



OUR PLACE

# Ko Konei

Your Whakatāne District Council  
Community Update - October 2018



## ShakeOut 2018

ShakeOut 2018 At 9:30am on 18 October 2018, New Zealand will be taking part in ShakeOut, an international earthquake drill and tsunami hiko (walk). It's important that you, your family and friends know what to do in the event of an earthquake or tsunami so this is the perfect opportunity to prepare. If you practice these drills twice a year you have a significantly lower chance of being injured in one of these events.

### What should you do in an earthquake?

- **DROP** to your hands and knees to ensure you don't fall.
- **COVER** your head and neck. If possible, take shelter under a sturdy table or desk. Do not move more than three steps.
- **HOLD** onto your head and neck (or protection) until the shaking stops.

## Council Chief Executive appointment announced

Whakatāne District Mayor Tony Bonne has announced that Stephanie O'Sullivan has been appointed Chief Executive of the Whakatāne District Council. Ms O'Sullivan will take up her new role on 19 November.

"Stephanie knows our area very well. She has worked here in the past, has family connections in Whakatāne and brings a unique governance and senior management skillset to the organisation," he says. "Council elected members are delighted to have employed a leader who will maintain the Council's momentum and continue to build collaborative partnerships and an increasingly prosperous and resilient community."

Ms O'Sullivan says she is thrilled to have the opportunity to contribute to achieving the Council's vision. "Whakatāne's climate, relaxed lifestyle, natural assets and strong cultural heritage and history provide a wonderful context to work within. I believe the District is poised for strong growth, post-settlement iwi investment, and will also benefit from the 'halo effect' of economic development opportunities in the wider eastern Bay of Plenty," she says. "These are exciting times and I feel privileged to be able to play a leadership role in shaping and facilitating the opportunities before us."

A Bachelor of Resource and Environmental Planning (Hons) graduate from Massey University, Ms O'Sullivan's most recent career highlights include her current role as the BoP Senior Advisor for the Government's Provincial Growth Fund, and prior to that, serving as a Treaty Settlement Negotiator for Raukawa iwi in the Waikato, and



Stephanie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of the Whakatāne District Council

CEO of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Ranginui. Stephanie has also held numerous governance roles, including the Waikato River Authority, Tauranga People's Project and Chairing the Advisory Board for the University of Waikato Adams High Performance Centre in Mount Maunganui.

"My background has given me valuable insight into the challenges, opportunities and partnership potential between local and central Government, iwi, the private sector and the community. I'm fortunate to have experienced leadership roles in pre- and post-settlement iwi entities, and to have championed environmentally sustainable community and economic development, both as a public servant and a non-government organisation leader. That gives me the ability to place myself in others' shoes and I believe that will be tremendously

helpful as the Council works to meet its challenges over the next 5-10 years."

Stephanie worked for Te Puni Kōkiri in Whakatāne in the late-1990s and has a sister, two nephews and many friends here. Her husband Goran Surucic is a high school teacher and originates from Croatia. She says that their family, which includes Goran's mother, who has settled here from Croatia, and Monty their miniature schnauzer, are very supportive of this opportunity.

She describes herself as a "tangata tiriti New Zealander" – a person of non-Māori origin, whose forbears came here to enjoy the opportunities Aotearoa presents – and says she has been privileged to be immersed in the world of tangata whenua for more than 20 years. Raised in a farming family in the South Waikato region, Ms O'Sullivan shares her story of being 'adopted', or being a whangai of senior kaumatua Hori Deane, of the Ngāti Ahuru hapu and Ngatira Marae, near Putaruru. Ngāti Ahuru has a strong connection to Ngāi Tūhoe.

"I've lived a life of cultural richness, and have had the opportunity to walk in two worlds," she concludes. "I feel a real connection to the Whakatāne District and I'm looking forward to listening, learning and gaining a solid understanding of the area, so that I can play my part in bringing the Council's vision to life."

## Council website tops national rankings

Picture of the 2018 ALGIM Supreme Website Awards The Whakatāne District Council's website has been ranked as the best local government site in the country, for the fourth year in a row.

The Association of Local Government Information Management Supreme Website award was announced last month, with the Council site again heading the assessments of New Zealand's 78 district, city and regional councils.

Council Public Affairs Manager Ross Boreham says the achievement is unprecedented in the history of the ALGIM awards and shows that smaller provincial councils can compete successfully with their 'heavyweight' metropolitan counterparts.

"The award is based on independent assessments of accessibility, best practice and enquiry response time, plus a self-assessment of functionality and online services," he says.

"The ongoing success of our website reflects the continuous effort made to maintain its usability and upgrade online services. Compared to most councils, our investment is minimal, but we have a consistent focus on making content accurate and accessible, and ensuring that it's easy for people to navigate around the site and find the information they're looking for.

"Our Customer Services team also plays a key role by ensuring that public inbox inquiries are responded to swiftly."

Mr Boreham says the Council team won't be "resting on its laurels", and will be reviewing ALGIM's assessment of the site to see where further improvements can be made. Additional online services are also planned, including the introduction of searchable property files once a major digitisation project is completed in 2019.

## Eastern Bay schools join BikeReady initiative



Eastern Bay Road Safety Programme partners, ACC and NZTA, have invested in a national cycling education system through a programme called BikeReady. The BikeReady programme was established to assist people to develop skills suited to their stage of cycling, from learning bike-handling skills in primary school, through to learning to ride safely on the road.

The BikeReady programme will commence with schools that are already participating in the Bikes in Schools Programme, including James Street School, Allandale School, Apanui School, Te Kura o Paroo, Ashbrook School (Ōpōtiki), Ōhope Beach Primary School and Matatā Public School, with other primary and intermediate schools to follow. Whakatāne Bluelight, which has extensive experience with cycle skills education in schools, has been contracted to deliver this programme, on behalf of the Eastern Bay Road Safety Programme and Whakatāne District Council.

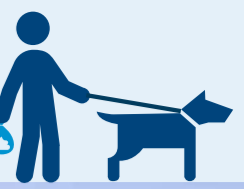
Whakatāne District Council Community Development Advisor, Lorreen Hartley says the programme aligns with the aspirations of the community, which were shared through the Whakatāne Ki Mua community vision feedback process. "Our community told us that they want people to be and feel safe when they cycle to school," says Ms Hartley. "The priorities for BikeReady will support this vision, with the inclusion of cycle skills training for 800 children, an inter-school cycle challenge and workforce development for teachers."

The BikeReady Programme will complement a wider project the Whakatāne District Council has underway, in collaboration with Whakatāne Ki Mua and NZTA, to encourage different modes of transport and understand the barriers preventing people from leaving their cars at home.



Photo: from left, Cathy Ball - WDC, Whakatāne Bluelight's Richard Hamer, Constable Helen Hay, and Lorreen Hartley.

## DOG OWNERS URGED TO BE CONSIDERATE



The Whakatāne District Council is urging residents using the new Ōhiwa Harbourside Trail to be considerate when exercising their dogs. Council has received a number of complaints regarding an increase in the amount of dog mess left on and around the trail, largely due to dogs that are not on leads, and owners who are not living up to their responsibilities.

Whakatāne District Council Manager Community Regulation, Graeme Lewer, says unlike Ōhope Beach, the Harbourside Trail is a dog-on-leash area.

"This new trail is a great asset for the community, so it's a shame to see people ignoring the rules and spoiling it for the responsible trail users and upsetting nearby residents."

Mr Lewer says it's important that dogs get the exercise they need, but it's equally important to ensure they're doing this under supervision and in the appropriate place. "There are a number of dog exercise areas throughout the District where residents can take their dogs off the lead and let them have a run around," he says. "We also ask that dog mess is bagged and disposed of considerately.

"Dog owners need to respect other people's rights to use reserves - no-one wants their day ruined because of an irresponsible dog owner."



## Holiday Fun at HEG Whakatāne Library

The Horizon Energy Group Whakatāne Library has heaps of fun activities planned for the school holidays, with a programme offering something for everyone.

Collect an entry form at any of the Whakatāne District libraries (or download it from the library website) and have a go at creating a short story! The short story theme is: "If I had a zoo..." and stories can be in the form of a poem, a detailed drawing, a comic strip or a written story (up to 350 words). The entry form has some handy hints to get the imagination going. Entrants will need to lodge their story with the Library team by Friday 12 October.

A special colouring-in competition will celebrate the launch of the Whakatāne Kiwi Wandering project, in partnership with the Whakatāne Kiwi Trust and Whakatāne Museum & Arts. Collect a colouring-in page from any library from 07 October, get busy with felts and/or pencils and return your creations by Monday 15 October (late entries will be accepted until 20 October). You can also download a copy of the colouring-in page from the library website.

Help Harmony find out what is making the jungle rumble on Wednesday, 10 October. Cathy from Animated Soundz will be at the library with her puppet show from 10.30am. Meet the jungle animals, listen to the sounds of the jungle and help Cathy with the puppets.

And don't forget that the Escape room is back! Take the escape challenge from 9-11 October (9.30am – 4.00pm). You'll have 30 minutes to solve the clues and escape the zoo. Teams of 3 – 5 people maximum, and children under 12 must have an adult in their team.

Murupara's Holiday Programme has the theme of healthy eating and activities are focused around making tasty and nutritious food, as well as free play, sports activities and colouring and crafts.

For more information and bookings, visit [whakatane.com/school-holidays](http://whakatane.com/school-holidays).

**NEW INFLATABLE**

**OCTOBER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**  
WEEKDAYS 12 noon - 3 pm

**\$2 PER DAY**

**Come on down!**

AQUATICS WHAKATĀNE

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