

Community Connection

Issue 234 MARCH 2026



Bernie Wanden

Message from the Mayor

Kia ora Horowhenua,

There is a real sense of momentum across our district at the moment. As we grow, the conversations we are having about safety, business and community are more important than ever.

One area I continue to feel very strongly about is road safety. In 2025, the Government increased the speed limits on several key stretches of state highway in our district, including SH57 Kimberley Road and SH1 between Ōhau and Manakau, to 100km/h, despite strong opposition from those who live along these roads and use them every day.

At the time, I led the Safer at 80 campaign, standing with our community to call for a more sensible and safer approach. I believed then, and still do, that 80km/h is the right speed for these routes. These roads are no longer rural highways, they are vital community corridors serving growing residential areas, regular turning movements, local businesses, marae, urupā, and other important community sites that form part of our district's development story.

For example, SH57 borders Speldhurst Country Estate, which continues to expand and will soon be home to more than 1,000 residents. SH1 runs directly past marae and urupā at Kuku and North Manakau. These are not high-speed environments, they are shared spaces used daily by residents, families and visitors.

I am pleased that NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi is now consulting on proposals to reinstate 80km/h limits on these sections of highway, responding to the same safety concerns our community raised last year. They are also proposing variable speed limits (VSLs) of 60km/h outside Tukorehe Marae and Wehi Wehi Marae to manage traffic during high-volume events such as tangihanga, this is a practical step that recognises how these roads are used and supports the wellbeing of our communities.

If you, like me, believe we are Safer at 80, I encourage you to make a submission to NZTA before 9 April. Together, we can help ensure our highways reflect the communities they serve and remain safe for everyone who lives, works and travels through the Horowhenua. To submit, go to: <https://nzta.mysocialpinpoint.com/horowhenua-speed-limit-reviews>

As part of our district's growth and the Levin Town Centre Transformation, a Retail Transformation Strategy is being prepared. A short Retailer Insight Survey is currently open, asking what would encourage people to visit more often, stay longer and spend locally. This feedback will be helpful in shaping what comes next. As traffic patterns change with the Ōtaki to North Levin Expressway (Ō2NL), access and car parking in the Levin Town Centre continues to be a current area of focus as Council develops an Access and Parking Strategy.

It was fantastic to see the energy at the Let's Move Together Triathlon recently. Shannon and Levin came alive with young people giving it their all and families cheering from the sidelines and even participating alongside. That kind of participation says a lot about our district, well done and congratulations to everyone who took part.

On Saturday 7 March we will acknowledge the 75th Anniversary of Hokio Beach Progressive Association, a huge milestone for this small but active community association. That same day, Pasifika Celebration Day returns to the Levin Showgrounds from 3pm to 7pm. It promises vibrant cultural performances, indulgent foods of the Pacific, market stalls and activities for the whole family.

Horowhenua is moving forward with confidence. Staying involved and being connected, helps ensure we make the right decisions for our growing district.

Ngā mihi,

Mayor Bernie Wanden

Council Meetings



Council Meeting

Wednesday 18 March 2026, 10am
Council Chambers, 126 Oxford Street, Levin



Community Funding and Recognition Committee

Wednesday 25 March 2026, 10am
Ante Room, Horowhenua District Council,
126 Oxford Street, Levin
(Not open to the public)

Meeting dates and times are subject to change.

horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings

CUPPA WITH A COUNCILLOR

Levin - Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō

Thursday 12 March, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Wednesday 25 March, 6pm to 7.30pm

Foxton - Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom

Thursday 12 March, 10.30am to 12.30pm

Shannon - Shannon Library

Thursday 12 March, 1pm to 2.30pm

Help shape the future of Levin's Town Centre

Levin's Town Centre is changing, and you have an important role in shaping what comes next.

As part of the wider Levin Town Centre Transformation, Horowhenua District Council is partnering with The Horowhenua Company Ltd to develop a Retail Transformation Strategy. This work is focused on understanding what will help the town centre thrive over the next few years and continue to meet the needs of the people who live, work, invest in and spend time in Levin.

We're starting by listening.

Rather than sharing a draft strategy, we're asking you about your experiences, habits and ideas for the future of the town centre.

Retail plays a big role in how the town centre feels and functions. With continued growth and the future impact of the Ōtaki to North of Levin expressway (Ō2NL), the way Levin's town centre is used is likely to change.

Through a short survey, we're asking what draws you to the town centre, what encourages people to stay longer, the types of shops, services or experiences you'd like to see over the next three to five years, and what currently draws people elsewhere.

Scan the QR code to complete the survey. It will take around 8 to 10 minutes to complete. Responses are confidential and will be reported in aggregate only.

Survey closes 20 March 2026.



HOROWHENUA
HOI

CELEBRATION OF COLOUR SATURDAY 21 MARCH

1PM TO 5PM
LEVIN ADVENTURE PARK

Get ready for an explosion of colour, music and joy. Join us for a vibrant afternoon of colour throws, music, performances and food for the whole whānau.

FREE ENTRY

Colour powder available for purchase on the day from \$5.

horowhenua.govt.nz/events

In the Works

Land transport update

Work continues across the district to improve road safety, drainage and everyday travel.

On Hannan Street, stormwater renewal works progressed with two catchpits upgraded to improve drainage and reduce surface flooding.

Safety improvements are also taking shape at the Kawiu Road and Tiro Tiro Road intersection, where groundworks are underway for a new traffic island layout. This change is designed to discourage heavy vehicle through-traffic and improve safety in the surrounding residential area.



Tiro Tiro / Kawiu Roads, Levin

Footpath renewals are ongoing on Herrington Street, supporting safer and more accessible walking routes.

Pavement maintenance and sump renewals on Cambridge Street have now been completed. These works prepare the road for its upcoming reseal.



Herrington Street, Foxton

High vegetation maintenance is currently underway in the Foxton and Shannon areas, helping to improve visibility and road safety.

Following the recent weather event, contractors worked alongside Electra to manage road closures and remove fallen trees. All roads across the district network that were affected have now reopened.

Bridge maintenance has been completed on Old Foxton Road, and district-wide grading and metalling of unsealed roads is now underway, with Konini Street already completed.



Moutere Road, Levin

Levin Adventure Park upgrades now complete

The playground renewals at Levin Adventure Park are now complete, giving tamariki fresh new spaces to climb, explore and play.

The new outdoor fitness equipment has also been installed and is ready to use, offering a free and easy way to get active in the fresh air. Whether you're watching the kids burn off energy or have been meaning to start your own fitness goals, now's a great time to make the most of it.

If you've noticed the new metal poles, they're there for a reason. Shade sails will soon be installed overhead, creating a cooler, more comfortable space to exercise and relax.



Are you eligible for a Rates Rebate? Apply Now

[Horowhenua.govt.nz/rates](https://horowhenua.govt.nz/rates)



Let's Kōrero

Proposed Resource Management Act Fees and Charges 2026/27

We're inviting public feedback on proposed fees and charges set under the Resource Management Act 1991 for the 2026/27 financial year.

These fees relate to planning and resource consent services and help ensure costs are fairly shared between those who use the services and the wider community.

Most fees are not increasing. Where increases are proposed, the average increase is 5.7 percent. Three new fees are also proposed, including two optional fees to help fund a fire appliance in growing areas without a piped water supply.

Consultation opened on **17 February 2026** and **closes at 4pm on 17 March 2026**. Any approved changes will take effect from 1 July 2026.

We'd love to hear from you. Let us know your thoughts at:

letskorero.horowhenua.govt.nz/proposedfees2026-27



FREE WHĀNAU EVENT



SATURDAY 14 MARCH

Neighbours Day 2026

10AM TO 2PM, LEVIN ADVENTURE PARK

Come along, meet your neighbours and enjoy a day of fun, food and activities.

horowhenua.govt.nz/NeighboursDay

Horowhenua
DISTRICT COUNCIL

