



Thursday, 30 March 2017

Waihi Ward Reflections

This advertisement is authorised by the Hauraki District Council

Waihi Street changes

One year later...

It's hard to believe it's been just over a year since 650 Waihi properties had their street number and/or street name changed.

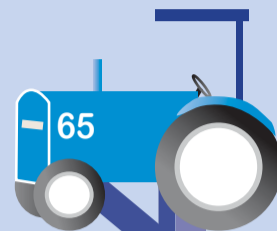
As you may be aware, these changes were necessary because the previous names and numbers were both random and 'quirky', such as properties numbered out of sequence and road name changes in the middle of one stretch of road.

This 'creativity' increasingly caused problems and concerns for emergency services (particularly for new or temporary staff) and business operators and as it's Council's job to respond to these problems and concerns we agreed to address the most problematic ones by introducing street number and/or name changes.

In a nutshell the main reasons for the changes were:

- to reduce confusion in emergency situations for Police, Fire and Ambulance services
- to increase efficiencies for NZ Post and other delivery services for residential and business properties
- so there are enough numbers in places where new development is occurring
- to meet Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) standards

More background information and answers to some common questions about this can be found on our website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/renumbering



Where we are now

"What we did"

When the changes kicked in just over a year ago we anticipated and planned for quite a number of potential issues. The changes were always going to cause some inconvenience to people but to help make the transition as smooth as possible we:

- notified NZ Post and LINZ (the two main databases businesses get their street addresses from)
- contacted companies like Sky, Chorus and the main power, insurance, gas and phone companies as well as WINZ and other government departments.
- updated our online mapping system to reflect the changes and made it available to everyone.
- notified Google Maps and followed their process for changing street numbers and addresses.

Some of these plans worked well:

- Emergency services have told us they can find properties much more easily since the changes came into effect
- NZ Post has also told us they can find properties much more easily since the changes came into effect.

"The one issue we didn't see coming..."

What we didn't anticipate were the ongoing problems we've been having getting Google Maps to update their information. The company has a process for changing street numbers and addresses and at the time we had no reason to suspect it would cause us any headaches.

In reality, more than a year has passed and despite numerous attempts from us, the information has not yet been updated.

As Google Maps is one of the most commonly used electronic mapping systems today, this has caused problems for many residents, particularly in relation to courier deliveries and telecommunications connections.

"What we're doing about it"

- Emergency services don't use Google Maps. They have their own mapping systems which include the correct Waihi street names and numbers.
- We've advised all the main courier companies that Google Maps is inaccurate when it comes to Waihi, and asked them to refer to our online mapping system. We've also provided all the local couriers with paper maps of the changes.
- We've advised all the main power and telecommunications companies that Google Maps is inaccurate, and they've assured us they are using either LINZ based data, or our online mapping system (although we know the experience of some residents would suggest otherwise).
- We've double-checked to ensure LINZ and other government organisations have the correct information.

Where to from here

"In the meantime"

We're continuing to work on the Google Maps problem but have no control over the company's internal processes, so have not yet made any noticeable progress. What we think will probably happen is that we'll all wake up one morning and discover the addresses have been magically updated.

We will also continue to contact companies on your behalf when you notify us about ongoing issues.

In the meantime, there are some things we can all do to manage the situation as best we can:

- If you're having issues with courier deliveries or service connections visit our website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/renumbering/faq where you'll find the answers to some commonly asked questions
- For the correct Waihi street names and numbers go to our online mapping system at www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/online-maps. We need to encourage the use of this as much as possible so please pass this link on to friends, family, visitors and any companies you regularly deal with
- If you continue to experience problems and can't find the answers on our website please give us a call on 0800 734 834 or email us at info@hauraki-dc.govt.nz

We understand this has been inconvenient and frustrating for many of you. Your ongoing patience is most appreciated.

