

## Amalgamation



Amalgamation is the most significant issue that our community will face in a generation. The Wairoa District Council **OPPOSES** the current draft proposal to amalgamate and reorganise Hawke's Bay's councils. We believe that under the current proposal, a single Hawke's Bay council will not be in the best interest of Wairoa.

The Local Government Commission produced a position paper late last year explaining how the proposed reforms could change if it decides to proceed further. The changes included:

- Doubling the number of proposed councillors from nine to 18. Wairoa will only have two Councillors on this new super Council.
- Creating local boards, rather than community boards, to represent established Hawke's Bay communities.
- Appointing two councillors from each ward to their relevant local board to ensure good co-ordination and communication across the wider council.
- Establishing area offices in Wairoa, Napier, Hastings, Waipawa, and a service centre in Waipukurau, with council services to the public being decentralised to these locations as far as possible.

The Commission will engage an independent research company in the first quarter of 2015 to test public support for the revised position through a survey across the region. It also plans to circulate information more widely to Hawke's Bay households.

The position of the Wairoa District Council is that;

- Amalgamation is not needed to create a more prosperous Hawke's Bay.
- Amalgamation will not save money.
- Your rates will likely increase at a higher and faster rate.
- You will have less representation, making it harder to have your voice heard about what is important for your community.
- Hawke's Bay already has 38 'shared services', and several more regional projects are being worked on - proving amalgamation isn't needed for regional groups to work together where appropriate local boards will have no meaningful power.
- Our rural communities will suffer through a lack of representation, the loss of resources and ability to influence projects in their community.
- There is uncertainty with what will happen to ratepayer savings and council reserves. Ratepayer savings could be up for grabs.
- There is uncertainty with what will happen with jobs at council and QRS.
- There will be less representation for Maori.

There are too many questions that we just don't have the answers to.

The Wairoa District Council **OPPOSES** the current draft proposal for amalgamation. We've made our call, have you? Get involved and have your say.

### FOR YOUR DIARY

#### COUNCIL MEETINGS

24 February  
24 March  
28 April

#### COUNCIL FORUM

10 February  
10 March  
14 April

#### MAORI STANDING COMMITTEE

13 February  
13 March  
17 April

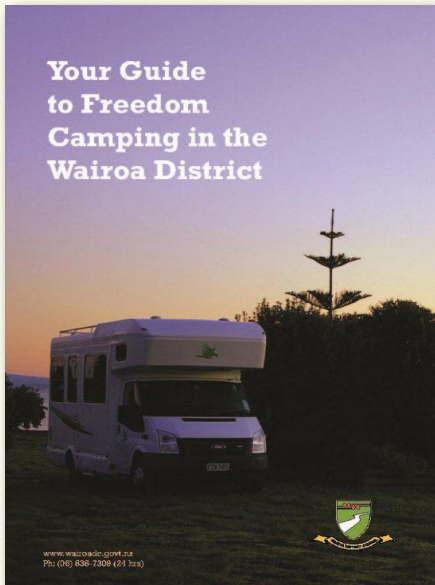
*Meetings and Forums are held at the Queen Street office council chambers, and are open to the public unless otherwise specified.*



## CONTACT US

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## Freedom Camping Bylaw



Under the Freedom Camping Act 2011, freedom camping is permitted in any area controlled or managed by Council unless we specify in a bylaw that a specific area is restricted or prohibited.

A bylaw under the Freedom Camping Act to restrict or prohibit freedom camping in particular areas may

only be made if it is necessary to protect a specified area, protect the health and safety of the people who visit the area, or to protect access to the area.

The Act increases the powers of council to regulate freedom camping in our district, and it introduces an infringement regime that is easier for council to enforce.

Council is proposing a new Freedom Camping Bylaw. Wairoa District Council Regulatory Manager, Helen Montgomery says, "It is important that through the public consultation process, that our community has the opportunity to participate, to have their views heard. The new Freedom Camping bylaw aims to attract responsible freedom camping to our district, protect and preserve our locality and prevent the misuse of public land".

"It is important that we have a robust bylaw in place, without it we risk driving freedom camping underground, which may increase the potential for irresponsible behaviour, public health risks and the misuse of public areas."

"At the end of the day, the Freedom Camping Act sets out quite clearly what councils are able to do and how we can better regulate freedom camping in our district", says Ms Montgomery.

**Submissions for the proposed Freedom Camping bylaw close on February 16.**

## Rural Fire



With a restricted fire season in place, it is important that you apply for a fire permit if you wish to light an open air fire. It has been a busy summer season so far and now during a restricted fire season it's important that everyone does their bit to ensure that we are all fire safe and mindful of keeping our district free from irresponsible behaviour.

Michael Walker, Wairoa District Council Deputy Principal Fire Officer also wishes to acknowledge the work of Wairoa's volunteer firefighters.

"Our volunteer firefighters are committed individuals who go above and beyond the call of duty for our district."

"We are always on the lookout for new recruits to join us, so if you're interested in becoming a Wairoa Volunteer Firefighter please contact us at Council", Mr Walker says.

There are a number of businesses that have been supportive of the volunteer firefighters, they are;

- Wairoa Autobodies
- Genesis Energy
- Tarrant Cotter and Co
- Wairoa Waikaremoana Maori Trust Board
- Pan Pac
- Putorino Rural Volunteer fire force under HDC authority

Mr Walker says, "I'd also like to acknowledge the ongoing and continued support of these local businesses and look forward to continuing and building on these relationships. We would not be able to do what we do without your support, and we thank you."

Keep an eye out for changes to the fire ban status as we have had a very dry summer. More likely than not, a Total Fire Ban season may be implemented by February. Watch this space.

Council has updated its information on the website about rural fire. There is a frequently asked questions section and an online request form for fire permits has also been developed

## Engineering and Roading update

Significant maintenance repair work has begun on the Mohaka township bridge. This project is expected to take approximately six months to complete and at times we expect that traffic will be affected while the structure of the bridge is being improved. Further work on strengthening the Mohaka township bridge will also occur at a later date.

- If you went to the Wairoa A&P Show, you would have noticed a new crushed limestone walkway along Ruataniwha Road all the way down to the show grounds and an upgraded footpath on Career street. It was great to see that these two projects were completed just in time for the A&P Show. Feedback from residents has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Sealing of Awamate road now complete.



- Sealing of several localised sections near residential areas i.e. Whakaki are being completed in January, with William street (off Kopu road) completed last October.
- On the programme remains the Whakamahi road and a section of sealing at Waikaremoana (on SP38 Road) for the Hopuruahine Incline treatment.
- Resealing of council roads (worth \$1M per annum) is also due to get underway to waterproof up to
- 28km of sealed roads at various locations throughout the district. This will commence in February. This activity usually generates public comment due to
- its intensity during construction and some short term impacts to traffic AND also due to loose chip and wet tar. Council asks for patience and understanding while this work is undertaken.
- DID YOU KNOW - Unformed legal roads and gates/ cattle-stops. Unformed legal roads or 'paper roads' are no different in law from formed roads. That is, the public have the right to use them on foot, on horse, or in vehicles without hindrance from the adjacent

landholder or anyone else. The general rules of the road apply, as well as the provisions in Part 21 of the Local Government Act 1974. However, users of these roads should still be considerate of others, including adjoining landowners and their property.

These provisions include the conditions under which an adjoining landowner may place a cattle-stop or a swing gate across an unformed road. This is permissible only when the road is not fenced laterally, and is clearly aimed as a measure to enable the control of stock in these circumstances. Otherwise it is not lawful to place a gate, fence or other obstruction across an unformed legal road. Gates and cattle-stops may only be placed with the permission of Council; they must not be locked, and must have a sign indicating that they are on a public road.

## Wairoa A&P Show

We were proud to be the principal sponsor of the 2015 Wairoa A&P Show. Wairoa certainly put on great weather and we would like to send our thanks to all those involved in putting together a great show this year. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, from the equestrian, to the rodeo to the speed shearing and all the many stall holders. Thank you to all the participants and to the organisers for making this year's A&P show such a great success.



WDC interns competing in the Farmlands Rural Challenge

## By-Election Update

If you haven't already, you should have received your voting papers for the by-election for the vacancy that currently exists on Council.

**Voting closes on the 17th of February.**

Have your say and VOTE in the upcoming by-election.

*Meet our interns.....*



Ola and Kia Ora

Our names are Lucas, Nathan and Ian and we have been interning at the Wairoa District Council since last December. We are from Foz do Iguassu in the south of Brazil. We are currently on exchange to the University of Waikato and we are all studying Computer Science. We came over on the Science Without Borders Programme through our home University, UNIOESTE or the State University of West Paraná. Science Without Borders is a Brazilian government scholarship programme that encourages students to spend time studying and learning overseas. Our internship is unpaid, and without the support of our government we would not have been able to come to Wairoa for this great experience. We are currently working on a couple of IT projects including developing apps for mobile devices for visitors to Wairoa. Thank you all for being so welcoming to us while we've been here. We have had an awesome time. As our internship is coming to an end, we just want to say 'Kia Ora Wairoa!'

## Wairoa District Council Long Term Plan

We will be updating the Wairoa District Council's Long Term Plan (LTP) this year and will seek to engage meaningfully with our community. Under the Local Government Act 2002, each local authority is required to undertake long-term planning with its community. The LTP is a significant piece of work and will map out council's intention to take strong, deliberate policy action on a number of critical issues facing our district over the next 10 years. It is an important piece of work and we would like to encourage our community to engage in the process.