




# On the Radar

On the Radar is your fortnightly hub for essential information, updates and reminders. In this edition, introducing the Library of Things, a huge surge in playground use, and promising signs of recovery for the Waipā economy.

## Save the date! Upcoming events and notable dates



Balloons visit Waipā,  
Albert Park,  
Te Awamutu

5-8pm Friday, March 21



Te Awamutu War  
Memorial Park Bridge  
Panel unveiling

7am (TBC) Thurs, March 27

# Community Services

## Museums, libraries and heritage

Te Awamutu Library is working on something exciting – **creating a Library of Things!** This collection means people will soon be able to hire all manner of items for a small fee – including a sewing machine, spinning wheel, a GoPro camera, musical instruments and even a set of giant dominoes. We’re hoping to launch this to our customers later this month or early April, and plan to add more cool stuff to the collection as we can.

We’re looking forward to hosting Cambridge author and musician Holly Christina (right) at the Cambridge Library at 5.30pm on Friday, March 28, as she performs and talks about her third novel in the Harp and the Lyre climate fiction series.



This information is provided from Waipa District Council.

Last weekend, we had a wonderful exhibition of **The Canvas Project** at the Te Awamutu Library. This initiative, led by local artist Lee Samuels and funded through the Creative Community Scheme, aimed to raise awareness for mental health.

More than 200 people registered, and picked up a small canvas from the library to paint or decorate however they liked. Of the 150 canvases returned for the exhibition, 60 were sold, with all proceeds going towards future creative projects supporting the mental health of people living with disabilities.

## Reserves planning



Parks Week was a fantastic success. There was **great engagement from the community** participating in Zumba in the Park (though the Te Awamutu session was cancelled due to the weather), Novels in Nature and Kids' Storytime events, all held outdoors. We had people of all ages taking part, and many requested more sessions. With this positive feedback, we're looking at holding more of these events in the future.

## Hockey turf update

A solution for **Cambridge High School's hockey turf** is a step closer. Sport Waikato have let us know that the NZ Hockey Strategy is soon to be released, which recommends our region prioritises waterless turfs and multi-sport turf development over single sport surfaces. This strategy will be a key resource for funding applications, and guide the desired solution for Cambridge High School.

## Community assets

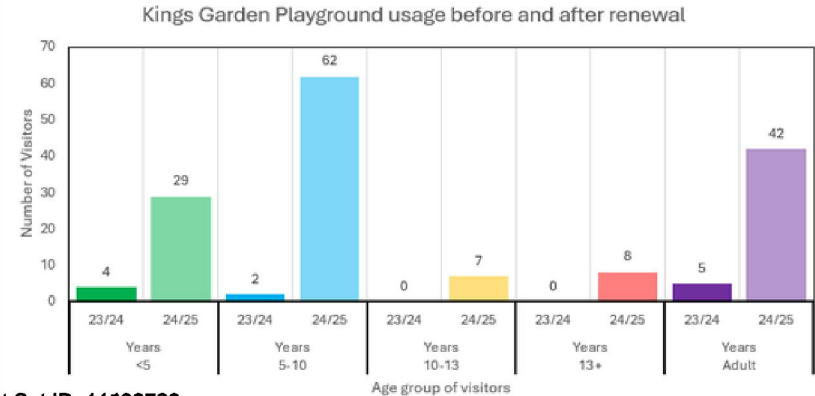
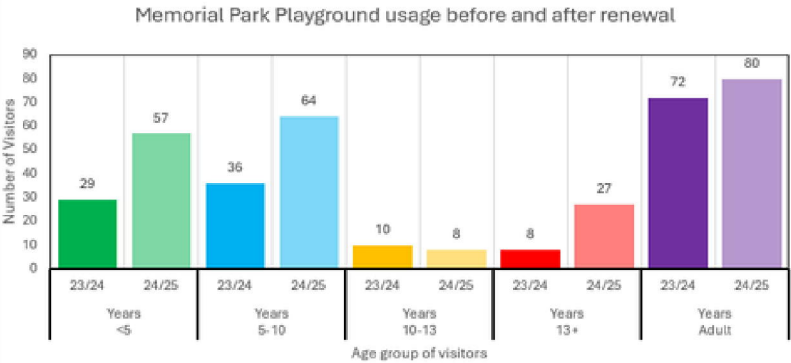
Renewing playgrounds makes them **hugely more popular with our communities!**

Data has come in from surveys held over the last two summers at a number of our playgrounds, and as both Kings Garden in Cambridge and Te Awamutu War Memorial Park had been renewed in the 12 months between the surveys, we were able to measure the impact the makeovers had.

Kings Garden had an amazing 3000 percent increase in use among tamariki aged 5 to 10! There was also a strong increase in use from 13+-year-olds at Kings Garden (800 percent) and TA War Memorial Park (238 percent).

Local tamariki testing out the Kings Garden playground

The graphs below show the numbers for each age bracket. The surveys were undertaken 9am-5pm, Wednesday to Sunday through the months of December to March. The aim is to provide a snapshot of usage and customer preference at the parks and allows us to accurately plan and develop renewal programmes.



## Arts policy review

**A review has kicked off for the Arts Policy 2018**, which sets out how Council manages public art, especially art gifted to Council. We're proposing renaming it the Public Art Policy, to better show its intent.

The review will also aim to:

- Clarify and improve operational matters such as delegations and deaccessioning of art
- Align the policy with Ahu Ake
- Separate internal and external processes
- Align in style with other council policies
- Make the policy more user-friendly for the public.

The review does not require community consultation as the changes to the policy are minor and operational. It is anticipated the policy will be tabled with Ngā Iwi Tōpū o Waipā due to their involvement with drafting the original policy and mana whenua will be asked for feedback. A workshop will be held on April 9 with more information on the proposed changes.

You can review the [current policy here](#).

## Transport



Signs are going up for Cambridge's CBD parking trial extension, which became effective yesterday (Thursday, March 13). We will put the updated parking map on our website as soon as it comes back from the designers.

Retailers requested we reconsider parking time limits in the town centre after a similar trial was launched in Te Awamutu.

The one-hour limit is being extended to 90 minutes along Victoria Street between Alpha Street and Commerce Street, Duke Street between Hallys Lane and Anzac Street, Empire Street between Alpha and Duke Streets, and Commerce Street between Duke Street and Milichich Place.

The trial runs through to August.

## Road reseals

Roads set to be resealed around the district over the next two weeks:

- Maungatautari Road
- Luck at Last Road
- Maungakawa Road
- Brunskill Road
- Mystery Creek Road
- Cambridge Road (Te Awamutu)

## Economic development

**Waipā's economy is showing strong signs of recovery**, according to some key insights from the Infometrics Quarterly Monitor for the period to December 2024, released at the end of last month.

While the Waipā economy contracted 0.2 percent over the year – the first contraction since June 2020 – the fall is smaller than the national decline of 0.5 percent. In addition, business counts rose 1.4 percent in the year to December, showing entrepreneurs' confidence despite difficult trading conditions. Consumer spending grew 2.4 percent, outpacing the 2.2 percent rate of inflation over the same period, and employment rose 0.2 percent.

Growth was driven by education and healthcare, offset by declines in construction.

Meanwhile, the unemployment rate rose to 3.5 percent – the highest level since March 2017 – but is much lower than the national rate of 4.7 percent.

Housing affordability has improved a little, with the average house price in the district now 6.8 times the average household income. This was due to a combination of house prices falling 0.3 percent per annum, and the average household income rising 4.8 percent over the year to December. However, this rise in incomes did not help rental affordability, as residential rents rose 5.5 percent.

Farmers will be smiling after a few difficult years, with strong growth in global dairy prices. Fonterra is estimating a farmgate milk price midpoint for 2024-25 of \$10/kg of milk solids, well above last season's final price of \$7.83/kg.

The total dairy payout to Waipā is estimated to be around \$753 million, up \$176 million from last season. Of course, improved revenue for Waipā farmers will help support the district's economy.





# Regulatory

As Wayne mentioned this week, a date has been set for the **resource consent hearing for the sand quarry proposed for Cambridge**. It will be a joint hearing with the Waikato Regional Council, held at Council Chambers in Te Awamutu, and is scheduled to run from Wednesday, April 2 until Friday, April 4, starting at 9.30am.

Auckland-based planning consultant Richard Blakey will chair, with Waikato local Tim Manukau and Marlborough-based environmental scientist Dr Ngaire Phillips joining him on the panel. There are 44 submitters who have stated they wish to be heard.

The revised **Local Alcohol Policy** came into force on 10 March and [can be seen here](#).

Councils can develop a policy to establish their positions on licensing matters such as the location, number and trading hours of licensed premises. This is then applied as necessary by the District Licensing Committee.

The main operational changes are:

- The number of off licences (bottle stores, groceries and supermarkets) in the defined CBD areas is limited to the number currently in force
- The maximum hours of on-licences (hotels, taverns, restaurants etc) is reduced from 2am to 1am as these licences are renewed.
- All licensees have received notification of this directly, as required as part of the review process.



### **New MPI Food Levy**

Central Government has passed legislation to allow the Ministry of Primary Industries to collect an **annual food levy** from registered food businesses, to help fund safety rules, education and standards, and the obligation to collect this has been passed to councils. The fee for the year from July 1 is \$66.13.

To make this as easy as possible, we are likely to add this to the existing registration process for businesses that register with us annually. Lower risk premises with a two-year registration period will receive it separately.

The Ministry has advised they will be in contact with all food premises soon. More information can be found on the [Ministry's website](#).

---

## **Media releases**

[March 3: Lights, Camera, Action: Creative NZ fund opens for Waipā](#)

[March 3: Culturally significant artwork gifted to Council](#)

[March 11: Balloons are back in Te Awamutu – and it's going to be epic!](#)

[March 13: Quarry hearing set for April](#)

[March 13: Extended parking time limit trial begins in Cambridge](#)

[March 14: Waipā District Council successful in bid to increase borrowing limit](#)

## **Media clippings**

[Councils prepare for water decision](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • 06 Mar 2025, 1:04 pm

[Paewira backers object to costs](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • 06 Mar 2025, 8:02 am

[A nicer welcome awaits](#)

Te Awamutu News • Angela Holt • 06 Mar 2025, 9:05 am

[A feral litter problem](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • 06 Mar 2025, 6:06 am

[Eco expo a success](#)

Te Awamutu News • Viv Posselt • 06 Mar 2025, 11:02 am

[Town split over cycleway](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • 06 Mar 2025, 7:17 am

[Ōhaupō job done](#)

Te Awamutu News • Chris Gardner • 06 Mar 2025, 9:05 am

This information is provided from Waipa District Council

[Mayoralty top of the pops: Waikato's best and worst rated](#)

Waikato Times • 06 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Economy shifts gears](#)

Waikato Business News • Mary Anne Gill • 06 Mar 2025, 11:44 am

[Board to lose chair, deputy](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • 06 Mar 2025, 7:17 am

[News ... in brief](#)

Te Awamutu News • 05 Mar 2025, 4:00 pm

[Colourful Cambridge Pathway project completed](#)

Cambridge Edition • 05 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Waipā deputy chief executive resigns](#)

Cambridge Edition • 05 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Weed warning ahead of Maadi Regatta](#)

Cambridge Edition • Matthew Martin • 05 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Artwork gifted](#)

Waikato Times • 05 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Waikato mayors back four-year council terms](#)

Waikato Times • Stephen Ward • 05 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[Your turn now ...](#)

Waikato Business News • Mary Anne Gill • 03 Mar 2025, 4:50 pm

[Changing the game for good](#)

Waikato Business News • Leonard Gardner • 03 Mar 2025, 3:59 pm

[Wastewater facility on track](#)

Business North • Sue Russell • Magazine • 01 Mar 2025, 12:00 am

[No alcohol in carpark](#)

Waikato Times • 28 Feb 2025, 12:00 am

[YouTuber hijacks district council meeting](#)

Waikato Times • Matthew Martin • 28 Feb 2025, 12:00 am

[Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari receives funding boost from Government](#)

New Zealand Herald • Danielle Zollickhofer • 27 Feb 2025, 11:06 am

[It's on the tip of your ... finger](#)

Te Awamutu News • Jesse Wood • 27 Feb 2025, 10:00 am

[Air and health prime concerns](#)

Cambridge Edition • Leonard Gardner • 27 Feb 2025, 8:01 am



[Welcome to our library](#)

Te Awamutu News • Julie Guest • 27 Feb 2025, 8:01 am

[Firefighters deal to Ōhaupō blaze](#)

Te Awamutu News • Roy Pilott • 27 Feb 2025, 6:02 am

[Council trio make sharing deal](#)

Te Awamutu News • Mary Anne Gill • 27 Feb 2025, 5:05 am

[Anzac and water plans](#)

Cambridge News • Jo Davies-Colley • 27 Feb 2025, 7:01 am

[Gordon figures out bus stats](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • 27 Feb 2025, 8:03 am

[Raceway counts cost](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • 27 Feb 2025, 5:02 am

[Letters to the Editor – 27 February 2025](#)

Cambridge News • 27 Feb 2025, 5:59 am

[School move stays in plan](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • 27 Feb 2025, 7:01 am

[Chair changes in chamber](#)

Cambridge News • Mary Anne Gill • 26 Feb 2025, 3:32 pm

[Pathway complete](#)

Waikato Times • Newspaper • 26 Feb 2025, 12:00 am

[Waipā to join regional water group](#)

Cambridge Edition • Matthew Martin • 26 Feb 2025, 12:00 am

[Public art online to get more views](#)

Cambridge Edition • 26 Feb 2025, 12:00 am

[News in brief](#)

Te Awamutu News • 26 Feb 2025, 10:29 pm