

## News from Marlborough District Council.

### Remote/virtual building inspections way of the future

Fifteen per cent of Council's building inspections are currently completed virtually using an app, saving time and money, and that figure is set to grow.

Building Control Group Manager Dhyanom Gala told last week's Environment and Planning Committee that virtual/remote inspections were the future of the building industry.

"We are one of the very early adopters of the BRANZ Artisan app and we now have 35 building firms using it," he said.

"Since we started using it in 2021, 1,085 inspections have been completed, saving more than 32,000 kms and 1,000 man-hours."

The Government recently announced plans to make remote inspections the default approach for BCAs (Building Consent Authorities), an initiative expected to streamline the building consent system, reduce costs and improve efficiency.

While remote/virtual inspections were the future of the building industry, there were several challenges Mr Gala said.

The benefits were increased efficiency, cost savings, flexibility, high-quality digital records, reduced health and safety risks as inspectors were not on-site and continuity during emergency events (e.g. road closures).

Challenges included lack of liability sharing framework, resistance to change, staff training, technological requirements and maintaining consistency and quality control.

Mr Gala said Council's Building Control Group currently undertakes up to 5,000 inspections yearly and is continually exploring ways to promote efficiencies.

The Artisan app is recognising the quality assurance processes of building teams and fostering stronger connections between council and the building community.

The Building Control Group is gradually increasing its uptake of inspections carried out using the Artisan app.

"We will continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of remote/virtual inspections and make adjustments as needed to adapt to new challenges and regulatory challenges," Mr Gala said.



Building Control Group Manager Dhyanom Gala using the Artisan app to inspect a building

### Harbourmaster direction withdrawn for Tory Channel/Kura Te Au

Following collaborative discussions with Maritime New Zealand, the Marlborough Harbourmaster has decided to lift the Harbourmaster's direction for Tory Channel/Kura Te Au regarding the size of vessels and requirements for the introduction of new ships into the channel.

Earlier this year, the Harbourmaster introduced a direction setting a maximum length of 187m for any new vessels looking to use Tory Channel/Kura Te Au to access Port Marlborough at Picton.

Under Maritime NZ Rules a specified risk management process exists for determining the size limits of pilot exempt vessels.

"Current rules are in place to guide which vessels require pilotage and that they need to be under the command of a master with the correct certification. If there are requests to change pilotage, there is a risk management process which requires engagement with harbourmasters and other affected parties," Maritime NZ Director Kirstie Hewlett said.

"Removing the direction simplifies the regulatory picture for maritime safety for the channel," she said.

Marlborough Harbourmaster Captain Jake Oliver was confident the risks the direction was designed to address would be managed through a combination of national regulatory requirements and the statutory powers he had.

"I want to assure the Marlborough community that safe passage for vessels in the Tory Channel/Kura Te Au is a top priority for me as Harbourmaster. For large vessels, such as those over 187m in length, the onus is on the operator to demonstrate that this sized vessel can use the Channel without impacting maritime safety standards. I will continue to advocate for the high

standards of safety that the public expects, and a risk and evidence based approach to decision making."

"We will work closely with Maritime NZ on its protocols for new vessels over 187m planning to enter Tory Channel/Kura Te Au," Captain Oliver said.

This lifting of the direction does not prevent the Harbourmaster's statutory power for taking action when safety issues arise within the region's waters.

The Harbourmaster and Maritime NZ have a strong working relationship and are both focused on ensuring vessels can safely traverse Cook Strait, the Sounds and Tory Channel/Kura Te Au.



A ferry entering Tory Channel/Kura Te Au from Cook Strait

### Fire risk and erosion control trial



The area along Forest Park Drive where dead trees and branches were mulched to reduce fire risk

Walkers on the Wither Hills Farm Park will have noticed large-scale works under and around the trees on the lower slopes near walking tracks adjacent to Forest Park Drive.

A trial to reduce fire risk from excessive dry fuel loading has been underway through this tree block.

Previously the area had significant numbers of dead and dying trees as well as fallen branches which formed a significant risk during dry summer periods.

Additionally, huge numbers of self-seeded wattles were stunting and suffocating existing trees, which compromised the sustainability of the block and had resulted in large areas of bare, eroding soil.

Any useful lengths of firewood are being removed and donated to the Blenheim Lions Club for their firewood programme while the remaining brush was mulched into the soil to support existing trees.

While the area looks a little bare, grass is starting to emerge under the remaining tree canopy and the area should look mostly recovered by the end of November.

So far there has been an overwhelming positive response from local residents and park users.

A comprehensive report on trial results will be done in spring when the trial finishes.

### Blenheim's street tree planting programme

The 2024 winter street tree planting programme is almost complete.

Council has planted 130 trees this year in streets in Havelock, Renwick and Blenheim.

Some streets in the province are unable to have trees due to narrow berms and the location of underground and overhead services.

Trees planted have gone onto the three year watering program which has 560 trees on it, to help get them established.



Council planted street trees in Rose Manor in full bloom

### Are you ready to conquer Everest?

The Marlborough Mount Everest Challenge begins tomorrow, a run/walk event where the goal is to travel the elevation of Mount Everest (8,800m) in seven weeks.

Run by the Port Marlborough Pavilion with the support of Council, this year's annual event runs from 12 October to 30 November. Twenty per cent of all entry fees will be donated to the Picton Foodbank.

Pavilion Project Coordinator for Council Regan Russell said it took Sir Edmund Hillary seven weeks to climb Mount Everest in 1953. "This is a challenge for locals to set their own challenge."

"We aim to encourage local people to not only use the amazing local walking tracks that Marlborough has to offer but to get fit while doing so," he said.

"Attaining the goal of 8,800m during the seven week period will not be an easy task but we're sure Marlburian's will be up to the challenge."

Participants can either run or walk the Tirohanga Track in Picton or the Mt Vernon Track in Blenheim. The Tirohanga Track will need to be climbed 36 times and Mt Vernon 25 times to complete the task.

"You can do it solo or as part of a team to help motivate each other. Get your family, friends and work colleagues to join your team. Put the challenge out there and see what you and your team can achieve," Mr Russell said.

Those who reach the goal of 8800m as an individual or a group will receive a medal at a prize giving at the Pavilion on Saturday 7 December at 11am.

For more information and to register go to: [www.everestchallenge.nz](http://www.everestchallenge.nz)



### Future-proofing SH6 Rai Saddle

New resilience work to help future-proof State Highway 6 on the Rai Saddle begins next week.

Contractors will be on-site from Monday 14 October until late November improving drainage and addressing under-slips by redirecting stormwater on three one-kilometre sections of the highway.

Rob Service, System Manager Top of the South Island said it will help mitigate the impact of bad weather and heavy rainfall.

"Each section will be completed one at a time to reduce the impact on drivers, with crews starting at the top of the Rai Saddle and working their way down towards the Mt Richmond Estate Motels," he said.

Contractors will install pipework, kerbs and barriers to redirect stormwater at each site, which is critical in hillside areas such as the Rai Saddle.

"It's about making the highway stronger and better prepared for future disruption," Mr Service said.

During work one highway lane will remain open under stop/go temporary traffic management 24 hours a day. A temporary speed limit of 30km/h will be in place. Road users can expect delays of up to five minutes.

Mr Service advises those with ferry connections or appointments to plan ahead given other summer maintenance work currently underway.

"We recommend allowing an extra 30 minutes," he said.

The work on the Rai Saddle is funded by the Transport Resilience Fund, set up to cover the cost of resilience improvements on the state highway network and minimise damage from future weather events.





# Public Notices

## Meet your Council



Mayor Nadine Taylor leads a team of 14 elected councillors. They are responsible for making decisions and developing policies that will help shape our province into the future.

Council's vision is that Marlborough is a globally-connected district of smart, progressive, high-value enterprises, known for its economic efficiency, quality lifestyle and wellbeing, caring community, desirable location and healthy natural environment.

For more information or to contact one of your elected representatives, go to: [www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/councillors](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/councillors) or Ph: 03 520 7400.

## Commercial Events Fund closes Monday

Round 1 of Council's 2024/2025 Commercial Events Fund closes this Monday 14 October.

This contestable fund was established to help create economic benefit to Marlborough by attracting new events and helping to build on existing ones.

Council's Commercial Events Fund sub-committee considers the applications and there is a budget of \$130,000 available for allocation for 2024/2025.

To be eligible, commercial events must be held within the Marlborough District Council boundaries. Community events, conferences, conventions, trade shows and exhibitions are not eligible.

Funding is granted on an annual basis but it does not mean that all funds must be distributed each year. Past applicants who have been unsuccessful may re-apply.

Key dates:

- Applications close: 5pm Monday 14 October 2024
- Funding decision by: 5pm Friday 1 November 2024

Further information and the online application form can be found on Council's website - [www.marlborough.govt.nz/recreation/events/commercial-events-fund](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/recreation/events/commercial-events-fund)

Any enquiries can be directed to Council's Regional Events Advisor, Samantha Young, Ph: 03 520 7400 or email: [events@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:events@marlborough.govt.nz)

## Making of Regional Pest Management Plan 2024

Pursuant to Section 77 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, the Marlborough District Council gives public notice of an amendment to the Regional Pest Management Plan 2018 (the plan).

The amendment to the plan has been made to incorporate a new programme for pest conifers (wilding pines).

The amendment aligns with the aim of the National Wilding Conifer Management Strategy 2015 - 2030 that pest conifers are to be contained and reduced.

The commencement date of the amendment to the plan is the 14 October 2024.

The plan is available on the Council website at: [www.marlborough.govt.nz/environment/biosecurity/regional-pest-management-plan/amendments-and-rpmp-reviews/stage-4-council-resulting-rpmp](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/environment/biosecurity/regional-pest-management-plan/amendments-and-rpmp-reviews/stage-4-council-resulting-rpmp)

Hard copies of the plan can be requested by emailing [Biosecurity@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:Biosecurity@marlborough.govt.nz)

For further information Ph: 03 520 7400 and ask for Liam Falconer.

## Awatere and Dashwood rural boil water notice

Water from Council's reticulation network to the Awatere and Dashwood rural areas should be boiled.

It does not currently meet the NZ Drinking Water Standards and may contain bacteria or protozoa that are harmful to human health.

All water used for drinking, food preparation or cleaning teeth should be boiled before use.

Treated water is available at the public taps on Marama Road, outside Seddon School. For further information contact Council on Ph: 03 520 7400.



## Blenheim Customer Service Centre

15 Seymour Street, Blenheim 7201

Ph: 03 520 7400

[mdc@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:mdc@marlborough.govt.nz)

Mon - Tues 8.30am - 4.30pm

Wed 8.30am - 12.30pm

1.30pm - 4.30pm

Thurs - Fri 8.30am - 4.30pm

## Picton Library & Service Centre

2 Dublin Street, Picton 7220

Ph: 03 520 7493

[pictonlibrary@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:pictonlibrary@marlborough.govt.nz)

Mon - Tues 8.30am - 5pm

Wed 9am - 5pm

Thurs - Fri 8.30am - 5pm

Sat 10am - 4pm

Sun 1pm - 4pm

## Council & Committee Meetings

The following meeting is open to the public and anyone is welcome to attend. A copy of the agenda will be available online and at Council's Office, 15 Seymour Street, Blenheim.

### Economic, Finance & Community Committee

Tuesday 15 October at 9am

### Public Forum

A public forum is held prior to the Economic, Finance & Community Committee meeting at 8.30am. If you wish to address the committee you will need to confirm your attendance and speaking time with the Committee Secretary by the Friday prior. Please note topics are restricted to those agenda items for the meeting or within the Committee's delegation.

Times and dates may be subject to change, please contact the Committee Secretary, Ph: 03 520 7400 for confirmation.

## Proposed road closures, navigation warnings and alcohol licensing

For the latest public notices, please go to: [www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/latest-news-notice-and-media-releases/all-news-notice-and-media-releases](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/your-council/latest-news-notice-and-media-releases/all-news-notice-and-media-releases)

**Council's Harbours team - working to ensure our waterways are safe for everyone to enjoy.**

Contact the Harbourmaster's Office if you need advice or information about Marlborough's harbours.

03 520 7400 |

