

On the Radar

On the Radar is your fortnightly hub for essential information, updates and reminders. In this edition, museum highlights, rural women honoured and upcoming legislative changes.

Community Services

Museums and heritage



With Te Awamutu Museum Education and Research Centre now closed ahead of the move back to Roche Street, it's a great time to reflect on the highlights from the past year.

Staff welcomed 3765 visitors to the temporary Rickit Road location, offering a range of exhibitions. A key highlight was the six-month anchor exhibition *Ka Whawhai Tonu: Ake, Ake, Ake*—showcasing the costumes and stories connected to the film *Ka Whawhai Tonu – Struggle Without End*, which tells the pivotal story of Ōrākau.

Other exhibitions covered Matariki, family history and ancestry, Te Hōkioi for Te Reo Māori Language Week, New Zealand Land Wars commemorations, and local myths and legends.

The Tui and Tama Club continues to thrive, with 683 members. The annual Tui and Tama Expo helped connect the public with ecological work being led by groups such as Maungatautari Sanctuary Mountain, Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society, and Predator Free Te Awamutu.

This information is provided from Waipa District Council
We once again exceeded our Ministry of Education annual target of 3900 students, with 4915 students participating in museum programmes. A standout moment was the full involvement of Te Awamutu Intermediate in a wearable arts project. We also supported local teachers through professional learning development opportunities.

Following the closure of the Te Awamutu Courier, a significant donation of archival objects and photographic negatives was made to the museum collection. Steady progress is also being made on the collection rationalisation project for social history objects.

Park and public amenities snapshot

- **Public cleaning and facilities:** Evolve Ventures Ltd, our public cleaning contractor, delivered consistently high service throughout the year, with audit scores averaging 96%. We logged 238 customer service requests for public toilets—most commonly at Victoria Square, Arawata Street, Keeleys Reserve and Hallys Lane. Visitor counters confirm high usage, with Victoria Square alone seeing over 280,000 visits.
- **Rural open space care:** Illegal dumping remains an ongoing challenge, with more than \$10,000 spent on removals — over half of that at Keeleys Reserve. McCann Mowing Ltd continues to provide reliable service across our rural sites, including along new cycleway corridors.

Rural Women rose planting – Te Awamutu



Fifteen ‘Rural Women’ rose plants were planted last week by the Parks team in the rose bed outside the Woolshed Theatre, Te Awamutu.

The planting follows a request made at the Waipā King Country Rural Women’s meeting in February to mark the centennial of Rural Women New Zealand in 2025. The new rose cultivar was bred in celebration of this milestone.

The Woolshed Theatre site was chosen for its central, visible location and because it was already due for renewal. As a stand-alone space with no other commemorative plantings, it offers a fitting and meaningful place to honour rural women. There’s also a natural connection between the theatre and the history of rural storytelling and community, making the location especially appropriate.

Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant Update



Over the past five years, Hamilton City Council, Waikato District Council, Waipā District Council, Waikato-Tainui and mana whenua have looked at the future wastewater servicing needs across the Waikato metro area (from Taupiri in the north through to Cambridge and Te Awamutu in the south). That work has delivered an agreed servicing strategy including major investments at the Cambridge and Pukete (Hamilton) wastewater treatment plants as well as identifying the need for a new plant in the south of Hamilton, the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant is part of a new, boundaryless approach to managing wastewater across Hamilton, Waikato, and Waipā. Hamilton City Council is the lead council for this project and is working in close collaboration with iwi, mana whenua and Waikato and Waipā District Councils.

After assessing a number of potential sites near Hamilton Airport against a range of technical requirements, as well as a comprehensive cultural assessment, the preferred option is parcel of Hamilton City Council-owned land in Waipā, between Peacockes Road and Raynes Road.

This information is provided from Waipa District Council

Staff from Waipā are working collaboratively with HCC, Waikato District Council and mana whenua to firm up timing and consenting requirements for the SWWTP. The draft Water Services Delivery Plan (WSDP) signals that the proposed Waikato Water Done Well CCO will take forward discussions on funding requirements once established.

Hamilton City Council advises that engagement with landowners nearby to the preferred site is well underway, with 20 immediate neighbours contacted by phone or in person. Letters have been sent to landowners in the surrounding area, and to key stakeholder organisations. Feedback has been mixed and follow up conversations are planned to address any concerns from the community. Some members of the community have indicated they plan to organise as a group to respond to the project. Staff will continue to engage positively and proactively with residents and ensure their concerns are recorded for consideration during this first design and site master planning phase.

The Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant has also seen some media coverage, as it was listed on the Infrastructure Priorities Programme and nominated as a key project for IAWAI Flowing Waters. [The project page](#) on Hamilton City Council's website has launched.

Staff have been working on ensuring information flow between partner councils is relevant and timely. A fortnightly communications meeting has now been set up to facilitate collaboration between councils. An "all-in" induction meeting took place last week with staff from all councils who have a touch point with the project.

Planning

Plan change reviews on pause

At this week's Local Government NZ conference, the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, the Hon Chris Bishop, announced Central Government was going to stop all Councils from publicly notifying any reviews and changes to district plans. The process, as we understand it, is that an amendment to the RMA will be pushed through as part of the current Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Bill, which has just completed its second reading. This is expected to become law toward the end of August this year.

We understand that the new law will restrict public notification of any plan change unless:

1. It relates to a private plan change; or
2. The plan change relates to a topic (such as housing growth) which is listed as a specific exemption; or
3. On application, the Minister for the Environment grants an exemption for Councils to publicly notify a plan change.

This has implication for Plan Change 25 (Shelterbelts and Artificial Crop Protection and Support Structures) which we had been working towards publicly notifying on July 30.

Staff advise we may consider seeking an exemption from the Minister for the Environment to allow us to proceed to notification. The basis for seeking an exemption would be that:

This information is provided from Waipā District Council

- The Council has been working on PC25 for some time, the work has been completed and we were set to publicly notify
- The purpose of the plan change is to remove unnecessary resource consent requirements and enable establishment of structures important for food production
- The current Waipā District Plan will remain in place for some years to come and the changes proposed will benefit primary producers in the interim and transitional periods.

If the exemption is granted, we will be able to proceed to notification following the standard plan change process. If the exemption is declined, no further work on PC25 will be permitted and the current District Plan provisions will remain in place until a new District Plan chapter for Waipā has been prepared and becomes operative in accordance with the future RM system to come into force in 2027.

Transportation

Cambridge nightworks

Parts of Pope Terrace and Tirau Road, Cambridge will be having some resurfacing work done next week under night works.

Pope Terrace will be closed between 7pm to 6am each night from Sunday, July 20 to Tuesday, July 22. The closure will be between the Pengover Avenue/Ihimaera Terrace roundabout and Bracken Street (weather permitting).

A detour will be in place via Lamb and Shakespeare Street. Emergency services will have access at all times.

The Tirau Road/Achillies Avenue/Shakespeare Street roundabout will have Stop/Go traffic management on Wednesday, July 23, Thursday, July 24 and Sunday, July 27 between 7pm and 6am each night. Most of the work will be on Tirau Road and a small stretch of Shakespeare Street.

Economic development

Waipā Tech Meetups – pilot series wrap



This information is provided from Waipā District Council
We recently wrapped up a successful pilot series of Waipā Tech Meetups, delivered in partnership with Rocketspark and SODA Inc. Over five months, four events were held — two each in Cambridge and Te Awamutu — aimed at supporting our growing local tech community.

The meetups focused on making tech topics relevant and accessible to local businesses, with strong engagement from attendees. Survey feedback showed:

- 120+ attendees, with an average satisfaction rating of 3.6 out of 5
- Popular topics included AI, funding, and IP protection
- A relaxed, friendly atmosphere and strong networking opportunities
- Mixed formats (expert panels and speaker sessions) were well received.

Series two is already in the works — a great example of community-led momentum in the innovation space.

Business Support

Waipā start-ups and small businesses continue to benefit from support through the Regional Business Partner programme, delivered locally by SODA Inc. and jointly funded by MBIE and Callaghan Innovation.

[SODA's latest quarterly report](#) (to June 2025) shows an increase in the number of local businesses seeking support—split evenly across Cambridge and Te Awamutu, with Ōhaupō represented for the first time. The main areas of interest remain consistent: AI and prompt engineering, leadership, and communications training. Most support is being sought by businesses in professional services, construction, and agriculture — sectors particularly impacted in the current economy.

SODA also hosts a monthly drop-in clinic at Council's Wilson Street office (last Thursday of each month, 9am–1pm), offering mentoring, business advice, and access to government funding and support.

We're proud to partner with SODA to support local business success — some of Waipā's best-known companies, like Rocketspark, started right here. If you know someone who might benefit, help spread the word!

Update on Callaghan Innovation Changes

The disestablishment of Callaghan Innovation has created uncertainty for many start-ups and businesses, particularly around research and development funding and support.

The picture is now becoming clearer. While some services are shifting to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), funding and support will continue to be available through MBIE's partnership with SODA Inc. Local businesses can access advice and guidance via a dedicated Callaghan Innovation Navigator at SODA.

This support remains an important resource for Waipā businesses looking to innovate and grow. More detail is available in the [linked update from SODA](#).

Strategy

Legislation changes

This information is provided from Waipa District Council

We actively monitor the changes to legislation being proposed by Central Government, and want to keep elected members across the latest changes, submissions and directions.

The table below lists the changes that have occurred over the last fortnight.

Item Name	Description	Status comments
Consultation open		
Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and supporting the use of EV charging	<p>The Ministry of Transport's Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy sets a long-term plan to build a national charging network to support New Zealand's growing number of EVs.</p> <p>The strategy focuses on accelerating the roll-out of public EV chargers and ensuring the electricity system can meet future demand.</p> <p>Various policy options to increase the use of EV chargers are being considered, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continuing with current voluntary guidance and approved product lists.Introducing optional labels to help consumers identify smart and efficient chargers.Requiring all EV chargers to carry labels showing smart functionality and energy efficiency.Requiring that all new EV chargers supplied in New Zealand must have smart functionality.Combining smart functionality requirements with mandatory labelling to enhance consumer awareness and choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consultation open until Friday, August 1.Staff recommendation – do not submit.
Updated		
Regulatory Standards Bill	<p>The bill aims to support Parliament's scrutiny of legislation, and its oversight and control of the use of delegated powers to make legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Submissions closed on Monday, June 23.Staff recommendation – keep a watching brief for further information.
Regulatory review of the hairdressing and barbering industry	<p>The Ministry for Regulation conducted its third sector review concerning the hairdressing and barbering industry. The review examined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Health (Hairdressers) Regulations and Health (Registration of Premises) Regulations and how they are implemented.Any other legislative instruments about hairdressing and barbering that the Ministry for Regulation considers necessary during the Review process.Requirements imposed on hairdressing shops by local authorities as part of the licencing regime or in bylaws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Council provided feedback on both proposals.Legislation comes into effect on Thursday, July 31.The legislative change removes Council's environmental health role in relation to hairdressers and barbers.

This information is provided from Waipa District Council	<p>It was decided that the Health (Hairdressers) Regulations will be revoked by the Health (Hairdressers) Regulations Revocation Order 2025.</p> <p>The Health (Registration of Premises) Regulations will remain in force for other industries, but will not apply to hairdressers and barbers after the Notice comes into force.</p>	
Local Government (Water Services) Bill	<p>This Bill establishes a new regulatory framework for water services delivery. It builds on the foundations in the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act 2024 and provides for the development of water services delivery plans and the regulatory framework that future water service providers will operate within.</p> <p>The key aspects of the Bill include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishing a new framework for delivering water services (supply, wastewater, and stormwater). This includes:• Allowing flexibility for territorial authorities to structure their water service delivery (for example, through direct provision, transfer to water organisations, contracting, or joint arrangements).• Giving water organisations various powers that already apply to local authorities through other legislation (including charging customers for water services delivery or proposing water services bylaws).• Introducing a new planning and accountability framework for water services that applies to all water service providers (instead of certain parts of the Local Government Act).• Requiring territorial authorities to prepare stormwater network risk management plans to identify any hazards and assess risks in the network in the district (and allowing this responsibility to be transferred to a water organisation).• Introducing an economic regulatory framework overseen by the Commerce Commission, focusing initially on water supply and wastewater services.• Changing the Water Services Act and Resource Management Act to introduce national wastewater and stormwater environmental performance standards, and national engineering design standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submissions closed in February.• The Select Committee recommended that the Bill be passed with extensive changes. The changes are explained in pages 1-26 of the Committee's report.• The Government intends to pass the Bill by the end of 2025.

Upcoming		
Proposals to control rate rises and introduce rate capping	The Government will consider options to control rate rises, including rate capping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff recommendation – keep a watching brief until more information is known.
Back to basics LG reform package - Local Government (Systems Improvements) Bill	<p>This Bill will change the Local Government Act. The changes will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refocusing local government on delivering core infrastructure and services.• Removing all references to the four aspects of community well-being.• Requiring councils to prioritise spending on core services and apply new financial management principles.• Introducing a performance framework to improve how council performance is measured and reported.• Allowing the Secretary for Local Government to release a code of conduct and standing orders for elected members.• Reducing regulatory requirements on councils, including updating public notice rules and removing service review obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bill was introduced on July 14, 2025.• The Government intends to pass the Bill by the end of 2025.• Staff recommendation – awaiting staff response.
Proposed changes to Treaty of Waitangi clauses in legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Government is reviewing 28 laws dating back to 1986 that refer to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, except where the references relate to existing full and final Treaty settlements.• The review is considering whether to replace general references with more specific wording or to remove them altogether.• The review stems from the coalition agreement between National and New Zealand First.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The reviewers of all Treaty of Waitangi clauses in legislation are expected to report back by the end of August.• Staff recommendation - keep a watching brief until more information is known.

Media releases

- [July 17: Waipā’s future starts now: Pre-election report sets the scene](#)
- [July 14: Ahu Ake engagement a finalist in Local Government awards](#)
- [July 10: Te Awamutu Museum temporarily closing to return home](#)
- [July 7: Kihikihi’s trusty water bore retiring after 46 years service](#)

Media clippings

[Museum on the move](#)

Waikato Times • Newspaper • 14 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[2025 Rates Dashboard Exposes Out of Control Rates Burden](#)

Taxpayers' Union NZ • Internet • 14 Jul 2025, 5:14 am

[New Zealand's four-decade fight over waste incineration](#)

Waikato Times • Rob Stock • Internet • 12 Jul 2025, 3:08 am

[Waste plant hearings close amid firestorm of concern](#)

Waikato Times • Rob Stock • Internet • 11 Jul 2025, 3:20 am

[TA Museum](#)

Waikato Herald • Newspaper • 11 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[How much do mayors and councillors get paid?](#)

Waikato Times • Local Matthew Martin • Newspaper • 10 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[Linking homes of champions](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 5:03 am

[Chamber take over i-Site](#)

Te Awamutu News • Jesse Wood • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 6:04 am

[Call to save town reserve](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 7:06 am

[Merger could follow water deal](#)

kingcountrynews.co.nz • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 6:07 am

[Road job done... nearly](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 4:01 am

[Playground party time](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 5:03 am

[Call to stall all waste incineration](#)

Cambridge News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 10 Jul 2025, 2:01 pm

[Hamilton Airport Titanium Park: Precinct North celebrates sod-turning](#)

New Zealand Herald • Internet • 09 Jul 2025, 3:02 pm

[New bore in pipeline](#)

Waikato Times • Newspaper • 09 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[Waipā needs you: step up this election](#)

stuff.co.nz • Internet • 09 Jul 2025, 3:11 am

[Te Awamutu incinerator plant decision six weeks away](#)

Waikato Times • Matthew Martin • Internet • 05 Jul 2025, 3:09 am

[Libraries – 'more than books'](#)

Cambridge News • Viv Posselt • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 12:04 pm

[Fears over waste plan](#)

Cambridge News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 11:02 am

[Five councils take the plunge](#)

Cambridge News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 10:01 am

[A destination is reached...](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 7:03 am

[Waipā District Council seeks fresh start with Cambridge Connections after bridge backlash](#)

Waikato Times • Internet • 04 Jul 2025, 10:04 am

[Blue Blob showdown](#)

Te Awamutu News • Mary Anne Gill • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 2:03 pm

[Safety last? What counsel said](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 10:05 am

[Park bench plan stalled](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 8:03 am

[Waitomo District Council opts for Waikato waters group](#)

Waikato Times • Internet • 03 Jul 2025, 3:18 am

[Eye-watering 15.5% rates rise is coming your way](#)

Cambridge Edition • Newspaper • 02 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[Waipā leads way in new water group](#)

Cambridge Edition • Matthew Martin • Newspaper • 02 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

[Passionate Te Awamutu locals voice concerns overwaste plant](#)

Waikato Times • Matthew Martin • Internet • 01 Jul 2025, 3:11 pm

[Beef cheek likely source of gastro outbreak](#)

Waikato Times • Paora Manuel • Newspaper • 01 Jul 2025, 12:00 am

