

Unite against COVID 19



Mayor Craig Little

Heart in our community

What an amazing town we live in. We have always known what a caring and giving community we have but this has been magnified as we have moved through the COVID-19 restrictions and challenges.

Every day I am hearing about the kindness people in our community have shown to others.

Stories that really stand out are the Mahia Ave Dairy giving away free bread and milk and Mobil giving out free sanitiser and other products.

The Community Welfare Food Hub operating out of the Taiwhenua and hubs throughout

the district are incredibly well-oiled machines with hundreds of food parcels being distributed locally - and still going.

This group of selfless volunteers, principally from Wairoa Taiwhenua, Kahungunu Executive, Enabled Wairoa and Te Whare Maire o Tapuwae Whānau Ora Wairoa, Wairoa Financial Literacy Services (food bank), Wairoa Waikaremoana Māori Trust Board and Age Concern plus many more, have just rolled their sleeves up and got the job done.

The Ministry of Health COVID-19 guidelines set the criteria for who received the parcels which are particularly focussed on vulnerable kaumatua and whānau with distributions based on information received.

We are lucky to live in a town where everybody looks after each other and to be supported by some fantastic Māori organisations and iwi.

I would like to also acknowledge the generosity of local farmers who donated lambs which are now being distributed through the Community Welfare Food Hub. Donations by local farmers amounted to more than \$12,000 which shows the kind-heartedness of our rural community.

Thank you again to AFFCO/Talleys for processing and packaging the meat free of charge.

Also, a special thank you to Andrew Powdrell of Turiroa Angus who got right behind the lamb drive, helped with the organisation and grazed sheep at his property until they could go to AFFCO.

Andrew's father Rick said the quality of the lambs that were donated were some of the best he had seen which speaks to the generosity of the Wairoa farmers.

We still have 10 ewes to be processed so it is not too late if anybody would still like to make a donation.

Tautoko Wairoa - Buy Local

It is now more important than ever to shop and buy locally and support our local economy.

Spending money locally has a multiplying effect. The multiplier results from the fact that independent locally owned businesses recirculate a far greater percentage of revenue locally.

Whether you are shopping in the main street, buying farm supplies or looking for services I encourage people to shop and buy locally before looking out of town.

And it is a two-way street. Local businesses need to be savvy and ensure their prices are competitive, their service premium and if they do not have a product in stock that they can access it without delay.

In order to support local businesses post-pandemic, the Council has partnered with Tātau Tātau o Te Wairoa Trust, the Post-Settlement Governance Entity, to deliver the business wellness initiative, Pākihi Ora.

Again, I encourage our community to support local businesses. Shop and buy locally and help keep our very necessary businesses afloat.

Wairoa races

The Wairoa Racing Club is again being targeted for closure and we will be doing everything we can to keep our local race meeting.

Last year the local club dodged closure following submissions from the Wairoa District Council and the local racing club urging the New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing to keep the Wairoa races going.

Wairoa, along with nine other tracks, had been tagged for closure proposing that Wairoa race at Gisborne from 2019/20 onwards.

The Wairoa race meeting won a reprieve and was advised it will keep its two days of racing for at least the next five years.

Strong community and industry support and recognising Wairoa's geographical isolation were key factors in keeping the country race meeting going.

Now in another blow the proposed racing calendar for 2020/21 has been released with Wairoa and Gisborne two of 10 tracks not included on the racing calendar.

This is a ridiculous backtrack and appalling that one year ago we were told we had five more years of racing and have now had that ripped from under us.

We were given a false sense of security and it is disappointing that Wairoa has again been targeted. We cannot afford to lose these two important racing dates.

The draft calendar is aligned with New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Venue Plan and the recommendations of the 2018 Messara Review of the New Zealand Racing Industry.

The draft calendar has been released for a consultation process which concludes on 15 June.

Thoroughbred venues proposed to not host racing in 2020/21 Draft calendar are: Avondale, Te Teko, Waipa (Te Awamutu), Gisborne, Wairoa, Waipukurau, Blenheim (Waterlea), Motukarara, Waikouaiti and Omakau.

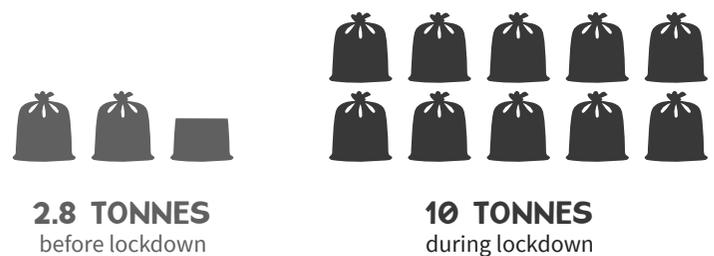
Free rubbish collection

This week marks the end of the Wairoa District Council initiative to pick up rubbish for free during the COVID-19 lock down levels.

The free rubbish collection supported people staying in their bubbles and not having to leave home to take their rubbish to the dump.

The initiative cost Council around \$16,000 and saw landfill visits drop by nearly half.

Before lockdown, the roadside collection was around 2.8 tonnes per week. That increased to around 10 tonnes per week during the free service.



I am really pleased this initiative was so successful and meant people were able to stay at home and safe in their bubble while Council provided a vital service in our community.

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