



Mayor's message

While the start of 2021 has not been without its interruptions, there is a sense of positivity as we map out the rest of the year. Our major focus now is getting your feedback on the Council's Long Term and Spatial Plans for the district.



In this newsletter, we're putting the spotlight on consultations and welcome submissions right up until 30 April, and this is your chance to have your say. That being said, we ran an active pre-consultation campaign to canvas your thoughts, and Council feels the proposals have been well thought through.

While we face many significant challenges in the coming years, we also have an opportunity to set the right course of action for the future of South Wairarapa.

How much we invest in "three waters" (drinking, waste and stormwater) is a huge issue for the region, our largest dollar spend item, and a major topic in the LTP consultation.

While South Wairarapa has shored up well in the face of this global pandemic, the pressure on jobs and employment is far from over and we need to be prepared for more disruption to the norm.

In this newsletter we share information about the Mayor's Taskforce For Jobs (MTFJ). This initiative, delivered by the Wairarapa Whānau Trust with the Mayor and councillors, aims to support young jobseekers and local industries by building connections.

We also look at employment with a series of pop-up advice sessions and workshops hosted by the district's three libraries. No matter what stage of your working life you are at, these sessions will support you in finding, applying for and understanding new employment.

As always, if you are struggling financially, please give us a ring to talk privately about how we can work with you on payment options and ease any stress you may feel.

Finally, I would like to reiterate how important it is for us to hear your voice on the major decisions in our Spatial and Long Term Plans. If you have never made a submission before, now is the time!

Alex Beijen
Mayor

Library news

Pop-up career advice sessions

Looking for a job, or thinking about a career change? Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston libraries will be hosting free career advice pop-up sessions between March to June 2021. Delivered by experienced career guidance practitioners Kirsten Earnshaw and Gabrielle Riley, these advice sessions are aimed at those entering the workforce, returning to it, or considering a change.

The full schedule of pop-ups is available in the libraries and online.

Job search and application workshops

Alongside the pop-up sessions, Kirsten and Gabrielle will be hosting two special workshops at Greytown Library. Not sure about the best ways to look for a job? Head along to the free two-hour workshop on 12 June. Need help writing your CV and a good cover letter? The workshop on the 19 June is the one for you.

You can register for one or both sessions at any South Wairarapa library. Workshops are free and places are limited to 12 per workshop, so get in quick

For more information please go to www.swdc.govt.nz/libraries.

New website

We have a new website! The new site was launched on 25 March and is the result of a project to move to a more modern, streamlined, and sophisticated online portal.

Our biggest focus was to make it more user-friendly, and especially to improve the accessibility for those on mobile devices. On the new site, you can make online payments, request meetings with the Planning and Building Teams, and sign-up for important updates. It's also much easier to search for the information you need.

This is just the first phase: we are planning to develop the content further to better meet the needs of our community. Please visit the website and have a look – if you have any feedback, we'd love to hear from you via email. Send your feedback to: comms@swdc.govt.nz.



Our bank is stopping cheques

Many NZ banks are phasing out cheques as a payment option during 2021. Many of us already prefer to use online and mobile payment methods as a more convenient way to pay, however, we realise some ratepayers will be affected by this change.

Every bank is on a different timeline, and our bank will no longer accept your cheques after 1 July 2021. Other ways to pay your rates include direct debit (see page 4 for details), internet banking, or paying by cash or EFTPOS at Council offices or service centres at Featherston and Greytown libraries.

Open consultations

When it comes to the future of South Wairarapa, we want to hear from you. The planning decisions we make - including roads, libraries, community events and the water you drink will impact you and your whānau. That's why it's really important we hear from you in the consultation on our Spatial and Long Term Plans.

The Spatial Plan sets the long-term direction for the district over the next 30 years, and protects what is valued by communities while responding to change, growth, and new opportunities. The Long Term Plan sets our strategic direction, activities and budgets for the next ten years.

This phase of Spatial Plan consultation is focused on identifying proposed residential growth options for our towns. Make a submission by Friday, 30 April. Read on to learn more, we look forward to receiving your feedback.

Long Term Plan

Big challenges mean big decisions. As a region, we face an array of complex issues in the coming years. The impact of Covid-19 has yet to make itself fully known, and we must prepare for unexpected changes and challenges as a result. Global climate change is a factor we must consider in all aspects of our development plans. We need to find ways to adapt and mitigate the impact on our region.

We also need to look at how best to overcome challenges to South Wairarapa. Failing infrastructure and historic underinvestment in water infrastructure and roading need to be addressed. At the same time, we must look to the future. We need to balance out solving these

historic issues with the need to invest in the future of our communities. Part of this involves creating and refreshing the public spaces that can help our towns thrive.

The Long Term Plan Consultation Document discusses these challenges and the actions we can take to address them and lays out the options and costs to ratepayers. We want your feedback, in particular on six big decisions the Council has identified in the consultation document.

The six big decisions we're asking are around:

1. Investing in water and wastewater renewals
2. Removing funding for road seal extensions
3. New footpaths kerbs and channels in towns
4. No longer mowing berms in towns
5. The development of a new Greytown play space
6. Closing down the Greytown recycling centre.

Spatial Plan - Residential Growth

South Wairarapa's population is projected to grow by around 20% by 2051. The number of households is projected to grow by around 22% over the same period. How we manage this growth, while protecting what makes South Wairarapa unique, is critical to making our region a better place to live.

The Spatial Plan will help shape the way our communities grow and develop and where this happens. The consultation document sets out a Spatial Plan Diagram showing our strategic framework for the next 30 years, a districtwide map and individual town maps with residential growth options. Providing for residential growth is the first step in developing the Spatial Plan.

Both the Long Term Plan and the Spatial Plan consultation documents are available on our website, as a supplement in the Wairarapa Midweek newspaper on 7 April. To have your say, and for dates for public meetings, visit www.swdc.govt.nz/consultations

Water race survey

Approximately 40% of property owners with a water race have taken the opportunity to respond to Council's water race survey.

"This is a great response, with water race owners providing valuable information about how they currently use their water race and how they feel about future regulatory requirements," says Colin Olds, Chair of the Water Race Subcommittee.

The Council provides two stock water races, the Moroa Race near Greytown and the Longwood Race near Featherston. These races intake water from the Waiohine and Tauherenikau rivers respectively. The water races have been in existence since circa 1890 (Moroa) and 1930 (Longwood), with the original purpose of providing stock watering systems.

It is recognised that changes in owner demographics and farming practices have evolved over time. With environmental and regulatory changes in mind, the Council is committed to the development of a long-term water race strategy for the Moroa and Longwood Water Race Systems.

General themes emerging from the surveys include comments on the effectiveness of planting and fencing for stock watering, support for ecological planting and water quality improvements, the importance of the water races for animal care, and an expectation for regulatory enforcement.

"The survey findings will assist the Water Race Subcommittee with future policy and planning," says Mr Olds.

For more information please visit the Water Race page on our website www.swdc.govt.nz/water-race-review.

Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs

South Wairarapa District Council and the Wairarapa Whānau Trust are working in collaboration on an employment initiative to find effective solutions for youth underemployment and labour, and staffing shortages across the region.

This Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) Community Recovery Pilot in South Wairarapa has been made possible with funding from the Industry Partnerships, Skills for Industry MTFJ Community Recovery Pilot, supported by Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ), Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and other government agencies.

This initiative is a two-pronged approach: supporting young people to be work-ready and find sustained employment, and supporting businesses to identify employees who are work-ready to cover business commitments and deadlines. Young people (aged 16-25 years) not in education, employment or training are able to register with the Taskforce, and so too can businesses that are in need of staff and want to be youth-employment ready. If you (or someone you know) could benefit from this initiative, make sure to register on our website. Applicants don't need to be registered job seekers with (MSD).



Examples of how the funding has been used include support for apprenticeships, employment subsidies, training costs and assets for self-employment.

For more information around the criteria for being eligible to participate or partner with the MTFJ Recovery Programme, please contact Siv Fjaerestad, Community Development Coordinator, South Wairarapa District Council on cdco@swdc.govt.nz

Neighbours Day

Neighbours Day Aotearoa is a great opportunity for individuals, neighbourhoods, and communities to reach out to their neighbours. This year's theme, the Great Plant Swap, encourages neighbours across the country to swap, share and celebrate their horticultural achievements. The Plant Swap and Sale held at

Cobblestones Museum on 20 March was Wairarapa's first event for 2021, with another planned for 31 March.

There were also a number of other events in South Wairarapa to celebrate Neighbours Day, where our communities reached out and met their neighbours.

Just remember though, it doesn't need to be Neighbours Day to reach out to your neighbours – you can do that any day of the year!



Meter readings

A quick reminder that we'll be undertaking meter readings in June. You'll need to ensure meters are accessible and not covered by heavy objects or overgrown. It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure the meters are accessible at all times, so if you are renting, check with your landlord if you are unsure about your meter's location.

Rebates 2020/21

The Rates Rebate Scheme provides a rebate of up to \$655.00 for low income earners. Ratepayers must have been living in the home they own on 1 July 2020.

1. Your rebate will be calculated based on your gross income from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, your rates, and the number of dependants you have. The income eligibility for a rebate is \$26,150-\$42,000.
2. You must provide details of income from your income provider for ALL forms of income, including interest and dividends. If requested by Department of Internal Affairs you must provide proof of this income. Application forms will be sent to those who have received a rebate in 2019/2020 and are also available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, the Council office and online www.swdc.govt.nz/rates-and-property and can be obtained by calling 06 306 9611 ext. 858.

Get your rates invoice by email

If you wish to receive your rates notice by email contact rates@swdc.govt.nz

We encourage you to take up this option to allow Council to use the postage savings on projects to benefit the district.

Rates 2020/21 Instalment four

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Enclosed with this newsletter is the second rates invoice covering the period 1 April - 30 June 2021.

The last day for payment is 20 May 2021. Please pay by this date to avoid the 10% penalty.

Please help us to process payments by ensuring you include the property valuation number for all properties you are paying. If paying online please make a separate payment for each property.

Having trouble paying your rates?

Please contact us as soon as possible so we can work with you on a payment plan. Council's policy is to approach banks and legal representatives to assist us in recovering arrears at the end of the rating year.

For any queries regarding your rates, please contact our rates team at the following email address: rates@swdc.govt.nz

Payment by direct debit

Council encourages ratepayers to pay rates via direct debit as this ensures the correct amount is paid and you avoid paying penalties for late payment.

Based on feedback from ratepayers, we now offer **weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly direct debit options** to pay rates.

Direct debit is the easiest way to pay your rates as we withdraw the funds directly from your bank account at the very last minute. That way you will get the benefit of your funds for the longest time,

and avoid penalties. If you would like your payments to be made by using this method the forms are available from the Featherston and Greytown libraries, as well as the Council office and on our website www.swdc.govt.nz/rates-and-property. All you need to do is complete the form and send it to SWDC, PO Box 6, Martinborough 5741, scan and email it to rates@swdc.govt.nz or drop it off at either the Council office in Martinborough or at the Featherston or Greytown libraries.

**GET IT
SORTED**

Something needs fixing?
Let us know...

To South Wairarapa District Council,
P.O. Box 6, Martinborough 5741

From:

First name

Surname

What's the problem?

Where exactly?

Street, Road, Number

Your phone number (Should we need to contact you to clarify the details)