

# Community Connection

Issue 210 FEBRUARY 2025



Bernie Wanden

## Message from the Mayor

**Kia ora Horowhenua,**

I hope you had a pleasant Waitangi Day last week and for those of you who took an extra day off and turned it into a long weekend, I'm

sure you enjoyed some relaxation and time with loved ones. I was able to spend some time soaking in the celebrations at Donnelly Park. The event, hosted by Muaupoko Tribal Authority, brought our community together in the spirit of whanaungatanga – whānau and connection. A huge thanks to all the organisers and volunteers who made it happen and everyone who joined in across the district. I would also like to acknowledge Foxton and Shannon iwi and community members who led festivities in their respective towns which I am told were well attended and enjoyed by all. From the kapa haka and live music in Foxton to the fun in Shannon, it was a day full of community spirit and celebration.

Last week we welcomed 27 new citizens to New Zealand citizenship at our first ceremony of 2025. Congratulations to each of you, may your journey ahead be filled with joy, success and opportunity. You've certainly chosen a wonderful part of the country to settle in.

We're in the process of developing the Annual Plan for 2025/26, and we're sticking with the direction agreed on in our Long Term Plan, staying focused on delivering essential services. Some good news – we've managed to reduce the proposed rate increase and find savings, including cutting consultation costs on the Annual Plan, as there are no significant changes to the Long Term Plan. This approach allows us to focus on providing value to you while keeping costs in check. We'll keep you updated as we move forward.

This week we have asked for expressions of interest for the Foxton Futures Group, a team of community members, councillors, and council officers focused on making a meaningful impact in the Foxton and Foxton Beach community. Voluntary participation would suit members of the community who are passionate about Foxton and Foxton Beach, good communicators, and able to bring various groups of people together. We want a thriving Te Awahou Foxton where history is honoured, people and culture are celebrated, and natural surroundings are proudly treasured by all who work, live and play there. This group will be instrumental in making that happen.

While we've had some beautiful weather recently, there is a lot of strain on our water supply. We already have different levels of water conservation in place around the district so it's important we all do our part to reduce that strain. There are lots of different, and simple, ways you can use less water at home. Check out [www.horowhenua.govt.nz/water](http://www.horowhenua.govt.nz/water) for a comprehensive list of water saving tips and help us protect this precious resource.

Speaking of hot weather, Fire and Emergency New Zealand has declared a restricted fire season for parts of the Manawatū-Whanganui District from 8am on Friday 7 February until further notice. The restrictions apply to Horowhenua, Manawatū, Palmerston North, Rangitikei, and Whanganui areas. A restricted fire season means anyone who wants to light an outdoor fire will need to go to [www.checkitsalright.nz](http://www.checkitsalright.nz) to apply for a permit authorised by Fire and Emergency.

Ngā mihi,

Mayor Bernie Wanden

## Council Meetings



### Risk and Assurance Committee

Wednesday 26 February 2025, 10am  
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin



### Te Awahou Foxton Community Board

Monday 10 March 2025, 6pm  
Ngārongo Iwikātea Room, Te Awahou  
Nieuwe Stroom, 92 Main Street, Foxton



### Chief Executive Employment and Performance Committee

Wednesday 19 March 2025, 10am  
Tararua Room, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please refer to [horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings](http://horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings) for the full meeting schedule, minutes and agendas.

## Be mindful when driving on beaches

**With summer heating up, Kiwis are flocking to their local beaches to soak up the sun. The Horowhenua District is one of the few places in New Zealand where you are allowed to drive on beaches. It is a privilege and it is important those who do so are mindful of their surroundings.**

Beaches are shared spaces. From keen fisherman to equally keen sandcastle builders, everyone has a right to enjoy them safely.

Our beaches are also enjoyed by wildlife, such as native birds and birds that migrate here from overseas each year. Their environment must also be cared for.

### Safety tips for driving on beaches:

- You must observe a 30km/h speed limit.
- Follow all the New Zealand road rules, as these apply equally to beaches and roads.
- Watch out for beach hazards and be aware that conditions can change quickly on the coast.
- Check the tides, which can change rapidly.

- Drive slowly and carefully, especially around children and other beachgoers.
- Only use signposted vehicle accessways to the beach.
- Keep off the dunes.
- Be mindful of wildlife.



## WATER CONSERVATION

### Save water now, avoid restrictions later

The sun has certainly been shining on Horowhenua District lately. While this is great for your vitamin D intake, it also means more pressure is being put on our water supply.

We already have different levels of water conservation in place around our district – you can find out if this applies to you by visiting our website or calling our office on 06 366 0999. If we all save a little water now, we may be able to avoid further restrictions later. There are handy tips on our website. Thank you Horowhenua – every drop counts!

[horowhenua.govt.nz](http://horowhenua.govt.nz)



@ events@horowhenua.govt.nz 06 366 0999

Pop Up Eats Horowhenua

## Native plants beautify local stream

**Working with local hapū Ngāti Whakare, we're about to start the next stage of planting native trees alongside the Ōtauru Stream in Shannon.**

The Ōtauru Stream Riparian Planting project aims to improve the water quality and ecosystem of the stream.

We've already put in around 750 native plants between Graham and Margaret Streets and on the land once occupied by the Velvaleen Farm, and there's another 800 to come in July. The native plants used in this project are locally sourced and are indigenous to the landscape.

And now we're starting work clearing the land between Levin Street and Nathan Terrace.

We have also installed a lovely new seat on Graham Street – so go on, take the weight off your feet and enjoy the view over the stream.

Many thanks to all our community partners for their help with this work.



## Worried about your water meter?

**Have we installed a new smart meter at your property yet? Are you worried you'll start being charged for water?**

Relax, you already pay for 91,000 litres of treated drinking water every three months through your rates if you live in Levin, Foxton, Shannon or Tokomaru (Foxton Beach has a different charging system). That's a lot of water – about 1000 litres a day.

You won't be charged any extra unless you use more water than that. If your meter shows you are using lots of water, it might mean you have a leak – we'll pick that up when we read the meter electronically and ask you to fix it.

If you do so within three months and provide evidence, we won't even charge you for the extra water you've used.

Using less water is good for the environment and saves money on treatment and plant maintenance.

And finding and fixing a leak on your property might save you expensive repairs in the future.

As for those meters – we've almost finished installing them in Shannon and Foxton, and are halfway through Levin. Tokomaru and Foxton Beach are next. If you have any questions, contact Council – we'll be happy to answer them for you.



## Turning books into trees

**From December to March, Green by Nature and the Levin Library are joining forces to get more people reading and trees planted in the Horowhenua District.**

Community members are encouraged to track their reading – the more they read, the more native trees will be planted at Kowhai Park. These trees are leftover from other projects and our friends at Green by Nature saw it as an opportunity to expand young minds.

It's not too late to get involved. Visit Levin Library to get your child started on this green reading adventure.

It's a win-win: Kids develop their love for reading while helping make Levin greener.

[tetakere.org.nz](http://tetakere.org.nz)



HALFWAY THROUGH, THE RESULTS ARE:



**22.6**  
Trees Unlocked



**109,919**  
pages read



**2260**  
leaves earned

Let's  
**KŌRERO**

## Draft Local Waters Combined Bylaw

**Don't forget to have your say.**

We're proposing to have one combined bylaw covering all our local water services. Currently there are three different bylaws and no stormwater bylaw.

The proposed local waters combined bylaw aims to protect public health and safety, safeguard the environment, help Horowhenua District plan for future growth and ensure users pay for local water services.

Submissions close on Friday 14 March 2025 – visit our website to find out more and make your voice heard.

[letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz](http://letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz)

**Don't just dream.  
Vote to be heard.**

**VOTE  
2025**  
LOCAL ELECTIONS

**Have you enrolled to vote yet? This is the first step towards making sure your voice can be heard in the Local Government Elections later this year.**

This is an opportunity to have your say on who Horowhenua District Council's decision-makers will be for the next three years. Before you can vote you need to make sure you are enrolled and your details are up to date. If you are registered to vote in Parliamentary elections, you are automatically enrolled to vote in local elections, however it is important your address and contact details are correct. To enrol, check or update your details:

[vote.nz/enrol](http://vote.nz/enrol)

## In the Works

**MacArthur Street in Levin is closed from Cambridge Street to Queenwood Road while we install new sewerage and water mains. Residents still have access from the Queenwood Road end.**

Margaret Street in Shannon will have reduced speed and shoulder closures while we install new water mains during the coming months.

In both cases the work is crucial to replace outdated pipes, prevent leaks and improve service. Expect some disruption and be sure to follow any changing traffic management. Excavations will be fenced off and covered each day to keep everyone safe. Please drive carefully and obey all temporary speed limits and fenced areas.

Thanks so much for your patience and cooperation while we complete these important projects.