

Council Views

News from Hutt City Council



Kids have fun learning water safety skills

LEARNING water skills was never so much fun – that was the verdict of students from Lower Hutt's St Michaels School after they attended a regional water safety day at Kilbirnie Pool recently.

They were among 150 students from around the region who were tested for their ability to survive a water-based accident. The programme included a 200-metre swim and other practical activities such as snorkelling, treading water, floating in a lifejacket, rescuing others and keeping a life raft afloat.

"The rafting was fun," said William Horua of St Michaels. "It [the programme] taught me a lot about water safety."

His sentiments were echoed by fellow St Michaels student Molly Weaver, who said "we learnt a lot of useful things, like if ever you were in a sinking boat and what to do".

Hutt City Council pool staff, including Leisure Active aquatic programmer Kay Lindsay, helped other regional instructors on the day. Kay says the children got a lot out of the programme.

"Many kids in Lower Hutt swim in the river, at the beach and in the pools," she says. "But what we found was that many of them didn't have the water skills to keep themselves safe. Being able to swim is not enough on its own.

"We're looking at introducing more water safety skills into our swimming programmes."

St Michaels teacher Eleanor McLeod says the students had a lot of fun during the day, and they were surprised at what they were able to do.

"It gave them a good awareness of water safety skills," Eleanor says. "That knowledge might just save one of their lives one day, or the life of someone they might save."

Practical exercises included students jumping off a low diving board wearing a lifejacket to simulate jumping off a boat. This taught them how to ensure the impact of the lifejacket hitting the water did not hurt their neck.

The 200m swim simulated swimming to shore from a sinking boat. Students had to tread water and float in a lifejacket, use items such as buckets and bottles as flotation devices, pull others into a boat using clothing and towels, and be rescued from water while holding on to clothes and towels.

A group huddle, used to stay warm in the water while awaiting rescue, included netball star Irene van Dyk, who spent several hours in the water helping out each group.

The event was free, courtesy of the New Zealand Recreation Association and Water Safety New Zealand.

Views sought on Petone's District Plan provisions

WHETHER you live in Petone or not you have to admit it's a great place and an important part of Hutt City. That's why the council is reviewing the District Plan as it relates to Petone.

The District Plan tells you what you can do where in Petone and answers questions like:

- How tall can a building be in Jackson Street?
- Is it OK to have a café in Nevis Street?
- Can my neighbour build two houses next to my property in William Street?

The review of the District Plan follows on from the Petone vision exercise, which clearly established that Petone is a unique place of heritage within the city, with a vibrant commercial centre and a popular residential area. The vision also showed that Petone is changing and is under increasing pressure from all kinds of development.

It became clear that the District Plan had to be reviewed to reflect these changes and the expectations of the community.

The council has prepared a discussion document which outlines what it thinks the District Plan issues are as they relate to these changes and the vision outcomes. Examples of the issues raised include:

- Should apartments be provided for close to the railway station and at the western end of The Esplanade?
- Are we protecting heritage well enough in Petone?
- Should it be easier to build more than two houses on a residential property?

- You can get a copy of the discussion document and a freepost feedback form by calling the council at 570 6666 or from <http://www.huttcity.govt.nz/Have-Your-Say/Petone-District-Plan-Discussion/>. Copies are also at Petone Community Library, the War Memorial (Central) Library and at the council administration building, 30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt.

Written feedback needs to be submitted by 24 July.

City's urban backyard incinerators now banned



IF YOU have a backyard incinerator and you live in an urban area, it's time to find a new use for it.

The fire prevention bylaw, which became effective in August last year, prohibits the use of incinerators in Hutt City's urban areas. The bylaw limited the lighting of urban open-air fires as of August, but residents were given until 1 July this year before incinerators were banned.

Environmental investigations officer Alan Pope says the bylaw is intended not only as a fire safety measure, but also to stop the nuisance caused by open fires.

"Backyard incinerators are often used to burn vegetation and other combustible rubbish, which produces a lot of smoke," Alan says. "This can be a nuisance or health risk for neighbours, and it pollutes the air."

Vegetation is defined as all plant material and

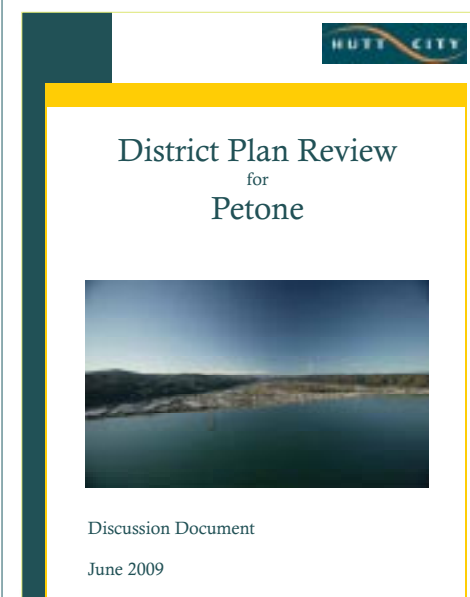
debris, whether green or dead, standing, cut, sawn, fallen, windblown, broken, harvested, stubble or stumps.

The bylaw does not apply to rural areas of the city. It also does not include hangi, umu, barbecues, other outdoor cooking, and braziers, as long as the fire burns cleanly and is adequately supervised.

Alan says residents have plenty of options apart from burning to dispose of garden waste.

"For small amounts of green waste you could start a compost bin, or for tree pruning, hire or buy a mulching machine to create mulch for your garden," he says. "Larger amounts of vegetation and other material can be taken to the city's landfills at Silverstream and Wainuiomata, or to the Seaview Recycle and Transfer Station."

- For further information about the bylaw phone 570 6666 or go to www.huttcity.govt.nz



Council Views

News from Hutt City Council



MĀORI LANGUAGE WEEK

Te Reo i te Hapori

Māori language in the community



He wiki o ngā kōrero tairitenga - a week of storytelling

Join storytellers for a week of captivating stories written by leading Māori writers. Stories are in English, but you'll learn a little te reo along the way! It's part of the Flying Solo exhibition at TheNewDowse.

Monday 27 to Friday 31 July, 10am

Have a go at te reo Māori at all regular library storytimes at Hutt City Libraries.

Have a go at te reo

Join a beginner Māori language class in the War Memorial Library foyer, cnr Woburn Road and Queens Drive.

Tuesday 28 July, noon and 1pm

See kapa haka live

Be entertained by Hutt City Council's kapa haka group in the War Memorial Library foyer.

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 29, 30 & 31 July, 1pm

St Peter and Paul's kapa haka group perform at TheNewDowse

Monday 27 July, noon

■ For more information, see www.huttvalleynz.com or phone 570 6666

Support for new migrants

THE room at Te Awa Kairangi resembled a meeting of the United Nations when about 40 people with birth places as diverse as the Philippines, China and India gathered recently to hear about how to drive safely on New Zealand roads.

The evening meeting was organised by Hutt City Council's Settlement Support, which provides advice and assistance to new migrants.

As the council's road safety coordinator, Anna Blomquist, spoke some people took notes and others asked questions about situations Kiwis take for granted – "What does it mean if someone flashes their lights at you", or "what indicator should I use when I'm leaving a roundabout".

The atmosphere was friendly, and afterwards, many people moved to chat to new-found friends.

"There's a serious side to our workshops and meetings, because it's important that new migrants understand how things work in New Zealand," says settlement support coordinator Vesna West. "But our clients also find that they meet new friends who are going through the same process of adapting to a new lifestyle."

Raje Giridharan and Suchi Vijayakrishnan, both from the Tamil Nadu region of India, say the friendships gained through Settlement Support are important.

"We met after arriving in New Zealand, and now we do a lot of things together," Suchi says. "We go to the Settlement Support meetings to find out about the services



Suchi Vijayakrishnan, left, and Raje Giridharan, who are getting to understand New Zealand better thanks to Settlement Support.

available for new immigrants, but we also get to meet lots of interesting people."

Raje says: "Settlement Support gives me an opportunity to meet various people from different backgrounds and explore new opportunities. It has given me some useful advice about looking for voluntary work in and around Lower Hutt.

"And I certainly understand New Zealand better than when I first arrived here."

Both women are software specialists looking for permanent work, and their husbands are working in the IT field in Wellington.

"One of the biggest challenges migrants face when they move here is not knowing how things work in New Zealand and finding information," Vesna West says.

"The new Settlement Support web page has all sorts of information about different areas of daily life in New Zealand, such as banking, health, education, transport, housing and so on."

There is clearly a need for the service, with nearly 250 people accessing both Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt Settlement Support in the first four months of the year. Of those, 161 were first-time clients.

The largest ethnic group was Chinese, who made up just over 30 percent of the total.

Vesna says the three main reasons for contact were learning English, followed by immigration and employment issues.

"There has also been an increase in clients requesting information on financial related matters."

The next Settlement Support workshop, on 16 July, will look at



"One of the biggest challenges migrants face when they move here is not knowing how things work in New Zealand ..."

– Vesna West

energy savings, and how to keep yourself and your house warm in the winter.

■ For more information about Settlement Support, please visit www.huttcity.govt.nz/ssnz or call Vesna West on 570 6786.

Community Plan balances needs with rein on rate increases

THE 2009-19 Long Term Council Community Plan, which sets out council's budget and work programme for the next 10 years, has been finalised. It's a plan that balances the community's needs with keeping rate increases to a minimum. I want to share with you some of the changes from the draft plan published in February.

We have been able to bring the average rates increase down to 2.9 percent after asking council officers to find savings in the council budget. This is a smaller increase than projected in the draft plan and is lower than most other councils that have finalised their plans.

Sports are a big part of life in Hutt City and we are continuing to invest in sport and leisure facilities to keep it that way. Additions to the plan included funding to upgrade the Walter Nash Stadium (\$4m), Mitchell Street tennis courts (\$200,000) and Fraser Park



FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

hockey turf (\$100,000). Also, the final stage of the Hutt Park redevelopment (\$300,000) and a new synthetic turf at Memorial Park (\$510,000) have been brought forward.

Council continues to promote development in the city and the new projects in the plan reflect this, including Naenae subway improvements (\$500,000), construction of the Wainuiomata Hill summit bridge (\$800,000), further upgrading of the Stokes Valley shopping centre (\$100,000), more money for cycleways (an extra \$200,000 a year), refurbishing the Korohiwa bus barn (\$2m), and new CCTV cameras in the CBD and Wainuiomata (\$150,000).

The environment and beautification of the city remains a priority, with council budgeting \$2.15m during the next 10 years for environmental initiatives and \$300,000 for new street trees, and a further \$185,000 to upgrade the Tutukiwi orchid house next year.

Promotion of the city and the suburbs gets a boost with additional funding for a part-time CBD retail coordinator, and to retain a retail coordinator for the Stokes Valley/Naenae/Taita

shopping centres. The city events budget also gets another \$50,000 a year.

Thank you to everyone who had their say on the plan. We received about 900 submissions and the information they provided was essential in guiding the decision-making process. Copies of the plan will be available at all Hutt City libraries or the main council building and online at www.huttcity.govt.nz from late July.

Well done!

Congratulations to Cr Angus Finlayson, Dr Jeff Tallon and Valerie Burns who were included in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours list. All three have given great service to our community and it's pleasing to see their efforts recognised in this way.

Mayor David Ogden