

MAYOR'S COLUMN



Mayor Craig Rowley

You'll be familiar now with our plans to help grow our district through the Economic Development Strategy – a project we've been working on since last year.

Initially we established working groups to identify what actions we want to take based on the strategic themes of:

1. Improving ICT connectivity and infrastructure
2. Growing the district's visitor economy
3. Beautification of the district's entrances and main streets
4. Growing and attracting businesses and residents
5. Enhancing employment and education

The subsequent action plans have now been developed (which can be found at waimatedc.govt.nz) and we're about to create a steering group to drive the plans.

This is an exciting time and we'll start to see the plans brought to life through the steering group and ourselves.

HOW READY ARE YOU?

It's no secret that we live in a pretty special part of the world but we also live with natural hazards and they can catch us out any time, anywhere. In geological terms New Zealand could be described as a moody teenager!

In Waimate we're not immune. The Alpine Fault isn't far away and we are also prone to flooding. So the big question is – how well prepared are you? Could you take care of yourself and your family for several days without any official assistance?

Here's an important point – there's no Civil Defence Army – Civil Defence is everyone! Following a disaster there's every possibility people will have to take care of themselves and their family so here's some things to consider:

1. Make a plan so if you and your family are separated, think about how you'll meet up from home, school or work.
2. Here's some things you'll need (you'll need at least three days worth):
 - Water
 - Food (non-perishable)
 - Medication
 - Torches and batteries
 - Food for pets
 - First aid kit
 - Cooking equipment eg barbeque and gas bottle
 - Clothing
 - Radio (battery-operated or wind-up)
3. If you need to evacuate where will you go? If you need to leave make sure to turn off power, water and gas, take your emergency supplies and take your pets (if possible).
4. Stay in touch with official information.

Resilience, looking out for your neighbour and being prepared, will help you get through a Civil Defence emergency.

For more information go to www.waimatedc.govt.nz.

PROTECTING OUR RESERVES

Over the last couple of weeks we have been receiving feedback from you, the public, on how best to protect and make the most of our reserves, in particular Knottingley Park & Arboretum.

We've received some excellent ideas and will now draft a General Reserves Policy and a specific Reserves Management Plan for Knottingley Park. Once drafted, residents will have a chance to read them and give us more feedback before the plans are formally adopted.

So what will this actually mean for our reserves and Knottingley Park in particular? It will help protect our reserves and put in place plans for how they can be better utilised by residents and groups.

The Reserve Management Plan (RMP) for Knottingley Park will include the facilities we already enjoy and the things we want to add to in the future. Once this particular RMP has been adopted, further RMPs will be developed. Watch this space!



TAKE A STAND, YOUR VOICE COUNTS!

Are you thinking about standing for Council this year but have some questions? Over the next few months we're going to publish some questions and answers you might find useful.

If you'd like to see them all in one hit go to waimatedc.govt.nz.

Do I need particular skills or experience to be a councillor or mayor?

No experience necessary. An interest in helping shape the direction of the Waimate District is important. Everyone has particular skills, and they will be used when appropriate.

You do, however, need to be enrolled as a voter, be a New Zealand citizen, and not be disqualified from enrolling.



WALKIES TIME!

Not sure where you can walk your dog off its lead? We can help with that.

There's a number of places in the Waimate District where you can walk or exercise your dog without it needing to be on a lead. For example, Knottingley Park, William Boland Park, Seddon Square, St Andrews Recreation Reserve, and Victoria Park. There are, however, areas where dogs are not permitted - around children's playgrounds, the Waimate Cemetery, the Waimate Event Centre, and the Victoria Park velodrome.

Even when your dog is off its lead it must be under control at all times and being under control can mean different things to different people so here's a few tips:

- your dog must not be a nuisance or behaving in a dangerous way
- your dog must be obedient and obey any commands you give it
- while your dog might be friendly and like to run up to strangers, this is not considered to be 'under control'

To view the maps showing designated off-lead dog areas go to www.waimatedc.govt.nz.

