

Community Connection

Issue 218 JUNE 2025



Bernie Wanden

Message from the Mayor

Kia ora Horowhenua,

As I write this, Council is getting ready to make one of the biggest decisions of this triennium – how our water services will be delivered.

Under the Government's Local Water Done Well policy, we need to figure out whether we'll join with other councils to deliver water services, or continue managing it ourselves. It's a big deal because safe, reliable, affordable water is something every person in our district needs. We'll keep you updated about the decision, and you'll find more details about this elsewhere in this issue.

Another big talking point lately is the proposed changes to the Ō2NL expressway, especially removing the Manakau overbridge and changing the Tararua Road interchange to a roundabout. From what I've heard around town, many of you aren't happy, and neither am I. The NZTA board will meet soon to finalise these plans, so now's the time to speak up. If you'd like to have your say, you can email the Minister directly (Chris.Bishop@parliament.govt.nz) and the board at (boardsecretariat@nzta.govt.nz).

It's always fantastic seeing our community speak up strongly, and we saw that recently when Youth Voice Horowhenua and members of the Access & Inclusion Committee presented at Horizons Regional Council's Annual Plan hearings. They made clear, powerful arguments for better public transport options and improved accessibility around the Horowhenua district. I'd like to acknowledge those who presented at the hearings. Your efforts make a huge difference, and we're all incredibly proud of you.

Every week, across our district, hundreds of people, from little league to seniors, take to the fields, courts and pitches to enjoy sport. Council is proud to provide and maintain the parks and recreation spaces where these games take place. But it's our local clubs, volunteers and referees who bring these places to life.

Referees are the unsung heroes of our sporting community. They give up their time so that our children and young people, friends and whānau can play. Without them, the game doesn't go ahead. And yet, far too often, they are on the receiving end of abuse from participants and from the side lines.

I am jumping on the Horowhenua Kāpiti Rugby Union bandwagon where they announced last week that senior rugby games will be cancelled for one weekend, should the abuse of referees continue. Let's take a stance, all of us, the abuse of referees in all sporting codes has to stop. We all have a role to play in protecting the spirit of sport. If you see someone abusing a ref—call it out. Stand up for respect. Our referees deserve support, not hostility.

Sport is about teamwork, fairness and community. Let's make sure our behaviour reflects those values. So whether you're playing, coaching or cheering from the side lines—remember: Respect the Ref. Without them, there is no game.

Finally, Matariki is almost here which means plenty of events to enjoy right across the district. It's a time to reflect, remember and celebrate. As the Māori New Year, it marks the rising of the Matariki star cluster and is a moment to honour those who have passed, give thanks for the present and set intentions for the year ahead. Celebrating Matariki brings communities together and strengthens our connection to the land, each other and the rhythms of nature. The Matariki Project Team has pulled together a fantastic programme of events, check out page 2 for all the details—I'm sure you'll find something special to enjoy.

Ngā mihi

Mayor Bernie Wanden

Council Meetings

9 Te Awahou Foxton Community Board Public Forum

Monday 9 June 2025, 5.30 to 6pm
Foyer, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom,
92 Main Street, Foxton

9 Te Awahou Foxton Community Board Meeting

Monday 9 June 2025, 6pm to 8pm
Ngārongo Iwikātea Room,
Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom,
92 Main Street, Foxton

10 Hearings and Regulatory Committee Meeting

Hearing of submitters, Dog Control Policy and Bylaw
Tuesday 10 June 2025, 10am to 12pm
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

18 Extraordinary Council Meeting

Adoption of the Shannon Community Plan
Wednesday 18 June 2025, 4pm
Shannon Memorial Hall, Grey Street, Shannon

25 Council Public Forum

Wednesday 25 June 2025,
10.15am to 10.45am
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

25 Council Meeting

Wednesday 25 June 2025, 11am
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

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

In the Works

Our contractors are continuing to lay new water and wastewater pipes in Margaret and Bryce Streets in Shannon. This important work is going well.

In Levin, we're working our way down MacArthur Street, also to replace old water and wastewater pipes. The first stage from Cambridge Street to Queenwood Road is complete, and work has now moved to the length of road between Queenwood and Bartholomew.

We know the delays and works can be frustrating for residents, but we think you'll find it worth it as new pipes are essential to ensure our network is

well managed. The new pipes provide capacity for growth, stop leaks and prevent major issues like pipe bursts in the future.

NZTA is also hard at work, with night-time works about to start to connect three new 'legs' at the new roundabout at the intersection of SH57 and Tararua Road. Detours will be in place.

And some good news about some work we're recently completed: flooding near the roundabout on Waitāre Beach Road should be a thing of the past after extensive stormwater upgrades.



Puanga Matariki

Matariki 2025 Calendar

JUNE

Matariki Swim Challenge

Take on the free Horowhenua Marae-to-Marae Swim Challenge, where every 0.5km lap brings you closer to a new Marae, complete with a photo and story sent to your inbox.



**Sunday 1st June –
Monday 30th June**

Matariki Pōhutukawa Remembrance Walls

Visit any of our libraries to add a paper star to the display boards in memory of loved ones, as we reflect on those we have lost during Matariki.



Monday 16th June – Sunday 29th June
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom, Shannon Library

Matariki for Tamariki

Join us in a celebration of Matariki led by Punahau Early Childhood Centre.



Tuesday 17th June
10.30am – 11.30am
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Matariki Day Out

Bus trip from Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō to Tokomaru to celebrate and learn about Matariki. Registrations required. Limited capacity.



Wednesday 18th June
10.30am – 2pm
Departing Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō heading to Tokomaru Hall

Te Putanga mai o Matariki

Wrap up warm and bring the whānau down to join Muaūpoko for a hautapu ceremony to welcome in Matariki.



Thursday 19th June
5.30am
Cricket Pavillion, Donnelly Park, Levin

Matariki ki Ōtauru

Celebrate the Māori New Year in Shannon with Ngāti Whakare.



Friday 20th June
9am – 2pm
Te Maire Park, Shannon

Matariki Levin Pool Party

Celebration with music, inflatables, hydro slide and free BBQ.



Saturday 21st June
3pm – 5pm
Levin Aquatic Centre

Taitoko Night Market

A vibrant celebration of culture and community. Enjoy market stalls, food trucks, music, fire poi, whakairo displays, traditional Māori games and more.



Saturday 21st June
3pm – 7pm
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō and Levin Mall Carpark

Puna Kaukau

Join us for a karakia to acknowledge the whetū (star) Waitī, the awa (river) and Matariki before taking a refreshing mid-winter dip in the river.



Sunday 22nd June (postponement date Sunday 29th June)
5.45am – 7.30am
Gladstone Reserve

Pō Kiriata Whānau

A free screening of beloved kids film Coco Reo Māori.



Tuesday 24th June
6pm – 8pm
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Friday Konohete

Enjoy a special Friday concert from a range of groups coming together to perform kapa haka and waiata.



Friday 27th June
12pm – 1pm
Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Kapahaka Hapori Kai Night

A free celebration of kapahaka showcasing talent from our primary school-aged tamariki through to our kaumatua.



Friday 27th June
5pm – 7pm
Waiopahu College Auditorium

Foxton Pool Party

Celebration with music, inflatables and free BBQ.



Saturday 28th June
3pm – 5pm
Foxton Aquatic Centre

Lights over Te Awahou

Come and celebrate Puanga's arrival with delicious food, live music, and stunning light displays.



Saturday 28th June
4pm – 8pm
Te Awahou Riverside Cultural Park

THE 2025 HOROWHENUA MATARIKI EVENT PROGRAMME PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Photo by: Kris Adams