

Thursday, 24 September 2015

Waihi Ward Reflections

This advertisement is authorised by the Hauraki District Council



Hats off to Waihi's older people

Don't be alarmed if you notice ladies in purple wearing outlandish red hats in Waihi next Friday – they know their outfits don't match. The whole point of the Red Hat Society for fabulous ladies over 50, is to embrace life, have fun, and do the opposite of what society expects an old lady to say and do.

On Friday, 2 October Waihi will be celebrating the International Day of the Older Person with a special expo organised by the Council to be held at the Waihi Memorial Hall. Members of the Red Hatters, from chapters with names like Bloomers and Babes, Ravishing Rubies, and Wild Poppies, are just part of the entertainment at the expo.

"The Waihi Ward's focus this year is on providing services to older people and the idea of the expo is to get some coordination between the different groups and have some fun and entertainment too," says Waihi Ward Councillor Pam Keall.

Along with line dancing, Tai Chi demonstrations and ladies with 'Hattitude', the Expo will provide the perfect opportunity to launch Waihi Senior Connect, a new initiative coordinated through the Waihi Resource Centre. Rather than rifling through the Yellow Pages, seniors needing support can now call a single phone number and be connected to the service they require.

A quarter of people living in Waihi have blown out the candles on their 65th birthday cake, some quite a few decades ago, and the expo is all about acknowledging that, and ensuring Hauraki is a better place to live for everyone, says Cr Keall.

Waihi Expo for the International Day of the Older Person

at the

Waihi Memorial Hall
10 am – 12 noon

Friday, 2 October.

Please register your interest for catering purposes.

Local transport is available on request.

Please phone the Council's Waihi Service Centre on 0800 734 834.

Government receives special delivery from Hauraki

The Government received a special delivery this morning. The second part of Hauraki District Council's application for broadband funding, its Digital Enablement Plan (DEP), has now been submitted and will be assessed in Wellington over the next few months. The submission marks the successful completion of an application process that began earlier this year when Councils were asked to compete for a share of \$360 million to improve broadband and mobile phone services in regional New Zealand.

The process has given the Council a valuable insight into the digital needs of its communities, says Hauraki District Mayor John Tregidga, "Unsurprisingly, Hauraki residents and business owners want fast, reliable broadband that's affordable - regardless of whether they live in our urban towns or more rural areas," he says.

The DEP links to a comprehensive programme of work to improve digital infrastructure and utilise technology to enhance community and business growth over the next three to four years.

At this stage of the application process Ngatea, Waihi and Paeroa have all made the funding long list, but Mr Tregidga says the Council is looking beyond that to the needs of the entire District and will find ways to implement the DEP regardless of the outcome of its application.

"In today's world, the internet is as important as our roads, it's the highway of the future and if we want people to come and live and do business here we need to keep up," he says.

Paeroa Ward Councillor and Economic Development Committee Chairman Toby Adams agrees.

"The availability of Ultra-Fast Broadband (UFB) is one of the first questions asked by businesses looking to locate in the area. We are extremely well positioned in relation to bigger cities, enjoy a great lifestyle and don't have to put up with rush hour traffic – throw in UFB and it's hard to find a reason not to come to Hauraki," he says.



Vegetable based rabbit poison little threat to dogs and cats

A vegetable based poison specifically for the control of rabbits at Waihi's Morgan Park, poses little threat to dogs, cats or other curious animals says Hauraki District Council Parks and Reserves Manager Steve Clark.



"The poison has been professionally laid in secure stations inaccessible to any animal bigger than a rabbit, and placed in scrub and vegetation on the park fringes," he says.

Even if they had some kind of super powers and could get at it, wandering pets are unlikely to eat it because it's a rabbit attractant designed to repel dogs and cats.

After spending the winter holed up and breeding like, well, rabbits, rabbits are thick as thieves at the park. Three emergency services workers have twisted their ankles in burrows while loading patients into helicopters in recent months.

"The park is used as an emergency landing pad, but it's currently riddled with rabbit holes which makes it quite a hazard, especially when it's dark," says Clark.

The park is also used for football, junior rugby and other recreational activities better suited to a flat surface than a slice of Swiss cheese.

Five signs, advising of the operation have been placed at each entrance to the park.

Other rabbit strongholds, including Waihi and Paeroa cemeteries, will be targeted over the coming months. Exact dates and locations will be advertised via public notices in the Waihi Leader, Council facebook page, and website. Signs will also be erected on these sites.



Are you entitled to a rates rebate?

Good news for low-income homeowners: the government has increased the thresholds for its rates rebates scheme, making more people eligible for a subsidy.

Ratepayers can now receive a maximum annual income of \$24,440 plus \$500 for each dependant, to qualify for a full \$610 rebate. People with an income of up to \$40,000 may still be entitled to some assistance, depending on the rates amount and the number of dependants in the household.

The Council will send out letters to Hauraki homeowners who have previously received a rebate, encouraging them to apply again. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) requires people to apply every year for their rebate. Brochures are also being distributed with newsletters from all schools, so those that may be eligible because of dependants have a better chance of becoming aware of the eligibility criteria.

Rebate applicants can make a 15-minute appointment at the Council office, with a customer service advisor. Customer services staff are authorised to take the statutory declaration required by the DIA. Every endeavour is made to ensure that these short interviews are friendly and private.

Alternatively you can have an application form posted to you by contacting the Council on 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (free call within Hauraki

District), or download a form from the DIA website <http://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Rates-Rebate-Scheme-Index>.

If you are completing the form yourself you will need to get the Statutory Declaration witnessed by a Solicitor, JP, Notary Public, Court Registrar or MP, before mailing it to Council.

If you are unable to come into a Council Office, home visits are available by arrangement. Council staff really will go the extra mile to assist!

Wage or salary earners need to bring to their appointment a summary of earnings and a bank interest statement, for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. Self-employed workers need to supply an income summary for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 from the IRD or an accountant. Those receiving income assistance need only bring their bank interest statement for the previous financial year, as the Council has been instructed to use pre-printed benefit schedules for this calculation. If you have received accommodation supplement throughout the year you do need to supply a statement showing the amount of accommodation supplement received.

Applicants must have been living at the relevant property as at 1 July 2015. The deadline for applications is 30 June 2016, but we encourage you to apply early in order to gain the benefits of the rebate throughout the rating year.