Recount

TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



Keen students put down roots

Taranaki Regional Council

September 2016 No. 102

Hawera High School students showed how much can be achieved in numbers when 45 of them dug in more than 1000 plants on a Manaia property in August.

The group is in the school's Primary Industries Academy Programme, which has 100 students across Years 11 and 12, and undertook the riparian planting exercise to protect and enhance water quality as part of their studies.

The academy's Head of Department, Malcolm McKercher, demonstrated the correct planting method and then the students were away, planting side-byside along streambanks on Phil Nixon's

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State of the Council

Healthy report for waterways

Our annual update on the quality of Taranaki's waterways is enclosed in this edition of Recount.

The update sets out the most recent findings of the Council's extensive freshwater monitoring programmes and is based on detailed scientific reports available on the Council website, www.trc.govt.nz

The monitoring shows that in overview, the region's rivers and streams are continuing to do well.

Water quality measures are either stable or improving, and an ever-increasing number are improving.

The Taranaki Regional Council has recently published a Pre-Election Report, which is a mandatory requirement, to inform the regional community in the run-up to the local authority elections on 8 October.

As required by law, the report was prepared by the Chief Executive, and there was no involvement of the current elected councillors.

The report notes that the Council's strong operational and financial position should continue into the future.

Key points from the Pre-Election Report are outlined below:

Operational achievements

The Council has a successful record of achievement across all of its functions and responsibilities over the past three years and more. Highlights are:

Voluntary Riparian Management Programme: The programme is improving water quality — 84% (12,099 km) of

Local Elections 2016 YOUR VOTE YOUR COMMUNITY

streambanks fenced, 69% (7639 km) protected with plants and 4.3 million plants supplied.

Taranaki's high-quality environment: Fresh water, coastal water and air quality is improving or being maintained. Best ever trends in freshwater quality.

Yarrow Stadium: Secure long-term maintenance and development.

Bus passenger increase: Increase in urban New Plymouth and regional Taranaki to more than 582,000 passengers annually.

Resource consents: 100% processed in statutory deadlines. Compliance monitoring, public reporting and appropriate enforcement.

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Council publishes pre-election report

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Taranaki's biodiversity protected: Approx 100 biodiversity plans being actioned for key native ecosystems.

Animal and plant pest programme: Reducing the impact of pests, including the self-help possum control programme on 240,000 ha.

Flood control upgrades: Waiwhakaiho and Waitara flood schemes upgraded to one-in-100-year protection.

Pukeiti, Tupare and Hollard Gardens: Enhancing and securing future of these iconic gardens.

Ownership of Port Taranaki: Holding strategic investment on behalf of regional community.

Foundation partnership with Puke Ariki

Regional advocacy: Advocacy on significant regional issues and infrastructure improvements such as SH3 from New Plymouth City north and Normanby realignment.

Financial situation & forecast

The Council is in a very sound financial position and that is expected to continue over the medium term.

Strong balance sheet: Assets of approx \$84 million with no external public debt; the Council's balance sheet is expected to remain strong, with no public debt.

Low rates increases: Average 1.3% for past three years and 1% in 2016/2017; rates changes expected to continue at or below inflation; one of the lowest rating councils in New Zealand.

Key risks to forecast

Potential changes to dividend returns from

Port Taranaki Ltd: Dividends are budgeted to account for about 15% of the Council's total revenue. Changes could impact positively or negatively on rates. Estimates for future dividends are conservative and the Council works closely with Port Taranaki Ltd to communicate and coordinate financial planning.

Potential significant changes in direction that are not planned. These could result from changes in the Council's mandated functions, structure or leadership.

Looking ahead

The Council remains strongly focused on its core activities for the well-being of the Taranaki region. Through its work programme and major projects, the Council will:

- Protect and enhance the quality of our rivers, lakes, coastal waters, soil and air.
- Process and monitor consents, respond to pollution incidents and take appropriate enforcement action.
- Supply 450,000 riparian plants each year, with the aim of completing the Taranaki Riparian Management Programme by 2020.
- Work with landowners, and other groups to enhance the region's indigenous biodiversity.
- Control or eradicate pest animals and plants.
- Provide passenger transport services in urban New Plymouth and regional Taranaki.
- Enhance the comprehensive civil defence emergency management system in Taranaki.
- Complete the major upgrade of the Waitara flood protection scheme and maintain the Waiwhakaiho, Waitotara and other schemes.
- Continue to maintain and develop Yarrow Stadium and Tupare, Pukeiti and Hollard Gardens.
- Support Port Taranaki Ltd to ensure its continued growth and success and its critical role in the Taranaki economy.

The Council's role

The Council's role is to work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki by:

- Promoting the sustainable use, development and protection of Taranaki's natural and physical resources.
- Safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards.
- Promoting and providing for Taranaki's regionally significant services, amenities and infrastructure.
- Representing Taranaki's interests and contributions to the regional, national and international community.

YOUR VOTE YOUR COMMUNITY

The candidates

New Plymouth constituency (five members): Tom Cloke, David Gibson, Peter Horton, John Larmer, David Lean, Charlotte Littlewood, Bev Raine, Richard Williams, Craig Williamson.

North Taranaki constituency (two

members): Netta Burnside, Mike Davey, Vicky Dombroski, Rex Hendry, John Hill, Donald McIntyre, Karen Schumacher, Chris Wilkes.

South Taranaki constituency (three members): Michael Joyce, David MacLeod, Karen Pratt, Robert Shaw, Neil Walker.

Stratford constituency (one member): Brian Jeffares, Matthew McDonald.



Election timeline

16-21 September: Voting documents delivered to households. Electors can post the documents back to electoral officers as soon as they have voted.

8 October: Polling day — voting closes at 12 noon. Preliminary results (once all 'ordinary' votes are counted) will be available as soon as possible afterwards.

13-19 October (or as soon as practicable): Official results (including all valid ordinary and special votes) declared.



Project completed on time and within budget:

\$3m investment protects Waitara

Waitara is more secure following the Taranaki Regional Council's \$3.4 million investment to increase the town's flood protection.

The three-year upgrade, finished on time and within budget, is designed to withstand the high and fast-moving flows of a one-in-100-year Waitara River flood, up from the old safeguard that only provided a one-in-30-year protection.

As well as upgrading flood defences, the amenities along the river front have been greatly enhanced and pedestrians can now walk along the riverbank from upstream of the town all the way to the sea.

Throughout this project the Council has remained absolutely focused on giving the Waitara people and businesses the level of flood protection that the town deserves.

The community understands the security and value that resilient flood defences provide for Waitara.

The project included:

- Raising the protection structures by up to 1.5 metres along the length of the scheme.
- Upgrading 3.5 kilometres of stopbanks.
- Construction of 450 metres of reinforced concrete flood wall.
- Construction of 800 metres of gabion basket flood wall (wire cages filled with rocks and sprayed with concrete).







Flooding in 1965 (right) and the flood defences today (top right). The scheme has brought new riverside amenities for people to enjoy (left).

- Two kilometres of walkway beside the river from Toohill Park down to Marine Park.
- Landscaping of walkways and stopbanks.

Anyone who has seen the river in flood will appreciate its might. The 1965 and 1971 Waitara floods devastated large sections of the township, and another flood in 1990 showed the need to further improve protection standards.

The scheme is designed for a one-in-100-year flow, estimated at about 3800 cubic metres per second – more than twice the June 2015 flood (1640 cubic metres) with the river level some three metres higher. The river's average flow is about 60 cubic metres per second.



A one-in-100-year flow does not mean that there will only be one such flood per century, but that there is a 1% chance of it occurring in any given year. The Waitara scheme also allows for climate change and the increasing risk of more frequent large floods.

The value of the upgrade can be measured against the floods of 1965 and 1971, and the June 2015 over-topping of the Whanganui River stopbanks, which had recently been upgraded to an inadequate one-in-50-year standard. Without protection schemes, floods can cause devastation to lives and property. This is why the Council has provided the Waitara community with the level of protection it deserves. The investment can easily pay for itself in hours if the scheme stops the town from flooding.

The \$3.4 million upgrade was financed by existing Council funds. These funds will be repaid over the next 30 years (to reflect the long-term benefit of the assets) by ratepayers in the New Plymouth and North Taranaki constituencies through a targeted rate. The rate will also fund ongoing maintenance of the scheme.

The Council is grateful for the cooperation of many local residents who have had their properties or views affected by the works; and for the support of the Waitara Community Board, liaison committee, local hapu and the wider community. Key parties, including Methanex NZ, ANZCO and New Plymouth District Council, have also made significant investment.



'Chipping away' sets scene for success

Awatuna farmers Phil and Donna Cram are a sunny, go-ahead couple.

It shows in their everyday talk about their children, the management of their 117hectare dairy farm, and their dealings with others. It especially shows in their musings about the benefits of riparian fencing and planting, including beautification of their land and easier management of stock.

The pair joined the Taranaki Regional Council's riparian management programme about 10 years ago and have planted and ordered each year, in good times and bad, to meet its 2020 completion target.

It's been a family affair, with their two children, James and Aleisha, hands-on from the start. Donna hopes the pair – and Opunake High School Enviro Fitness students who helped with the planting as a fundraiser – will be able to see and appreciate their efforts for years to come.

"Our children are really involved with the planting. Hopefully they'll appreciate it when they see it growing. That would be great," she says.

The Crams, who milk 270 cows, try to order about 600 plants a year. Having fenced 2280 metres and planted 3285 metres of streambanks, they've done 100% of their fencing and 61% of their planting. That figure would be higher, but they bought some land that needed extra riparian work.

"I think you've got to just keep chipping away at this," says Phil. "If you just, even in the bad times, take a small piece of stream that needs planting out, rather than a huge piece, and just keep chipping away."

The benefits to date have included better ease of stock management, in that their cows now don't disappear elsewhere or risk getting stuck in a creek, says Phil.

"Everything's obviously 100% fenced now, so there's no stock wandering around, being places they

"... we have a responsibility to the land that we farm – and it is a privilege to farm here."

shouldn't be, and aesthetically ... it's a lot nicer to look at now, and it's got to be better for the health of the stream," he says.

"Certainly with the winter rains when the erosion comes through – the big floods – the stabilisation of the creek-banks is way better than it used to be. There's not the erosion once it's been planted out and is established." Donna says that by ordering their plants from the Regional Council a year in advance, they've been able to plan ahead and buy



species that will attract native birds, and receive the 10% discount on the first 80,000 plants ordered for the season after the current financial year.

"It's certainly saved us money and in 10 years you've paid for one year's plants," she says. "We're just so lucky in Taranaki that we're getting choices compared to other regional councils that are really forcing things onto farmers. I think our council is forwardlooking with the riparian planting and as far

> as I know we've got the only council that is doing that. And when you look around the district now and see the planting a few years on, it's just so nice.

"As we get older I think we realise that we're only here for a short time in the scheme of things and that we have a responsibility to the land that we farm – and it is a privilege to farm here."

Taranaki Regional Council Land Services Manager Don Shearman says the Crams are in a good position to finish their riparian fencing and planting by 2020. Like most of the region's farmers, they have a lot to be proud of, with Taranaki's riparian programme leading New Zealand in terms of scale and voluntary participation, through good times and bad. "The key thing is to order your plants in advance so that the Council can secure enough plants, especially during the lead-up to 2020, while the programme is still voluntary. The fencing is on target and the planting can be completed then if we plant at a slightly higher rate, using a staged approach.

"The Council tenders for external contracts to grow plants in bulk, and has to place these a year ahead in June and July. The only way plants can be supplied at this scale, and at cost, is by advance ordering through our scheme. Those who order for the 2016/2017 financial year can also get a 10% discount on the first 80,000 plants ordered for 2017/2018.

"We are on the right track. Let's work together to meet that 2020 target and show the rest of the country what can be achieved without regulation."

For more details, contact your Land Management Officer or call the Council on 06 765 7127.

Order now for both 2017 and 2018 to get 10% discount on your 2018 plants. Contact your Land Management Officer on 0800 736 222 to place your order.





Keen students put down roots

From Page 1

property and being assessed on whether they consistently repeated the correct skills.

"We cover farming, horticulture and forestry," Mr McKercher says of the two-year programme. "The idea is to complete an NCEA Level 2 Certificate, Introduction to Primary Industries. It also counts towards a New Zealand Certificate in Horticulture or Agriculture."

Overall, the school has more than 150 Years 10 to 13 students studying primary industries, "with an emphasis on exploring and getting started on vocational pathways in this huge industry", he says.

Taranaki Regional Council Land Management Officer Aubrey Day oversaw the planting exercise and explained the region's long-standing riparian management programme, which has seen thousands of kilometres of fencing and planting done by farmers on Taranaki ring plain streamand riverbanks.

This equates to 84.4% now protected by fencing and 69.5% protected by vegetation.

"This programme is significant," says Miss Day.

"It's transforming the landscape in Taranaki. If you think of all of the rivers that are protected by riparian planting from the mountain to the sea, it's a lot."

She was impressed with how much the students achieved over three hours, saying they were quick, courteous, enthusiastic and hard-working.

"It's a win-win for everyone when you've got an organised group like this that helps farmers with their riparian planting.

"It's a good way to fundraise or gain practical experience, and it's great for the farmers because they get a huge amount of riparian planting done affordably and in a short time during their busiest season."

New website brings Council up to speed

The Taranaki Regional Council has launched a responsive new website that allows it to do more business with the public.

The website, at

www.trc.govt.nz, brings together a number of separate sites previously devoted to the Council, its heritage properties at Tūpare, Pukeiti and Hollard Gardens, and Council bus

services. Meanwhile, Taranaki Civil Defence now has a new standalone website at www.cdemtaranaki.govt.nz.

The new sites replace ones that were developed in 2009. "Mobile users were very much at the front of our minds for this project," says the Council's Director-Corporate Services, Mike Nield.

"The new sites are fully responsive to whatever device they are being viewed with."

He says particular attention was paid to environmental data feeds (rainfall, wind, rivers and so on) and bus information, popular features with users of the old website.

Users can now 'favourite' a particular category of environmental data, so that it will always appear on the home page, and can download data, including historical data, relating to individual monitored sites.

Each bus timetable on the new site includes detailed fare information.

New online services give users the ability to:

- Apply for or change a resource consent a limited range at this stage, but this will expand in time.
- Lodge an official information request.

There is also an online services portal page.

Other improvements and enhancements include:

- Simplified site structure.
- Easier navigation.
- Easier social media sharing.

"We're keen to hear what people think, particularly Taranaki people," says Mr Nield.



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The website display adapts to whatever device is being used to view it.

"Hop on the site, have a look around, and use the feedback form to get back to us."

He says people who have favourited or bookmarked pages on the old websites may find the URLs no longer work.

Join in the conversation



Taranaki Regional Council Taranaki Regional Gardens Taranaki Civil Defence



Taranaki public transport Taranaki schools environment group



You

Tube

@TaranakiRC (Council)
 @TaranakiRG (Gardens)
 @TaranakiCD (Civil Defence)

TaranakiRC



Suburban coverage enhanced with route alterations

Citylink bus route changes have resulted in greater coverage of the New Plymouth suburbs of Welbourn, Merrilands and Highlands Park covered by Routes 7 and 8.

Route 8 has dropped its previous off-peak section and now runs the peak route all day.

Route 7 has added Awanui St and Nevada Drive all day. The direction of travel on Karaka St, Riversdale Drive and Kauri Street has been reversed, allowing easier turning access from Mangorei Road.

"The aim has been to enhance the service coverage in these areas and balance the travel time for the two routes," says the Taranaki Regional Council's Transport Services Manager, Chris Clarke. "We understand the changes may cause some inconvenience as people adjust. However, they provide greater opportunities for existing and new users."

Revised timetables are available from the bus drivers or can be viewed at www.taranakibus.info. To stay up-to-date with Citylink news, follow Taranaki Public Transport on Facebook.



New Plymouth Citylink Routes 7 (left) and 8. For timetable information, go to www.taranakibus.info



Use of Smart Cards made easier

Users of Smart Cards on New Plymouth Citylink and the Hawera-New Plymouth Connector bus services now have more options for purchasing and topping up Smart Cards.

"Smart Cards are the most economical way to use the bus and we've made it easier to take advantage of them by expanding the retail network," says the Taranaki Regional Council's Transport Services Manager, Chris Clarke.

New Plymouth Citylink

Citylink Smart Cards can be purchased and topped up at these outlets:

- Puke Ariki i-SITE.
- Bus Centre, Ariki St (Dalroy Tours office).
- Bell Block library.
- Waitara library and service centre.
- Tranzit Coachlines, 15 Sunley St, New Plymouth.

Hawera-New Plymouth Connector

Connector Smart Cards can be purchased at these outlets (and topped up where indicated):

- Opunake Library Plus.
- Pickering Motors, 11 Tennyson St, Opunake (top-ups available).
- South Taranaki i-SITE, High St, Hawera (top-ups available).
- Manaia Library Plus.
- Eltham Library Plus.
- Stratford i-SITE (top-ups available).
- Inglewood library and service centre.
- Puke Ariki i-SITE, New Plymouth (top-ups available).
- Bus Centre, Ariki St, New Plymouth (Dalroy Tours office top-ups available).



Feedback sought on Draft Coastal Plan

The Taranaki Regional Council is reviewing its Coastal Plan, which is the 'rule book' governing the use, development and protection of what's known as the Coastal Marine Area.

The review is an opportunity to make a great place even better. While the region's coast is largely unmodified with good coastal water quality, the Council is keen for improvements to keep Taranaki ahead of the field. It is confident the community shares this ambition.

A major aim of the review is to find the most practical and cost-effective ways for the region to make progress.

After many years of detailed research and analysis, and engagement with iwi, coastal users, industry and others, the Council has drafted a new Coastal Plan that it's seeking your feedback on before formally notifying and consulting on a Proposed Coastal Plan.

The Draft Plan largely continues the existing coastal management regime but with a number of important changes, particularly to bring it in line with the Government's revised New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.

One proposal of particular interest is the establishment of a 'Nationally Significant



Find a link to the Draft Coastal Plan online at www.trc.govt.nz/coastal-plan-review/

Surfing Area' offering increased protection for all the surf breaks between Kaihihi Road and Cape Road.

Now it's time for a wider conversation to test whether this and other proposals stack up and to see what might need changing before we advance to a more formal public consultation process in 2017.

Go to www.trc.govt.nz/coastal-plan-review/ to find links to the Draft Plan, a background and summary document, and various technical papers.

There's also an online form allowing you to send the Council your feedback. The deadline for feedback is Friday 18 November 2016.

Taranaki Regional Council Facts File

Address:	F	Private Bag 713,	
		Stratford 4352	
Street Address	: 4	47 Cloten Road,	
		Stratford 4332	
Telephone:		06 765 7127	
Fax:		06 765 5097	
Email:	ir	nfo@trc.govt.nz	
Websites:	www.trc.govt.nz		
	www.t	aranakibus.info	
		www.tupare.nz	
	www.ho	llardgardens.nz	
		www.pukeiti.nz	
	www.taranakiplants.net.nz		
Twitter:	@TaranakiRC		
		@TaranakiCD	
		@TaranakiRG	
Facebook:	TaranakiRegionalCouncil		
	TaranakiCivilDefence		
	TaranakiRegionalGardens		
Environmental hotline:		0800 736 222	
Civil Defence freephone:		0800 900 049	
NP bus information:		0800 827 287	
Total Mobility:		0800 868 662	

MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday 1 November, 10am: First meeting of the Council following the local body elections.

Tuesday 8 November, 10.30am: Ordinary Council meeting.

Thursday 17 November, 10.30am: Taranaki Solid Waste Management Committee.

Tuesday 22 November, 10.30am: Consents and Regulatory Committee.

Annual Report 'good reading' in challenging times

The Taranaki Regional Council finished the 2015/2016 year in a strong financial position, its record intact as one of the country's lowest rating local authorities.

The Annual Report, adopted by the Council at its September meeting, shows an end-of-year surplus of \$963,000. Expenditure was \$373,000 over budget, in large part due to unbudgeted emergency funding to assist those in need following winter storm damage last year.

"We believe the report is good reading," says the Council Chairman, David MacLeod.

"At a time when many sectors of the regional community are facing increased pressures, all of us at the Council are more mindful than ever of our responsibility to be as efficient as possible in our mission to work for a thriving and prosperous region."

Highlights of the year included:

- More encouraging results from the Council's state of the environment monitoring, most especially for Taranaki's crucial freshwater resource.
- The Council's flagship freshwater project, the Riparian

Management Programme, going from strength to strength. By the end of June 2016, more than 4.3 million native plants had been supplied to landowners.

- Completion, on time and within budget, of the \$3.4 million project to increase Waitara's flood protection to a one-in-100-year standard.
- Good progress in the redevelopment of Pukeiti.
- Years of advocacy by the Council bearing fruit with the Government's announcement in January of multimillion-dollar bypass projects at Mt Messenger and Awakino Tunnel.
- Responding to 585 reports and complaints of pollution and other environmental incidents.
- Processing 100% of resource consents within RMA timeframes for the 16th straight year.
- Extending the coverage of Biodiversity Plans to 3,370ha of ecologically important habitats on private land.
- Further increasing passenger trips on Council-provided bus services to more than 605,600.

The full Annual Report will be published on the Council website, www.trc.govt.nz







The kitchen at Tūpare has been restored to its original 1930s splendour.

Taste of authenticity for Tupare's kitchen

The kitchen at Tūpare's distinctive Chapman-Taylor house has been restored to its 1930s splendour.

"We consulted the original plans and members of the Matthews family to make it as authentic as possible," says the Taranaki Regional Council's Regional Gardens Manager, Greg Rine. "You certainly get a feel for kitchens of that era – a bit different from today!"

The original kitchen had been remodelled and modernised in the 1990s, when the house was being used as a commercial functions centre.

The refurbished kitchen will now be included in the popular and free house tours conducted by the Friends of Tupare. These will run at 11am and 11.30am on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from 30 September until the end of March.

Superb backdrop for exquisite woodcraft



A winter highlight at Hollard Gardens was a Woodcraft Expo including this display of exquisitely crafted pieces and demonstrations of lathe work, carving, scroll saw, pyrography and inlay techniques, with members of Stratford Woodturners and New Plymouth Woodturners Guild on hand. The expo was well-attended and generated positive discussion and comments on our social media

channels. It was also an opportunity to highlight the versatility of the Hollard Centre at Hollard Gardens.

Gardens events

Sunday 25 September, 2pm-4pm, Hollard Gardens, Kaponga: Workshop - food gardening for beginners. Tips, information and advice on gardening simple economically manageable spaces. Aimed at busy people with busy lives.

Sunday 2 October, 6.30pm-9pm

Pukeiti: Explorer Day - the river at night. Join our river experts and find out what happens in a stream after dark. Numbers strictly limited and registration essential email workshops@trc.govt.nz with your details.

Saturday and Sunday 8 and 9 October, 10am-3pm, Hollard Gardens,

Kaponga: Women weavers at work. Demonstrations of the art of harakeke/flax weaving and the creation of new pieces. Try your hand at the basics.

Powerco Taranaki **Garden Spectacular**

28 October -6 November

Catch these Festival events at Tupare, Pukeiti and Hollard Gardens:

Daily

- 9am to 5pm: Photograph exhibition: The Magnolias of Tūpare, by Tara Jahn-Werner. Tūpare gardener's cottage (exhibition opening: 2pm, Saturday 29 October).
- 10am to 1pm (last tour at 12.30pm): • Tūpare house tours. Free.
- 11am and 2pm: Pukeiti garden walks. Free.
- 2pm: Hollard Gardens walk. Free.

Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays 11am: Tūpare garden walk. Free.

Saturday and Sunday 29 and 30 October 9.30am-4pm: New Plymouth Orchestra plays in the garden at Tūpare. Shelter and seating provided. Free.

Friday 4 November

12 noon-6pm: Chapman-Taylor tour. Takes in Wilkinson's Castle, Plas Mawr and Tupare. Lunch at Wilkinson's and wine and nibbles at Tūpare. \$85pp. Book at Festival office, cnr Brougham and Powderham Streets, NP, ph 06 759 8412.

