



New Council Chief Executive starts



Mayor Nadine Taylor with new Council Chief Executive John Boswell

Council has a new Chief Executive, John Boswell.

Mayor Nadine Taylor said she was very pleased to welcome Mr Boswell to Council.

“John joins us after a highly successful military career, reaching the position of Major General and Chief of Army, the most senior officer in the New Zealand Army. John wants to continue to serve the public in a positive values-based organisation after his impressive career in the Army,” she said.

“He brings a collaborative leadership style as well as strong strategic management and communication skills which I know will work well for Council and the Marlborough community.”

Mr Boswell said he was incredibly honoured to have the opportunity to take on a senior leadership role with Council.

“I’m really looking forward to supporting the delivery of the core services of Council, effectively and efficiently, whilst always looking to be better in all we do and keeping an eye on how to position the district to benefit from future opportunities,” he said.

“Marlborough is an area that offers so much - it has huge

potential - and it is a region my wife Vicky and I are looking forward to calling home.”

Outgoing CE Mark Wheeler wished Mr Boswell well in the role, saying it had been a great privilege to be the CE at Council for the past eight and a half years.

“Council is a ‘people business’ and the people of Marlborough are amazing. They rightly expect quality services, respectful interactions, professionalism and cost efficiency,” he said. “The CE role has given me many extremely satisfying times, all of which were team efforts.”

Mayor Taylor thanked Mr Wheeler sincerely for his 26 years of service to Council and said this service was not only to Council but to the people of Marlborough. Mr Wheeler has been chief executive since 2015, and before that was deputy chief executive and assets and services manager from 1998.

“We as a Council, province and community have been very lucky to have Mark at the helm as our CE and lead public servant,” Mayor Taylor said. “We wish Mark and wife Cathy a wonderful retirement.”



The new gateway signs for Canvastown/Whakamarino

New gateway signs for Canvastown celebrate the area’s cultural and environmental significance.

The signs feature dramatic photographs of the Pelorus River and Te Hora Marae’s waharoa, with one using the te reo word Whakamarino.

During consultation with iwi and the community, it was discovered Whakamarino was more than just a name for the area.

Ruihana Lewis Smith, kaiwhakahaere Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust, said the translation of Whakamarino was to “make calm”. The area was given the name by Ngāti Kuia ancestors who used the waters for traditional ritual

cleansing. “We are proud that the name of our awa and its environs will be visible in our community on the signs that welcome people as they enter the area,” he said. “I think it’s important we bring everyone - locals and visitors alike - on this journey to understand the meaning of our place names so that together we can better understand the history.”

Whakamarino has significant historical meaning to Ngāti Kuia. Sounds Ward Councillor Barbara Faulls said the discussions about the signs recognised the environment

drew people to the area hence its use in the photographs.

“There was a desire to use beautiful images celebrating nature, hence the wording ‘where nature meets community,’” she said. “Working alongside both the Canvastown Community Association and local iwi, Ngāti Kuia, it was agreed that using the te reo name of Whakamarino would be a very positive move.”

The name Canvastown acknowledges the many pitched tents that dotted the area in the 1860s.

Be on the rook out – but don’t shoot

Once eradicated in Marlborough, rooks have been spotted a number of times by local farmers and contractors over the past few years.

Council’s Biosecurity Manager Liam Falconer urges the public to report any sightings of this pest to prevent them establishing here.

“These introduced birds are intelligent, but destructive.

They are capable of stripping crops and ripping up paddocks. If you see a glossy black bird similar in size to a magpie, with a slight purple tint, let us know immediately,” he said

If you do see a rook, do not shoot at it as it can reduce the chances of successfully controlling them, he said.

“Rooks are smart birds and learn very quickly to avoid control methods. They become very wary of any shooting, therefore, controlling rooks is a specialised activity which Council will undertake,” he said.

The last active rookery in Marlborough was eradicated



in 2006. Individual rooks have occasionally arrived in Marlborough with the latest arrival in July this year. They continue to be an ongoing problem in the North Island and can fly here, Liam said.

“They have a distinctive ‘kaak’ call and are particularly noisy during the spring breeding season. Their favoured nesting spot is the top of tall pine and gum trees,” he said. If birds were looking to make their way here, then they would likely do so in spring when they want to nest, Liam said. If you think you’ve seen a rook, contact Council’s biosecurity team at biosecurity@marlborough.govt.nz or Ph: 03 520 7400.