



# HDC NEWS



## Climate Change and Ngatea

If you are a regular reader of this page you will know that Councils are now required by law, to take climate change into account in their planning. This requirement has been accentuated for Hauraki recently by the need to rezone more land in Ngatea for subdivision. Ngatea is seen as somewhat vulnerable to the effects of climate change being flat, low lying and close to the river and coast. In order to prepare a case for the further expansion of Ngatea, Council employed consultant Robert Aves to do a study into the effects of future climate change on the Ngatea township.

The main findings of his report "A Rational Approach to Assessment of Predicted Climate Change Effects on Flood Hazards for Existing Communities" were presented to Council's District Plan Committee recently. The report firstly looks at the current situation, then at the possible scenarios using the predicted climate change effects accepted as reasonable by the government. It then analyses the risks associated with these changes in the Ngatea community.

While the extent of likely climate change is disputed by many scientists, Government has given us a level of 0.5m sea level rise by 2050 as the predicted value to work with. It is clear that we should plan for this sort of sea level increase as we cannot afford to gamble with all the assets, both private and public, that would be at stake. There is not expected to be a great increase in rainfall in the Hauraki Plains area but storms may become more frequent. Tidal surge is probably more important to consider. This can be most dangerous when a spring tide coincides with a northerly wind. The highest tidal surge in the area is thought to have been in 1936 or 1938. This was a level of 3.00m compared with the Tararu Datum (a point everything is measured against). Another high tidal surge came in 1995 when 2.5m was reached.

Robert Aves has concluded that even with this sort of sea level rise and tidal surge there would still be seven hours per tidal cycle when water would drain into the river from the Ngatea drains under gravity alone and that the existing floodgates would work efficiently. The pumps in the area are underutilised at present and could be used to improve the removal of water. If necessary, extra pumps could be added at a relatively low cost.

It is worth noting that there has never been a serious flood in Ngatea according to anecdotal evidence and that the amount of rural run off flowing towards Ngatea is decreasing as the peat in surrounding areas has been sinking and is now at a lower level than the town.

The ground level in Ngatea is about 1.2m above the Tararu datum and Council's current rules ask that floor levels are 0.4m above ground level. This puts recently built houses at around 1.6m floor level but it should also be noted that 92% of houses in Ngatea have floor levels at or above 1.55m. The report therefore concludes that, in short, Ngatea is pretty safe from the effects of climate change and that nothing needs to be done to change Council's policy on floor levels.

It now remains for Council to repeat this exercise for other communities in the District.

## New Valuations

Rating valuations are currently being redone for our district. They were last done in 2003. You can expect your valuation notice in the mail around the 22nd of September. While the valuations have an active date of July 2006 they will not be used for rating purposes until the following year. The timing means that you will get a notice in the mail around the end of September with your new valuation on it and a week or two later you will get your rates demand which will still have the old valuation on it.

While it is expected that the new valuations will have risen substantially throughout the District this does not mean there will be a corresponding increase in rates. If all valuations go up by the same percentage there would be no increase at all in the rates due to valuation changes. It is only when one area goes up and other areas do not that there is a shift in rating.

It is also worth noting that less of your total rates are dependent on valuation now than formerly. Targeted rates, service charges and uniform charges form a higher percentage of the rate take than they did in previous times and therefore the valuations are not quite as important in terms of the rates you pay as they used to be.

## Waihi Ward Issues

### Grant

A grant of \$100 was given to the Waihi Community Resource Centre to assist in the convening of a meeting of teenaged mothers. The object of the exercise is ultimately to give support and parenting skills to these young mothers.

### Rubbish Bin

A request for a rubbish bin to be put on the track to the Owharoa Falls was declined. This track is next to the DoC tracks in the Karangahake Gorge. DoC's policy is not to provide rubbish bins and they encourage people to take their rubbish away with them. Councillors felt that if a bin was put there it would only encourage people to empty their cars of rubbish and deposit it there for removal at the ratepayers' expense.

### Memorial Fountain

The Ward Committee were happy to accept the offer from the Morgan family of a decorative fountain to grace the middle of Gilmour Lake in memory of Owen Morgan and honouring his contribution to the town. Present plans indicate that the fountain would feature a 4 metre high water jet and would be illuminated.

### Loan to Hall Committee

The Victoria Hall Committee in Waikino wishes to upgrade the kitchen of the Hall and has asked the Council for a loan to allow them to achieve this. The Council collects \$3800 per year on behalf of the committee from the Waikino community by way of a hall rate. While the loan would be outside Council's investment policy it is able to vary from this policy provided it states that it is doing so and for what reasons. As it is assured of future income being available to repay the debt, the Ward Committee recommended that the loan proceed and that the Ward would pay the interest on the loan for the first twelve months. Hopefully by the end of twelve months the committee will have been able to pay off the loan fully.

### Request to Display Proposal

The Ward Committee was asked at its last meeting for permission to display a proposal for a revival of the Waihi Art Gallery in its offices and libraries throughout the District. While the Committee declined to make a judgement on the merit of the proposal it agreed that the material could be displayed at the Waihi Library only on condition it was quite clearly stated on the written matter that the Council was not involved in the proposal in any way. Other material is displayed in our libraries covering community organisations that are not part of Council and it was considered that this was no different. On the other hand the Council Offices should only display material related to Council work and Council sponsored projects.

## ENVIRONMENT WAIKATO REPRESENTATIONAL REVIEW

Council is preparing a submission to the Environment Waikato representational review. Councillors are concerned that the proposal will remove the elected representative from the Hauraki District and will amalgamate part of the present electoral area with that of the North Waikato constituency and another part with the Thames Coromandel constituency.

The particular concern is that, because of the lower population numbers in the Plains-Paeroa locality, the elected member for the new combined area would most likely come from the Waikato area and this person would be unlikely to have a full understanding of the Piako and Waihou River schemes which are so essential to our District.

Submissions close on the 30th June and Council is likely to approve its submission at its meeting on June 29th.

## Elected Members' Diary



Meetings for the week of the 26th June to the 2nd July 2006

Thursday 29th June 2006 - Full Council Meeting

## PUBLIC NOTICES



### HYDRANT FLUSHING

As part of Hauraki District Councils reticulation maintenance programme annual flushing will be carried out from Fire Hydrants within the district. This work is carried out to improve the water quality in the system and also provide valuable information for pressure and flow measurements. This work will begin in Waihi during July 2006 and then move through the Karangahake Gorge to Paeroa and finish during August with the hydrants around the Plains and Waitakaruru. The hydrants will have flow and pressure recorded and then be opened fully to remove any sediment that could be located in the main.

An announcement will be placed on Coromandel FM informing the public of which area is currently being flushed each week.

HDC apologises for any inconvenience this work may cause and asks that if you experience dirty water to please flush an outside tap for a few minutes to assist removing coloured water from the system.

Dean Burwell  
Utilities Manager  
Water, Wastewater, Refuse

### PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ROAD TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Pursuant to the Transport (Vehicular Traffic Road Closure) Regulations 1965, notice is hereby given that the Hauraki District Council, for the purpose of repairing a water mains organised by Hauraki District Council, proposes to close the following road to ordinary vehicular traffic for the period indicated hereunder.

During the proposed period of closure the following provision will be made for ordinary vehicular traffic, which would otherwise use the road: divert to Station Road or Willoughby and Victoria Streets Paeroa.

Any person objecting to the proposal is called upon to lodge notice of his objection and grounds thereof in writing before 17 July 2006 at the office of the Hauraki District Council at William Street, P.O. Box 17, PAEROA.

Road proposed to be closed to ordinary vehicular traffic: Arney Street between Willoughby Street and Normanby Road Paeroa.

Period of proposed closure: Monday 14 August through to Friday 18 August 2006 from 7.00am to 5.30pm.

LD Cavers  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

