



Wairoa In Focus

Your Community, Your Future

Work all go on Opoutama road and wastewater

The 'Gateway to Mahia' project has well and truly moved off the drawing board and into reality as the new stretch of road takes shape at Opoutama.

Contractors Quality Roading and Services Wairoa Ltd have wasted no time in laying the foundations for the sweeping road, which includes a new railway crossing point opposite the former school buildings.

It is expected the new road will be commissioned before Christmas, allowing the summer influx of visitors to put it to the test.

In the meantime, Trustees of the Ruawharawhara Urupa have allowed the continued use of the old section of Ormond Drive that runs over part of the cemetery. Once the new road opens, this section will be removed completely.

Creating the new roadway is only part of the Gateway to Mahia project. Installing a much-needed new wastewater system for the people of Opoutama is another major aspect of the work being carried out there. The innovative system sees the



Looking back towards Opoutama from where the new road joins the existing Ormond Drive, it's clear to see work is well on track to have it open before Christmas.

majority of wastewater treatment being carried out at each dwelling, before being piped to the underground dispersal areas on native-planted reserve land near the new road.

The project is being managed by WDC Engineer Jamie Cox, who said

taking into account environmental effects had been paramount in the development and execution of the plans.

"Wastewater is a sensitive issue for most people, but we can make the assurance that we have kept maintenance of the natural

environment at the heart of our work," he said.

Mr Cox said scientific reports had shown the effect on the environment and groundwater would be "less than minor" and all passers-by would see is a small shed and native shrubbery. Engineering manager Neil Cook said it made sense to deal with the two issues together and create one "master plan" for the area, rather than doubling up on resources. Around \$500,000 is budgeted for the road, while the majority of the waste dispersal costs will be covered by a \$1.56 million Ministry of Health subsidy.

Working with tangata whenua and the local community has been a key factor in the development of the plan. "It has been a long road to get this project underway. Positive involvement of tangata whenua throughout has been a vital element - the marae representative on the project team and active engagement of the people of Ruawharo Marae have provided valuable assistance in allowing this work to progress," Mr Cook said.

Hunting Wairoa programme best yet

YROA YNOT has gone from strength to strength this year, having recently completed one of the group's most popular programmes to date.

During a weekend in September, eight people took advantage of the 'Hunting Wairoa' programme, receiving instruction on firearm safety and use, as well as how to hunt and process meat. A highlight was that the group were filmed for a segment on the popular television show, Hunting Aotearoa, while on an expedition at Colin and Margaret Baynes' property.

A major contributor to the programme was the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council, which has a national drive to improve firearm safety within Maori communities.

Research that was undertaken in 2005 by Rotorua Police Arms Officers indicated that only around 25 percent of rural Maori in their area who used a firearm had received formal firearms training; the remainder relied on casual training from family and friends. Also approximately 50 percent of rural Maori in the Northern Te Urewera area who possessed a firearm were at that time unlicensed. Last year our Wairoa youth had highlighted their interest in a hunting programme, which is where the Whakatupato programme fitted in.

The first part of the programme took place at Wairoa College, where students were taken through the Arms Code and given the opportunity to sit their firearms test. From there they headed up to the Baynes' Makapua Station to put theory into practice. They started on

the practice range, learning how to sight in a firearm, different field shooting techniques and use of different calibre rifles.

Practice shooting was quickly translated into reality when students headed out into the field to try out their new skills on the local goat population. It wasn't all about shooting, as students also learnt how to set a hinaki (eel trap).

WDC Youth Co-ordinator Allison Maru said safety was paramount throughout the programme, which was delivered by NZMSC's Mike Spray.

"He went to considerable lengths to deliver a great hunting programme and to teach our



Keen hunters receive instruction on firearm use at Makapua Station as part of the YROA YNOT Hunting Wairoa programme.

rangatahi safety with firearms while out hunting. Thanks must also go to all the other volunteers that made this a great weekend for all of us."

In other YROA YNOT news, mentoring with the junior and senior students of Wairoa College has been going very well. The junior programme has had many great results inside and outside of the school environment, while the senior group have focused on writing their application letters for the Wairoa College scholarships, compiling CVs and gathering information on their choice of study for next year. Over the last month the group has also been doing extra study after school to achieve their literacy credits for entrance into tertiary education. Next month the focus will shift to budgeting, tenancy agreements, studylink and options for next year.

With the start of the Rugby World cup YROA YNOT got involved with the Wairoa Fanzone Celebrations. At the first of the four celebrations held at the Gaiety Theatre, lots of stall holders and rugby fans were out and about to enjoy the rugby atmosphere. YROA YNOT was there with their famous sausage sizzle stall to get amongst the fun.

This month was also the beginning of the great New Zealand Beach Clean Up. Crew members supported the kaupapa by heading out to Mahia to assist the locals to keep Mahia a clean, green, and beautiful place.

Cemetery search online

Establishing links to the past just became much easier with the introduction of an online cemetery search via the Wairoa District Council website.

A click on the 'IntraMap' icon on the home page will take users into the WDC's mapping system, which now includes satellite imagery of Wairoa Cemetery, with the ability to find out plot and burial information.

Council staff regularly field enquiries concerning the burial locations, so this service now allows those seeking answers to carry out the search in the comfort of their own home.

GIS Co-ordinator Russell McCracken said the addition of the cemetery search is part of the continuing development of the WDC's mapping service - it is already possible to search property details, Maori land and statistics.

"The service is constantly being refined to make it more user-friendly, but the core database is there," he said. Additional innovations in the pipeline include having the service available in smartphone format so that it can be used while on the go.

For the diary:

Council meetings:

November 8
December 13

Forum:

November 22

Maori Standing Committee:

October 28
November 25*

*Meeting will be held on a marae

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers in the Queen Street offices and are open to the public, unless otherwise specified.

For more information phone 838 7309 or visit www.wairoadc.govt.nz