



October 2024

New pedestrian lights a win-win

New lighting is being installed at the 16 pedestrian crossings in the South Wairarapa's three towns, Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough. All new lighting complies with the Wairarapa Dark Sky Reserve, which enables it to retain low light pollution levels and provide walkers in the district with more visibility during evening strolls at dusk and during darker hours. The first town to have the new lighting is Martinborough, which has the majority of the district's pedestrian crossings with 10 in total. Featherston and Greytown share the other six crossings and will be progressively upgraded with new lighting. The work is expected to be completed this year.



Libraries open longer

Library lovers, bibliophiles and those looking for social connection can all enjoy longer hours and six days a week at all three South Wairarapa libraries in Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough.

A lot of library goers today utilise the wifi, printing and scanning services as well as hard print and digital materials. One of the fastest growing services at the libraries is the Libby App. This gives 24/7 access to ebooks, emagazines, and audio books. The WLS app is also increasingly popular, giving patrons access to their account details, the ability to renew items, and reserve them online with notifications sent when their reserved item is ready for collection.

"Libraries mesh the community together," says Louise. "They provide a sense of belonging and a place to connect with others outside the home, as well as using the services we offer."

The libraries in Featherston, Greytown and Martinborough are now open on weekdays from 9.30am to 5pm and Saturdays from 9.30am to 12pm.



*The Wairarapa Library Service's new librarians (left to right):
Diana Carrillo, Eledir Seren, Isabelle Davidson*

Still feeling impact of 2023 cyclones?

If you're still feeling the effects of last year's adverse weather events, you're not alone and support is available.

A recent survey run by the Wairarapa Recovery Office (WRO) highlighted the ongoing property, financial, social and wellbeing impacts from the cyclones on people and communities in our region. Around 75% of respondents reported



outstanding property damage along with ongoing impacts to their wellbeing and relationships. The WRO works with all district councils in the region to coordinate recovery efforts and build community resilience for future emergency events. If you, your whānau or your farming business still needs support, help is available.

How to find help

- Contact **Rural Support Trust** - for support and referral to other services.
Email: wairarapateam@ruralsupport.org.nz
or phone 0800 787 254.
- Talk to your rural banker, farm advisor or accountant.
- Free call or text 1737 anytime to talk to a trained counsellor.
- Visit depression.org.nz or call the Depression Line on 0800 111 757.
- Talk to your doctor, medical centre health improvement practitioner or contact Practice Plus for after hours medical advice at practiceplus.nz

Library lovers growing



Membership of libraries in the South Wairarapa grew by 800+ people over the past year and the three libraries issued 119,274 items in print; 13,292 audio books and 15,441 ebooks.

Having trouble paying your rates?

Find out more about options for paying rates on page 4

Māori ward reaffirmed

South Wairarapa district councillors have unanimously reaffirmed their decision to create a Māori ward for the 2025 triennium. This decision means the council will have to hold a binding poll on Māori wards in the 2025 election process.

“We stand beside mana whenua and have a strong desire to give Māori a voice in our district’s governance now and in the future. We have a legal obligation to improve Māori participation in our democracy,” says Mayor Martin Connelly.

The council’s Pou Māori Advisor Narida Hooper says that when councillors first voted to establish a Māori ward in 2023, she felt: “Those councillors were thinking of the future they wanted for their Tamariki and mokopuna to grow up in and they recognised the value Māori bring to our communities and that Māori representation in local government is a step towards a dynamic innovative future.”

“This takes nothing away from anyone but provides tremendous opportunity for Māori.

Support for remote communities

South Wairarapa’s remote communities have gained new Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), which have been installed in Pirinoa, Ngawi and Ruakōkoputuna, where a group of community members was given training on how to use the AEDs in late August.

The AEDs were donated by the Wairarapa Recovery Office (WRO) to provide support and resources to rural communities for potential emergencies. “The better equipped and prepared our communities are before emergencies, the better they can respond and recover

afterwards,” said WRO Programme Manager Simon Taylor.

“The AEDs are among a range of resources and equipment that have been donated to communities likely to be isolated during emergency events to help them manage after a disaster. Having them installed in facilities, such as halls, also means they will provide a lifesaving resource all year round.”

Wellington Free Ambulance installed the new defibrillators and will provide ongoing maintenance for them. All installations will be followed by AED and CPR training for volunteers in these communities.



Volunteers at the Ruakōkoputuna AED training session

What will South Wairarapa look like in the future?

South Wairarapa District Council is well into its preparation for our 2025-34 Long-term Plan (LTP). The LTP sets the strategic direction for the district and outlines priorities, how much it all costs, and where the money might come from.

You can keep up to date with our progress at swdc.govt.nz/long-term-plan, including opportunities over the coming months to engage with us as part of the process. Planning in uncertain times is a challenge and now, more than ever, it is essential we hear from the community.

Do you need funds for a project or initiative?

We all need a helping hand sometimes and if your funds are stretched too thin to complete a dream project, help is at hand thanks to South Wairarapa District Councils (SWDC) powerful, new, free to use, Fund Finder, which launched this year. Fund Finder hand picks grants and funding opportunities for individuals, local businesses and community groups. It encompasses all government and private sector grants available and provides top tips to find and apply for grants to maximise the chances of receiving one," says Siv Fjaerestad, Community

Development. Siv hopes Fund Finder will be a game changer in the community to enable people to tap into funds that may potentially come from outside the district and region, but which are well suited to local projects. The South Wairarapa Fund Finder is a one stop shop for everyone looking for funds and is available in partnership with GrantGuru, New Zealand and Australia's leading grant search engine. It's free to register.

Learn more and find funds online at South Wairarapa Fund Finder: grantguru.com/nz/southwairarapa

Rethink, reuse and repurpose

A wise person once said that one person's trash is another one's treasure and don't we know it when we find a bargain in a second hand store or even on the side of the road. It's the roadside, the coast and the shores of Wairarapa Moana that we don't want to find rubbish dumped on, but which has been found in piles and is now the responsibility of the council to clean up. This year, the council has discovered several illegal dumping grounds around the South Wairarapa. This can be costly to clean up and we want to avoid all unnecessary costs to all ratepayers.



The five Rs

- Reduce** ask yourself if you need to buy new items.
- Reuse** can you reuse or give away an item that you no longer need?
- Repurpose** take items you no longer want or need to second hand stores or give them to people who can repurpose them, such as the Men's Shed in your area.
- Refuse** to dump waste in rural areas or anywhere it doesn't belong.
- Rethink** before purchasing new products, the impact of their packaging and whether you need the item.

Recycling Week runs from 21 October to 27 October 2024.

New Greytown Pavilion nearly complete

After several years in the making and as part of the Long Term Plan, Greytown will soon have a brand new pavilion for sports clubs, events and use as a conference venue. The new pavilion will be situated behind the Greytown Swimming Pool and is scheduled for completion in November this year, with demolition of the current building in October. It will replace the existing structure which no longer works very well as a sports club venue due to its size and inability to accommodate different genders in changing room facilities.

"I helped build the pavilion and I'm passionate about it. But it's no longer fit for purpose and we regretfully need to say goodbye to it. We're hoping to salvage the clock-tower to put on the new building that will keep a connection with the past," says John Gray, Life Member and Chair of the Cricket Club Management Committee. The project went to an open tender and was won by Presidential Homes, which has been constructing the new pavilion in three modules. These will be transported to the site where they will be connected to services and to each other. This offsite method of construction significantly reduces the disruption a more traditional onsite build would require from months to a matter of weeks. "The sports clubs that use the current facility for swimming, cricket, football along with Greytown Sport & Leisure have been

fantastic to work with and engaged with the project in terms of design, some fundraising and coordination of contractors for completion works such as building the deck and veranda," says James O'Connor, Manager Community Operations. The new pavilion will be a larger building with more changing rooms, shower facilities, a large clubroom area, bar, kitchen facilities, storage rooms for clubs and an outdoor decking area.



Progress photos show the build in situ at the Presidential Homes facility in Palmerston North where the construction takes place in a large warehouse.

Rebates 2024-25

The Rates Rebate Scheme provides a rebate of up to \$790.00 for low income earners. Ratepayers must have been living in the home they own on 1 July 2024.

1. Your rebate will be calculated based on your gross income from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, your rates, and the number of dependants you have. The income eligibility for a rebate is \$31,510 - \$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 the Department of Internal Affairs you must provide proof of this income. Application forms will be sent to those who have previously received a rebate in 2023-24. Copies of the form can be obtained from the Council office in Martinborough, Greytown and Featherston libraries, or online www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms and by email: rates@swdc.govt.nz.

Having trouble paying your rates?

Please contact us as soon as possible so we can work with you on a payment plan. Council will make every effort to work with you on this process. As a last resort, Council policy is to approach banks and legal representatives to recover arrears.

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

Automatic payment

At the start of each new rating year, if you are paying your rates by automatic payment, you may need to recalculate your payments for the new year's rates.

Please check your payments and adjust these if required. Your payments still need to clear the quarterly instalment by the due date to avoid penalties.

We are unable to recalculate automatic payments for you. To avoid any issues, you can switch to a direct debit where we calculate the payments right up to 30 June, not each quarter. No penalties are charged if paying by direct debit.

Rates 2024-25 Instalment Two

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Enclosed with this newsletter is the rates invoice covering the period 1 October 2024 - 31 December 2024.

The last day for payment is 20 November 2024. 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 for. If paying online please make a separate payment for each property.

Payment by direct debit

We encourage ratepayers to pay rates by direct debit as this ensures the correct amount is paid and you avoid late payment penalties.

We 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 last minute. That way you will get the benefit of your funds for the longest time and avoid penalties. If you would like to pay using this method, forms are available from Featherston and Greytown libraries, the Council office in Martinborough and online at www.swdc.govt.nz/services/forms. All you need to do is complete the form and send it to SWDC, PO Box 6, Martinborough 5741 or scan and email it to rates@swdc.govt.nz or drop it off at either the Council office in Martinborough or at 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 or Road name and number

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