

COMMUNITY UPDATE

23 MARCH 2023

Koromātua | Mayor's Message

Welcome to this issue of Council's Community Update.

Tēnā tātau katoa – warm greetings to you all, to us all, to everyone in our community of Kawerau and welcome to the March issue of the Council's Community Update.

The start to the year has been unsettling, with the unpredictable and wild weather including Cyclone Gabrielle, which had devastating impacts on other regions but thankfully only minor damage here.

Then of course, we have a swarm of 600-plus earthquakes this weekend.

It has been a hugely stressful time for residents, particularly as many of us, can recall the devastating impacts of the 1987 Edgecumbe earthquake.

We are thankful there have been no reports of people being injured. We know there are some reports of damage to homes, and many reports of damage to the contents within homes.

Council teams and emergency managers across the region within GNS Science Te Pū Ao and Bay of Plenty Emergency Management have been closely monitoring earthquake activity.

We know there has been damage and losses in a number of businesses in Kawerau, and council teams are checking for any damage to infrastructure and buildings, and particularly the water systems. Everything appears intact, however we will carry out further structural assessments to confirm this is the case.

We appreciate it was unusual to hear the large steam vents on Saturday morning. We have been assured by Mercury Energy that this is standard protocol after an earthquake as the power plant will automatically trip and turn off as a safety precaution (and steam is then vented).

GNS Science Te Pū Ao tell us the level of shaking is within the expected range for the area, but it has been very unsettling for people, especially with the large number of quakes we are experiencing.

There has been at least one slip with trees down in Kawerau behind The Village on Tamarangi Drive. Our initial assessments show this does not pose a risk to people, property or the Ruruanga stream.

Council closed the walkway up into the Monika Lanham Reserve where the lower level of steps show signs of cracking. Heavy rainfall had initially caused damage which has been made

worse by the earthquakes. Council staff are organising an urgent repair.

Our partners Māori Investment Limited (MIL) advised they have temporarily closed access to the Tarawera Falls as any damage or potential slips on the road and walking track are assessed. Also, the popular hiko steps up to the MIL headquarters are closed due to safety concerns of subsidence.

After speaking with several whānau, I can appreciate that while some families are connected by the decrease in the number of earthquakes, there are whānau who continue to feel anxious, nervous and fearful. Please continue to connect and check in with each other. You can also contact Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau Hauora, who are out supporting whānau in the community.

Can I also encourage you to please check the accuracy and source of any concerns you may find in our community. I have spoken to a number of people who have been in fear as a result of inaccurate assumptions.

Work has restarted on the drinking water pipe replacement project in the River Road area. We appreciate the patience of our community as we continue this major upgrade of our drinking water infrastructure.

We know that many homes are experiencing discoloured water and our teams are working hard to flush lines, and deal with what has been double our heaviest year's rainfall over the last four months.

To our Hardie Ave, Emme Allan, Julian and Owen Road residents, we are working with stormwater engineers to progress a longer-term solution and will keep in contact with you as this progresses.

Thank you also to our community and stakeholders for welcoming us to share the information about the Stoneham Park Residential Development in our current engagement process. We appreciate and value your input.

Look after yourselves, look after one another and please know we are all in this together.

*Ngā mihi nui,
Kawerau District Mayor Faylene Tunui*



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KEEP KAWERAU BEAUTIFUL SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

Keep Kawerau Beautiful are a voluntary group who have been dedicated to the beautification of Kawerau for over 40 years. The purpose of volunteering at Keep Kawerau Beautiful is to provide community support and to help keep the district clean and tidy.

Denis Fahey (right) has been a member of Keep Kawerau Beautiful for the last 12 years and can often be seen with his chainsaw doing his part for Kawerau if a tree comes down. With the recent aftereffects of Cyclone Gabrielle, Denis Fahey (right), Jeff Gouldsmith (left), Steve Doyle and Monty Beard (not pictured) have been hard at work assisting Council with the cleanup and providing firewood for the elderly residents of Kawerau.

If helping out your local community is for you, then get in touch with Denis on 021 270 5550 to find out more.

Keep Kawerau Beautiful Member of eight years, Jeff Gouldsmith (left) and Keep Kawerau Beautiful member of 12 years, Denis Fahey (right).

THANK YOU PETER CHRISTOPHERS AND WELCOME LEE-ANNE BUTLER

Kawerau's finances have been in safe and prudent hands for the past 12 years with Peter Christophers at the helm. As Group Manager Finance and Corporate Services, Peter has been responsible for the corporate services team, customer services, finance, information services and the Kawerau District Library and Sir James Fletcher Kawerau Museum.

We would also like to acknowledge Peter for more than 25 years of service to local government with Kawerau, Rotorua and Whakatāne (he was given an award by local government two years ago).

Peter is stepping down from his role but will continue to work for the betterment of Kawerau and our community, in a part-time capacity as Financial Accountant. We wish Peter well for his semi-retirement and trust we will still see him out and about walking in Kawerau, swimming in the pools and mountain biking in his spare time.

We welcome Lee-Anne Butler as our new Group Manager, Finance and Corporate Services. Lee-Anne joins us from Rotorua Lakes Council. Lee-Anne is excited to be part of the team and welcomes the challenge of leading Council's Finance and Corporate Services Team. Lee-Anne has a wealth of experience in local government and also in real estate ownership and operation.

Haere mai | welcome on board Lee-Anne.



General Manager Finance and Corporate Service, Lee-Anne Butler (left) and Financial Accountant, Peter Christophers (right).

MEETING WITH HARDIE AVE, EMME ALLAN, JULIAN AND OWEN ROAD RESIDENTS

Last month, Council met with concerned residents from these streets after heavy rainfall and high water tables have resulted in surface flooding.

There are several approaches being taken, including short-term fixes of the drains and opening up of berms which is occurring now. A longer-term approach is canals that will be engineered.

Council has introduced a two-ton weight limit for vehicles using Hardie Avenue and the off-roads Emme Allan and Julian Roads. This is due to the road instability with the water flow underneath.

If you live in that area and wish for Council to visit your property and view the issues, please contact Council on 07 306 9009 or email kaweraudc@kaweraudc.govt.nz and leave your name, address and contact number along with the best time to meet.

REPORTS OF DISCOLOURED WATER AROUND THE DISTRICT

There have been ongoing reports of discoloured water received by Council over recent weeks. This is due to more than double the amount of rainfall over the summer period than the heaviest annual rainfall in recent years.

Our Council staff believe that the discolouration has come from water sitting the pipes longer than usual. To combat this, our Three Waters Team has been adjusting the chlorine levels and working hard to flush street lines where discoloured water has been reported. The aggressive flushing regime throughout the district aims to flush the discoloured water through the pipes to remedy the programme. In some cases, further flushing has been required.

If you have discoloured water or any water issues, please contact Council on 07 306 9009 anytime.



Applications are OPEN for the Creative Communities Scheme funded by Creative New Zealand until 5:00pm Monday, 3 April 2023.

If you have a project that...has an arts and cultural focus and will benefit the local community check out if you are eligible to apply.

More information and the application form are available online kaweraudc.govt.nz

Please contact the Administration Officer, on 07 306 9009 or email kaweraudc@kaweraudc.govt.nz for further details or to answer any queries and/or assist with completing the application form.

MAURIE KJAR MEMORIAL AQUATIC CENTRE

HEATING ISSUES

Due to the huge rainfall the district received over the summer period the water table has risen significantly, causing the 80m deep steam well to flood. The steam well provides clean steam to heat the pools and the flooding has cooled the steam. Staff, engineers and well-drillers are working to fix the steam well. In the meantime, the pools will remain cooler than usual.

STAFFING SHORTAGES CAUSE CLOSURES

Council acknowledges residents' frustrations with the recent disruption at the Maurie Kjar Memorial Aquatic Centre. Several staff have been away with COVID-19, and we have not been able to staff the pools safely. As staff become well, and return to work these issues will reduce. Council wishes to advise that there may be unplanned closures. We aim to keep these to a minimum. Please check with Council or online for the latest update.

COUNCIL JOB VACANCIES

If you enjoy working with people and want to serve our district, consider applying for one of the following job vacancies:

TEAM LEADER, GARDENS

This role supervises the Gardens Team and maintains the gardens in the district.

Closes Friday, 24 March.

GARDENS TEAM MEMBERS x 3

Three team members are sought to work together to maintain the gardens in the district.

Closes Friday, 24 March.

MOWING OPERATOR

This role maintains the parks and reserves in the district.

Closes Monday, 10 April.

ARBORIST

This role is responsible for maintaining the district's trees.

Closes Wednesday 19, April.

We are also on the lookout for a:

DOG RANGER / GENERAL INSPECTOR

This role is responsible for maintaining a safe environment within the district for members of the public, dog owners, children and visitors.

Closes Monday, 10 April.

For more information, an application form and position description please visit: kaweraudc.govt.nz/vacancies

Please ensure you complete a Council application form and supply a copy of your current CV. Please return the forms via email to vacancy@kaweraudc.govt.nz or hand delivery to the District Office.



LEGO CLUB IS BACK AT THE KAWERAU LIBRARY

Lego Club has returned for 2023 in a new format. Every second Monday of the month, 3.30pm - 4.30pm, sessions will be run using Lego to discuss and build around different themes. This is aimed at five to 12 year olds, with parents encouraged to participate as well. The next session has been set for Tuesday, 11 April, 10am - 4.30pm (due to Easter Monday), with a science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics focus.

BE PREPARED FOR AN EARTHQUAKE: DROP, COVER, HOLD

DROP COVER AND HOLD WHEN YOU FEEL A QUAKE.

If people are safe at home, the best advice is to stay there.

If you need to, go outside away from any trees or structures that may cause injury.

Phone Emergency Services on 111 if needed.

Unless you need to stay off the roads in an emergency, so they're free for emergency services to use.

BE PREPARED

Events like these are always a reminder that people should think ahead about how to protect themselves and their whānau | family if something unexpected happens.

- If you haven't already, secure shelves, bookcases and any tall items of furniture that may cause injury
- Find out where your child/ren's school evacuation points are
- Have a plan for your whānau | family and how you would meet up
- Have a supply of fresh water at home, and food if possible.



More information is available online at civildefence.govt.nz or getready.govt.nz

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Answered by GNS Science Te Pū Ao

Q: Is this swarm related to volcanic or geothermal processes?

The swarm of earthquakes is tectonic due to the movement of active faults. Also, the location of the swarm is outside a volcanic area, but in the geothermal area. There is no indication of volcanic unrest and no relation to the recent unrest at Taupō or Ruapehu.

It's very rare for geothermal activity to lead to such large magnitude earthquakes. Given the tectonic setting, history of swarm activity, and normal-faulting mechanism, it's likely to be tectonic causes.

Q. Is this Specific fault lines, if known, being impacted?

For earthquakes of this size, we don't regularly associate them with a particular fault, partly because of uncertainties on the seismic parameters (location and depth), and partly because even fairly small fractures can host events like this.

Q. Is it possible to hear earthquakes?

Yes! The first wave arriving from an earthquake is a P (primary) wave, which is a compressional wave similar to a sound wave. When this wave reaches the ground surface from below, it can produce a sound wave in the air that people hear.

Roy Stoneham Park Residential Development

We want your feedback on:

- 1 Changing the status of Roy Stoneham Park to residential
- 2 Changes to the District Plan to enable better use of the land – Residential Growth Precinct
- 3 Ideas about how to improve the former 'Stock Pound'. How can this become an asset to our community?

Make a submission

For more information on how to make a submission please check the Council website kaweraudc.govt.nz, visit the Council Offices or Kawerau District Library.

Council website www.kaweraudc.govt.nz

Email submissions@kaweraudc.govt.nz

Drop your written submission to the Council Offices, District Library or via post.



Submissions close 5pm Friday, 24 March 2023

Kōrero mai!
HAVE YOUR SAY!