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**Ruapehu's electorate changes P3**



**Donut doer dobbed in P4**



**\$400 fine for dogs taken into Park P5**



**US-NZ Army meet up P7**

## Demand for U-turn on 'totally unaffordable' Ruapehu water services plan

By Moana Ellis, Local Democracy Reporting

Ruapehu's current mayor Weston Kirton is urging councillors to reverse a water services decision he says could cost residents \$1000 more a year.

He is calling for an urgent rethink of the decision last month to partner solely with Whanganui District Council in a water services body.

The two-council model would cause "extreme unaffordability" and long-term harm, he said.

"With rising costs and high unemployment, it's hard to understand why any councillor wouldn't choose the most affordable option.

"Ruapehu has the highest levels of deprivation in the country. Continuing with the current model will drive unacceptable and unnecessary financial hardship."

He has formally asked councillors to revoke the July resolution and, instead, join a four- or five-council option with the Palmerston North, Horowhenua and Rangitikei councils and Whanganui, if they wished to join.

The larger groupings would deliver significantly lower water charges for ratepayers, Kirton said.

The council voted 6-4 on 9 July to reject the officer-recommended four-council model. Kirton and three councillors were in favour.



The bid to overturn the decision comes after new affordability guidance from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA).

Kirton said the advice showed the decision would increase all Ruapehu water bills well above what was considered affordable.

In the first year of the two-council entity, charges would be nearly \$2500 per household – almost \$1000 more than under a five-council model.

For affordability, the DIA recommends water charges stay under 2.5% of median household income. Updated financial modelling shows Ruapehu would breach that benchmark under the two-council arrangement.

### 'Totally unaffordable'

For the poorest households, particularly in northern Ruapehu, water charges could climb to nearly 6% of median household income within 10 years – more than double the threshold.

"These costs are totally unaffordable for many of our people and will be especially severe for Māori communities."

New regulatory requirements would further increase cost pressures, Kirton said.

**Turn to Page 2**



**Leaping into new snow: Monday has been dubbed the best day of the season so far by some skiers and snowboarders. Photo: Pure Tūroa.**

Snowfalls on Mt Ruapehu on the weekend has seen many in the industry breathe a sigh of relief, following one of the slowest starts to the snow base build up in decades.

The two commercial skifields picked up around 25cm through the storm, with extensive drifting into the gullies. The upper area bases are still shallow – 36cm at the Knoll Ridge at Whakapapa and 80cm at the upper mountain at Tūroa.

In comparison, Tūroa's base prior to the storm – at 1 August – was around 50cm; in 2024 was about 75cm; and 2 metres in 2018 and again in 2023.

The chief executives of both Whakapapa and Tūroa presented updates to interested people at the public session after the AGM of the Ohakune Community Charitable Trust on Monday

"It's probably a bit of an understatement to suggest it's be a bit of a difficult start to the year's season," Tūroa CEO Jono Dean told the audience.

He gave an overview of the 2025 season so far: three major rain events; low visitor numbers (20,000 lost through the school holidays); staff numbers 30% down on a normal year.

"Staff, operations and maintenance teams have done an exceptional job holding things together under challenging conditions," said Dean.

Whakapapa CEO Travis Donoghue said that up to the OCCT meeting they had been skiing on man-made snow only.

"The team is proud that we have runs open for the full

**Turn to Page 6**



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# Power scholarship open for applications

A local electricity company has announced that its 2025 Inspiring Local Minds Scholarship is now open for applications.

“Helping local young people realise their potential through tertiary education is important to us,” said the Lines Company (TLC) chief executive Mike Fox.

“In the past we have supported students through a range of studies from science, technology and law to commerce and marketing.”

He said for young people with big dreams about tertiary study, this is their chance to be one of three to receive \$6000 over three years to support their studies.

Scholarship recipients are chosen by a selection panel that includes TLC’s chief executive and TLC’s customer and community engagement manager, alongside a Trustee from TLC’s shareholder Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT).

Supported by WESCT, TLC introduced the Inspiring Local Minds Scholarship programme in 2018. Since inception 30 young people have been awarded scholarships. Recipients must live or go to school in TLC’s network area.

Ruapehu College alumnus Una Drayton, a 2023 recipient currently doing an engineering degree, said she was extremely grateful to receive the scholarship. Una has subsequently returned to TLC’s network area to conduct a practical research project into smart metering. This work is now being shared with other EDBs and has positive uses across the sector that will benefit customers.

Fox was thrilled to see one of TLC’s scholarship students doing important practical research on the network.

“TLC takes great pride in our scholarship initiative, helping to nurture the next generation of experts,” said Fox.

“It’s even more rewarding when this investment makes a difference by benefiting our customers in the future. Una’s study and research work are great examples of why this scholarship is so important – to us at TLC, and the community. It’s a great investment into local young minds.”

Applications for the 2026 year close on 31 August 2025. Applicants must live in the TLC network area. Studies must be in a profession linked to jobs at TLC.



Una Drayton.

# Demand for water U-turn

From Page 1

National water regulator Taumata Arowai has told the council to bring forward upgrades to its non-compliant wastewater plants sooner than planned.

This meant water charges under the two-council model were forecast to rise to \$2800 per connection within a few years and reach more than \$4000 by 2033/34.

The estimated cost for the upgrades ranged from \$66 million for wastewater dispersed to water, to more than \$200m if dispersed to land.

## River protection

Kirton said he was not rejecting Whanganui or the many constructive partnerships between the two districts.

“We have strong and ongoing collaboration with Whanganui across multiple areas, such as the Mountains to Sea cycle trail and economic development, which will continue regardless of our water services structure.”

A five-council model would deliver the lowest possible user charges for all water users, the greatest operational efficiencies, and align the Whangaeu and Whanganui river catchments under a single regulator and service provider.

Existing commitments to river protection and shared services would not be compromised by moving to a larger model.

Kirton said some councillors had downplayed financial concerns, arguing that affordability could be addressed by the new entity or the Commerce Commission.

“At our workshop this week, the only proposed solution to unaffordable charges was ‘writing a letter to the Minister.’ That’s not good enough.

“I’m not prepared to defer responsibility and hope someone else sorts it out. This is our chance to act decisively and protect the people of Ruapehu from excessive costs.”

## ‘Blood out of a stone’

Councillor Fiona Kahukura Hadley-Chase told Local Democracy Reporting she thought it unlikely the decision would be overturned.

She was unconvinced by the cost projections.

“There’s no clear data, information or evidence. The modelling, the forecasting and the legislation keeps changing. They’re

plucking figures out of the sky.

“Because of that, I’m going to say the relationship with Whanganui must stay strong. If we don’t have that, then we’re paddling upstream.”

Hadley-Chase said the district’s 5500 ratepayers could not afford upcoming water costs and the council should seek a partnership with the DIA to pay for water.

“Dumping us in a bigger pool is not going to help. Our people can’t afford to pay for water, full-stop.

“We cannot afford to build this infrastructure. It shouldn’t mean we should go into millions worth of debt. It’s unreasonable for the Government to put that on us.

“The DIA should develop a unique solution to help those [councils] who are struggling. You cannot get blood out of a stone.”

## Decision looms on water plan U-turn

The council will consider the motion to overturn the two-council decision on 13 August.

Kirton is encouraging the public to contact their elected members or speak in the public forum before the vote.

Whanganui mayor Andrew Tripe said he was surprised to learn that the decision was being reconsidered.

“It was disappointing to learn of this without direct contact to me – fortunately I was advised informally.

“I am confident that when this matter goes to vote next week, the majority will continue to support the two-council water services CCO.”

Tripe said the councils were to consider a joint water services delivery plan (WSDP) for adoption next week, to make sure they meet the 3 September deadline.

“It’s a strong model, which balances local voice, and the benefits of scale and consolidation. A majority of Ruapehu councillors recognised this when they also adopted it as their preferred model.”

Tripe said if Whanganui’s preferred model became unavailable, the council would have to re-consider its remaining options, revise its WSDP and work to meet its legislative obligations.

LDR is local body journalism co-funded by RNZ and NZ On Air



Ruapehu councillors are being urged to revoke a decision to forge a two-council water services partnership with Whanganui. Photo/Supplied.

## Ruapehu Events & What's On

### AUGUST 2025

Elvis the King and Queens of Country 16 August  
Royal Theatre Raetihi

Waimarino Cup - Junior Interfields 16 - 17 August  
Registrations opening soon via Snowsports New Zealand. Snowsports New Zealand [www.snowsports.co.nz](http://www.snowsports.co.nz)

Tūroa Slopestyle Mini Shred (under 14) 16 August  
Visit [www.pureturoa.nz](http://www.pureturoa.nz) or find us on Facebook or Instagram @turoa.nz for up to date information.

North Island Champs - National Points 22 - 23 August  
Registrations opening soon via Snowsports New Zealand. Snowsports New Zealand [www.snowsports.co.nz](http://www.snowsports.co.nz)

Junction Winterfest 23 August - 6 September  
Winter Art Exhibition, TASCi Fundraiser, NZ Mountain Film Festival and much more. [Ohakunejunction.co.nz](http://Ohakunejunction.co.nz)

### SEPTEMBER 2025

James Bond, From Russia with Love 6 September

2001: A Space Odyssey 13 September

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid 20 September

The Sound of Music 27 September  
Full details on the Theatre Facebook [www.facebook.com/royal.raetihi](http://www.facebook.com/royal.raetihi)

Pond Skim - Whakapapa 13 September  
More on this event at [www.whakapapa.com](http://www.whakapapa.com)

Ruapehu Art Awards 17 September - 1 October  
[www.ruapehuartawards.com](http://www.ruapehuartawards.com)

Retro Day 27 September  
The Kitchen, 4 Thames St, Ohakune Junction. See Facebook page for details. #RETRODAYOHAKUNE or [ohakunejunction.co.nz](http://ohakunejunction.co.nz)

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[OHAKUNE.INFO](http://OHAKUNE.INFO) OR [RUAPEHUNOW.CO.NZ](http://RUAPEHUNOW.CO.NZ)

IT'S FREE TO LIST SO PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU

HAVE AN EVENT COMING UP ...

[ADS@RUAPEHUBULLETIN.CO.NZ](mailto:ADS@RUAPEHUBULLETIN.CO.NZ)

LINK YOUR EVENT TO EVENTFINDA FOR FREE

## Eating out in the Ruapehu District

Call 06 385 8532 to list your business here

### KINGS BAR & RESTAURANT

3 Rimu St Ohakune Junction Ph: 06 385 8648

Est in 1913, historic Kings offers an inviting menu by international chefs, a great selection of boutique wines and craft breweries including award winning Ruapehu Brewing Co beers in the fridge and on tap. See our Facebook page for what's on. Please check our open times as these will vary.

### LA PIZZERIA

6 Thames St, Ohakune Junction Ph: 06 385 8558

Ohakune's most famous pizza restaurant, for over 37 years we have been serving Ohakune's best pizza. Come up and see us in the "Junction" at the end of the Old Coach Road and try one of our hot, tasty, handmade pizzas. Same great menu available for takeaway. Open 7 days, 4 – late. Check us out online at: [www.lapizzeria.co.nz](http://www.lapizzeria.co.nz)

### LKNZ LODGE & CAFE

1 Rata St, Ohakune Ph: 027 257 LKNZ (5569)

Open every day. Menu includes our delicious big breakfast, creamy mushrooms, homemade soups, wedges, nachos, toasties, waffles and more ... Volcanic coffee, muffins & scones, real fruit smoothies and thick shakes. Dine in or takeaway. Onsite parking. [www.lknz.co.nz](http://www.lknz.co.nz)

### POWDERKEG

Bottom of the mountain road Ph: 06 385 8888

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### UTOPIA CAFÉ

47 Clyde St, Ohakune Ph: 06 385 9120

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## Alzheimers Whanganui

### Services in the Waimarino

- Do you need to speak to someone about concerns with cognitive issues
- Do you need the support of someone who understands dementia
- Are you caring for someone with dementia
- Do you just require some information about dementia

Our Support Coordinator will be in Raetihi  
Wednesday 27 August 2025  
10.30am - 12.00pm

If you would like to make an appointment  
Please contact Mary: Ph 022 694 4978



# Ruapehu move to Whanganui electorate confirmed

Most of the geographical area of the Ruapehu District will become part of the Whanganui Electorate at next year's general election, moving out of the Rangitikei Electorate.

Taumarunui township and the north of the Ruapehu District will come under the King Country Electorate.

The changes were confirmed when the Representation Commission released the final electorate boundaries and names for the next general election.

The boundaries of 49 general and three Māori electorates have been adjusted.

The main areas of change are in Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Christchurch, and the lower North Island where electorate boundaries have been reconfigured to include one fewer electorate.

"Most of the boundary changes were signalled in the proposed electorates report published in March 2025, but we have made some amendments to those proposals following public consultation," says Judge Kevin Kelly, Chair of the Representation Commission.

There were 717 written submissions on the proposed boundaries and public hearings were held in June.

"We were heartened that so many people took an active interest in this important work. The many public contributions were invaluable," says Judge Kelly.

Despite submissions, no changes have been made to the proposed Whanganui Electorate boundaries.

"Overall, we consider we have struck the appropriate balance so that each electorate has about the same number of people as is required of us under the Electoral Act," says Judge Kelly.

The Representation Commission's full report and maps of the final boundaries are available at [vote.nz/boundary-review](http://vote.nz/boundary-review).

**Complete change for Ruapehu**

Most of the national media in March focussed on the changes to electorates in the cities, especially Wellington that loses a whole electorate.

But the review completely changes the Ruapehu District's electorate – splitting the District in two.

The changes are being made following changes in New Zealand's population and where people live.

The Electoral Act 1993 determines the number of electorates, following a formula within the Act.

Based on the 2023 Census of Population and Dwellings and the continuous Māori Electoral Option, the formula produces 64 general electorates – the 16 fixed in the South Island and 48 in the North Island, one fewer than present.

In the central North Island, Taranaki-King Country gains a small area around and including Taumarunui. Whanganui extends northwards to incorporate Raetihi, Ohakune, Waiouru, Waimarino (until recently known as National Park) and Ōwhango.

Whanganui will comprise the communities of Whanganui, Patea, Eltham, Stratford, Ōwhango, Hāwera, Ohakune and Waiouru.

Whanganui is within 5% of quota but to address the reconfiguration of other electorates in the lower North Island, population of 5100 (7% of quota) is moved from Rangitikei into Whanganui including the communities of Ōwhango, Ohakune and Waiouru.

**Past electorates**

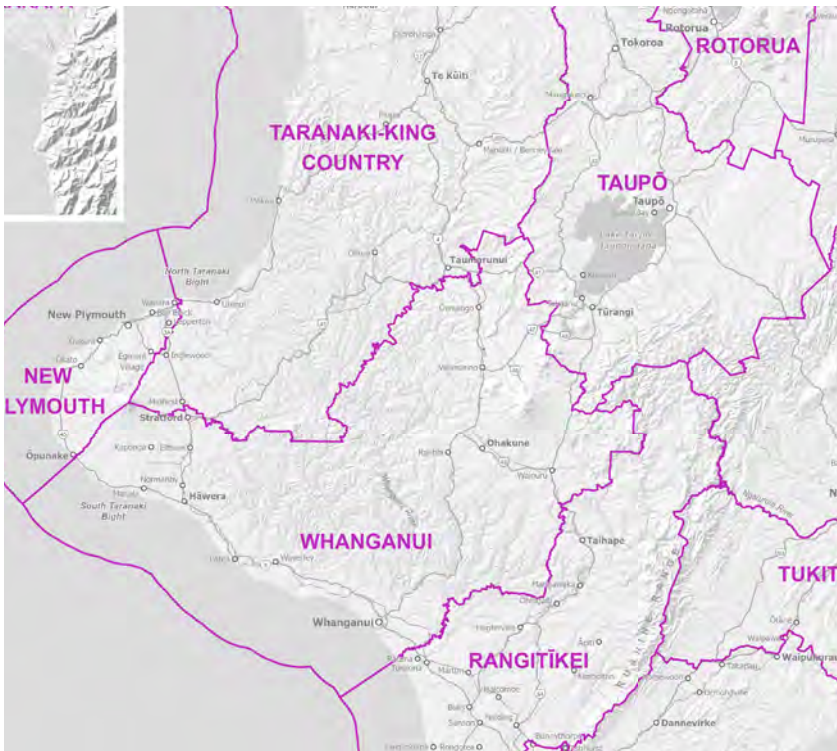
In the past 40 years, the Waimarino area (the old Waimarino County and Raetihi and Ohakune Boroughs) has been part of the King Country electorate, then Taupō, then Rangitikei.

In 1911, Waimarino was its own electorate, stretching from the coast to Lake Taupō.

In 1918, the boundaries changed, losing the area near the coast but taking in Taumarunui.

After changes in boundaries over the decades, the Waimarino electorate was abolished in 1952 and was split up between surrounding electorates.

The Waimarino electorate was re-established in 1963, but abolished again in 1972, splitting it between Rangitikei and King Country.



Ruapehu voters will be looking at two different electorates at the election next year – Taranaki-King Country for the north and Whanganui for the south.

# Arts deadline extended

Artists now have an extra week to get their entry forms in for the Ruapehu Art Awards, based in Taumarunui. The deadline for entry forms has been extended to 22 August to encourage more entries.

Artwork must now be delivered to Twin Rivers Community Art Gallery in Taumarunui by 10 September.

The last Ruapehu Art Awards in 2023 saw the Taumarunui War Memorial Hall filled to bursting with over 300 paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures and more.

"We would love to see this year's event be as inspiring again," says Kathleen Lennie from the Art Awards.

The Exhibition opens on 17 September with an evening prize-giving, then open to the public until 30 September.

Categories are: 2-dimensional open; 2-dimensional Ruapehu theme; 3-dimensional; photography; fibre art; Māori art; young adults; junior.

Entry for young adult and junior artists is free: for everyone else there is a cost of \$35 per entry (no longer raised to \$45). More information and entries are online at [ruapehuartawards.com](http://ruapehuartawards.com).

"Artists from anywhere in the country are welcome to enter, with prizes of \$500 for each adult category and \$1000 for the Premier Prize overall winner," says Kathleen.

"We thank the local sponsors who have already come on board with donations to make these prizes possible: Mitre10 – once again sponsoring the premier award; Property Brokers; Ohakune Chocolate Éclair Shop; Lyn Neeson; Ohakune Liquorland; 100% Appliances; Bailey Ingham Ltd; King Country Wheel Alignment; Fergusson Bhullar & Scott; Bakehouse Café; Central Mowers & Chainsaws; Gorjiss; Main Trunk Fitness; The Toolshed; King Country Glass; Taumarunui Hire Centre; Doyle Valuations; Bellasolè Hair Design; Partners in Hair; Time For Me.

The Awards also thank those who have donated anonymously and those who have promised donations to come.

Contact: [riversartgallery@gmail.com](mailto:riversartgallery@gmail.com).



## Cancer Society

Te Kāhui Matepukupuku o Aotearoa

### Drop In Sessions – 20 August, 2025

**10.30–11.30am**  
**at The Centre, 14 Seddon Street, Raetihi**

**12.30pm – 1.30pm**  
**at Ngāti Rangi Community Health Centre, Ohakune**

Chat over a cuppa with us about:

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- Volunteering
- Fundraising

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**027 285 8411**



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<https://ruapehu.resolve.red/web/home.aspx>



### Benefits to the new way of doing things:

- Can Watch meetings live or on demand
- Can read agendas and minutes from same location
- If watching on demand video function has bookmarks which allows you go directly to what you want to see, rather than working through the whole Facebook video!





# Letters

## Candidate hype.

I encourage all voters to look at the promises and slogans of all prospective mayors and councillors. Then consider the track record of the real tried-and-true councillors who have consistently made positive contributions, namely Weston Kirton and his family.

Mayoral candidate Lyn Neeson claimed that the \$700,000 overspend in the Parks and Reserves budget would not have happened on her watch.

The fact is that it did happen on her watch. (On the Taumarunui FB site, she attacked both the mayor and the CEO saying their heads should roll, which I found rather astounding because the matter was still being dealt with and I believed she deliberately wanted to discredit Kirton. As a team member, I believe she showed lack of loyalty (and a breach of confidentiality) to the Council. Personally, I condone the dirty politics. It gives you an insight into the behaviour, attitude and integrity of the attacker.

All elected members, including Neeson were aware of the overspend at the time and they all share 'collective responsibility'. Neeson sits on the Risk and Assurance Committee, which exists specifically to provide extra oversight of Council spending.

Neeson doesn't pay water rates but voted alongside councillors Nottage, Hoeta, Iwikau, Hadley-Chase and Wilson for the most expensive water option available. Ratepayers will be paying around \$1000 more per year than the lower cost alternative. The water costs are based on Long Term Plan (LTP) estimates, which have proven to be significantly underestimated – Ohakune Water Treatment Plant LTP estimate \$3m, actual \$10m, Owahango Plant LTP estimate \$2.6 m, actual \$4.5m

Financial hardship for low-income homeowners, pensioners on fixed incomes and hardworking citizens may be forced to sell their homes or having to downsize because of the increased cost of water bills. Rental housing costs will go up too. Vote to keep costs down.

Helen Graaf

## Lyn Neeson replies:

The \$700,000 overspend would not have happened on my watch for the simple reason that I raised the issue originally, way back in November when it was only \$200,000, and I have been repeatedly questioning it. As part of a team, I expected my concerns to be taken seriously and action taken.

My loyalty belongs to the ratepayers, who deserve to know what is being done with their money. This was not a confidential matter. Details were part of the public record and available to anyone who followed live streams of meetings or read the minutes.

As councillor on the community board, I asked the department manager where the money was coming from for the fantastic work that was being done on the walkways as I was aware there was only \$10,000 in that budget. I was assured we were getting a good deal.

In the November council meeting, with an overspend beginning to appear in the Parks and Recreation budget at \$200,000, my questions met with reassurance that all was in hand.

By February, the overspend had more than doubled, at \$450,000. Again, I was assured that staff were monitoring the situation.

In the March Community Board meeting I asked why we were planning a bespoke bus shelter for Kakahi when I knew the budget for district bus shelters was \$13,000.

When the April agenda came out with that report I immediately sent it to the independent chair of the Risk and Assurance Committee, asking if this sort of concern should have come across our committee desk. His response is recorded in our meeting of 22 May.

Anyone watching the meetings will know I'm a critical thinker who always asks the hard questions. There are multiple reasons that budget was overspent and I fully expect that we will have clear answers eventually. But I reiterate, an out of budget overspend to that level will not happen if those sort of questions are asked and acted upon in a Council I lead.

Lyn Neeson, Ruapehu mayoral candidate

# Police nab ute-driving vandal

Police have arrested a 22-year-old male after he drove his Ford Ranger Raptor across the village green at the Ohakune Junction, causing damage to the area.

Police acting sergeant Bruce Francis said the male, from the Far North, thought it would be fun to show off in front of his friends, in the early hours of Saturday morning 2 August.

Sgt Francis said the driver's vehicle was impounded for 28 days and will be appearing in the Taihape District court in the near future.

"The most likely outcome, if found guilty, will be a six-month loss of driver's license."

Sgt Francis said Police have been very active in this space as this vehicle was the sixth impounded for sustained loss of traction offences in the past two months. In that time, three cars from Raetihi, two from Auckland and this recent one from the Far North.

He added that Ohakune Police would like to thank the two Auckland drivers for putting their antics on Facebook as it made locating the offending cars considerably easier.

"Sustained loss of traction, typically referred to as burn outs and skids, are dangerous to other motorists and pedestrians," said Sgt Francis.

"When the damage is to public grass areas around the district it can take months to recover, given the cold, wet weather. The repatriation costs for damage to green spaces in the community affect all ratepayers."

He said the Junction incident was reported to Police by a local district councillor through the Police 105 reporting line.

"We want to encourage everyone who care about their local spaces to use the reporting line to pot poor driving behaviours."



A skid across the village green at the Ohakune Junction has cost the driver the loss of his vehicle for 28 days. Photo supplied.

## THE WEEKLY WORKOUT

answers for each puzzle are included on this page

814

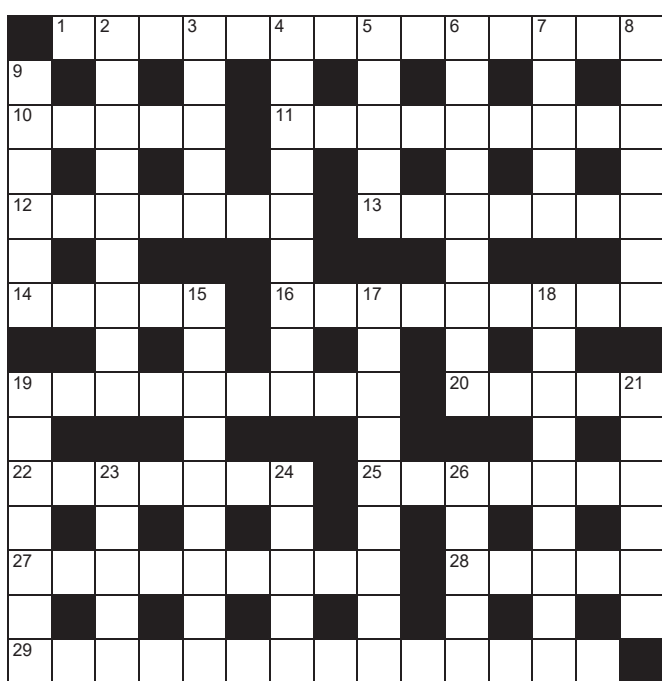
### QUICK CROSSWORD

#### Across

1. Aurora australis (8,6)
10. Sufficient (5)
11. Ravenous (9)
12. Tilts to one side (7)
13. Etch (7)
14. Picture (5)
16. Rebuke (9)
19. Apiarist (9)
20. Relating to the eye (5)
22. Outdated (7)
25. Breathe (7)
27. Appalled (9)
28. Farewell (Spanish) (5)
29. Innovative (14)

#### Down

2. Deliberate (2,7)
3. In that place (5)
4. Listen surreptitiously (9)
5. Tend (5)
6. Under an assumed identity (L) (9)
7. Commotion, outburst (colloq) (3-2)
8. Temporarily halt (7)
9. Daredevil (6)
15. Medical procedure (9)



17. Game bird (9)
18. Gradually diminish (9)
19. Powerful embrace (4,3)
21. Fold (6)
23. Freight (5)
24. Scale (5)
26. Pile (5)



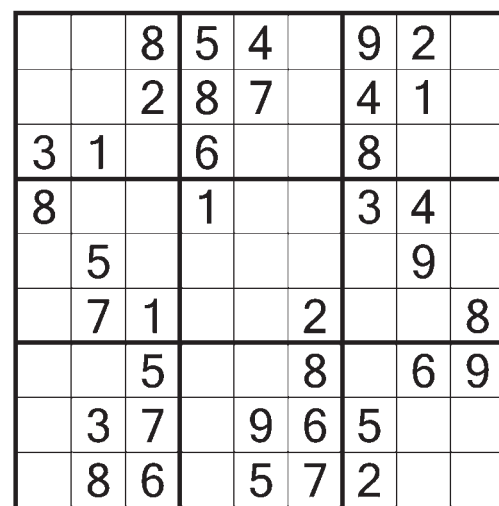
Enjoy WordFit puzzles?  
Magazines available from  
[www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz](http://www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz)

### THE TOP 10

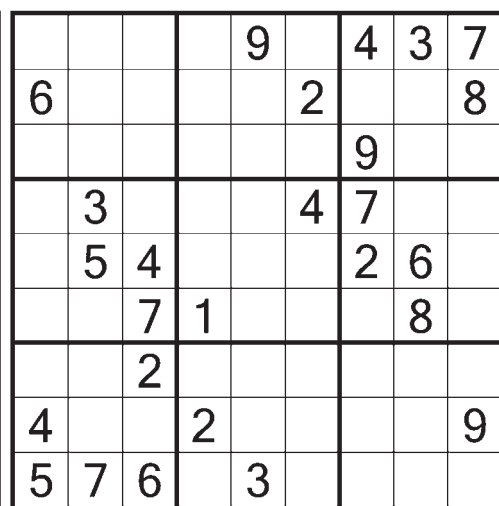
1. In ballet, 2. Horses, 3. Her right hand, 4. day Adventist, 10. Brummies.  
Lamb, 7. North, 1909 vs 1911, 8. 12, 9. Seventh-Brandy, 5. Crops and soils, 6. The Silence of the

### SUDOKU

Fill the grid so every row, column and every 3x3 box contains 1-9



1 EASY 2



MEDIUM

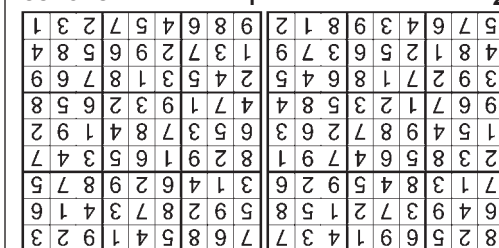
### The Top 10

1. A glissade is done a) on ice, b) when icing something, c) in ballet?
2. If you are a hippodrophobe, which animals do you fear?
3. What is on top of Mona Lisa's left hand?
4. What is added to egg yolks and vanilla to make advocaat?
5. Agronomy is the study of what?
6. Clarice Starling is an FBI agent in what 1991 Oscar-winning film?
7. Which Pole was reached first on foot, North or South?
8. How many pairs of ribs does a human have?
9. Sanitarium pays no tax on its profits because it is owned by which church?
10. Which Australian team was the first non New Zealand side to win Super 12 rugby?

### CROSSWORD

21. Crease, 23. Cargo, 24. Climb, 26. Stack.  
17. Partridge, 18. Attrition, 19. Bear hug,  
8. Suspend, 9. Madcap, 15. Operation,  
drop, 5. Nurse, 6. Incognito, 7. Hoo-ha,  
Down: 2. On purpose, 3. There, 4. Eaves-  
28. Adios, 29. Groundbreaking.  
Optic, 22. Archaic, 25. Respire, 27. Horrified,  
14. Photo, 16. Reprimand, 19. Beekeeper, 20.  
11. Voracious, 12. Careens, 13. Engrave,  
Across: 1. Southern Lights, 10. Ample,

### SUDOKU





# Dog owner's blatant rule breaking costs \$400

A woman who took photographs of herself illegally taking several dogs into Tongariro National Park has been given a \$400 infringement notice for her “blatant disregard” of the law.

Posted on a public Facebook page, the photos include damning evidence of the woman smiling while holding one of her dogs in front of one of the “no dogs” signs in the national park.

Department of Conservation Tongariro operations manager Libby O’Brien says the infringement notice was a no-brainer.

“This person didn’t make a mistake, she showed blatant disregard for the law, for nature, for the mana of the dual World Heritage listed Tongariro National Park.

“I’ve written to the organisation associated with the Facebook page to express my concern and disappointment at its apparent endorsement of this behaviour.”

Dogs are not allowed in Tongariro National Park – including at the three ski fields located in the park – where they can disturb or attack wildlife, such as kiwi and other threatened species.

Under the National Parks Act (1980) dogs are not allowed in any national park, with the exception of guide dogs and dogs engaged in duties for the purposes of law, search and rescue, or for approved management purposes.

Dog owners, or those in control of a dog found in a national park are liable for infringement fines of up to \$400. This includes dogs in cars, leashed, and unleashed.

O’Brien says making a public mockery of the law is an affront and an insult to those who value Tongariro National Park.

“Millions of people connect deeply to this place, value its cultural heritage and its volcano-sculpted environment.

“For this woman to celebrate her lawbreaking is to insult the iwi, the community, the businesses, and our DOC rangers, who all work so hard to protect the nature and experience of this national park.

“Big thanks go to the person who forwarded us the social media post; your actions have helped us to protect what’s important.”

Members of the public who see concerning incidents on public conservation land, or involving protected wildlife, should call 0800 DOC HOT. Any information they share – including pictures or video – will be managed in confidence by DOC.

# Redmayne on conservation: laws hold back growth?

Local MP Suze Redmayne passes on the Coalition Government’s plans for the conservation estate:

- Here in the Ruapehu District, we’re fortunate to call some of New Zealand’s most spectacular conservation land home. From our beautiful walking and cycling tracks to our mighty maunga and national parks – this land is part of our identity. It also offers enormous potential for tourism, job creation and regional development.

But outdated conservation laws are holding us back.

Plenty of people across our district already run outstanding businesses on the conservation estate – from ski fields to guided walks, cycling tours and rafting adventures. But to operate on public conservation land, they need a concession – and the current concessions regime is totally broken. Applications can take years to process or renew, leaving business owners stuck in a frustrating cycle of uncertainty.

There are real opportunities here to grow tourism, build stronger conservation partnerships

**Turn to Page 9**

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Five dogs were brought into Tongariro National Park, where no dogs are allowed. Photo: retrieved from Facebook, 6 August 2025. Inset: Signs clearly state no dogs are allowed in Tongariro National Park. Photo: DOC.

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VOICE OF THE RUAPEHU REGION  
Tuesday 13 August, 1985. Volume 3 No. 12

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## COMMUNITY LEADERS COMMENT

### LOCAL RATES AND GST... TO BE OR NOT TO BE

At the July meeting of the Raetihi Borough Council it was resolved that a letter be sent to the Minister of Finance, Roger Douglas, with a copy to our King Country MP, Jim Bolger, objecting strongly to a goods and services tax being applied to rates and urging the Government to reconsider this move — a move that will allow one form of tax to be based on and added to another.

Our Council has decided that it should pursue the case for 'zero rating status' for local Government (in other words no GST on rates thank you very much!) because of the amount of local concern being expressed and also because the president of the municipal association, Ross Jansen, has advised us that provision for the application of GST to rates may be included in a bill to be introduced into Parliament and referred to a select committee shortly. He intends appearing on behalf of all municipalities before the select committee to express our strong objection to this measure.

Rate increases here in Raetihi normally run close to the current rate of inflation and although the optimists are predicting that inflation will fall in future it is becoming fairly obvious that there will not be any change in the level next year from the present high rate (17%) currently being experienced and it is my bet that once GST has been implemented there will more than likely be a higher rate again to contend with at least initially. This of course will do 'wonders' for the striking of the 1986-87 rates.

Given that GST could add another 10% to 15% on top

of that 17% inflation rate, Raetihi ratepayers could be facing a rate increase around the 30% plus mark next year. This would mean of course that the average ratepayer will be having to find around another \$150 per year — that figure of course being based on an average Raetihi rate demand of just under \$500. Those paying above this average will be paying a greater increase.

It is therefore in the interest of us all to object strongly to this move now so as all members of Parliament are made aware and fully appreciate our concern on this matter before the select committee considers submissions and reports back to Parliament.

A letter from each ratepayer or household to the Ministers of Finance or Local Government, Parliament Buildings, Wellington (letters to Ministers of the Crown do not even require stamps), would probably prove to be the most effective form of protest rather than just signing a petition.

The fact that some of you may feel that you are not able to write an effective enough letter to the Minister should not deter you from doing so. Never mind the fancy wording or the precise English: just write telling

him, in your own way, how you feel.

As well grab hold of Jim Bolger, our MP next time he is in the area or if there are any other ideas some of you may have that you feel might be worthwhile pursuing.

Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or the Raetihi Borough Council Chambers.

I will ensure that the President of the Municipal Association receives all the relevant material available from this area prior to his appearing before the select committee on this matter e.g. newspaper clippings, copies of letters to the Editor and editorial articles.

Whether or not any of this will make the slightest bit of difference to the final decision made by this Government will remain to be seen.

However, if we take some positive action now before it happens rather than wait until it is a *fait accompli* then at least our objection will have been heard when it counts most rather than just squawking ineffectively when we receive our next year's rate demand.

G. S. Workman  
Mayor, Raetihi

## MAP

The Waimarino Bulletin is again featuring its special 'Holiday Map' on page 15.

It provides a comprehensive round-up of recreational activities and facilities in the Ruapehu region.

### Former hotel managers visit old stamping ground



Ross and Gail Henry in the public bar of the Ohakune Hotel where they met many old friends and former patrons.

After an absence of more than a year a couple of very popular and familiar faces were to be seen in the Waimarino last week.

Ross and Gail Henry — former managers of the Ohakune Hotel — were back in New Zealand for a short holiday and spent some time visiting friends and attending functions in the area...they were very much in demand and difficult to get hold of to interview as their well-intentioned plans were constantly changed in response to invitations.

For the past year they have been managing the Huon Gulf Motel in Lae, New Guinea. This brief break marks the half-way stage of their 2-year contract.

Whether they will renew or extend the initial contract

period hasn't yet been decided but it is much more likely they will return to New Zealand next year to run a family-owned hotel in Hawkes Bay.

Ross and Gail took on the tropically-situated Huon Gulf Motel challenge to broaden their experience after a brief stint (about four months) at Wanganui's Rutland Hotel following their departure from Ohakune's not nearly so tropical hotel in March last year.

Life in New Guinea has certainly been an experience-broadening exercise for them.

The limitations of pidgin-English communication has had its amusing as well as its frustrating moments.

And, in a post-colonial society where the traditional master-servant relationship is still deeply entrenched, the

self-sufficient kiwi egalitarianism is met with native bewilderment and even some mild hostility.

"Life in fact could hardly be more different...it's a whole new world," said Ross.

Asked if the problems currently affecting Port Moresby and widely reported in the international press — gang-rapes, looting, assaults etc. — are being experienced in Lae (which is on the northern and opposite coast of New Guinea) Ross replied that, whilst one has to be careful and sensible, the situation in Lae was not nearly as bad.

"In fact if we were asked to transfer to Port Moresby, Gail and I would return to New Zealand pronto."

According to their friends in the Waimarino it wouldn't take much to persuade them to return anyway.

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### New trail eases congestion



Turoa Skifield staff worked throughout the summer months to provide a new 5-metre wide track down to the Parklane chairlift drive station. This has transformed what was formerly a difficult, steep and rocky slope, down which skiers had to pick their cautious way into a gentle gradient suitable for intermediate skiers. Only a light snow cover is needed to make the trail useable and, by enabling skiers to use both chairlifts, mid-field congestion is avoided.

NEWS  
58-681

Your Community Newspaper

ADS  
58-532

## Snow news



Jono Dean, at right, provides a season update at the OCCT meeting at the Powderhorn on 4 August.

From Page 1

range of abilities at the moment," he stated on social media after the storm.

"Our team are particularly epic in 2025."

He pointed out to the meeting that Whakapapa has been around for 72 years, but the new company was only 12 weeks old.

"We have had a huge early season, with record numbers for some of our guest categories, and Term 3 is a big one for us — with up to 2000 school kids coming each week.

"From the dancing parking crew, to the snowmakers nerding out over the wet bulb ... it's been going well," he stated on Monday this week.

"We've made our best snow in years and last Saturday was one of our biggest days this decade, without needing to close the road.

"We had a good 15-20cm of snow out of Friday's latest storm, which was then followed by some big wind stripping, but overall a slight net gain and we are now getting really close to a comeback for the Delta chair and the 2025 debut of the Valley T-bar.

"We will keep you updated on these through this week. Relatively, it's still early and we are sure to see more snow and upper mountain skiing come online, the Knoll T-bar would follow after the Valley.

"With the current state of play we have unfortunately had to farewell a few of our team members earlier than planned. They've been phenomenal and we are grateful for every bit of energy, skill and heart they've brought."

### Summer operations

Both CEOs outlined plans for spring and summer, with Dean stating that Turoa will remain open "as long as conditions allow".

He said they were working on a summer operation, for sightseeing, hiking and food and beverages.

"We aim to build a unique alpine summer visitor experience for Ohakune."

### Threats

Dean also outlined some of the challenges for Turoa.

These included the judicial review of the ski areas' concessions, which creates "major uncertainty". He said a court date for the review is set for March 2026.

He said Turoa would like to see an improvement in their relationship with the Department of Conservation to avoid conflicting messaging and "delays in decision-making".

### Positives

The Turoa chief outlined some "blue sky" points — plans for ski area improvements:

These include lift rope replacements for the Movenpick and Parklane in May 2026, to extend the lifts' lifespans.

A three-stage infrastructure upgrade includes installing a snow factory in April 2026, to improve the reliability of the Alpine Meadow, adding 30-45 days.

Stage Two (12-24 months) would be an upgrade to the High Noon Express to extend its life to 30 years as well as uplift the capacity and reliability. The field's snowmaking system will also receive a "birthday" upgrade.

Stage three (24-60 months) would "fulfil the mountain's potential" with lift upgrades and alpine base activation, further developing year-round sightseeing.

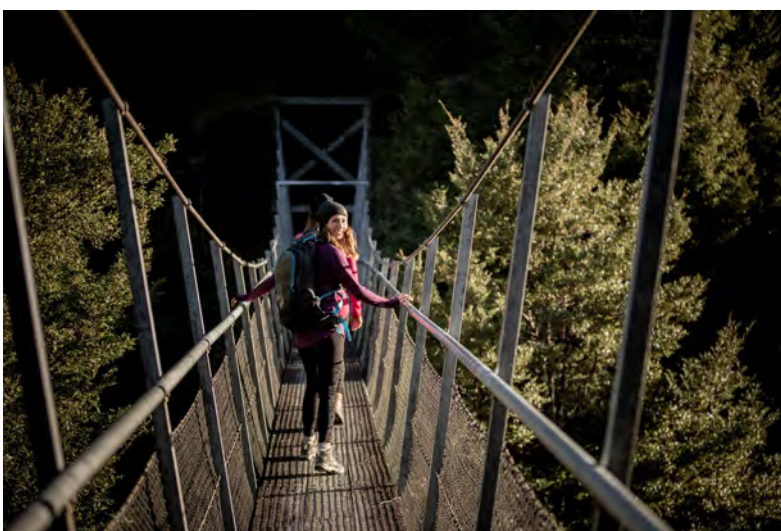
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# Waiouru visit: US and NZ Army leaders strengthen strategic partnership

Ngāti Tūmatauenga hosted United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) Commanding General, General Ronald P. Clark for a valuable few days of discussions in July, including a visit to Waiouru.

Over the course of the senior leaders' and their delegations meeting in Wellington, as well as a visit to the NZ Army's training and cultural home in Waiouru, the deepening defence relationship was reflected between both countries, rooted in shared democratic values and more than a century of military cooperation dating back to the First World War.

"Our armies have stood side by side in every major conflict of the past century," said General Clark.

"Today, that legacy continues as we build the integrated landpower network required to meet today's challenges and preserve peace in the Indo-Pacific."

The meeting underscored not only the historical depth of the US-New Zealand Army partnership, but also the shared commitment to preparing our forces for the challenges of a rapidly evolving regional security environment.

"New Zealand values its close and enduring relationship with the US Army. Our co-operation is not just historical – it's operational, forward-looking, and grounded in trust," said Major General Rose King.

"Together, we are preparing our forces to meet shared challenges across the region with agility, adaptability and purpose."

Discussions focused on building further interoperability, advancing combined readiness initiatives, and the US Army's recent transformation efforts. The leaders emphasised the critical role both armies play in shaping a free and open Indo-Pacific, especially as the



General Clark, commander U.S. Army Pacific, receives a brief from Colonel Lisa Kelliher, Commander of Army Training Group in Waiouru. Photo: New Zealand Army.

region faces evolving threats and strategic competition.

The meeting occurred as both nations' armies participate in Exercise Talisman Sabre in Australia, where close to 700 New Zealand Defence Force troops are training alongside US, Australian and other allied forces. The exercise is demonstrating growing interoperability across air, land, maritime, cyber, and space domains.

Major General King highlighted New Zealand's commitment to maintaining a modern, combat-ready force capable of deploying globally and regionally. The New Zealand Army – 4200 active and 2000 reserve soldiers strong – regularly integrates seamlessly with allied partners across combined missions and operations, supports United

Nations peacekeeping operations and delivers humanitarian assistance across the Pacific when called upon.

"We know that we can't contribute mass and scale, but we pride ourselves on the quality of our soldiers and our leaders, who regularly deploy to, and add significant value to multinational deployments and operations," Major General King said.

"To that end, it's been great to be able to share some insight with General Clark and his team around how we go about training our people."

Under the New Zealand Government's Defence Capability Plan, the NZ Army is pursuing upgrades to its Javelin anti-tank missile system, investing in a Network Enabled

Turn to Page 9

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## Property Brokers



## Welcome, Jody Milham

In late 2024, my partner Kate and I made the strategic decision to relocate from the Kapiti Coast to Ohakune, choosing the mountains over the beach. Our affinity for Ohakune and its surroundings has grown over numerous visits, drawn by the region's striking landscapes, abundant recreational opportunities, and welcoming small-town atmosphere.

I bring more than a decade of sales success in Melbourne's highly competitive automotive industry and professional experience ranging from dairy farming to IT.

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Westlorne makes shade sails (left) gun bags (above) and market gardeners' harvesting equipment (at right)



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# Redmayne writes

**From Page 5**  
and support local initiatives. But too often, red tape and a system that says ‘no’ means great ideas never get off the ground.

This is why our Government is reforming the Conservation Act – to fix the broken concessions process and make it easier for appropriate activity to get off the ground, while still protecting the natural environment we all value.

This is a sensible and much-needed step forward and it’s exciting – it’s about unlocking growth, backing rural enterprise and helping more people live, work and thrive in our region.

The new electorate boundaries for the 2026 General Election were confirmed on Friday. The Ruapehu District will move out of my Rangitikei electorate – and I’m gutted, as I have really enjoyed working with you all. Taumarunui will join Taranaki-King Country, while Owahango, National Park (now Waimarino – editor), Raetihi, Ohakune and Waiouru will become part of Whanganui.

Additionally, Ashhurst moves into Wairarapa, and Palmerston North has gained Bunnythorpe, Summer Hill, Massey University and Linton. Rangitikei moves south to welcome Foxton, Waitare, Levin, Ohau and Manakau. While things will look a bit different at the next election, Rangitikei will continue to showcase heartland provincial and rural New Zealand.

The new boundaries will be used for next year’s election, but Ruapehu District people will move into the Whanganui electorate after voting at the 2026 election has taken place.

I love my job and I’m proud to be the MP for Rangitikei and will continue to work hard for all our communities across the entire electorate.

I’ll be in Raetihi and Ohakune during the last week of August and look forward to catching up with some of you then. As always, if you have anything you’d like to discuss please email me at Suze. RedmayneMP@parliament.govt.nz, or give Kay in my Taumarunui office a call on 07 896 8008.

Authorised by Suze Redmayne Parliament Buildings, Wellington

# Army leaders strengthen strategic partnership

**From Page 7**  
Army to improve its digital communications and command-and-control interoperability, and plans the replacement of aging vehicle fleets to enhance mobility and sustainment in the field.

“New Zealand is a stalwart partner in the Pacific,” said General Clark.

“Whether in exercises like Talisman Sabre or standing shoulder to shoulder in peacekeeping operations, our soldiers share trust built on action, not just words.”

This sentiment was echoed by Major General King, who emphasised the operational value of combined training and the practical steps both armies are taking to improve regional preparedness.

“Participating in Talisman Sabre alongside US and Australian forces showcases our commitment to operational readiness and deepening interoperability,” said Major General King.

“These exercises strengthen our collective capability to respond quickly and effectively in the region — whether in conflict, crisis, or humanitarian need.”

Both generals acknowledged the strategic importance of the Pacific Islands region and affirmed our roles in promoting regional security, development, and sovereignty.

This visit underscored the enduring strength of the US–New Zealand partnership - one forged in the trenches of the First World War, battle-tested in the Pacific during the Second World War, and reaffirmed today through shared purpose and mutual respect.



General Ronald Clark and NZ Army's Major General Rose King.

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**Auto Services**

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Locally owned and operated by mechanic Daniel Norris.

WOF \$75 car, \$45 trailer

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For enquiries, please phone Daniel

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**FEEDER** Jersey bull calves for sale. Ph 0273 898 258

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**HAVE YOU GOT AN EVENT** you want to tell the community about? Contact us here at the Bulletin on 06-385-8532.

## PUBLIC NOTICES



**Lyn Neeson for Mayor**

Inclusive Leadership  
Financial Accountability  
Economic Diversity

Please phone if you want a chat  
07 896 7659  
Authorised by Lyn Neeson

**Deadline for all advertising bookings and copy is 5pm Fridays!**

*It's important that we get your ad booking and copy in on time, so that we have time to check it, plan the best layout and work on producing a better paper for you!*

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**Ruapehu Mayor Weston Kirton**

To arrange a meeting or call back, please phone Council on 06 385 8364 or email: [kay.kidd@ruapehudc.govt.nz](mailto:kay.kidd@ruapehudc.govt.nz)



**RAETIHI Country Market**  
**This Saturday 16 August**  
**at The Centre, Seddon St until 1pm**  
For stall info phone Angel 0274 316 327  
Only \$10 per stall – third Saturday of each month

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PUBLIC NOTICES

**Section 101, Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012**  
**Turoa Lodge 2021 Limited** have made an application to the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council for the **Renewal of an On Licence** in respect of the premises situated at **10 Thames Street, Ohakune** and known as **Turoa Lodge**. The general nature of the business to be conducted under the licence is that of a **Tavern**. The days on which and the hours during which alcohol is intended to be sold under the licence are: **Monday to Sunday 9.00am – 3.00am**. The application may be inspected during ordinary office hours at the office of the Ruapehu District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, 59-63 Huia Street, Taumarunui.

Any person who is entitled to object and who wishes to object to the issue of the licence may, not later than 25 working days after the date of the publication of this notice, file a notice in writing of the objection with the Secretary of the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, Private Bag 1001, Taumarunui 3946.

No objections to the renewal of a licence may be made in relation to a matter other than a matter specified in section 131 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

This is the second publication of this notice. The first notice was published on 6 August 2025.

### PUBLIC NOTICES

**Section 101, Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012**  
**Miro Street Liquor Limited** has made an application to the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council for the **issue of an Off Licence** in respect of the premises situated at **8 Miro Street, Ohakune** known as **Liquorland (Ohakune)**. The general nature of the business to be conducted under the licence is that of a **Bottle Store**. The days on which and the hours during which alcohol is intended to be sold under the licence are: **Monday – Sunday 9.00am – 10.00pm**. The application may be inspected during ordinary office hours at the office of the Ruapehu District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, 59-63 Huia Street, Taumarunui.

Any person who is entitled to object and who wishes to object to the issue of the licence may, not later than 25 working days after the date of the publication of this notice, file a notice in writing of the objection with the Secretary of the District Licensing Committee at Ruapehu District Council, Private Bag 1001, Taumarunui 3946.

No objections to the issue of a licence may be made in relation to a matter other than a matter specified in section 105(1) of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

This is the first publication of this notice.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Ruapehu District Council Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ruapehu Boards and Committees UPCOMING MEETING DATES



Agendas are published on our 'Meetings this Month' page ([ruapehudc.govt.nz](http://ruapehudc.govt.nz)) two working days before each scheduled meeting.

To speak at our Public Forum and share your thoughts directly with Elected Members, please contact our Governance team at [governance@ruapehudc.govt.nz](mailto:governance@ruapehudc.govt.nz).

#### Risk & Assurance Committee

11AM, Monday 25 August 2025  
Council Chambers, Huia Street, Taumarunui

#### Council Meeting

10AM, Wednesday 27 August 2025  
Council Chambers, Ayr Street, Ohakune

#### MEETING CONTACTS

<b>Ruapehu District Council</b>	07 895 8188
<b>Taumarunui-Ōhura Community Board</b>	
Luke Pepper, Chairperson	027 329 2849
<b>Ōwhango-National Park Community Board</b>	
Anthony Gurr, Chairperson	021 487 742
<b>Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board</b>	
John (Luigi) Hotter, Chairperson	027 274 2616
<b>Risk &amp; Assurance Committee</b>	
Philip Jones, Chairperson	027 499 9408



Whakarato Te Rohe Pōtae

### KING COUNTRY TRUST NOTICE TO CONSUMERS, BUSINESS HOUSES AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 20 August 2025 at 4.00pm

#### VENUE:

Conference Room at Oreti Village Resort,  
88 Pukawa Road, Pukawa, Lake Taupo.

#### TIME:

Our AGM will be held at 4pm followed at 4.30pm with drinks and nibbles.

#### AGENDA:

- Consideration and Adoption of Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting held on 28 August 2024
- Presentation of Annual Report
- Presentation of Annual Financial Statements for the Year ended 31st March 2025
- Appointment of Auditor
- Informal General Business

#### CONTACT:

For any queries please email: [kcept@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kcept@xtra.co.nz) or phone Carla at Peak Chartered Accountants Ltd on 07 895 3013

Annual Reports and Financial Statements will be available from 14 August 2025 on our website: [www.kcpowertrust.co.nz](http://www.kcpowertrust.co.nz)

*Uwe Kroll - Chair*

## SITUATIONS VACANT

### RATES OFFICER



Taumarunui or Raetihi  
30 hours per week

#### Who are we?

Ruapehu District Council is dedicated to creating safe, prosperous rural communities that thrive all while sustaining our beautiful environment. We are an inclusive organisation guided by our mission to improve the well-being and quality of life for our communities.

#### About the role

We're looking for a detail-focused and community-minded Rates Officer to support the smooth delivery of our rating functions. Working within our Finance and Strategy team, you'll play a key role in keeping our systems accurate and our ratepayers informed.

#### Key responsibilities:

- Respond to ratepayer enquiries ensuring responsive, solution-focused outcomes.
- Maintain and update the Rating Information Database (RID).
- Supporting quarterly rate instalments, direct debit processes and the Rates Rebate Scheme.
- Assist with arrears monitoring, reporting, and administration tasks.

#### Who we are looking for

You'll bring a strong administrative background and a keen eye for accuracy. You'll be confident handling data and financial systems, with the interpersonal skills to support our community.

#### You will have:

- Proven admin experience, ideally in a finance setting or local government.
- Strong computer skills, including Microsoft Office.
- A people-first mindset with excellent communication skills, problem-solving, and attention to detail.
- The ability to interpret policy and maintain confidentiality.

To apply, please visit <https://www.ruapehudc.govt.nz/our-council/employment/current-vacancies>.  
Applications close Friday 15th August

## ADVENTURE HOSTS WANTED!



As one of New Zealand's leading tourism operators, we pride ourselves on giving all of our guests an unforgettable experience - with our mantra being to treat them as we would guests in our own homes.

So ahead of our upcoming season (Oct-May) we're hiring for the following **host** roles:

**TOUR GUIDES**  
**SAFETY CONDUCTORS**  
**BUS DRIVERS**  
**FOOD HEROES/LUNCHIES**

We have full and part time roles available with full training provided. For more detail visit the career page [www.fwa.co.nz/careers](http://www.fwa.co.nz/careers). And if you're passionate about our special part of the world and keen to join our talented and friendly team, please send your CV and cover letter to [careers@fwa.co.nz](mailto:careers@fwa.co.nz)

**Deadline for all advertising bookings and copy is 5pm Fridays!**

**For everything Ohakune, visit**  
**[www.ohakune.info](http://www.ohakune.info)**



# Squash prize for Ruapehu College girls

Eye on Ruapehu College, contributed by staff and students

From Friday 1 to Sunday 3 August, 14 Ruapehu students competed in the 2025 New Zealand Secondary Schools Squash Championships, performing “exceptionally well”, represented Ruapehu College “with pride”, says principal Marama Allen.

The girls’ team was initially seeded 8th, and the boys’ team 21st. After some hard-fought battles, the girls finished in 5th place, taking home the Susan Devoy Plate. The boys finished 20th, narrowly missing out on the new Paul Coll Division 2 Winners Trophy. Both teams came close to claiming the Co-ed Cup, just missing out to Macleans College by a few seeding places.

“A huge congratulations to Hana Harding, who was one of five players

selected for the Junior Girls team to travel to Australia and compete against the Australian team in the Trans-Tasman Test Series. Congratulations also to Mr Laurenson, who was selected as one of two New Zealand coaches to travel to Australia,” said Mrs Allen.

**Basketball**

Ruapehu’s boys’ basketball team has wrapped up a fantastic season, showing determination and heart every step of the way. Committed to weekly training and travelling to Whanganui every Friday for games, the boys gave it their all — winning some, losing some, and ultimately earning a spot in last week’s semi-finals, says coach Miriama Lucas.

“Although they didn’t come away with the win, finishing in the top four is a huge



**Ruapehu College’s successful girls squash team, from left, Grace Rowe, Milla Smith-Horne, Hanna Harding, Paige Drinkwater, Heleyna Hammond, Olivia Gray and Charlotte Marshall.**

**Turn to Page 12**

## PUBLIC NOTICES



**Protecting native species from introduced predators in Tongariro Forest Conservation Area**

The Department of Conservation (DOC) in Tongariro District is going to control rats, stoats, ferrets and possums over 23,593. The prefeed application was delivered on 3 and 4 August 2025. The 1080 application is scheduled for the first clear weather window between 16 August and 30 September.

**Native wildlife and forests need protection**

Native species are fighting for survival due to predation from rats, stoats, ferrets and possums. Without protection, we risk losing the unique natural heritage and biodiversity within the Tongariro Forest Conservation Area.

Tongariro Forest is a unique, large, forested area in the central plateau that is home to many endangered native plant and animal species. It has a large population of kiwi and is a nationally important research site for kiwi protection methods. Its rivers also have the largest population of whio (blue duck) in New Zealand. Other native species living in the forest include karearea/New Zealand falcon, kākārīki, kākā, mātātā/fernbird, kererū, koekoeā/long-tailed cuckoo and pekapeka-tou-roa/long-tailed bats. Tongariro Forest is home to endangered plant species such as Pua o te Rēinga (Dactylanthus), Turner’s kohuhu and white mistletoe. Animal pests are one of the biggest threats to native species in Tongariro Forest. Mustelids (stoats and ferrets) are the main predators of kiwi and whio. Rats also prey on smaller forest birds, while possums are a significant threat to threatened plants. Predation by stoats, rats and possums can lead to native species facing local extinction.

In Tongariro Forest, DOC’s monitoring of kiwi chicks shows that in years when there is no aerial 1080, the majority of kiwi chicks do not survive, mostly due to stoat predation. For example, only one out of 20 monitored kiwi North Island brown kiwi chicks survived in 2019-2020. In a year when there was aerial 1080, 18 out of 22 chicks survived. Whio breeding success also increases dramatically when aerial 1080 is applied. On Tongariro Forest rivers, the number of whio juveniles doubled between 2014 and 2017 when aerial 1080 was applied. Monitoring of the endangered shrub Turner’s kohuhu in Tongariro after 1080 application showed that none of the 60 plants monitored had possum browse.

**Our plan to protect native species**

Through sustained predator control using 1080, there is a big increase in breeding success for native birds, their food source is more abundant, and the forest canopy is healthier.

The safest and most effective method we have to control possums, rats and stoats over large areas is to use biodegradable cereal bait pellets containing 1080. This bait targets rodents and possums. Stoats are also controlled through secondary poisoning as they feed on the carcasses of the dead rodents.

Helicopters distribute bait pellets across the forest area along pre-determined and monitored flight paths using technology that enables accurate placement. This is the only viable method to control predators in the Tongariro Forest Conservation Area due to the vast and rugged terrain.

This operation began with the distribution of non-toxic pre-feed bait pellets (sandy coloured), on 3 and 4 August. This prepares possums and rodents to eat the toxic bait (dyed green) that is applied afterwards. Both baits are about 16 mm in diameter and cylindrical shaped.

**Consultation and permissions**

DOC has consulted with hapū, iwi and key stakeholders including landowners adjacent to the treatment area.

DOC is delegated authority by the Environmental Protection Agency to decide applications for permission to use 1080 on land administered or managed by DOC. Permission has been granted for this operation. DOC has also received the required permission from the Ministry of Health. DOC ensures that all legal and policy requirements are met, and that any potential risks of the operation are managed.

**Managing risk**

1080 is poisonous to humans, domestic and game animals. In areas where the toxin has been applied, dogs are highly at risk until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated. This takes four-to-eight months or longer.

There will be warning signs placed at entrances to the treatment area immediately prior to the operation.

Risks can be eliminated by following these rules:

**DO NOT touch bait**

**WATCH children at all times**

**DO NOT EAT animals from this area** or within the buffer zone outside the treatment boundary. The buffer zone is 2 km for deer and pigs, 200 m for rabbits, and 1 km for hares, tahr, wallabies and possums.

**Poison baits or carcasses are DEADLY to DOGS**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. These signs indicate pesticide residues may be still present in baits and poisoned carcasses. When signs are removed, normal activities can resume. If in doubt, check with your local DOC office. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

**If you suspect poisoning, please contact:**

- Your local doctor or hospital OR The National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 OR dial 111
- Seek veterinary advice for suspected poisoning of domestic animals.

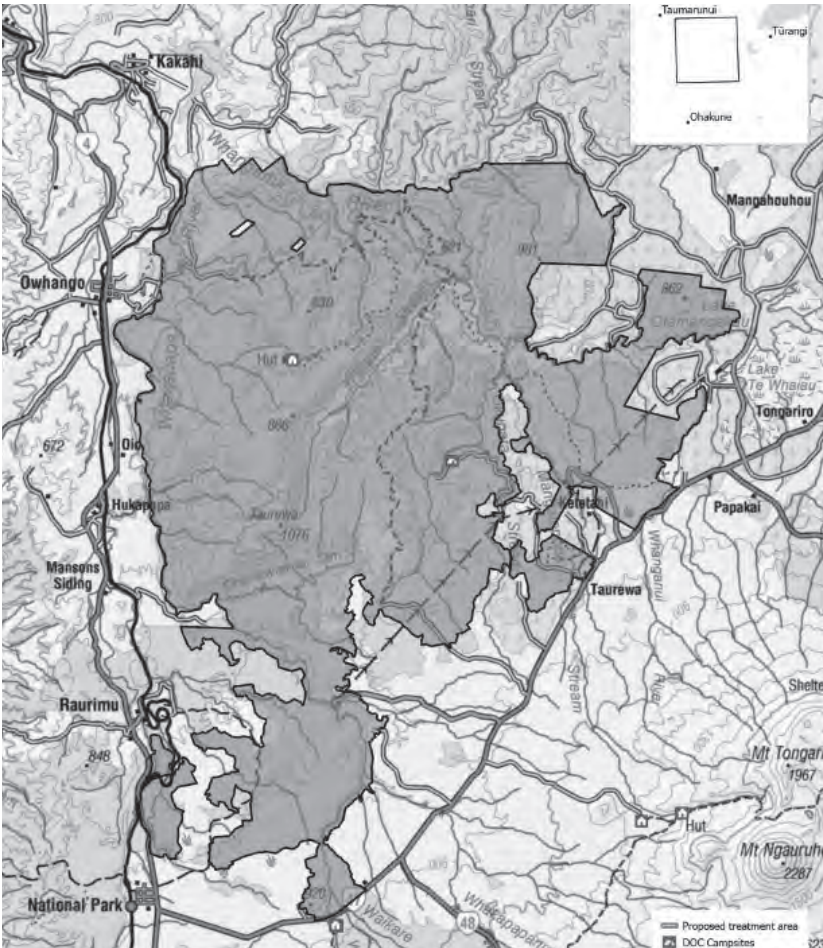
**For more information**

**Please contact:** Operational planner Biodiversity Supervisor, Ohakune office, 1 Mountain Road, Ohakune 4625, 0800 275 362 and tongariro@doc.govt.nz  
OR Epro Ltd, 0800 ASK EPRO and control@epro.co.nz

**Visit the DOC website:** More information about DOC’s National Predator Control Programme is available on our website [www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme](http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/national-predator-control-programme)

**Map of predator control area within Tongariro Forest Conservation Area**

This map shows the area we are controlling rats, stoats, ferrets and possums to protect native species. You can also see operational updates and detailed maps of predator control on public conservation land on the DOC website. [www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries](http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries)





# Letters

## Council water decision

• As local elections approach, the debate over water infrastructure has become a defining issue—one that deserves careful, nonpartisan scrutiny. A majority of mayoral and sitting council candidates have endorsed the Whanganui option, diverging from Mayor Kirton's support for the four-council model. The implications are significant: ratepayers face substantially higher costs under the current plan.

This matter should not be reduced to political positioning. At its heart lies a question of affordability—something that affects every household in our district. While some have cited the Whanganui River as a reason to support the Whanganui option, it's important to note that the river's legal and cultural status is already protected under the Ruruku Whakatupua Deed of Settlement, signed in 2014 and backed by legislation. That protection is not contingent on which water model is chosen.

The evidence presented at the council meeting made a compelling case: the four-council option was the most economically viable. Choosing the more expensive alternative, despite clear data, raises concerns about whether the decision was made in the best interest of the community.

Mayor Kirton has since presented further documentation suggesting the decision may breach government guidelines on affordability. This presents council members with an opportunity—not to revisit old divisions, but to reassess the impact of their choice with fresh eyes and a shared commitment to fiscal responsibility.

Regardless of political affiliation or preferred candidate, this issue warrants deeper investigation. In a district where many residents are already facing financial pressure, the long-term cost of water should be weighed carefully. Leadership means making decisions that serve the public good—not just in principle, but in practice.

*John Chapman, RDC candidate*

# College reports

## From Page 11

achievement, especially considering they started the season without a coach and took it upon themselves to find one.

"Every player has shown noticeable improvement in both their game and overall fitness. The boys worked hard, supported one another and grew stronger as a team. Their effort, commitment, and teamwork have been nothing short of inspiring."

## Girls rugby

The Rugby girls are growing in confidence and coming together as a strong, united team as the 10-a-side season progresses, says coach Campbell Harding.

"With a great mix of experience and skill levels at the start of the season, it's exciting to see the girls now putting themselves in serious contention for a spot in the final, after a gritty and determined win over Tupoho on Thursday 28 July.

"With a bye last week, all eyes are on Thursday's crucial clash with WGC—a win there will lock in their place in the final.

"All support is hugely appreciated so let's get behind them!"

## Subject choices

It's time for students to start thinking about subject choices for next year, advises deputy principal Helena Burns.

"This is an important moment for them to reflect on what they enjoy, where their strengths lie and what kind of future they see for themselves."

She said with Term 3 now at the halfway point, teachers are actively working alongside students to help guide them through the selection process. These conversations are happening during form time and in one-on-one settings, giving students the chance to ask questions, explore their options, and make confident, informed decisions.

"We also encourage whānau to get involved. Your input and support are incredibly valuable as students consider their next steps.

"This stage is more than just picking subjects; it's about beginning to shape the

path ahead. Whether that leads to further study, training, apprenticeships, or straight into the workforce. We want every student to feel supported in thinking about what comes next and to know they're not making these decisions alone.

"As always, we're here to help our students grow, thrive and reach their potential. We're looking forward to walking alongside them as they take this next step in their journey."

## Farming a dream

In this week's *Inspiring Stories* is Hezakaya Metekingi who has found purpose and pride in the farming industry, working as a shepherd general where he handles livestock, maintains equipment and helps keep daily operations running smoothly. For him, farming is more than a career, it's a lifestyle grounded in nature, hard work, and a deep sense of belonging to the land.

He appreciates the wide range of opportunities in agriculture, both in New Zealand and around the world. Farming plays a vital role in putting food on tables and remains one of the country's leading export industries.

Hezakaya also recognises how technology is changing the way farms operate, with tools like automated weighing systems improving animal care and efficiency.

To succeed in his role, Hezakaya relies on core school subjects like maths and English, along with key habits of mind such as striving for accuracy, asking questions, and imagining better ways to work. He believes that staying curious and open to improvement helps both the individual and the industry grow.

Looking back on his own journey, Hezakaya encourages others not to be discouraged by mistakes.

"They're part of learning," he says.

Hezakaya's story is a must-watch for anyone curious about agriculture or life on the land. Stay tuned for next week's episode featuring Kataraina Hakaraia's inspiring path into nursing.



Weston with his wife Annette

**"I'll keep fighting for affordable rates"**

**Weston Kirton  
for Ruapehu Mayor**

"Out of control rates increases was one the reasons I stood for Mayor last time.

I am proud that under my watch as Mayor,

**Ruapehu's rates increase was one of the lowest in the country.**

But we have more work to do. We need to keep costs down and make sure the

Government backs our region with adequate funding.

And I make no apology for doing everything I can to ensure the **new water rates are as low as possible.**

If re-elected, I'll keep standing up for ratepayers every day." -Weston

**Experience & leadership you can trust.**

[www.westonkirton.org](http://www.westonkirton.org)

Authorised by Weston Kirton, RD4 Taumarunui. [weston@westonkirton.org](mailto:weston@westonkirton.org)



**Ruapehu College's girls rugby team is eyeing up a win on Thursday to make the finals.**

**True Team Promise means our whole team works for you.**  
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**Polly Ingles**  
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027 315 8368



**Jenna Hovell**  
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**Ben Blakley**  
Property Manager  
027 370 0914



**Mere Haitana**  
Branch Administrator  
06 385 4466

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