



Ōpōtiki District Council
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE

Pānui

Issue 85 // April 2021



Keeping you up to date with Ōpōtiki District Council

Pou raised at Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangī

These beautiful carved pou will be unveiled when the building is opened later this year so we can't show you any of the carving. But we can show you a few shots of the process to get them out of the carving studio and into the library – looking wrapped and ready in their new home.

A huge thanks to Heke Collier who is the master carver behind these taonga and who has trained and led a small team of carvers through the process. Thanks also to Livingstone Building Construction Manager, Tim Bunnett who was very hands on making sure each measurement was exact and that everything went smoothly.



From the Mayor

The seasons change just like always but what a difference a year makes!

Last April I was thankful for such amazing commitment from the whole community as we got through the national Level 4 rāhui. I was also writing about Council's need to start planning for 'recovery mode' and how we make sure that Ōpōtiki emerged from the Covid crisis strong and resilient.

Just one year later, and I can see what a difference our focus on recovery has made. Our new harbour entrance is taking shape. The mussel processing factory is training up recruits and planning on an opening in the middle of this year. And Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangī is standing tall and proud in the main street. We have kilometres of new footpaths and cycleway extensions. Changes and spend up the Coast on some neat horticultural projects in Raukōkore and Te Kaha.

So the Long Term Plan questions are really well-timed to check in and make sure you are comfortable with the direction council is taking. You'll see more in this Pānui about how to give feedback on our LTP and Council would really value your time. It's easy online – just fill in some questions and write down your thoughts. But we still welcome paper submissions posted in or emailed to us.

If you'd like to know more about anything in this Pānui, just talk to a councillor or get in touch with Council directly – there is just so much going on at the moment it can be difficult to fit on a page!

Lyn Riesterer, Mayor



LONG TERM PLAN

CONSULTATION ON OUR 2021-2031 LONG TERM PLAN IS NOW OPEN!

This document sets out our activities for the next 10 years and how we plan to manage, deliver and pay for them.

These decisions can affect things like debt, the levels of service you get, and the amount of rates you pay. That's why it's important for us to hear what you think on the important issues and choices ahead.

OUR FOUR KEY ISSUES ARE:

- 1 Hukutaia growth** – The roll out of infrastructure into Hukutaia to unlock housing required for growth
- 2 Solid Waste** – the provision of bins at each public toilet in response to request to councillors
- 3 Mobile services on the coast** to provide accessibility of services
- 4 Social Development** – creating a mandate for council to step up its activities in social development to help ensure that our major projects deliver benefit to our communities.

We have produced a shorter 'consultation document' to provide the information on each of these and how to provide your feedback.

**Submissions close 4pm,
Friday 7 May 2021**

www.odc.govt.nz/ltp



Harbour progress up close (and far away)



The contractor for the build of the Ōpōtiki harbour entrance, HEB Construction, recently trialled equipment for use in dredging the river channel for the new harbour. You can see the cutter-suction dredge-head on the excavator which moved the sand around 120m to the discharge spot. The trial was a good opportunity to test the process on site and in Ōpōtiki's unique conditions.



This telephoto shot taken from Pakowhai ki Otutaopuku Bridge, gives a sense of scale to the harbour project. Back in January when this photo was taken, there were approximately 1,500 hanbar units that had been cast so far. Now there are almost 4,000. There's another 9,400 to go!

No cheques

Council will not be accepting cheques as a payment method after Friday 21 May (the last day to pay this rates instalment).

All major banks within New Zealand are phasing out the use of cheques, including Council's bank ANZ.

There are other ways to pay for council services including direct debits, credit card, internet or phone banking, or in person with EFTPOS at our reception.

New Zealand is increasingly moving to internet banking to pay people, bills and make donations. So don't forget that we have an amazing team down at the Digital Hub who can help those who may be 'technology hesitant' or just need to brush up on their digital skills.



Chasing arrears

Several 'notices of substituted service' have been run in newspapers recently on council's behalf as part of Council's firmer line collecting outstanding debts.

Each year, Council writes off almost half a million dollars in unpaid rates (last year it was \$426,000 in statute-barred arrears). This places an additional and unfair burden on other ratepayers.

There are several valid reasons for rates remissions and postponements including Māori title, sporting or other charitable use, or economic development. In addition, there is other assistance available through the Rates Rebates Scheme if people are struggling to pay their rates. It is better to work with Council on a payment system before debt arrears build up to unmanageable levels.



Workforce Matters!

The Council's website now has a quick link to all local workforce information - fortnightly listings of local jobs, support and training we're aware of, and other news about workforce happenings in Ōpōtiki. The latest listing had more than 30 jobs across hospitality, retail, health, education, community services, primary industries and trades.

You can also find out about the Tūāpapa Training programme – a specially designed three week course for people keen to apply for jobs at the Open Ocean Mussel Factory when it's commissioned in mid-2021.

Want to know more about Workforce matters? Visit odc.govt.nz/workforcematters

Are you prepared?

Last month, many of us got a rude awakening to a long and strong earthquake in the middle of the night and then a series of earthquakes we didn't feel but that triggered a tsunami warning for coastal areas in the eastern Bay of Plenty. There were a few key things we learnt from that:

1 BE PREPARED

Have a school plan, a work plan, a whānau plan and a marae plan. Make sure you know what everyone will be doing and what they will bring. Put together a 'go kit' with a few necessities. Have a place to meet or an arrangement with a friend or family member further inland. If you are evacuating inland, make sure you walk or ride a bike if you can – that will help avoid some of the traffic jams and free up space for more vulnerable community members.



2 STAY INFORMED

It's important to know the different ways you can stay informed during an emergency. Whether it is the very loud Emergency Mobile Alerts (EMA) or updates on social media or the emergency management website, a local radio station or calls to landlines of friends and neighbours, make sure you know how you will know what is going on.



You can find out more about what to put in your kit, how to make a plan or how you will stay informed on the Get Ready website – www.getready.govt.nz. You can also make a time to talk to Council's Community Resilience advisor to talk about how your community group or marae group can be ready for an emergency.

Sharing i-SITE insights

Ōpōtiki i-SITE hosted i-SITE managers from around the central North Island to share ideas and join up campaigns. It also gave Ōpōtiki a well-deserved chance to show off some of the 'wins' around the district.

The group went out to the Harbour site where they were shown around by the Harbour Development crew and then Jim Robinson from the Motu Trails took them up the Pakihi Track which was a real treat. Some squeezed in a trip to the museum as well and they even used the Digital Hub for their meeting so it was a great opportunity to show off the town.



FAREWELL IAN

Ian Castles, Council's Works Manager (and the Sector Manager Eastern Zone Pumicelands Rural Fire Authority and Emergency Management Officer!) retired this month after 31 years at Ōpōtiki District Council. Ian has provided an outstanding service to the Ōpōtiki community over many years and he will be sorely missed.

Ian was presented with a pounamu taonga by Deputy Mayor Shona Browne to thank him for his dedication and many years of service. Councillors Steve Nelson (left) and David Moore (right) were on hand to congratulate Ian on extending his weekends to five days a week!

ŌPŌTIKI WHAT'S ON



3 April – 17 April 10am – 3pm each day, **Ōpōtiki Arts Society “Out Of the Box” Exhibition 2021**

Thursday 22 April 7:30pm - Ōpōtiki Library and Arts on Tour Present: **Carnivorous Plant Society**. Tickets available through www.trybooking.com/nz and the Library.

Wednesday 21 and Friday 23 April, 10am – 11:30am - **Ōpōtiki Blue Light Felt Poppy Making Activity**, Ōpōtiki RSA. Gold coin donation

Sunday 7 June – Thursday 10 June, **Kontiki / Drone Fishing Classic –** Hosted by NZMCA EBOP Area

2 – 10 July – Ōpōtiki’s week of Matariki celebration. Find out more about planned events and how you can get involved at the i-SITE.



For more details on these great dates talk to the friendly team at the i-SITE. They also have details on a wide range of regular events and meetings including table tennis, bridge, cycling, walking, bowls, cancer support, arts and crafts, Te Reo classes, and even Scottish Country dancing.

And don't forget the **Community Events Calendar** – your group or organisation can upload your upcoming events and activities easily online. It is a great place to check out all the awesome things happening around the district.

Our library and Digital Hub

Our library and Digital Hub are humming and busy and very excited about the new Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi expected to open in October this year.

If you want to know about new books, new resources and activity at your community library make sure you visit, sign up to the newsletter or like the Facebook page to learn more. And don't forget the resources available at the digital hub - from basic printing and scanning to one-on-one upskilling sessions and modem set up plus all you need for business – hotdesks, charging, computers, video conferencing and bookable meeting rooms, a 3D printer, digital camera, short throw projector and screen and more being added all the time.



Bruce and Chris Comyns are long-time library users and they weren't too shy to try the virtual reality equipment for the first time! Bruce is immersed in the 3D world and Chris is watching on the iPad to see what Bruce is seeing.

Arts on Tour – so many events this year!

The library also runs the district's Arts on Tour events each year. And Ōpōtiki has signed up to eight great events this year – that is one almost every month between now and Christmas. A busy (artistic) autumn and winter coming up!

It is the only library in the country that does this but the team at the library think it is a natural fit. They are all about connection – connecting people to new worlds through fiction, new knowledge and new skills in whatever format that takes – a book, the internet, a movie or through theatre, music and art.

Arts on Tour is a programme subsidised by Creative NZ to take arts and culture to regional Aotearoa. So you don't just have to be in a big city to see an excellent act live on stage!

The next act is the amazing musical force known as 'Carnivorous Plant Society'. And there are more coming up – you can see the full menu for each month on the Library calendar.

Matariki

Ōpōtiki celebrates Matariki like nowhere else on earth! Each year, the local celebrations for Matariki grow bigger and brighter and this year we have a great range of events that will come under the umbrella of Ōpōtiki's Matariki Festival. There will be workshops and displays, art and events, talks, music and song. At the end of a great week, we'll celebrate together with music and kai and fireworks on 10 July at Ohui Domain.

We also want to encourage schools, groups and event organisers to come on board and run their own events for Matariki and add to our Matariki Festival calendar. If you want to know more have a chat with the team at the i-SITE.

This newsletter is produced quarterly by:



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