has implications for Lake Domain Reserve management, future spatial planning, and catchment management across South Wairarapa.
- Members recommend Council develop and provide a response to help inform the Board's Overarching Vision and Desired Outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Note the report
2. Recommend to the Council that SWDC provide feedback to the Board as requested.

BACKGROUND

In 2022 the Government passed the Te Rohe o Rongokako Act (the Act) to give effect to the Treaty Settlements it had agreed with Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tamaki nui-a-Rua and Rangitane of Wairarapa and Rangitane o Tamaki nui-a-Rua (the Iwi).

The Act established the Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board (the Board), with the purpose of acting as a guardian of Wairarapa Moana and the Ruamahanga River catchment for present and future generations. Its purpose includes protecting and enhancing cultural, spiritual and ecological values, providing leadership on sustainable management and promoting restoration, protection and enhancement of social, economic, cultural, environmental and spiritual health and wellbeing of the Moana and its catchment.

The Board comprises representatives of the Iwi, together with representatives of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW), the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC). The Mayor represents SWDC on the Board, with Cr Rutene as the alternate.

A principle responsibility of the Board is the preparation of the Wairarapa Moana Document, which has three parts:

- Overarching Vision and Desired outcomes
- Reserves Management Plan
- Natural Resources Document.

The approach of the Board is that the Document will be grounded in tikanga, matauranga and the partial relationships, history and environment of Wairarapa Moana and the catchment. The Board wishes to complete the long-term Overarching Vision and Desired Outcomes part of the Document in 2027.

The Board has recently engaged a Kaiwhakahaere and a Project Manager, so is definitely gearing up to start delivery.

DISCUSSION

Impact on SWDC

The impact of this change is significant for SWDC in three areas:

- Current management of the Lake Reserve;
- The role of the future Unitary Council in terms of spatial planning; and
- The SWDC/community interest in the Lower Wairarapa Valley development scheme.

Lake Reserve

Currently SWDC directly administers the Lake Domain Recreation Reserve (located just outside Featherston at the northern end of Lake Wairarapa) under the Reserves Act 1977. Its operational responsibilities include:

- Camping and Visitor Facilities. SWDC oversees the designated Lake domain Reserve camping area and maintains public amenities such as picnic areas, shelters, and access roads.
- Recreation Zoning and Safety. Guided by the Lake Domain Development plan, SWDC manages conflicting user activities—such as boating, swimming, picnicking, and camping—to minimize environmental harm and keep visitors safe.
- Local Maintenance. Council staff coordinate ground maintenance, signage and basic infrastructure upkeep within approved annual budgets.

The delivery arrangements for the Lake Domain Reserve are unlikely to change in the near future, but it is important that SWDC continue to report (as we already do) to the Board on any activity we are undertaking and that we work with the Board on future plans.

New Spatial Planning Regime

The 2023- 26 Government replaced the Resource Management Act with two separate laws that mandate 30-year regional spatial plans and shift local government toward consolidated unitary authorities. These reforms separate land-use development from environmental protection while eliminating standalone regional councils in favour of larger unitary models.
Unlike current district councils that manage only land use, unitary authorities prepare and enforce both land-use plans under the Planning Act and natural environment plans under the Natural Environment Act.

Under the new regime, where multiple unitary authorities share a wider region, they must collaborate through joint committees or shared entities to deliver regional spatial planning, public transport and emergency management. The Wellington Regional Leadership Committee is currently setting up a new Spatial Planning Committee which will include the Wairarapa Councils and regional iwi and which will replace the Leadership Committee.

The Planning Act now governs urban growth, housing and infrastructure, while the Natural Environment Act sets hard environmental limits for air, water, soil, and biodiversity.
Every region must produce a long-term spatial plan covering at least 30 years to coordinate housing, business growth, infrastructure corridors and natural hazards. Each region will integrate its spatial plan, district land-use plans and natural environment plan into this single standardised regional framework to reduce duplication.

Transitional consenting began on 30 October 2026, and councils must notify their draft regional spatial plans by 30 June 2028. Spatial plan committees must consult with iwi authorities and communities during the plan-making stage rather than litigating individual resource consents later. Ministers Chris Bishop and Simon Watts confirmed plans to abolish standalone regional councils, with final regional governance decisions scheduled for 2027 and no regional council elections taking place in 2028. However, given the uncertain results of the general election, it is unclear at this stage whether local government reform will proceed in the exact format laid down by the outgoing ministers, though some reform is likely regardless of makeup of the incoming Government.

Since the Board's mandate is enshrined in legislation as a result of Treaty settlements, it is unlikely that it will be changed in any way. This means that spatial plan for Wairarapa or the broader region will need to accommodate the Board's ambitions for Wairarapa Moana and the Ruamahanga River catchment. Clearly this will require close working relationships.

Lower Valley Development Scheme

The scheme is administered by GW (SWDC councillors were briefed on it some time ago). It is important for our residents because it involves flood management - which also obviously impacts on SWDC via the cost of remedial work on roads and bridges damaged in floods. The Act does not give the Board any functions in relation to the existing scheme. However, it is clear that future decisions will need a high degree of collaboration and partnership.

Immediate issues for SWDC

More immediately, the Board has requested SWDC to consider our vision for Wairarapa Moana to inform it when formulating the first part of the Document – i.e. Overarching Vision and Desired Outcomes. Since Wairarapa Moana falls completely within the rohe of SWDC it is important that we are able to respond.

The Board is at present conducting a series of stakeholder/community meetings and several of these are with the SWDC area, so it is likely that a number of our interested citizens are already engaged in some way.

The committee may wish to recommend to the Council that we take some time to explore this issue so we can respond to the Board in the next few months (i.e. early in 2027).

APPENDICES

Nil

10.2 RESOURCE RECOVERY & WASTE AND WASTE MINIMISATION REPORTS

Author: **Melissa Stockley, Manager, Community Operations**

Authoriser: **James O'Connor, Group Manager, Infrastructure and Community Operations**

File Number:

PURPOSE

To inform councillors with an update on resource recovery and waste activities, including operational performance, Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) progress, findings from the recent waste audit, and upcoming projects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Kerbside recycling contamination remains low at 2.3%.
- Waste-to-landfill trends continue to decline.
- The recent Solid Waste Assessment Protocol (SWAP) audit identified food waste as the largest remaining opportunity for diversion
- WMMP projects are progressing across waste reduction, recycling resilience, and organics management.
- Key infrastructure upgrades at Martinborough and Featherston sites are planned or underway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Officers recommend the Environmental Sustainability Committee:

1. Receive the Resource Recovery & Waste and Waste Minimisation Reports.
2. Note the findings of the Solid Waste Assessment Protocol (SWAP) audit and Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP) progress update.
3. Supports the continued implementation of waste minimisation initiatives and planned infrastructure improvements.

BACKGROUND

Council delivers waste minimisation and resource recovery programmes in line with the WMMP. Regular reporting provides updates on operational performance, waste trends, project delivery, and regulatory developments.

DISCUSSION

Recent reporting shows continued low recycling contamination and declining landfill volumes. The SWAP audit found that almost half of kerbside rubbish could potentially be diverted, with food waste remaining the most significant opportunity. Progress has also been made on WMMP actions, including emergency waste planning, event waste management, construction and demolition waste

initiatives, and organics planning. Upcoming work includes site upgrades, improved weighbridge data systems, and implementation of recommendations arising from regional waste planning projects.

APPENDICES

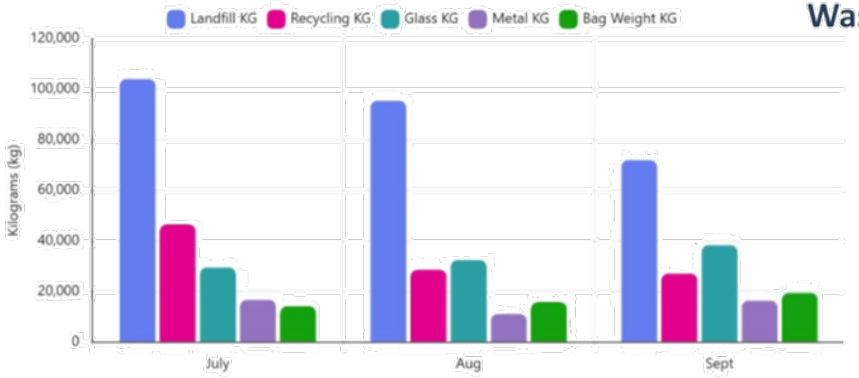
Appendix 1 Resource Recovery & Waste Dashboard November 2026

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL
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Resource Recovery & Waste Update

November 2026

Key Updates	Key Upcoming Actions
Contamination rate for kerbside recycling was down at 2.3% this month. When recycing is monitored, good recycling practices increase.	A station network review by Tonkin & Taylor was commissioned and draft report has been returned. Findings from this report will be shared, and will be useful in future discussions around amalgamation etc.
MCERT reporting has been completed. The Waste Levy funding spent for 25/26 was $128,000. Funds spent include Enviroschools, yellow recycling pods in coastal areas, and a share of a regional adviser for regional WMMP projects.	New litter fence to be installed around the landfill area at Martinborough. This is in response to feedback from residents regarding migrating rubbish. Due to be completed week of 9th November.
The waste audit of kerbside and transfer station waste has been completed, with the final report attached for this meeting. (SWAP)	Work to repair and upgrade kiosk at Martinborough also due to start at the end of November.
Updates to the WMA and Litter Act will not be introduced to Parliament this term, and the Government has advised that no further work will progress. Without stronger legislation requiring producers to take responsibility for the products and packaging they place on the market, means council remains responsible for managing much of the resulting waste.	A new weighbridge data system to be installed at Martinborough to allow clearer data capture on refuse and recycling. This will follow the kiosk upgrade.
Phasing out of PVC and polystyrene food and beverage packaging will also not be implemented by Parliament at this time; without this legislative reform, the council have fewer tools to influence waste generation and reducing waste at events remains an ongoing challenge.	Re-cladding of the shed at Featherston recycling station is due to start in January (weather dependent).



Waste Summary

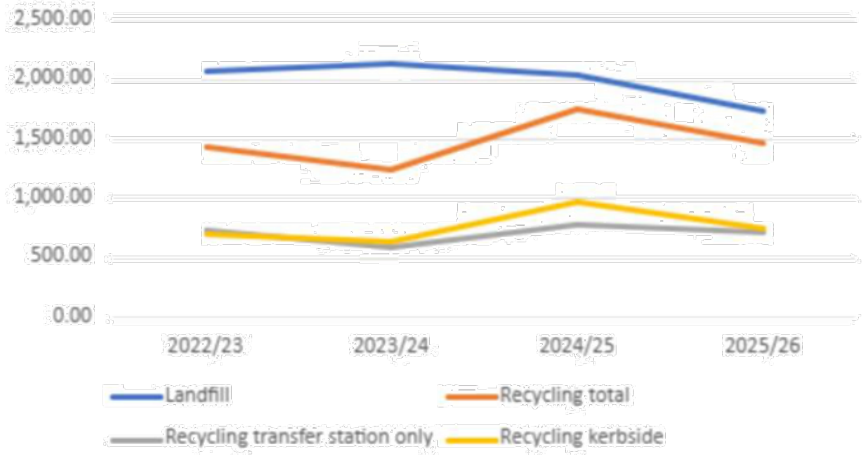
The data in this report reflects a five-week cycle.

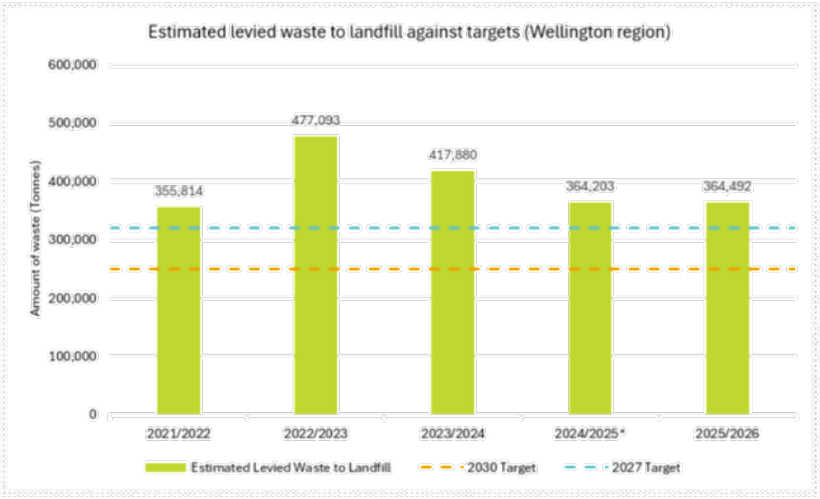
Lower waste-to-landfill and recycling totals could reflect the quiet period in areas that double in population during warmer months, or an increase in residents joining private waste collections.

Kerbside recycling contamination levels continue to be the lowest recorded levels across NZ.

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL
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Landfill & Recycling Data Trends 22-26





The graph above shows waste and recycling volumes reported to the Ministry for the Environment over the past three financial years. 2022-23 data is the baseline for the WMMP target, and overall, both kerbside recycling and landfill disposal have shown a downward trend for the last three financial years.

Several factors may be contributing to this decline. One possibility is an increase in the use of private waste collection services by households. Where privately collected waste is processed or disposed of outside the region, it is not captured in council reporting data. To improve data accuracy and visibility of waste flows, licensing of private waste operators is being considered, following a trial undertaken in the Wellington region.

Research indicates that **pay-as-you-throw** systems, such as refuse bag collections, generally result in lower volumes of waste sent to landfill and higher recycling rates. These systems provide a direct financial incentive for households to minimise waste and separate recyclable materials. In contrast, fixed-charge wheelie bin services can reduce this incentive, as households have access to greater disposal capacity at no additional cost. Evidence suggests that convenience and available disposal capacity are significant factors influencing household waste and recycling behaviours.

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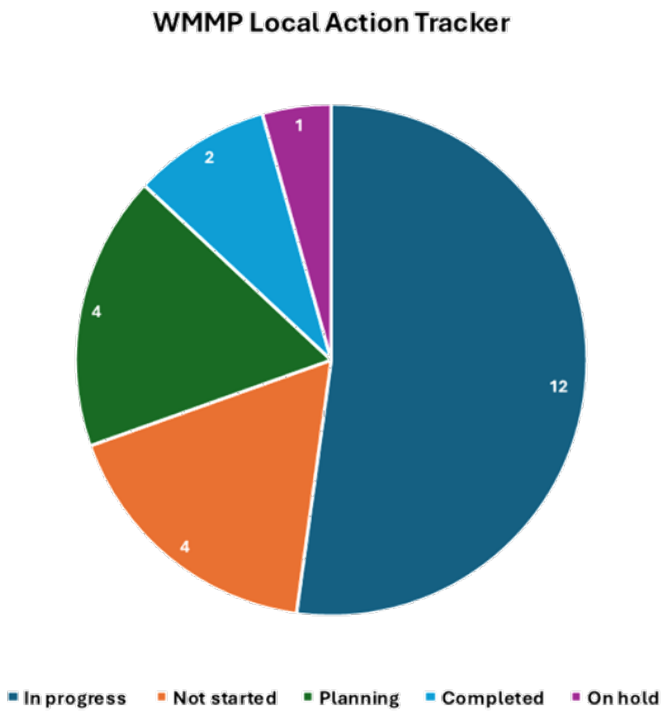
WMMP Progress Update

Waste Management and Minimisation Plan Progress Update – Year 3 of the 6 Year Action Plan

- The Steering Group has completed two successful mid-term workshops to realign the WMMP work programme. Resources have been redirected to higher-priority projects, including **Recycling Options** and **Future Pathways**. The Future Pathways project was accelerated following an earlier-than-expected closure date for **Spicer Landfill** (2027) and the resulting pressure on remaining landfill capacity. The Recycling Options project was prioritised following the closure of the **Masterton Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)**, (July 2027) highlighting resilience risks associated with reliance on a single processing facility.
- A new **Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Plan** has been developed to support implementation of the Solid Waste Bylaw. The plan requires developments valued over $2 million to prepare a waste management plan, while encouraging all construction and deconstruction projects to do the same. Promotion of the plan will be undertaken in collaboration with council building and planning teams to improve data collection on regional C&D waste.
- The **Waste Management in Emergencies** project has progressed to the implementation phase. Project partners are meeting regularly to support the development of emergency waste management plans across the region. The **Wairarapa Disaster Waste Plan** is currently under review by the Emergency Operations Controller.
- An updated **Event Waste Plan** is now available on council websites as an online form. This will be supported by revised event packaging guidelines, which are nearing completion.
- A nationwide kerbside recycling education campaign is being developed and will be launched in April. The programme aims to improve recycling behaviours through consistent messaging across New Zealand and will be accompanied by a recycling-themed public engagement campaign.
- The **Future of Residual Waste** project has entered the procurement phase. Due to its scale and complexity, external consultancy support will be engaged to ensure delivery within project timeframes.
- Two Ministry for the Environment consultations have recently closed: one on reducing emissions from organic waste through landfill diversion and gas capture, and another on proposed amendments to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations. Outcomes are expected within the next six months. In addition, the **Wairarapa Organic Waste Next Steps Report** has been completed and aligns with broader Wellington regional initiatives on organic waste management.
- The **Joint Committee Terms of Reference** have been reviewed and updated. Two options will be presented to councillors for consideration and final decision, reflecting the need to modernise governance arrangements that have not been reviewed for several years.
- From March 2027, a regulated nationwide rural recycling scheme will replace existing voluntary programmes. The scheme will expand the collection and recycling of agrichemical containers, bale wrap, and silage plastic through a national take-back system. A rural recycling information resource for South Wairarapa is currently being developed and will be published on the council website once completed.

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WMMP Local Action Tracker



The programme is advancing well, with **75% of actions either completed, in progress, or actively being scoped** (18 of 24 projects). Current work is focused on improving recycling systems, developing future waste infrastructure, strengthening emergency waste management planning, and progressing regional waste minimisation initiatives.

- Two projects have been completed, including development of waste planning initiatives and strategic planning work.
- Three projects remain in the scope stage and are being defined before implementation.
- Four projects have not yet commenced and are scheduled for future delivery.One project is currently on hold pending further direction or external factors.

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SWAP: Key Findings & Implications

Solid Waste Analysis Protocol (SWAP) Study Overview

Six-day sort-and-weigh audit of kerbside rubbish
230 rubbish bags, 95 small wheelie bins, 48 large wheelie bins sampled
Seven-day visual survey at Masterton, Carterton and Martinborough transfer stations
Compared results with 2010/11 and 2012 audits

Organic waste remains the dominant waste stream across all districts and collection types.

Key Regional Findings

Food waste makes up around one-third of kerbside rubbish
Nearly half of kerbside rubbish could be diverted
Waste composition patterns are similar across the region
Diversion opportunities remain strongest for food waste, timber, cardboard and metals

Kerbside Diversion Potential

Potentially divertible through existing recycling and composting systems.

Masterton	Carterton	South Wairarapa
43.8%	47.4%	43.7%

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SWAP: Key Findings & Implications

What is in kerbside rubbish? Organics dominate every district.

Masterton: 48.0% organics
Carterton: 50.9% organics
South Wairarapa: 46.5% organics

Other major components:

- **Plastics** (13-15%)
- **Sanitary paper** (11-13%)
- **Textiles** (7-9%)
- **Paper** (7-8%)

Progress Since Previous Audits

Divertible material in kerbside rubbish bags has reduced significantly since 2010/11. This **suggests a stronger use of recycling services**, though **food waste remains largely unchanged**.

Masterton: 63.2% → 43.8% **(-19.4%)**

Carterton: 63.4% → 47.4% **(-16%)**

South Wairarapa: 66.4% → 43.7% **(-22.7%)**

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SWAP: Key Findings & Implications

Transfer Station Findings

Masterton RTS: Timber 25.9% of overall waste
Carterton RTS: Timber 41.2% of overall waste
Martinborough RTS: Organics 28.3%, Plastics 26.1%

Potential Diversion from Landfill

Masterton RTS: 30.0%
Carterton RTS: 23.3%
Martinborough RTS: 38.9%

Recommendations

1. Prioritise food waste reduction and composting initiatives
2. Explore regional food scraps collection options
3. Investigate timber recovery from transfer stations
4. Strengthen recovery of cardboard and metals
5. Target commercial and construction waste streams for diversion
6. Continue periodic SWAP audits to track progress

The Wairarapa councils have successfully reduced recyclable material going to landfill, but food waste remains the single greatest opportunity for further diversion.

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Organics Feasibility Study: Next Steps

Why a Community-First Organics Approach?

- Organics are the largest component of household waste in Wairarapa, with approximately **2,160 tonnes per year** of food and garden waste currently entering the kerbside refuse stream
- A regional kerbside organics service remains the preferred long-term solution, but key conditions have changed since the feasibility study was completed.

Why Not Proceed with Kerbside Collection Yet?

- **Regional project on hold:** The Wellington Region organics kerbside project has been paused, removing the anticipated shared-service framework and funding pathway.
- **Local government uncertainty:** Potential council amalgamation and wider reform create governance and investment risks for major infrastructure decisions.
- **Waste contract timing:** Future shared waste service arrangements are still being developed and could significantly influence organics processing options.

Why Act Now?

- Landfill costs continue to rise, with the waste disposal levy increasing to **$70 per tonne from July 2026**.
- Diverting organics can reduce landfill costs while building local capability and community participation.

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL
Kia Reretahi Tātau

Organics Feasibility Study: Next Steps

Recommended Next Steps

✅ Support existing community initiatives:
- Te Koru Kai
- Good Lives Wairarapa
- Enviroschools programmes
- Bokashi/pickle composting pilots

✅ Investigate a regional biochar pilot to process woody green waste and support carbon sequestration.

✅ Establish a Wairarapa Organics Working Group to coordinate councils, community groups and future planning.

✅ Develop local processing pathways through community composting, biochar and existing commercial operators before scaling to kerbside collection.

Community-first is a stepping stone, not an alternative, to kerbside food and garden organics (FOGO) collection A full business case should be revisited once governance, waste contracts and local processing capacity are confirmed.

SWDC action will be to follow and champion the community-first approach promoted in this report and continue to invest in local organics diversion initiatives while maintaining the pathway to future kerbside FOGO services.

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL
Kia Reretahi Tātau

Enviroschools in Wairarapa

What is Enviroschools?

- A nationwide environmental action programme that empowers young people to lead sustainability initiatives in schools and communities.
- Supports learners from early childhood centres through to secondary schools through practical, hands-on environmental projects.
- South Wairarapa District Council invests $18,000 annually through Waste Levy funding to support programme delivery.
- Carterton and Masterton District Councils also contribute, with funding based on the number of participating schools.
- The programme is administered by Greater Wellington Regional Council.
- The Wairarapa Enviroschools programme recently celebrated its 21st year, recognising the contributions of students, teachers, facilitators and community partners.
- The milestone highlighted over two decades of environmental education and positive community impact.

Why Council Continues to Support Enviroschools

Council's investment helps:

- Deliver environmental education and awareness programmes in schools and early childhood centres.
- Encourage positive waste minimisation and sustainability behaviours from an early age.
- Support practical initiatives that promote resource recovery, environmental stewardship and community engagement.
- Foster long-term environmental outcomes through partnerships with educators and external providers.

Alignment with Council's Waste Management and Minimisation Plan

Enviroschools directly supports Council objectives to:

- Increase community awareness of waste minimisation.
- Promote resource recovery and circular economy principles.
- Work collaboratively with external organisations to deliver sustainability initiatives.
- Build environmentally responsible behaviours that benefit the community now and into the future.

10.3 GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL ACTIVITIES UPDATE - NOVEMBER 2026

Author: **Amy Andersen, Lead Advisor, Democracy and Committees**

Authoriser: **James O'Connor, Group Manager, Infrastructure and Community Operations**

File Number:

PURPOSE

To provide the Environmental Sustainability Committee with an update on air quality across the Wellington Region, including key findings from Greater Wellington's 2026 Environmental Insights Report and recent monitoring results relevant to the Wairarapa and wider region. Submitted on behalf of Cr Quentin Duthie.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Air quality across the Wellington Region continues to improve overall; however, winter air pollution remains a significant issue in inland Wairarapa communities where woodsmoke from domestic heating is concentrated. Masterton and Carterton continue to experience more than 50 high-pollution days each winter, while monitoring indicates that other Wairarapa towns with high wood burner use and poor winter dispersion conditions, including Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough, may experience similar issues.
- Reports are available here on pages 181-203: https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Documents/2026/10/Environment-and-Climate-Committee-22-October-2026.pdf; and
- And the Air Quality report here on pages 15-62:

  https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Documents/2026/06/Environment-and-Climate-Committee-18-June-2026-Order-Paper.pdf

RECOMMENDATIONS

Officers recommend that the Environmental Sustainability Committee receives and notes the update on regional air quality monitoring and associated findings from Greater Wellington's Environmental Insights reporting.

BACKGROUND

In June 2026, Greater Wellington presented its first Environmental Insights Report focused on air quality. The report was developed to provide elected members with regular information on environmental health, identify key environmental trends, and support decision-making and resource prioritisation.

The report examined the current state of air quality, drivers of change, public health impacts, and opportunities for intervention. Particular attention was given to air pollution from domestic wood

burners and transport emissions, which remain the two most significant human-generated sources of air pollution in the region.

DISCUSSION

The report confirms that the Wellington Region generally benefits from favourable geography and wind conditions that support good air quality. Despite this, several urban areas experience poor winter air quality due to residential wood burning combined with weather and topographic conditions that limit the dispersal of pollutants.

The Wairarapa remains the area of greatest concern. Monitoring shows Masterton and Carterton consistently record poor winter air quality, with more than 50 high-pollution days annually. Census information also indicates some of the highest rates of wood burner use in the region occur in South Wairarapa communities, including Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough, all of which have poor natural winter dispersion conditions. Greater Wellington notes these areas may experience similar winter air quality issues, although comprehensive monitoring has not yet been undertaken.

The report identifies a gradual improvement in air quality over the past decade, largely driven by increased uptake of heat pumps, cleaner home-heating technologies, improved vehicle standards, and the introduction of electric buses. However, the rate of improvement remains slow and Greater Wellington estimates that, at current rates, it could take approximately 20 years for Masterton to achieve World Health Organization annual PM2.5 guidelines.

Greater Wellington considers targeted support for cleaner home heating and improved household insulation to be among the most effective options for accelerating air quality improvements. The report also highlights opportunities to further reduce transport-related pollution through continued public transport electrification and measures that reduce vehicle congestion.

An update provided to the Greater Wellington Environment and Climate Committee in October 2026 noted that winter air quality in Masterton remained within the range typically experienced during a Wairarapa winter, with PM2.5 concentrations exceeding World Health Organization guidelines on 55 days. Greater Wellington is trialling new monitoring technology in Masterton to improve understanding of local air quality patterns and to support more efficient monitoring programmes in the future.

The Environmental Insights Report also identifies several knowledge gaps, including limited information on winter air quality in towns such as Martinborough, Featherston, Carterton and other Wairarapa settlements. Greater Wellington is exploring the use of low-cost sensors to improve understanding of particulate pollution in areas where woodsmoke may be contributing to poor winter air quality.

APPENDICES

Nil

11 KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA – CLOSING

Kua mutu ā mātou mahi
Mō tēnei wā
Manaakitia mai mātou katoa
O mātou hoa
O mātou whānau
Aio ki te Aorangi

Our work is finished
For the moment
Blessing upon us all
Our friends
Our families
Peace to the Universe