



Mayor Bernie Wanden

Message from the Mayor

Warm greetings and a Merry Christmas to you all.

This has been an eventful year, and a challenging one for many in our community. As I reflect on 2020, I'd like to thank the many individuals and groups who helped others get through the difficult times.

But it's also been a year full of exciting progress for our district. When I consider the transformational projects going on across Horowhenua, I feel both proud and humbled to be Mayor.

Levin has seen major upgrades to Queen Street, with two new roundabouts, and significant safety and aesthetic improvements. Work is also underway on the exciting new Taraika subdivision, which will give us 2,500 much-needed new homes as our district continues to grow.

In Foxton, work on the Manawatū River Loop and River Loop Reserve is progressing rapidly, and Shannon has had a fabulous upgrade to its library as well as a new charging station for electric vehicles.

Our smaller communities are also seeing exciting developments. Council has adopted community plans for Waitārere Beach, Manakau and Ōhau. In Foxton Beach, the community is leading the development of a similar plan, while Council officers have worked with community groups on a concept plan for the future of Holben / Te Wharangi Reserve.

Thank you all for your efforts this year, and do enjoy some well-earned rest and relaxation over the holiday season.

Ngā manaakitanga

Bernie Wanden

Queen Street re-opens after safety upgrade

Major safety improvements on the Oxford Street to Salisbury Street section of Queen Street are now substantially complete, and traffic flows in Levin's busiest street are open as normal.

Council's Rooding Services Manager, James Wallace, said the project made the Oxford to Salisbury section of Queen Street safer and more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as cars.

"Previously, most of the space here was set up to fit as much car traffic through as possible. It became very difficult for people to cross the road safely, so we've installed a pedestrian refuge in the middle of the road. Also, there wasn't really enough room on the footpaths for walking or cycling, so we've put in a dedicated cycleway so you can ride your bike through here safely," he said.

Mr Wallace said drivers would benefit from a renewed road surface and safer parking.

"The old road was in very poor shape – it was cracking and had quite a few potholes, so we've replaced it with a new surface.

"We're also transitioning from an angled car park layout to having parallel parks between Oxford Street and Chamberlain Street. The purpose of that is to make it a lot safer – it's a busy bit of road and it would have been quite unsafe to keep the angled parks the way they were, with vehicles having to reverse into so much heavy traffic. We see a lot of crashes in that situation. Parallel parking will make it a lot safer."

The upgrade will also make this part of Queen Street more aesthetically appealing, he said.

"We've installed gardens at the Bristol Street and Chamberlain Street intersections, and along Queen Street. The gardens will have New Zealand native plants, thanks to Muaūpoko Tribal Authority."

The improvements to the Oxford Street to Salisbury Street section of the street are part one of a two-part project funded by the Provincial Growth Fund. The projects aim to enhance safety and modernise a key part of Levin's road network, as well as creating new jobs in the district.

The other part of the project was to install a roundabout at the intersection of Queen Street and Tiro Tiro Road. This was opened to traffic in early October, and the work is underway to install pedestrian refuge islands, footpaths and a streetlight.

Both parts of the project included work on Levin's water supply network.

"It makes sense to upgrade old water pipes at the same time as we work on the roads to maximise efficiency and minimise disruption to the community," said Mr Wallace.

The projects follow a major safety upgrade to the roundabout at the intersection of Queen Street and Cambridge Street earlier this year.

Mr Wallace thanked local businesses and members of public for their patience during the works and said he was delighted with the outcome of the projects.

"These projects are great for Levin, and our contractors have worked hard to get them done quickly. We're pretty stoked," he said.



Long Term Plan survey results identify infrastructure as a priority

A survey to help inform Council planning for the next 20 years has identified infrastructure as a priority for the community.

The survey asked people about their top priorities for where Council should focus investment, and how much of a rate increase they would be willing to have for improvements to priority activities.

Council's LTP Project Manager Ashley Huria said Council was pleased with the response.

"We had 306 responses from individuals and groups in the community, and 142 comments on social media, which we've taken account of by looking for themes in the comments," she said.

The top three priorities identified for investment were water supply, wastewater and stormwater, followed by transport. Other popular priorities included parks and

reserves, and rubbish and recycling.

However, few people were willing to have a rates increase of over 5% to fund improvements to these areas, with most indicating they would be prepared to have a low increase of between 1% and 4%.

There were also 142 comments on social media, with key themes raised including shared pathways, rates affordability and infrastructure.

Mayor of Horowhenua Bernie Wanden thanked people for their input and said there would be further opportunities for the community to help shape the Long Term Plan before it's finalised next year.

"We'll use the community's feedback from the survey to help inform our decision-making when we decide what to prioritise in the Long Term Plan," he said.

"We're currently creating a consultation document on the Long Term Plan 2021-2041 to take to our community in March next year. It's a chance for people to have their say on the key questions and the challenges facing our district over the next 20 years."

The Long Term Plan is one of Council's key strategic documents, and is reviewed every three years. It sets out Council's priorities for the next 20 years, and how projects, services and facilities will be funded.



Expressions of Interest open for Levin Historic Courthouse

Horowhenua District Council is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) to develop one of Levin's most iconic buildings, the Levin Historic Courthouse.

The 1903 Courthouse is in a high profile location in the Nola Simpson Rose Gardens, with community facilities such as the Levin Arts Centre and Thompson House nearby.

Council's Parks and Property Lead (South), Ann Clark, said the Courthouse has the potential to attract high numbers of locals and visitors alike.

"This EOI represents a unique and special opportunity for someone with energy and initiative," she said.

She said offering the opportunity for someone to develop the Courthouse supported the objective identified in the Transforming Taitoko/Levin Town Centre Strategy of creating a modern and vibrant town centre. Council adopted the strategy,

which sets out the community's vision for the future of Levin, in 2018.

"Using the Courthouse to its full potential will contribute towards making Levin a destination that continues to attract new residents and visitors," she said.

Council's Parks and Property Lead (South), Ann Clark, said Council was open to innovative proposals that will add interest and value to Levin's CBD.

"We're taking a flexible approach, with no preconceived ideas," she said.

"However, the Courthouse is part of Levin's heritage and is highly valued by the community, so proposals will need to retain the outward appearance of the building."

The Courthouse building and the rose gardens are managed by Horowhenua District Council, and the Council would remain responsible for asset management.

Expressions of Interest close at 4pm on Friday 22 January 2021.

Further information and Expressions of Interest documents are available on Council's website at www.horowhenua.govt.nz/LevinCourthouseEOI, or by contacting Horowhenua District Council on (06) 366 0999.



New shared pathways for Queen Street

Work is underway on the first of two new shared pathways to be constructed along Queen Street.

The new concrete pathway will be 450 metres long and will run along Queen Street East from Bartholomew Road to Featherston Street. It connects with the existing shared pathway along that part of Queen Street, which was completed in 2018.

Construction is expected to take about three weeks, weather permitting.

A second new shared pathway is planned for Queen Street West in the new year. It will connect Adkin Avenue with Kōwhai Park, and will be about 500 metres long. The work will be combined with installing chip seal in the Kōwhai Park car park.

Roading Projects Engineer Nihad Aljic said the new pathways build on a network that aims to connect the communities of Horowhenua with safe and accessible walking paths.

"The shared pathways network will progressively build on existing pathways and trails to link the district's major communities and natural highlights, such as our coastal reserves, rivers, mountains and lakes. It will also eventually link Horowhenua with similar pathway networks in neighbouring districts," he said.

He said shared pathways bring many benefits.

"They encourage people to stay fit and healthy, and improve safety for vulnerable

road users such as cyclists, people on mobility devices, joggers and walkers," he said.

The first of the new pathways is expected to be open by Christmas.



Final plans for new-look River Loop Reserve unveiled

The new-look River Loop Reserve is beginning to take shape as contractors enter the final few months of the project.

The Horowhenua Alliance began work on the project in spring, soon after the Government committed \$3.86M to the project through the Provincial Growth Fund.

The team have removed thousands of cubic metres of silt and weed from the River Loop.

Horowhenua District Council Mayor Bernie Wanden said the speed at which the project has progressed has been impressive.

"It's hard to believe, but back in March, few people thought the project would happen for a long time but here we are. We've excavated a large section of silt and weed and freed up the Loop so that next year waka ama, canoe and kayaking clubs can use it."

Project Manager Daniel Haigh said the concept design for the reserve is now complete, however it will be implemented in stages.

The new-look reserve will feature a large open public space, viewing platforms and a natural playground with a slide.

Mr Haigh said contractors are currently installing new car parks, kerb and channel

on the reserve side of Harbour Street. They are also contouring the park and will soon sow grass seed.

"We'll be using a bore water source if required over summer to irrigate the reserve so the grass can grow."

Lighting, drinking water fountains and BBQ areas will also be constructed alongside pathways and viewing platforms. Some aspects of the park will be installed at a later

date, including plantings that need autumn rains and a new gateway entrance. And there is a long-term aspiration to connect the Reserve to Paretao Gardens and the Te Awahou Cultural Park.

To mark the reopening of the Loop to the community, we will host a celebration on February 27 – and we want you to be a part of it. We'll be promoting the fun whānau event in the New Year.



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|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| (A) Open lawn area | (D) Rivers edge | (G) Street side parking |
| (B) Cultural Gateways | (E) Native planting | (H) Reserve carpark/amenities |
| (C) Natural Playground | (F) Piriharakeke | (I) Viewing platforms |

Concept plan design for Holben Reserve finalised

Horowhenua District Council has finalised the design of the concept plan on the long-term development of Holben / Te Wharangi Reserve, one of Foxton Beach's most popular parks.

The Concept Development Plan proposes a vision of how Holben / Te Wharangi Reserve could look in the future.

Key aspects of the plan include: developing a wetland area to filter and cleanse stormwater; improving native biodiversity and habitat value; celebrating the kaupapa and kaitiakitanga status of mana whenua; creating a wide range of opportunities for play, recreation and learning for all ages; and improving access into and through the reserve.

Council has been working with partners and key community stakeholders to develop the concept plan, including Iwi, Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Foxton Community Board, Foxton Beach Progressive Association, Foxton Beach School, local businesses, and recreational, social, and conservation groups. Feedback from the wider community was gathered in a survey and through two drop-in sessions in August.

The feedback received so far has been used to shape the concept plan. Further consultation will take place for the detailed design development of each separate implementation phase.



Council steps in to save Levin Adventure Park

The children of Horowhenua will be able to continue enjoying the district's favourite playground after councillors opted to take over the lease, subject to Crown agency agreement, to safeguard the park's immediate future.

The lease is currently held by the Levin Adventure Park Charitable Trust (LAPT) and expires on 21 February 2021. Crown agent Colliers offered a new three-year lease to the LAPT, but it contains a number of new provisions, including a clause that allows the Crown to terminate the lease at any time, with six months' notice. The leaseholder would then be required to remove all improvements to the site, such as buildings and playground equipment, at its own cost.

The new provisions are because the seven acres of land the park is on have been land-banked for Treaty settlements.

In a letter to Horowhenua District Council Chief Executive David Clapperton, LAPT trustees said they had unanimously agreed not to renew the lease under the new provisions and suggested that Council take it over. The popular children's train would be maintained by a new volunteer group to be established by current trustees, the letter said.

Mayor Bernie Wanden said Council recognised the importance of the Levin Adventure Park to locals and visitors alike.

Council has been maintaining the park since 2009, and the LAPT currently acts as a guardian or kaitiaki for the park.



Pay your parking tickets online

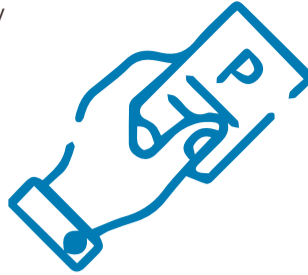
Did you know you can now pay your parking tickets online on the Horowhenua District Council website?

Payment is available by POLi, credit card or debit card.

Council's Compliance Manager Vai Miller said the online option

made it easier for people to pay their parking tickets and had been popular since it became available in October this year.

Need to pay a parking ticket? visit horowhenua.govt.nz/parkingtickets



Want to receive Community Connection in your email inbox? Sign up online:



horowhenua.govt.nz/CommunityConnection

Council Meetings

Council



Wednesday 9 December, 4pm
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin.

Council teams up with Tokomaru School to extend pathway

Horowhenua District Council staff teamed up with students from Tokomaru School on 6 November to extend the walkway at Horseshoe Bend Reserve.

Horseshoe Bend is a popular summer swimming and picnic spot, and Council is working to install more gravel pathways around the reserve.

Parks and Property Officer Craig Kidd thanked everyone who took part.

"It was a great team effort with Council and the community working together, and the students enjoyed helping out with loading, wheelbarrowing and spreading the gravel," he said.



What's happening

Event details are correct at the time of publication, but are subject to change. Please check horowhenua.govt.nz/Events or contact event organisers for updates and more events.

To have your local event included in this listing, please register your event for free at horowhenua.govt.nz/Events

December to January

Inflatable Invasion

Daily during school holidays at Levin Aquatic Centre and Foxton Heated Pools
Normal cost of pool entry.



Friday 4 December to Thursday 24 December
Harvey Bowler Festival of Lights

Various locations.

Christmas lights list and locations can be found from 4 December on the Festival of Lights website, festivaloflightshorowhenua.co.nz
Free.



Saturday 5 December
Repair Cafe

10am to 1pm at Te Whare Mahana, 32a Bristol Street

Koha appreciated.



Saturday 5 December to Sunday 6 December
Kia Ora Christmas

3pm to 7pm at Foxton Beach School Hall
\$2 entry per person.



Monday 7 December to Friday 15 January
Summer Reading Programme

Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō in Levin, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom in Foxton, Shannon Library

Free. Register at your library.



Monday 7 December
Iread VR

4pm at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō
Free.



Wednesday 9 December
DIY Marketing Materials

12 noon to 2pm at The Mahi Space, Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Free. Register by email to themahispace@horowhenua.govt.nz



Thursday 10 December
Christmas Tea & Tales

10:30am to 11:30am at Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Free.



Friday 11 December to Sunday 13 December
Christmas Avenue of Trees

6pm to 8:30pm at The Salvation Army, 11 Durham Street, Levin

Entry by gold coin donation or a can of food for the Interchurch Food Bank per person.



Tuesday 15 December
Colbert Cooper Series: Accounting Terms and Financial Statements

12 noon to 1pm at The Mahi Space, Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō
Free. Register by email to themahispace@horowhenua.govt.nz



Saturday 19 December to Sunday 18 April
Puaki: Photography and Videos – Tā Moko
Open daily, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom
Free.



Sunday 20 December
Shannon Christmas Carnival

10am to 2pm at Shannon Domain
Free.



Saturday 2 January
Foxton Beach New Year Fair

9am to 3pm at Dawick Street Reserve, Seabury Avenue, Foxton Beach

Free.



Saturday 2 January
Big Dig

2pm to 4pm at Waitārerere Beach
\$4 per person.



Friday 8 January
Little Dog Barking

10:30am at Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom
1pm at Shannon Library
3:30pm at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō
Free.



Wednesday 13 January
Zappo the Magician

10:30am at Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom
1pm at Shannon Library
3:30pm at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō
Free.



Monday 11 January to Saturday 16 January
\$1 Fitness Promo

Levin Aquatic Centre and Foxton Heated Pools
\$1 per fitness class.