



New system for online building consent applications

We are excited to let you know that Waimate District Council is upgrading its online building consent application platform. Objective Build launches on 7 September 2026.

This system will replace the current Simpli Portal and Go-Get online system and align us with neighbouring councils.

The switch to Objective Build

To minimise any disruption, we will migrate all active building consents that have not yet received a Code Compliance Certificate into the new system. Once this has been completed, you will receive an email inviting you to register for Objective Build. Please use the same email address you use for our current portal when registering.

Your applications will be available in Objective Build from 7 September 2026. Until then, please continue to submit consent applications through the Simpli Portal.

Applications submitted to Council before 7 September 2026 will be processed in the current system. If your application is not urgent, we recommend waiting until Objective Build goes live so you can manage the entire process from start to finish in one location.

Added features

We hope the new platform will provide a better user experience. Objective Build offers enhanced functionality including improved status tracking, organisation management and application templates. Once the system goes live, help panels will be available within Objective Build to guide you through the process. Information and links to support resources can also be found at waimatedc.govt.nz/objectivebuild



Objective BUILD

Grants awarded

Successful applicants for the latest round of two Council grants have been announced, with \$835.05 of funding going to a heritage project and \$10,000 to recreational track improvements.

Heritage Grant

The Waimate Historical Society was awarded \$835.05 to replace three very large panes of glass inside Bremner Cottage, a historic building which survived the Waimate bush fire of 1878 and is part of the Waimate Museum and Archives. The glass panes protect the inside of the cottage from foot traffic while allowing visitors to view the interior and the collection items on display which show how people lived prior to the fire. The glass has been identified as a safety risk and will be replaced with safety glass.

Recreational Track Grant

Waimate Trackways Inc was awarded \$10,000 towards the upgrade of the Waimate Branch Railway Embankment Track from Studholme Bush carpark to the newly opened section of the Waimate Trail. This represents a length of just over two kilometres which needs to be sprayed, graded, resurfaced with gravel and raised in areas prone to becoming too wet. Grading and resurfacing work will be carried out by M3 Contracting which has completed similar work on other local tracks.

Council typically receives applications for the Heritage Grant and Recreational Track Grant in February and August each year. We will advertise when the next round opens.

Rewarding year for MTFJ

"I've progressed really quickly and they're very pleased with me. Thank you for helping me get this job and for checking up on me. I appreciate it."

This feedback reflects the positive impact of the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) partnership with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), which supports young people into employment.

Between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, Waimate MTFJ helped 19 jobseekers secure full-time employment, exceeding the target of 15. Most were aged 18 to 24, including young people not engaged in employment, education or training and referrals from MSD.

"This is an outstanding programme. The jobs market is tough at present, particularly for our young community and it is exceptional that we have exceeded our placement target," says Mayor Craig Rowley.

Driver education remains a key part of the programme, since having no driver licence is often a major barrier to employment. As the only council in New Zealand with its own driver training vehicle, Waimate can provide licence training and employment support through a single, trusted relationship with MTFJ Coordinator and qualified driving instructor Deborah Kibble.

During the year, participants achieved six Learner licences, 13 Restricted licences and two Full licences, including one Class 2 licence.

"Our driver training initiative shows how much importance is put on being able to travel for work or training and in a rural community

without public transport it is even more empowering," says Mayor Rowley.

The programme also provides practical support and pastoral care, including assistance with clothing, safety boots, tools and other equipment, regular check-ins during the first six months of employment and in some cases, wage subsidies.

Local employers value the programme.

"We have employed a number of staff through this initiative and have seen exceptional outcomes, reflecting the value of the support and preparation the Taskforce provides to young jobseekers," says Mandy Workman, Facility Manager at Lister Home.

At the time of publication, we are awaiting confirmation of the 2026/27 MTFJ contract.



Positive changes to community grants

Community groups and organisations in the district are set to be better served by grant funding due to changes to Council's Community Grant and the Creative Communities Scheme.

Community Grant

Following the formation of a joint grant between Council and Ahu Community Trust (previously known as Community Trust Mid and South Canterbury), Council discussed the make-up of the new grant in its meeting on 21 July 2026. The changes outlined below are effective immediately:

- The full year's funding of \$60,000 will be split into two rounds in October and April.
- Grants of any amount up to \$10,000 can be applied for.
- The committee will decide how the \$30,000 is distributed in each round. This could be any number of grants of varying values making up the

\$30,000 and could mean that some grants are funded partially to share the funds.

- A change to the funding criteria means that operational costs can be included in the application. This can include electricity, insurance and rent but excludes wages and salary.
- Applying for this grant does not exclude the organisation or group from also applying to Ahu Community Trust, meaning that it might be possible to get a larger project funded through multiple grants.
- The committee member from Ahu Community Trust will have voting rights alongside elected members on the committee when choosing recipients.

Creative Communities Scheme

Ahu Community Trust is generously contributing just over \$6,000 per year to the Creative



Communities Scheme to increase funding available to support arts and culture within the Waimate District. This takes effect immediately and is agreed for three years. This grant opens, typically, in March and September each year.

All grants will be advertised when they become available. For more information, go to waimatedc.govt.nz/grants