

Maungaraki Views

OUR NEWS & VIEWS | MAUNGARAKI.CO.NZ | DEC & JAN 2023

Ice Cream party starts off Summer



The great Maungaraki 'Start of Summer ice-cream party is a popular community event to welcome in, you guessed it, Summer. Created by Paul Matthews

and a few friends it has grown to the extent it is a regular mainstay on the Maungaraki events calendar that everyone looks forward to.

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This year 351 people licked their way through 118 litres of delicious melt-in-your-mouth ice cream over 1.5 hours. That's a lot of ice cream!

Thank you to everyone who helped organise and bring this scoop of magic to Maungaraki.

Enjoy your Summer break everyone!



Maungaraki locals queue up for their favourite scoop of ice cream



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Maungaraki's new community precinct is taking shape

We're super excited to report that, despite a few setbacks due to costs and timing etc the new Maungaraki Precinct projects are progressing well, and we're on track to realising this vision for our suburb.

Here's an update on some of the key projects underway.

Maungaraki School & Community Library

As many will have seen, the new school and community library is taking shape! The kids at the school have loved watching it progress over the last few months:

The library is expected to be complete and in use from early February next year – shortly after Term 1 starts.

While we're not quite ready to let the cat out of the bag yet, Maungaraki School and Hutt City Council's community libraries team are currently in active discussions around how to maximise the community's access to the library after hours.

It's looking like there'll be some significant and quite awesome announcements around this early next year – stay tuned!

New entrance & car parking project

Alongside the library, Maungaraki School, the Education Ministry, Hutt City Council and Maungaraki Community Association have been working hard on making the new entrance and car parking project a reality for the community precinct and school.

This is a major change to how this whole area will be accessed, primarily to provide a **far safer environment** for both kids and other users of the hall and precinct while also making it far more convenient, especially given the growth in numbers on the hill over the last decade or so.

It will mean that children traveling to school from all directions can do so safely, always kept separate from cars. It will also mean far better access to the area for everyone.

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Maungaraki School is central to the new community precinct

This is a major change that many in the community have had for many, many years. The design will be like this (subject to changes in the consent process): As with the library, this was held up by significant cost increases due to the current construction environment.

It's exciting to report that the Council, Ministry, School, and community via the MCA all came to the party to cover the shortfall and help make this a reality.

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A real collaborative team effort to make it a reality for our community. You will see this also includes a managed drop-off zone to enable safe drop-off for younger children at the school.

This is intended to supplement other drop-off areas (eg at the shops, on Rowan Street, Dowse Drive and elsewhere) to help ease the significant congestion in the area and improve safety for children.

Installation of significant drainage in the field – starting January

Many longer-term Maungaraki residents will know there have been some serious drainage issues on the main field (by the school and within the community precinct) for many years.

In short, during winter, the field becomes an unusable bog, whereas in summer, the uneven ground, because of the winter bog, hardens solid, causing broken ankles and other injuries most years.

A local historian uncovered correspondence between local MPs and Council about the drainage issues dating back more than 40 years, so it really is exciting that the drainage is finally being resolved.

This includes the installation of drainage pipes, flattening and re-seeding the surface, plus an ongoing enhanced maintenance regime to keep it as good as possible. It won't be as flashy as a dedicated sports surface, but it will be a big improvement from the status quo. This installation project will start on **16 January 2023**.



Maungaraki's new community library is currently under construction and will become a focal point of learning and activity.

Unfortunately, it does mean the field will be out of action for a few weeks, but that short-term pain will bring significant long-term gain.

A massive thanks to the Council, who are funding the bulk of this work from a successful long-term plan bid from MCA and the school, topped up with smaller contributions from the school and MCA.

The bike track is next!

Once the drainage project is complete, it's time for the long-awaited bike track!

We'll see the installation of the bike tracks occur in the first part of next year once the drainage project is complete. The design is currently being updated and will look a little different, but here's an earlier design to whet your appetite:

The support for the Bike Track has been amazing, with significant contributions from the Council's Community Asset Fund, Bikes in Schools programme, Maungaraki School's Home and School group, MCA and more. Again, a broad community effort.

Playgrounds, Flying Fox and more!

Those with kids in the area will know that as part of the Precinct and over the last year or so, we've seen the installation of a new kids' playground at the rear of the school, a flying fox, and recently a new adventure playground for bigger kids. Awesome!

In summary

It's so exciting to see the vision for the community precinct come

together. It's taken longer than hoped, and we'll blame the usual suspects for that – Covid and huge construction cost increases. But it's still happening, and we're approaching the final steps!

Thanks to the Hutt City Council, Ministry of Education, Maungaraki Community Association, Maungaraki School and our wider community. These sorts of generational changes only happen because people are prepared to get around a table and find a way to make it happen, and it really has been a huge effort from everyone.

By Paul Matthews.

Paul is deputy president of the Maungaraki Community Association (MCA), Chairperson of Maungaraki School Board of Trustees.

Skyrocketing costs lift proposed rates rise for Hutt City to 8.9%

Hutt City residential ratepayers are facing a rates increase of 8.9%, as the council grapples with rising inflation and the rapidly increasing cost of projects. Some commercial ratepayers will be forking out an extra 15%.

Under the 8.9% scenario, rates on a residential property valued at \$815,000 would increase by \$231 per annum or \$4.44 per week.

Tell us what do you think. Is it time to pull the plug on some projects? Have your say on our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/Maungaraki>

Meri Kirihimete

As we come to the end of 2022, I would like to wish you a safe and happy festive season.

My offices will be closed from **21 December**, and will reopen on **9 January 2023**. It is a privilege to serve Hutt South as your local MP.



Ginny Andersen MP for Hutt South

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