

## Spring has sprung in Marlborough's premier parks

It's a wonderful time to be out and about in Marlborough.

Mayor Nadine Taylor said the region was blessed with some of the highest sunshine hours in the country, good soils and excellent growing conditions for a wide variety of trees, shrubs and flowers.

"Council's gardens team do an excellent job looking after our parks and reserves. Pollard Park in Blenheim looks particularly magnificent right now - the annual beds are stunning with the tulips flowering. The rose gardens have been weeded, fertilised and mulched. The camellia gardens, cottage garden and perennial border are all looking great too with spring growth," she said.

In Seymour Square, staff have just finished working through the annual beds weeding and dead heading. The border and rose gardens have also been given a tidy up and a layer of mulch added to help retain moisture over summer.

A recent visitor to the province wrote to Council to say the annual beds at both Seymour Square and Pollard Park were nothing short of magnificent. "Best I've ever seen and I have been involved in parks and horticulture for a couple of decades," the visitor said. "Your gardeners are doing an amazing job! Please pass on my thanks."



*Blenheim's Pollard Park is primed and ready for the influx of visitors for Garden Marlborough*

This bodes well as both gardens are the backdrop to one of Marlborough's biggest events in early November - Garden Marlborough.

"Now in its 31st year, it brings in thousands of visitors and generates over \$1 million in economic benefit. Last year more than 6,000 people attended the Garden Fête in Pollard Park and 4,000 tickets were sold for events and workshops," Mayor Taylor said.

She thanked the Garden Marlborough committee and major sponsors Bayleys and extended a special acknowledgement to the original committee members for

their vision all those years ago: Carolyn Ferraby, Jeremy Jones, David Robinson, Keren Mitchell, Tim Crawford, Puddi Shields, Richard MacFarlane and Ralph Ballinger. "They had an idea for a garden show like no other - a long weekend of tours and workshops culminating in a fête, showing off everything and anything to do with gardening."

"I am particularly proud of the support Council provides to Garden Marlborough, primarily by our garden team who ensure our parks look their absolute best. My thanks to that team for their professional gardening excellence - here's to another successful Garden Marlborough," she said.

## Community grants fund in high demand

Some difficult decisions will be needed for this year's Council Community Grants fund with a record number of applications received.

A total of just under \$700,000 has been requested through the fund which has \$280,000 available for annual distribution. Community Partnerships Advisor Jodie Griffiths said there was an extremely high demand for the limited funds available.

"Council's grants committee meet to consider the applications and their recommendations will be considered by full Council on 31 October," she said.

"Community grants are Council's way of acknowledging the contribution of not-for-profit organisations in providing essential services. Council's role is to add value to the ability of the volunteer sector to thrive and respond to community needs by providing funding assistance. Projects must be of direct benefit to people of the Marlborough district," Mrs Griffiths said.

"Council is aware funding is becoming a real challenge for many community groups with other funding sources narrowing their criteria and demand far exceeding the funding available."

All applicants will be advised of outcomes after 31 October.

## Work to be done to keep children safe on the road

More than 70 per cent of car seats assessed at child car restraint fitting clinics in Marlborough during the past year were incorrectly installed.

Child restraint technician Emma Barnett, who coordinates the clinics on behalf of Council, said many common errors had been observed in the past year, with just 27 per cent correctly installed.

"In those instances, caregivers were provided with advice about the next stage of car seat requirements for their child and had the opportunity to ask questions.

"In the other cases, caregivers were given advice about where they had gone wrong with the install, and we were usually able to fit their seat correctly for them, providing tips and advice throughout the process," Emma said.

In some cases, the seat was incompatible with

the vehicle, and needed to be replaced with a suitable alternative.

Other common errors included the use of expired seats, weight limits being exceeded, tether straps not being used or used incorrectly, turning the child to face the front too early, not using a booster seat in instances where it was advised, not following the manual for the seat correctly, or having the seat or capsule at the wrong angle, which can restrict breathing in infants.

The purpose of the workshops was to provide parents with the information needed to make safe decisions for their children, Emma said.

"At the clinic people can get advice, check and correct seats where required, help install new seats and provide advice that enables parents or caregivers to do it correctly in future, and to help them to find solutions," she

said.

Alongside the clinic, there are online groups that provide sound car seat advice, and Automotive Solutions in Blenheim are experts when it comes to fitting anchor points, Emma said.

She encouraged everyone to do their research to ensure their children are safe.

"Having a correctly fitted, age-appropriate car seat that is easy for parents, grandparents and guardians to use is important to keep tamariki safe on our roads and reduce injury in a crash. The best seat isn't often the most expensive one, either. Opt for one that fits the child, the car and the family well," she said.

The clinic is held at Redwoodtown Plunket Rooms every second Tuesday. Bookings are preferred; you can make an appointment by phoning Emma on 027 390 0767.



*Child restraint technician Emma Barnett checks the fit on daughter Olivia's car seat*

## Havelock isite not returning this summer

Destination Marlborough's Havelock isite will be closed indefinitely.

Acting General Manager Tracey Green said Marlborough's visitor numbers have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. "The domestic market remains sluggish and consumer habits have continued to evolve. These factors, combined with reduced product offerings, rising operational costs and

the disestablishment of the Destination Marlborough Trust in June, have underscored the need to reassess our operations," she said.

Now ring-fenced under Council's management, Destination Marlborough has maintained its funding for the 2024/2025 season.

"However, like all businesses, we are not

immune to cost increases. Our Havelock isite has operated as a satellite site since 2016, open only during the summer season. Last summer, due to resource and budget constraints, the centre was only open three days a week," Ms Green said.

"In addition to the ongoing challenges, we also need to relocate the isite due to its current location going on the market."

Ms Green said it hadn't been an easy decision.

"We are exploring options to have some form of visitor centre presence in Havelock in the future, but this will not be in 2024/25. The Blenheim and Picton isites will continue to provide Havelock and Te Hoiere/Pelorus information and operator bookings to visitors to Marlborough."

### Opening Hours

Mon to Fri: 8.30 am - 4.30 pm  
Closed Wed 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm  
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