

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Much of our attention is focused on the Government's proposed changes to local government and what they could mean for the future of Rangitīkei.

Council recently decided not to submit a formal Head Start Proposal for amalgamation. Ultimately, we did not believe there was enough time or information available to make such a significant decision about the future of our district.

That does not mean the conversation has stopped. We are continuing to work with neighbouring councils to build a better understanding of the options available to us. For me, one of the most important considerations remains representation. Rangitīkei is a large and predominantly rural district, and we need to understand what say our communities would have around the table if we were part of a larger council.

There is still a great deal we do not know about what the Government's reforms will ultimately look like, so we need to keep our options open and make sure any future decisions are based on good information and what is best for our communities.

I recently got the chance to see some of the work happening inside the Marton Swim Centre. From the road it may look like not much is happening, but I can assure you there is plenty going on inside. We have an update in this edition of Connect on how the project is progressing, and it is great to see work underway. I also had the pleasure of meeting recently with distance education students from northern Rangitīkei and representatives from Te Kura in Taihape. Our rural communities can face challenges that are quite different from those in larger centres, particularly when it comes to accessing education and employment opportunities, and it is important that we continue listening to our young people about their experiences.

That ties in well with another Rangitīkei success story, the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs. I attended the national Trust meeting and forum in Wellington this month, where Rangitīkei continues to be recognised as one of the strongest performing programmes in the country for helping people into employment.

That is something we should be incredibly proud of, and I would like to again acknowledge James, Louise and the wider team for the work they do supporting local people into employment and helping our businesses find the people they need.

Finally, I had the privilege of attending the Marton Fire Brigade Honours Night this month. Our volunteer firefighters make an incredible contribution to our communities, often giving up their own time and responding at all hours when people need them most. It was a pleasure to be there and recognise the commitment and service of those who were honoured on the night.

As always, there is plenty happening across Rangitīkei and plenty of work ahead of us. Thank you to everyone who continues to contribute their time and energy towards making our district a great place to live.

Ngā mihi, Mayor Andy - Rangitīkei District Council.



MARTON SWIM CENTRE

Work continues to progress on the Marton Swim Centre redevelopment, with contractors focusing on seismic strengthening around the main pool during August.

Strengthening work has been carried out around the columns and foundations of the main pool to bring this part of the centre up to Grade B (>67% New Building Standard).

The work involves exposing the existing foundations and pouring new reinforced concrete pads. These are then connected to the existing columns using epoxy dowels, providing additional restraint and strengthening the structure.

Much of this work will be covered up as construction progresses, but it forms an important and substantial part of the overall redevelopment.

While replacement of the roof is one of the most visible elements of the project, significant strengthening work is also being completed throughout the building. Roof work is expected to begin in September, subject to the remaining frame components arriving on site.

www.rangitikei.govt.nz/projects



COMMUNITY VOICES



For Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori 2026, Rangitīkei will come together in a district-wide celebration of language, culture and connection. Our goal is to see 1,000 poi swinging in unison across Rangitīkei District.

At 11am on Monday 14 September, we want to see 1,000 poi swinging together across Rangitīkei for more than two minutes.

You can take part:

- At your school or early learning centre
- With your whānau or community group
- At your business
- Alongside the wider community in Marton at Centennial Park

If more than 250 people join us at Centennial Park, the gathering will become a world record attempt.

We have enough equipment to make 1,000 poi and will be distributing this throughout the district. Schools, businesses and groups wishing to take part are encouraged to register their interest.

Please complete the registration form by 5pm, Friday 28 August to have your poi-making kit delivered the following week.

Individual packs and instructions will also be available to collect at our community hubs from Tuesday 1st September.

- Marton Community Hub
- Taihape Community Hub
- Te Matapihi - Bulls Community Hub

BE PART OF THE WERO!
www.rangitikei.govt.nz/1000-poi-challenge

Register to take part

MEET YOUR COUNCIL TEAM – CRYSTAL JOHNSTON

Kia ora, I'm Crystal Johnston, Executive Assistant to the Group Manager – Assets, Infrastructure & Projects at Rangitīkei District Council.

I've called the Rangitīkei home for the past 26 years and have been part of the RDC team for four years. Having lived in the district for so long, I really value being able to work for an organisation that supports the community I call home.

What I enjoy most about being an Executive Assistant is the variety; no two days are quite the same! I love keeping things organised, helping things run smoothly behind the scenes, supporting my team, and being someone people can rely on. I also enjoy working with people across Council and the community and being part of the many projects and pieces of work that contribute to our district.

Outside of Council, I'm a creative person at heart. I enjoy writing and creating, whether that's putting

thoughts and ideas into words, making handmade décor, painting or drawing. I'm drawn to things that are a little unique, and I love the process of taking an idea or inspiration and turning it into something of my own.

I'm also a bit of a car enthusiast, particularly when it comes to JDM vehicles. It's very much a family interest, so there's usually something automotive going on at our place! I appreciate the individuality, character and engineering of older Japanese cars, and it's probably fair to say our collection has grown well beyond being just a casual interest.

After 26 years in the Rangitīkei, it's definitely home, and I'm proud to be part of the team working for our district.



YOUR RATES AT WORK



ROADING

Otago Bridge temporary restrictions

On Tuesday 18 August 2026, we received reports of structural damage to Otago Bridge, located near Ōhinga, approximately 3 km east of State Highway One.

The Rangitīkei District Council and Manawātū District Council roading teams have conducted an inspection of the bridge and as a result, we have implemented the following precautionary restrictions:

- a weight limit of 6000 kg gross
- a 10 km/h speed restriction for light vehicles
- only one vehicle to cross the bridge at a time

Motorists are also advised to drive in the centre of the bridge.

Signage is now in place to advise motorists of these restrictions.

Further investigations will be undertaken to determine the cause of the damage, and how best to repair it. We'll have more information once these investigations are completed.

www.rangitikei.govt.nz/news



CIVIL DEFENCE

Emergency Operations Centre about to get underway

Council contractors Maycroft are beginning preparation work on the High Street and Grey Street site for the building of the new Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

Fencing has been erected around the area where the worksite will be, and ground is due to be broken on Monday 31 August.

www.rangitikei.govt.nz/projects



PARKS & RESERVES

Floodlight upgrades at Centennial Park and Bulls Domain

Council has completed upgrades to the netball court floodlights at Centennial Park in Marton and Bulls Domain.

At Centennial Park, Council's Parks and Reserves team and contractors The Downs Group have replaced five older floodlights with new LED lighting.

The new LED lights are more energy efficient and longer lasting than the previous lights, while also providing improved illumination across the courts for players and other users.

Similar work has also been completed at Bulls Domain, where the existing court floodlights have been replaced with new LED lighting.

The upgrades will help improve the usability of both facilities while reducing the energy and maintenance requirements associated with the older lighting.



ROADING

Calico Line shared pathway and watermain

This project is nearing completion of the 2.5 m wide pathway, with road markings and some safety measures still to be installed.

The pathway will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The work on the watermain renewal on Calico Line is almost complete as well, with the last stretch from Bredins Line to the Tūtaenui Stream Bridge to go. Both the pathway and watermain projects have been done simultaneously to minimise disruption to residents and reduce costs.



WAITATAPIA WEAR-A-BULL ARTS

WHEN	27 August
TIME	6pm
LOCATION	Te Matapihi - Bulls Community Centre
COST	Prices from \$15

This annual community creative arts and fashion show celebrates local artistic expression, creativity, and craftsmanship in a fun, inclusive environment.

Organised by the Bulls & District Community Trust.

www.bulls.kiwi/events



THE MUDDER - FUN RUN

WHEN	19 September
TIME	9am -1pm
LOCATION	Makuhou Road, Marton
COST	From \$25 kids / \$65 adults

The Mudder provides a great day out with friends, family or just by yourself. Promoting the benefits of exercise for your mental health, The Mudder is a great way to "Move your body, shift your mind."

Organised by Rangitīkei Farmstay.

www.themudder.co.nz



Business
Rangitīkei

Bragging Breakfast

"BOAST OVER TOAST"

After our first one was such a success, we are excited to bring to you another Business Rangitīkei Bragging Breakfast event!

It's time to celebrate the wins, big and small! Join us for a morning of stories and success amongst fellow business owners from across the Rangitīkei region.

Want to share your achievements? Talking spots are limited, with each speaker having a three minute time slot, so grab yours early. If you'd prefer to just listen and mingle, come for breakfast and soak up the inspiration!

Enjoy a buffet-style breakfast including tea and coffee, and an opportunity to network with region-wide businesses in a fun, relaxed atmosphere.

This is exclusive to paid Business Rangitīkei members so don't miss out! Use the QR code below, visit the "Events" section of our website, or get in touch via email to register.

Not sure if you're a current paid member, or want to become one? Email us and we'll help you get set up.

10 September, 2026 7.30am – 9am

Aunty's Bar and Grill – 2 Hammond Street, Marton

\$25.00 per person

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