

## Mayoral Column | 21 December, 2023



What a year it has been. We are all looking forward to 2024 and hopefully leaving the year of cyclones and weather events behind.

In our community, we still have many people hurting, many whānau not in their homes, and many others looking after displaced people. While the Council alone cannot fix all these issues, we are doing our best to support our district's recovery to enable Wairoa to come back better and stronger than before.

Our priority remains progressing flood protection for our town and getting whānau back in their homes.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Hon Simeon Brown, Minister for Local Government and Transport and Hon Mark Mitchell, Minister for Emergency Management and Recovery, visited Wairoa. They all showed genuine care and concern for our community, and I believe having them on the ground and seeing for themselves the issues we face must benefit our community.

I was encouraged by the comments from the Prime Minister and look forward to working in partnership with Central Government to see our community receive the levels of service required to give us parity with the rest of New Zealand.

With the right support, I know we can build back better. It won't be an overnight fix, and some people even suggest it may take a generation, but we will do our best to support everyone who calls Wairoa home.

As I reflect on 2023, opportunities have been built on, partnerships strengthened, and our ability to work

collaboratively has increased. Our 'By Wairoa For Wairoa' approach works for our unique community where our whānau is always at the centre.

We have an incredible amount of work ahead of us, and I would like to thank our Wairoa District Council staff for their input, which, in many cases, has been over and above. I would also like to acknowledge the work of our Civil Defence team, who are mainly Council staff, and emergency responders such as Police, Fire and Ambulance staff, who unfortunately have been required too many times in 2023.

Our contractors have worked in extremely challenging conditions to connect communities with roads and bridges; unfortunately, there is still a long road ahead.

Thank you to all our partners, iwi, local businesses, community groups, agencies, services and volunteers. I would also like to acknowledge all those people who will be working over the holiday break keeping our community ticking, I hope you manage a break soon. You have all contributed towards making Wairoa shine.

It is important, too, to acknowledge the extreme hardships the rest of Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti have been through this year, and we wish these regions all the best for their recovery.

I look forward to 2024 and our community again uniting and working to be the best we possibly can be, both now and in the future.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday break with summer weather that we can all enjoy.

I look forward to a reset and rebuild in 2024.



*Mayor Craig Little*

## MEET THE MAYOR KANOHI KI TE KANOHI

If you would like to have a meeting with the Mayor, call the council offices on 06 838 7309 to arrange a meeting time. He is available to meet with people on Wednesdays.

## CHRISTMAS CLOSURES

### COUNCIL OFFICE

The Queen Street office will have its final day for the year this Friday (December 22), closing at midday, reopening on Monday, January 8, 2024.

### I-SITE

Will only be closed on Christmas Day and open on all other statutory holidays and weekends from 10am - 4pm.

### COMMUNITY CENTRE

Closed from 5pm Friday, December 22 and re-opening on Wednesday, January 3, 2023.

### WAIROA LIBRARY

Closed from Midday Friday, December 22 and re-opening on Monday, January 8, 2024.

### WAIROA MUSEUM

Closed for statutory holidays, open from Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 2pm.

For any Council related services over the holiday break please call the Council's 24/7 number 06 838 7309

### WAIROA RECYCLING CENTRE AND LANDFILL

**OPEN:** Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday  
8am - 2pm

**CLOSED:** December 25, 26 & January 1, 2

### MAHIA RECYCLING CENTRE

Kaiwaitau Rd, Mahia  
Available from December 23 - January 14  
Open Daily 9am - 12pm

**CLOSED** Dec 25, 26 & Jan 1, 2  
Mahia recycling (1st & 3rd Sunday) will move to the Kaiwaitau site for the foreseeable future.

### MAHIA REFUSE

Extra Friday collection for Mahia areas only.  
(Does not stop at Nuhaka, and is in addition to the Monday Collection).  
December 15 - January 19

### KERBSIDE COLLECTIONS

Mahia Refuse collection moves from Monday, December 25 to Sunday, December 24

Mahia Refuse collection moves from Monday, January 1 to Sunday, December 31

Town refuse collection moves from Tuesday, December 26 to Wednesday, December 27

Town refuse collection moves from Tuesday, January 2 to Wednesday, January 3

All other services remain unchanged

