

He karere tā te Kaunihera o Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council

Pātea embraces rare Saltmarsh

Spades hit the ground in Pātea on World Environment Day, as South Taranaki District Council (STDC) staff and community volunteers worked together to plant 500 buffer plants next to the Pātea Saltmarsh.

The day marked another important milestone of many in STDC's journey to protect the region's largest Saltmarsh. Having been included in Taranaki Regional Council's Key Native Ecosystem programme, the two councils are now working together with the local community to protect and enhance the site of significant ecological value, which has been classified as 'acutely threatened'.

South Taranaki District Council's Reforestation Coordinator, Joe Churchman, is leading the project and says the Saltmarsh plays a crucial role in coastal ecosystems.

"The saltmarsh is a habitat to bird species, freshwater fish, and reptiles. Protecting and restoring the Saltmarsh is essential to maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance."

Saltmarsh habitats are rare in Taranaki, reinforcing the significance in preserving the site in the best possible condition.

"Our efforts will focus on fencing off the Saltmarsh to prevent damage from livestock, buffer planting to enhance the habitat and improve water quality, as well as pest plant and animal control" Joe says. "Monitoring plots will also be set up to better understand how the area is changing over time."

The Saltmarsh can be seen while crossing over the Pātea River bridge on State Highway 3 at the southern end of the town.

Upcoming Meetings

Ordinary Council
Monday 24 June, 4pm

Extraordinary Council
To adopt the Long Term Plan
Tuesday 2 July, 2pm

Risk and Assurance Committee
Wednesday 3 July, 10.30am

Unless specified, meetings are held in the Council Chambers, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera.

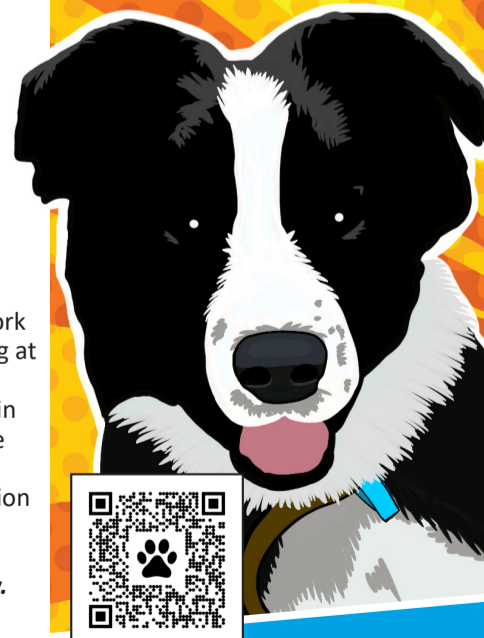
LYSAGHT-WATT TRUST
RONALD HUGH MORRIESON
LITERARY AWARDS

COMPETITION OPENS TODAY!

The 2024 Lysaght-Watt Trust Ronald Hugh Morrieson Literary Awards open today. If you are interested in entering the Short Story (open and secondary school categories), Poetry (open and secondary school categories) or the research section (secondary school only).

Visit www.southtaranaki.com/rhm to find out more or to enter online.

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Ōpunakē Pump Track back in business

With a fresh top up of asphalt and a shiny new seal coat, the track is now open for you to enjoy! Head to the Ōpunakē Recreational Grounds beside the Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration Event Centre.

Satisfaction with Council Services remains high in South Taranaki

South Taranaki residents are generally happy with the services Council provides according to an independent survey. The survey of 416 residents across all four South Taranaki wards found that overall satisfaction with the Council was high at 88%, with 89% satisfaction with the Council's core services. 90% of those surveyed felt the Council was moving in the right direction and 96% were also satisfied with the facilities provided by the Council.

The survey, which has been conducted regularly since 1993, allows the South Taranaki District Council to assess its performance by finding out from residents what they think the Council is doing well and areas where they could do better.

Services and facilities that residents were most satisfied with were the libraries (98% satisfaction), Hāwera Aquatic Centre (98%), the district's sewerage system (97%), the cleanliness and maintenance of recreation centres (97%) and overall waste management (92%). The services that had the lowest satisfaction rates were the condition of roads (58%), Animal Management (74%), value for money (74%), public participation in decision making (76%) and illegal litter dumping (76%).

Council CEO, Fiona Aitken, says she is pleased

with the results of the survey; however, the Council is always looking to improve the services it provides.

"As part of our Long Term Plan over the next three years we've planned to increase our roading expenditure, have committed to undertaking town centre upgrades in Manaia, Eltham, Ōpunakē, Pātea and Waverley, and have budgeted to increase resources in the animal management team."

"We don't always get it right, but I know how hard our staff work for the people of South Taranaki and we are continually looking at ways we can lift the bar in terms of performance," she says.

"But it is good to know that most people think we are moving in the right direction and understand we are trying to provide the best for our communities with the resources we have."

The District-wide survey was conducted using a random selection method by independent research company Key Research over August 2023 and March 2024.

The survey results can be found on the Council's website www.southtaranaki.com under Plans, Strategies and Reports.