



Johnson Li scores again

By Cheryl Voss

Johnson Li has done it again, securing consecutive first-place victories at the Zespri AIMS Games cross country.

The 12-year-old Newlands Intermediate School rocket has also equalled the Year 8 boys' AIMS record set in 2022 by Kiwi running sensation Sam Ruthe.

Continued on page 2.

A very happy Johnson Li about to finish first in the cross country.
Photo: Supplied.



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Second Gold Secured

Continued from page 1.

Johnson's time of 10 minutes and 00.67 seconds was 15 seconds faster than Havelock North's Lachie Scott, who was just ahead of Glen Eden's Jacob Heathorn, another 10 seconds back.

On the finish line of the 3km course, Johnson turned to hug second place winner Lachie Scott.

Out of the chute, Johnson's friends swamped him.

"You're a legend bro," said one. Another shouted: "He cooked!"

Johnson said he felt fine after the race.

"I didn't feel the best at the start, but when I got to the start of the steep hill, I started to make a move and started boosting it."

This was his second AIMS gold medal, after winning the Year 7 boys' race last year. Sam Ruthe was at the event and ran as a support person for an adapted sports runner. Sam says so many great memories would have been made at Waipuna Park this week.

"I feel like it's just such a cool event."

This is the same Sam Ruthe who became the fastest New Zealander to run a mile earlier this year. And the same Sam Ruthe who won Zespri AIMS Games cross country gold as recently as 2022.

When told Johnson had equalled his Year 8 boys' record from 2022, Sam was delighted: "That's so cool."

"Records are made to be broken and I was really, really impressed with his run, especially in these windy conditions," Sam said. "It's so nostalgic. I have so many great memories here and it's great to come back and reminisce."

It was an extraordinary day on the Waipuna Park course in Tauranga's Welcome Bay, with five of the six best times equalled or



Johnson Li on his way to a record equalling cross country victory. Photo: Supplied.

bettered.

More athletes lined up for the AIMS Games cross country this year than ever before – 768 runners across four age-groups and adapted sports athletes. Some wore sprigs or shoes, others ran in bare feet.

The Zespri AIMS Games is New Zealand's biggest school sporting tournament, hosted

annually in Tauranga. It ran from September 5 to 11.

This year saw a record 14,506 entries from 467 schools, including 11 international schools from Australia, the Cook Islands and Fiji.

The intermediate-aged athletes competed across 27 sporting codes.

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Local filmmaker breaks new ground

By Glenise Dreaver

Churton Park film maker April Phillips has spent several years during and since Covid bringing a very special project to life.

She is co-writer and co-director with Isaac Lee on 1978, a film based on a key year in the development of New Zealand as we know it.

"It was the year of the Bastion Point protests about the wartime seizure of Māori land, never returned as promised, and also a year where rural communities were being devastated by the closure of their schools," April says.

The film, originally Lee's brainchild, tracks through the theme of community resistance common to both.

It proved a massive venture, with a cast of around 500, filmed on 30 locations in the Wairarapa, Wellington and Horowhenua.

Award-winning cinematographer Matt Sharp and producer Jess Denise also worked on the project.

They are highly experienced northern suburbs locals who run their own content creation business, says April, adding that she and Matt have worked on film projects for the last 15 years and 1978 is their biggest project to date.

"When you set a film in a specific period in time you have to recreate that world with every detail, from heritage buildings and classic cars to bespoke retro costumes for a cast of 500.

"Even the music, composed by Ricky Simmonds of Evoke Audio in Auckland, reflects the two parallel stories with a groovy 70's soundtrack, counterpointed with traditional Māori instruments and Kiwi anthems," April says.

1978 balances comedy throughout the mischievous children's mission to save their school, with the powerful and moving storyline of the adults at Bastion Point fighting to save their land.

The filming of the Bastion Point protest meant being scrupulous that the Māori kaupapa was kept front and centre, April says.



1978 Directors April Phillips and Isaac Lee. Photo: Chris Holloman Photography.

"1978 is at its core a Kiwi film about helping people and understanding people.

"The themes in our film are about community and belonging and fighting for what matters to us, so we want to honour those themes by partnering with a local charity or not-for-profit group in every screening and gifting them 30% of the ticket price."

The recent Wellington screening was part of the nationwide August- to October line up

of local premieres, and benefitted the Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club, some of whose members appear in the film.

1978 had a world premiere at the 10th China New Zealand Film Festival and Carnival in Beijing, China, a red carpet event organised by festival committee chief executive Rachel Qi who also lives in Churton Park.

The event was attended by April and one of the stars, Mark Hadlow.

inbrief news

Quiz night

The Johnsonville Lions Club is running a quiz night on Sunday 18 October.

The Lions are holding the evening to raise funds for a youth diabetes camp.

The quiz night will take place at The 1841 in Johnsonville, starting at 7pm.

For more information or to enter contact Murray Gray, email murraygray@extra.co.nz.

Vege growing

A session on growing vegetables from seeds will be held from 10am to 11am on Sunday 20 September at Ngā Hau E Whā o Paparāngi in Newlands.

The session will cover the dos, don'ts, handy hints, pitfalls and techniques for healthy seedlings.

This is a free event, although a koha would be welcome, and there is parking on site.

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Malaysian food fair returns

By Frank Neill

The Malaysian ‘Street Food’ Fair returns to Johnsonville on Saturday 19 September. The fair will be held at the Johnsonville Community Centre hall, 3 Frankmore Avenue, and runs from 11:30am to 1:30pm. A vibrant community event, it will celebrate Malaysia Day, which is held annually on 16 September. The fair is organised by the New Zealand Malaysian Society. “Whether you’re craving a taste of home or curious to explore something new, this is your chance to experience a variety of authentic, home-cooked Malaysian dishes,” the organisers say. “Everyone is welcome to come, eat, connect and celebrate the diverse flavours and warmth of our culture. “Your presence goes beyond enjoying great food. “By attending, you’re supporting local Malaysian cooks and small food businesses; fundraising efforts for future community events; and inclusive gatherings like picnics, lucky draws and other public celebrations that bring people together.” All the food is Halal and will be served takeaway style. No seating will be available inside the hall to allow for movement of people visiting the stalls.



TNT! Whakakōkiri. Photo: Supplied.

Celebrate Te Wiki o te Reo Māori with libraries

Free song-writing workshops with acclaimed musical duo Aro will be held at Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library on Friday 18 September from 3:30pm to 4.30pm and 4:30pm to 5:30pm. Write a waiata reo Māori in this free workshop with award-winning Te Tiriti-based duo Aro, made up of Charles Looker (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Te Ata, Ngāti Mutunga) and Emily Looker. Through games, waiata, storytelling and creative exercises inspired by mātauranga Māori and our connection to te taiao, participants will explore the art of bilingual songwriting in a fun and welcoming environment. Together participants will create an original waiata inspired by the season, the natural world and the stories we share. Whether you're an experienced songwriter, learning te reo Māori, or simply curious to create, this workshop offers a playful and meaningful space to connect with music, language, and each other. Places are limited and registration is required. To register visit [\[libraries.trumba.com/\]\(https://libraries.trumba.com/\). Special interactive waiata performance by Aro will be presented on Saturday 19 September from 1pm to 2pm at Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library. This award-winning Te Tiriti-based duo create bilingual music that brings whānau together through waiata, storytelling and connection. Made up of Charles Looker \(Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Te Ata, Ngāti Mutunga\) and Emily Looker, Aro blend Emily's honey-voiced jazz with Charles' full-throated, haka-inspired rhythms to create a sound that is both distinctive and deeply rooted in Aotearoa. This interactive performance invites tamariki and their whānau to sing, move and join in through original waiata, playful participation, and stories inspired by te reo Māori, te taiao, and everyday life. Whether you're hearing Aro for the first time or already know the songs, everyone is welcome to take part. Aro remind us of our sacredness with expressions of their unique cultural identity. They are known for their rich harmonies, heartfelt storytelling and bilingual waiata inspired by whānau, whenua and te ao Māori. Since forming in 2017, they have toured extensively across Aotearoa, released five studio projects, numerous singles in between, and won Best Pop Album at the Waiata Māori Music Awards for He Rākau He Ngārara \(2024\).](https://wellingtonci-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Their latest album Tāwauwau (2026) explores fantasy, faith, beauty and longing, and has been celebrated as a finalist for the APRA Maioha award. This event will be held in Ngā Paiaka Bleachers, Ground Floor and entry is free. Capital City Big Band: TNT! will perform at Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library on Sunday 20 September from 11am to noon. It will be a free, whānau-friendly Wellington Jazz Festival event featuring TNT!, a bold new bilingual musical collaboration that brings together the explosive power of big band jazz and the rich storytelling of te ao Māori. This special project sees Wellington's Capital City Big Band joining powerhouse vocalist Lisa Tomlins with her rōpū kaiwaiata delivering bold sounds, beautiful lyricism and big band energy. Presented in English and te reo Māori, TNT! features traditional waiata Māori showband favourites alongside Great American Songbook jazz standards translated into te reo Māori and arranged for big band. Expect bespoke arrangements, newly commissioned works and music that moves between jazz, te reo Māori, and kaupapa Māori, all delivered with warmth, creativity and heart. Consider this a warm-up to the 2026 Wellington Jazz Festival before it takes over the city in October. Nau mai rā tātou katoa. Everybody is welcome.

Waitohi exhibition by local rangatahi

A new exhibition, Ōku Wāhi – My Places, is currently running at Waitohi Hub in the upper ground link space. Ōku Wāhi features personal stories from local rangatahi whaiora (young people seeking wellness) sharing their journeys with early psychosis and what it means to live well alongside these experiences. Told through film, photography, illustration and interactive displays, this collection invites conversation and reflection on how our spaces and places nurture wellbeing, identity, relationships, whenua, wairua and whānau. The collection was collaboratively devel-

oped with rangatahi whaiora as part of the Te Hekenga Whaiora research project. This is a joint project between Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington and Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka | Otago University, which aims to support young people in their journeys experiencing psychosis in Pōneke Wellington. The exhibition is open from 10am to 7pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday. Ōku Wāhi – My Places will close on 18 October. Te Hekenga Whaiora’s website is at <https://movingwithpsychosis.org/>.

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Feedback on track network wanted

Wellington City Council is seeking feedback about the city's track network.

The council is reviewing the Open Space Access Plan, which guides how Wellington's track network is planned and managed across the city.

The review will help set the direction for the track network over the next 10 years, including how the Council maintains and improves existing tracks, strengthens connections, improves accessibility and inclusion, responds to environmental pressures, manages different uses, and makes decisions about future priorities.

Wellington's current Open Space Access Plan was adopted in 2016. Since then, the city, the track network and the ways people use it have continued to change. The review is an opportunity to refresh the plan so it better responds to current strategic priorities and challenges and provides clear, practical direction for the next 10 years. Wellington's current Open Space Access Plan was adopted in 2016. Since then the city, the track network and the ways people use it have continued to change. The review is an opportunity to refresh the plan so it better responds to current strategic priorities and challenges and provides clear, practical direction for the next 10 years.

"This is early engagement, before a draft plan or new policy settings have been developed," the Council says.

"What we hear will help build the evidence base and inform development of the draft plan.

"We want to better understand:

- what people value about Wellington's track network, what is working well, and what should be continued or strengthened;
- where there are barriers, gaps, safety issues or tensions, and how accessibility, inclusion and



Khandallah's skyline track. Photo: Supplied.

information could be improved;

- opportunities to improve connections, recreation experiences, and how the network responds to environmental and climate pressures;

- how te ao Māori, mana whenua values, local histories and cultural identity can be better reflected; and

- what Council should prioritise over the next 10 years, what should guide future decisions, and how Council can work more effectively with communities.

"Feedback from this early engagement will be considered alongside mana whenua input, technical evidence, operational knowledge, environmental information, existing Council work and policy analysis.

"Together, this information will help shape the draft Open Space Access Plan.

"There will be another opportunity to have your say when the draft plan is ready for formal consultation," the Council says.

For more information or to provide feedback visit www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/open-space-access-plan-review.

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Two birds of year supported

By Frank Neill

Zealandia and Wellington City Council are both backing Toutouwai, also known as the North Island robin, to become 2026 Bird of the Year.

However Greater Wellington Regional Council is supporting pohowera (the banded dotterel) in this year's Bird of the Year competition.

People can vote for Bird of the Year at www.birdoftheyear.org.nz and voting closes on 20 September.

Toutouwai were extinct in the lower North Island until 76 birds were relocated from Kāpiti Island to Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne Te Māra a Tāne in 2001 and 2002.

The population established successfully within the predator-proof ecosanctuary and became the first species to be translocated out of Zealandia when 10 birds were moved to establish a population on Matiu/Somes Island in 2007.

Councillor Rebecca Matthews, who is also a Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne Board Member, says it's great to see Wellington get behind an 'underbird'.

"If you've spent time in Zealandia, you'll know the curious toutouwai are often the bird that comes the closest, sometimes hopping right up to your feet.

"For me, they represent something really special about Wellington: that connection with nature that can surprise and delight you when you least expect it. I'd love to see them

get the recognition they deserve."

Unlike kākā, kererū, and tūī, toutouwai have struggled to establish populations beyond Zealandia's fence because of predation.

Toutouwai mainly feed on invertebrates, using techniques like foot trembling, wing and tail flicking to flush out hidden prey.

They also store surplus food for later and demonstrate exceptional spatial memory, allowing them to locate their own food cache, and sometimes raid those hidden by other toutouwai.

Pohowera are one of the Wellington region's most charismatic, hard working and endangered coastal birds.

Recent surveys have highlighted the importance of the Wellington region for the species, with local rivers, coastlines and estuaries supporting significant populations of them.

While small in size, the banded dotterel is famous for its clever survival tactics.

During nesting season adults will often perform dramatic "broken wing" displays, pretending to be injured to lure people, dogs and predators away from vulnerable nests and chicks.

Greater Wellington Councillor and celebrated wildlife photographer Simon Woolf says the banded dotterel deserves its moment in the spotlight.

"The banded dotterel is a bird with real character," he says.

"They're tough, adaptable and incredibly devoted parents.



A pohowera (banded dotterel). Photo: Supplied.

"Watching one put on its famous distraction display to protect its chicks is something you never forget.

"As a photographer, I've spent countless hours observing birds around the region, and the banded dotterel is one of the most rewarding species to watch.

"Despite the challenges they face from predators and disturbance, they continue to hold on in some of the busiest places in our region," Cr Woolf says.

Roger Uys, a Senior Environmental Scientist at Greater Wellington says despite their geographic spread, the enigmatic banded dotterel is a threatened species with their regional population declining 21% between 2017 and 2023.

"Critically, we only have a breeding population of around 570 adult birds, so we must do everything we can to protect this fantastic little bird."

Chair of Greater Wellington's Environment and Climate Committee Cr Quentin Duthie says backing the banded dotterel is about celebrating a species that reflects the region's unique environment and the importance of ongoing conservation work.

"The banded dotterel is an important part of Wellington's coastal and river ecosystems," Cr Duthie says.

"From the braided rivers of the Wairarapa to the beaches of Kāpiti and Wellington's south coast, these birds are a familiar sight for people who spend time in nature.

"Greater Wellington works alongside mana whenua, community groups, landowners and conservation partners to protect habitats and support biodiversity across the region.

"Supporting the banded dotterel in Bird of the Year is a fun way to highlight that work and encourage people to learn more about the wildlife on their doorstep," Cr Duthie says.



A toutouwai (North Island robin) inspecting a mushroom. Photo: Lucy Broad.

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different from leaving a window open 24/7. Others are only single glazed or just plastic. By upgrading to double glazing you can retain up to 70% more of your heat. A lot of skylights we come across is simply a piece of glass glued to the roof structure of your home – This is by far inadequate for many reasons including thermal properties and condensation issues, as the moisture has no where to go but get absorbed by the structure of your home. We will assess the entire skylight including the flashings (roof flashings

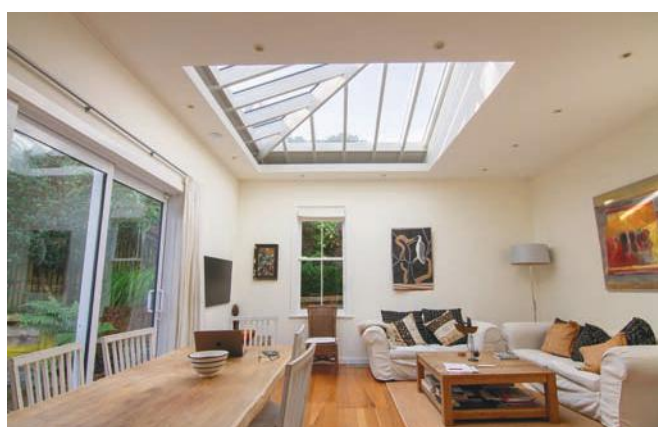
are what connects the skylight to your roof and keeps all watertight). This will cover if you have adequate condensation channels, drainage, seals, condition of flashings, thermal properties and of course longevity of the skylight/s and the surrounding areas.

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Greater Wellington endorses Harbour Quays

Greater Wellington’s Public Transport Committee endorsed a Harbour Quays business case at its meeting on 10 September. The decision was not unanimous, however, with four of the 14 Councillors – Cr Simon Woolf, Cr Nigel Elder, Cr Claire Johnstone and Cr Penny Gaylor voting against the proposal.

Greater Wellington’s Public Transport Committee Chair Ros Connelly says the decision reflects years of planning and engagement on a joint project between Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington to improve the resilience and efficiency of Wellington’s public transport network.

“Harbour Quays is about making sure our public transport system can keep pace with the needs of a growing city,” Cr Connelly says.

“The Golden Mile is already operating at capacity during peak periods, and this project provides an important second corridor that will help buses move more efficiently through the city centre.

“The business case shows Harbour Quays can improve travel times, increase network resilience and create capacity for more services as demand grows.

“It also gives us greater flexibility to respond when there are disruptions elsewhere in the network.

“We know people took the time to have their say during consultation, and officers have listened carefully to that feedback to refine the business case.

“Councillors also agreed to further recommendations to consider options to improve the experience for passengers transferring between Golden Mile and Harbour Quays services and to support Wellington City Council to address concerns about connectivity and safety,” Cr Connelly says.

The Harbour Quays corridor would operate along Customhouse Quay, Jervois Quay, Cable Street and Wakefield Street, with part-time peak-hour bus lanes designed to improve the movement of buses through one of the busiest transport corridors in the city.

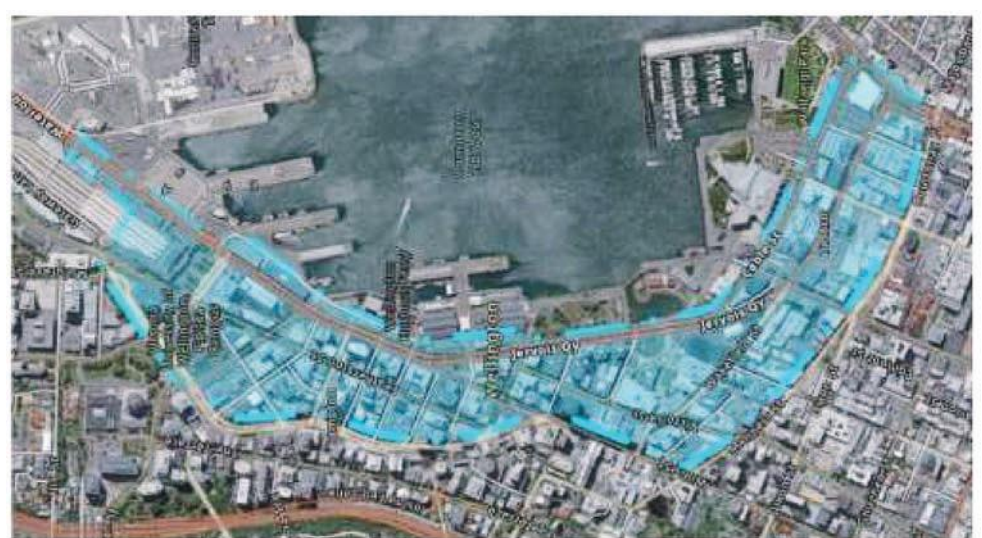
Early next year, Greater Wellington will confirm the mix of routes that will initially go into service on the Harbour Quays when the necessary infrastructure is completed.

“If we want more people using public transport, we need a network that is reliable, resilient, and able to grow. Harbour Quays helps achieve that,” the Deputy Chair of Greater Wellington’s Public Transport Committee Tom James says.

“This project will mean quicker bus trips for all buses through the city, plus it will finally give people the choice to take public transport to key destinations like Te Papa, Tākina, and our unbeatable-on-a-good-day waterfront.

“Thank you to everyone who engaged. Over 900 submissions were received during consultation, with a majority of respondents supporting the proposal.

“Public transport is incredibly important to Wellingtonians and we will keep working to



The geographic scope of the Harbour Quays project. Image: Wellington City Council.

improve it.”

The business case recommends increasing total project funding from \$10 million to \$11 million, with Greater Wellington contributing \$5.84 million and Wellington City Council contributing \$5.19 million.

Greater Wellington will fully fund six new bus shelters and the associated infrastructure, including real time information boards, as part of the project.

Wellington City Council will consider the Harbour Quays business case and associated

traffic resolutions today, 17 September.

If approved by both councils, procurement is expected to begin ahead of construction starting in March or April 2027, with buses potentially operating on the corridor by late 2027.

The order paper and business case can be found at <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Documents/2026/09/Public-Transport-Committee-10-September-2026-Order-Paper.pdf>.

Ngaio at forefront of Repair Festival



The Ngaio Repair Café in action. Photo: Supplied.

By John McInnes

The New Zealand Repair Festival, underway throughout the country until the 27th of this month, is run by Repair Network Aotearoa and Repair Café Aotearoa.

It celebrates the right of all individuals to be able to repair household items.

It advocates fixing, mending, and extending the lifespan of everyday belongings to reduce waste and support a circular economy.

It wants to cut down the quantity of stuff taken to landfills. And it’s behind the Consumer Guarantees (Right to Repair) Amendment Bill presently stalled in Parliament.

Ngaio Repair Café is the local front for New Zealand Repair Festival.

It’s run in and by Ngaio Union Church,

on the corner of Kenya Street and Crofton Road.

Ngaio Repair Cafe opens this Saturday, 18 September, from 10 am to 1pm.

It will be easy to find on Saturday morning because a large, coloured, electronic sign on the church corner advertises it.

Volunteers repair all manner of things people bring from their homes – torn clothes to be sewn, scissors and tools to be sharpened, kitchen appliances like toasters to be fixed, broken jewellery to be reglued.

Those who bring items may have to wait to be attended but morning tea is offered to occupy the waiting time.

True to its name it is a Repair Café – part of Repair Café International.

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Mayor accepts Moa Point review findings

Wellington Mayor Andrew Little says the Crown Review Team report into the failure of the Moa Point wastewater treatment plant in February is thorough, and has made a number of recommendations that aim to prevent a similar disaster happening again.

"What happened at Moa Point is unacceptable," Mayor Little says.

"The bottom line is Wellingtonians deserve transparency, and to have assurance about the response and recovery.

"That is why I asked the central government to commission a suitably independent report.

"On behalf of Wellington City Council, I acknowledge and accept the report's findings.

"Council will work with Tiaki Wai to respond to the report's recommen-

dations.

"This includes the Council, to the extent possible under the new regulatory framework, maintaining an active oversight and stewardship role in wastewater services, having governance and asset management capability, and recognising our ongoing accountability to the community.

"We are also committed to continuing to support Tiaki Wai as they complete the previously-announced pathway to restoring the Moa Point plant," Mayor Little says.

Wellington City Council's acting Chief Executive, Anna Calver, says the report highlights shortcomings in the way the Council governed and monitored Wellington Water in its role as owner of Moa Point.

"The report makes clear that there were various areas the Council

should have done better," Anna says.

"That included not being consistent in our governance responsibilities, resulting in gaps in asset information to guide investment decisions and manage risk.

"We accept this and are strengthening how we monitor, challenge, and oversee water services performance.

"We're ensuring we have the right internal expertise, reporting, and assurance processes in place, so we identify and address risks before they become larger problems.

"We want what all Wellingtonians want – reliable water services.

"We are committed to working with Tiaki Wai to be more effective stewards of our city's assets," Anna says.

The full report is on the MCERT website.



A view of the Moa Point wastewater treatment plant.
Photo: Wellington City Council.



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These holidays, kids can enjoy special activities including crafts, lively puppet shows,

and Kids Night Walks, where tamariki can discover the wildlife that emerges after dark. Members also receive discounts on tours.

The sanctuary is home to wildlife such as kākā, tuatara and tieke, with something new to discover on every visit. After exploring, relax at Rātā Café with treats, lunches and great coffee.

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Experience Inverlochy Art School

Despite an arts sector under continued pressure, Wellington's Inverlochy Art School is thriving.

The directors believe this reflects its strong programme, welcoming community, and a wider shift in Wellingtonians' values. "People are realising what's important in life and choosing to prioritise their wellbeing through the arts. At Inverlochy, we offer the quality and range of courses you might expect from a formal academy, but without the pressure. People of all ages and backgrounds come to explore art simply for the joy of making."

This happens within historic Inverlochy House, which the school has been kaitiaki of since 1987. Keeping courses affordable means profits are minimal, and the school relies on volunteers and donors to help maintain the heritage building. You don't need to be a student to experience Inverlochy House. The gallery is open weekdays from 10am–2pm, with heritage tours also available. The next, exploring the school's haunted history, takes place on 25 October, ahead of Halloween.



Busy lives need a break: discover the benefits of this yoga and meditation retreat

In a world where busy schedules, constant notifications and digital distractions have become part of everyday life, finding time to pause can feel like a luxury. This Labour Weekend, a four-day Yoga and Meditation Retreat at Tauhara Retreat Centre in Taupō offers an opportunity to step away from the rush and reconnect with yourself.

Running from Friday 23 October to Monday 26 October 2026, the retreat is open to everyone who would like to explore and benefit from an authentic yoga practice—whether experienced or new to yoga.

The retreat follows Yoga in Daily Life, a holistic system developed by Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda (Vishwaguruji), an authentic Yoga Master from a long lineage of Indian Masters. Rooted in the traditional teachings of classical Yoga while adapted to the needs of modern life, the system explores the wellbeing of the body, mind, consciousness and soul.

More than simply a series of physical exercises, yoga can become a way of approaching everyday life with greater awareness and balance. With regular practice, it can enrich, inform and illuminate many aspects of daily living.

Time to Slow Down

The retreat has been carefully designed to create a balance between activity and

rest, structured programmes and free time, challenge and nourishment.

Participants will be encouraged to take a break from phones, social media and other digital distractions, creating space to slow down and appreciate the world around them. The peaceful Taupō setting provides an ideal backdrop for breathing fresh country air, enjoying moments of silence and connecting with like-minded people.

For many, the real value of a retreat lies not only in what happens during the weekend, but in what can be taken home afterwards. Alongside time for relaxation and reflection, participants will gain practical tools and experiences that can support greater wellbeing in the weeks and months ahead.

By the time the long weekend comes to an end, the aim is for guests to feel rested, cared for and recharged, with a renewed sense of balance and some valuable practices to incorporate into everyday life.

With a friendly and professional team on hand throughout the retreat, Labour Weekend provides the perfect opportunity to press pause, breathe deeply and make some space for yourself.

Sometimes, the best way to move forward is simply to stop for a while.

Labour Weekend, 23–26 October 2026, Tauhara Retreat Centre, Taupō

Solace from the Earth

The people at The Rock Fella in Motueka have been working with stone for 20 years and their love of rocks is obvious from the moment you step into their workshop.

Owner David Dunning says the goal is to empower people. “We want people to look at the world and see that there is a

treasure for everyone - it is a gift from the earth. Knowledge and information is power and by sharing this we hope to embolden people”.

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If you can imagine it in stone, together they can make it happen.

Kiwis helping other Kiwis beat prostate cancer

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand - Te Kāhui Mate Pukupuku Repe Tātea o Aotearoa Manatōpū, (PCFNZ) provides vital support, education and information to individuals, their families and whānau across Aotearoa New Zealand affected by prostate cancer.

PCFNZ provides a comprehensive portfolio of free in-person and remote support services to help those living with

prostate cancer, at any stage of diagnosis, treatment and survivorship.

PCFNZ is also dedicated to reducing the impact of prostate cancer through raising awareness, funding NZ-based research and advocating for improved standards of care and investing in research that raises the understanding of prostate cancer and its effects on men, their families and our communities.

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Updated testing requirements for patients taking clozapine

Blood monitoring requirements for patients taking the psychiatric medicine clozapine will change from March 2027, helping reduce disruptions for patients while maintaining important safeguards.

Under the new system, monthly blood monitoring will no longer be mandatory for some stable patients who have been on continuous treatment for at least two years.

Medsafe Group Manager, Chris James says the change follows consultation with healthcare professionals, patients and their families, and will help make life easier for people taking these medicines.

“These changes will reduce the amount of time patients have to spend getting blood tests while ensuring any potential risks are carefully managed. Patients will continue being closely monitored by their health professionals, including for other side effects such as constipation and heart problems.”

The criteria for interrupting clozapine treatment has also been updated to reduce the number of unnecessary treatment interruptions.

“This change is consistent with international

requirements and is in response to feedback that patients were having to inappropriately stop a very effective and useful treatment because the thresholds were too conservative,” Chris James says.

“There will continue to be important safeguards to protect patient safety. Patients will need to meet strict eligibility criteria before they stop going for regular blood tests, and clinicians will make decisions with patients about their individual monitoring requirements,” Chris James says.

Patients have the option to receive their ongoing clozapine treatment from a general practitioner, nurse practitioner or pharmacist prescriber if this is within the healthcare professional's scope of practice. Source: MoH



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Pest control count climbs

A 56% increase in the number of pest animals culled by Greater Wellington Regional Council in the 2025/26 financial year is being attributed to new thermal hunting technology, and extra funding for pest control in the region's 2024-34 Long-Term Plan.

Staff culled 11,578 pest animals last year, the highest number controlled by the regional council in the last five years. 40% were rabbits, 20% wild goats, 10% possums and 9% hares.

Greater Wellington Director of Operations Jack Mace says the new hunting tools have increased cull numbers across the council projects.

"Pest control is a core function of Greater Wellington, and our techniques continue to improve. We're now using advanced technology like thermal drones, scopes, and viewers which means better night shoots," Jack says.

"As well as protecting regenerating forest and nesting birds, culling pests helps vegetation recover without constant browsing."

Greater Wellington Environment and Climate Committee Chair Quentin Duthie says the increase is consistent with community action to rid the region of pests.

"Our communities are leading the charge against invasive species."

"By setting thousands of traps in gardens, farms and regional parks the public has shown us



Pests like this pig, photographed by a trail cam, are being culled in big numbers. Photo: Supplied.

the importance of protecting our precious ecosystems and taonga species," Cr Duthie says.

"Last year, two community groups in Belmont Regional Park – Pareraho Forest Trust and Puke Ariki Pest Free – destroyed 1,875 predators.

"Greater Wellington's tally complements the effort of dozens of community groups, as well as Predator Free Wellington, Capital Kiwi, and the Wairarapa Pūkaha to

Kawakawa Alliance.

"The public has voted with their traps and bait stations for better pest control from council, and we have responded."

Greater Wellington also undertakes pest control for other councils and projects like WOWCAZUP, which aims to eradicate feral ungulates (pigs, deer and goats) from the Wainuiomata/Ōrongorongo water collection area.

The regional council has a Mem-



Pests like this deer, photographed by a trail cam, are being culled in big numbers. Photo: Supplied.

orandum of Understanding with the Department of Conservation, which allows Greater Wellington to control pests in buffer zones outside Key Native Ecosystem sites, helping to prevent animals from entering targeted areas.

"Effective pest control doesn't happen in isolation – we work with city and district councils, and DOC to have an impact on pest animal populations," Cr Duthie says.

"We also work with private landowners who live close to our regional parks to control animals before they make their way in."

"Our goal is a region where native plants and animals can thrive. Controlling pests protects wildlife and strengthens the health of our forests and waterways. It supports mana whenua, communities and businesses that rely on and identify with the wildlife and ecosystems that define the Wellington Region."

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The Benefits of Podiatric Care for Patients with Alzheimer's Disease

Podiatric care plays an important role in maintaining the health, mobility and quality of life of people living with Alzheimer's disease. As the condition progresses, patients may have difficulty recognising foot problems, communicating discomfort, or maintaining appropriate foot and nail care. Regular podiatric assessment can identify and manage common problems such as thickened or ingrown nails, corns, calluses, fungal infections, pressure areas and skin breakdown before they become more serious. Maintaining healthy feet can also improve comfort and support safe walking, helping to reduce the risk of falls.

Podiatrists can assess footwear and provide advice on appropriate shoes, socks and mobility aids where necessary. Care should be delivered in a calm, reassuring and patient-centred manner, taking account of the individual's communication needs and level of cognitive impairment. Regular podiatric care, ideally involving family members or carers, can therefore help preserve comfort, independence, mobility and overall wellbeing.



Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library, viewed from Harris Street.
Photo: Wellington City Council.

Apology for library website spend

By Frank Neill

Wellington City Council's Chief Executive Matt Prosser has apologised to Wellington ratepayers for the huge expenditure on the Central Library's website.

His apology comes in the wake of an independent review of the website for Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library.

The review, conducted by Colin MacDonald QSO at no charge, was commissioned by Mr Prosser following widespread concern about the almost \$600,000 spend on the website.

It found shortcomings across procurement, governance and value for money.

The review concluded a different approach could have delivered a less expensive website that remained fit for purpose in supporting the relaunch of Te Matapihi and the wider Te Ngākau precinct.

The Council's Chief Executive Matt Prosser apologises to the ratepayers of Wellington. "We accept the findings of the review," Mr Prosser says.

"We got this wrong.

"We are sorry this happened and acknowledge the amount of money spent on this website was not acceptable.

"The re-opening of Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui has been a wonderful boost for the city with well over 800,000 visits since the opening six months ago.

"It is disappointing decisions about the website have taken some of the shine off what has otherwise been a hugely successful project."

The Council's Chief Operating Officer James Roberts is the Senior Responsible Officer for the whole Te Ngākau Civic Square upgrade, which includes the redevelopment of Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library and all projects associated with it.

"I take full accountability," he says.

"It is clear from the review there are lessons we need to take from this and I've already started making changes to ensure it doesn't happen again.

"Managing projects of this size, scale and complexity – such as earthquake strengthening on reclaimed land – is enormously challenging.

"I accept that one of the implications of this is that I didn't pay enough attention to this element of the project."

Wellington Mayor Andrew Little says lessons must be learned from this website project.

"I've been clear that under my mayoralty, when the Council organisation makes mistakes we front up to the public, we fix those mistakes and we learn from them.

"That's why I asked for this review, and that's what is happening now.

"I am satisfied that the organisation has already made good progress on changing the culture and practices that contributed to this mistake, and that work will continue as we look to implement the recommendations of this review.

"I am grateful to Colin MacDonald for offering his services pro bono to do this review," the Mayor says.

Altrusa Ōhariau holding a clean-up

Altrusa Ōhariau will hold a clean-up at Grasslees Reserve, Tawa, from 2pm to 4pm on Sunday 20 September.

The clean-up is being held as part of Keep New Zealand Beautiful's Clean-up Week 2026.

The clean-up is weather dependent.

Altrusa Ōhariau will welcome anyone interested in helping out.

Registration (a requirement from Keep New Zealand Beautiful) will be at the Davies Street entrance to the reserve, from 2pm to 2:30pm.

Altrusa is an international non-profit organisation making local communities better through leadership, partnership and service.

Altrusa Ōhariau offers an opportunity to make a real difference in an area of Wel-

lington that covers Wadestown, Crofton Downs, Ngaio, Khandallah, Johnsonville, Newlands, Paparangi, Woodridge, Churton Park, Grenada North and Tawa.

The club undertakes a variety of service, literacy, fundraising and international projects each year.

Keep New Zealand Beautiful's Clean-up Week 2026 takes place from 18 to 25 September.

"Clean Up Week is a great opportunity to get your friends, family, school, business or local community group together to participate in New Zealand's largest clean-up event and to make a positive and tangible impact in your local community," Keep New Zealand Beautiful says.

World Clean-up Day is on 19 September.

A haunted house in Karori

Following the recent book fair and e-waste recycle collection, the Karori Lions Club is hosting a quiz night later in September followed by a haunted house experience at the end of October.

The quiz night will be at The Taphouse, Marsden Village, Karori, on Sunday 27 September.

It is being held to support a project about to be undertaken by Karori West Normal School to install solar panels and power storage for the Tech Hub at the school, which is also an Emergency Management Hub.

The school is also receiving support from NZCT.

This is a major project for the school, and Lions have been helping raise funds for this community asset over the course of the year.

The ever-popular Hilary Taylor will be the Quizmaster on the night, and there will be raffles, 'buy an answer', rolling spot prizes, a door prize and good prizes for each person in the winning team.

Organiser Beth Anders encourages people to make up a team of 6 to 8 people at \$20 per person. People can contact her at 021 264

1481 or email bethanders50@outlook.com.

There will be a snack menu available and a cash bar, so come early for a 7:15pm start.

Following this, things are about to get spooky in Karori.

The Lions Club of Karori is bringing its very first haunted house to the Karori Park Café on Friday 30 October, from 6:30pm.

Brave visitors can make their way through a series of creepy rooms packed with eerie surprises, spooky characters and plenty of jump scares along the way.

The haunted house is suitable for children aged 8 years and over, due to the nature of some of the props and scares being used. Tickets are \$5 for children and \$10 for adults (18+).

If the weather behaves, there will also be a sausage sizzle fundraiser, with lolly bags and glow sticks and glow in the dark stickers available to purchase at the door.

Organiser Ros Alsford invites people to come along and wear their best Halloween costume, enjoy a fun Halloween night and support the Lions Club of Karori's fundraising at the same time.

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Public Notices



Out of Zone Enrolment

EnrolmentRewa Rewa School is currently inviting applications for out of zone enrolments starting in **Term 1 2027 (Thursday 17 December 2026 – Friday 09 April 2027)**. The deadline for receipt of applications is 9am, Thursday 15 October 2026. Submit an online enrolment application at www.rewarewa.school.nz.

Enrolment at our school is governed by an enrolment scheme, details of which are available on our website. The board has determined that up to 12 places will be available for out-of-zone students in 2027.

The exact number of places will depend on the number of in zone student enrolments. If the number of out of zone applications exceeds the number of places available, students will be selected by ballot. If a ballot for out of zone places is required, it will be held on Monday 19 October 2026. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the ballot within three school days of the ballot being held.

Parents of students who live in zone should notify the school when their child turns 4, to assist the school to plan appropriately.

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Argentine tango comes to Karori



Tango Vivo. Photo: Supplied.

A new live music series will launch in Karori this October with a programme devoted to Argentine tango.

Tango Vivo will bring a style of concert that is still relatively uncommon on Wellington's suburban stages.

Presented by Americas in Concert, Tango Vivo will perform from 7pm to 8:30pm on Saturday 17 October at Karori Baptist Church in Marsden Village.

The first edition is designed as an intimate, seated concert, with approximately one hour of live tangos, milongas and vals performed by voice, violin, piano and double bass.

The concert also marks the beginning of Americas in Concert, a new series created by Latin Events Welly to present musicians, ensembles and solo artists connected with the musical traditions of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Future editions are intended to explore different genres and artists while keeping the focus on live performance and cultural connection.

Tango Vivo was formed in Wellington in 2021 through a collaboration between Argentine musicians and Wellington-based performers.

The group's approach is grounded in traditional tango, authentic interpretation and musical quality, with a multicultural line-up that reflects the diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The musicians are:

- Marilyn Mansilla – vocals, a performer and singing teacher who is well known within New Zealand's Latin American community;
- Christine Watson – violin, a professionally trained musician with extensive performance experience;
- Irena De – piano, a pianist, teacher and

dance rehearsal accompanist; and

- Bill Vella – double bass, an experienced bassist who has performed with a range of bands and musical projects.

As an ensemble, Tango Vivo has appeared at the Wellington Tango Festival, the New Zealand Tango Festival and Conference, Wellington Gardens Magic, the opening of Wellington's first Latin Market, Zonta International events, and other cultural and community events across the Wellington region.

This event is supported by many businesses in the Karori neighborhood, with the aim of raising the area's profile and attracting other residents to visit.

Thanks to the support of the Karori Business Association, this call for participation has been launched, offering various ways for members to engage and get involved.

The Embassy of the Argentine Republic to New Zealand has formally expressed its support for Tango Vivo and the launch of Americas in Concert.

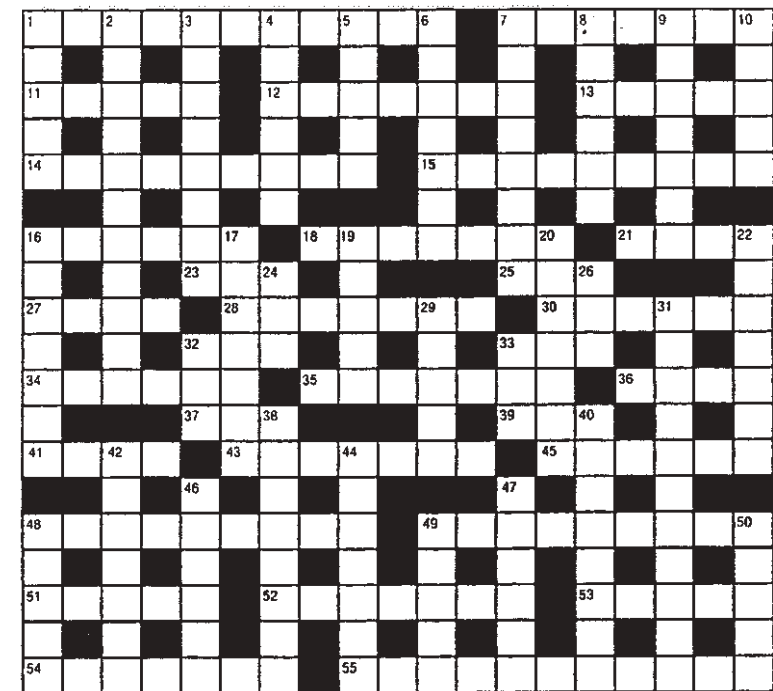
The Embassy says the series can provide an important platform for Argentine artistic expression and help strengthen cultural ties between Argentina and New Zealand through the performing arts.

The Embassy also notes the breadth of Argentine music beyond tango, from folk traditions to contemporary composition, and says it highly values the initiative.

"We wanted the first Americas in Concert event to feel close to the musicians and to the music itself," says Mariela Porrini of Latin Events Welly.

"Tango is powerful in a small room. You can hear the detail, the phrasing and the emotion in a very direct way."

CROSSWORD Puzzle



ACROSS

1. Be traitorous (6,5)
7. Alien (7)
11. Lowest point (5)
12. Italian wine (7)
13. Latin American dance (5)
14. Fill with delight (9)
15. Abode (9)
16. World's largest river (6)
18. Mobile home (7)
21. Sinistral (4)
23. For every (3)
25. Jack (in cribbage) (3)
27. Neat (4)
28. Castrated horse (7)
30. Became bitter (6)
32. High mountain (3)
33. Evil spell (3)
34. Puzzle (6)
35. Large grey goose (7)
36. Cross between a grapefruit & a tangerine (4)
37. Deed (3)
39. Petrol(inf) (3)
41. College official (4)
43. Diplomatic (7)
45. Young people (6)
48. Advancement (9)
49. Crouching down (9)
51. Take in & feed(livestock)

- for payment (5)
52. Mythical creature (7)
53. Bony plated marine fish(Europe) (5)
54. Skilled workman (7)
55. Hell (6,5)

DOWN

1. Stupid (5)
2. Deceitful (11)
3. Tip of graduates hood (8)
4. Desert plant (6)
5. Yellow-green colour (5)
6. Drink of red wine & fruit juice (7)
7. Cattle breed (8)
8. Cure (6)
9. Vast (7)
10. Loop (5)
16. Changed (7)
17. Overlook (7)
19. Snake (5)
20. Posy (7)
22. Hot spirit drinks (7)
24. Corded cloth (3)
26. Spar (3)
29. Brandy liqueur with almonds (5)
31. Conservative party member (5,6)

32. Wing (3)
33. Witch (3)
38. Habitually silent (8)
40. Left-handed person(inf) (8)
42. Writer of love (7)
44. Stress (7)
46. Adages (6)
47. Pear-shaped fruit (6)
48. Italian syndicate (Americas' Cup) (5)
49. Sprout (5)
50. Glutton

Solution

Last Week: 10 September 2026



Celebrate women's suffrage

By Frank Neill

Suffrage Day takes place on Saturday 19 September, marking the anniversary of women's suffrage in New Zealand.

On 19 September 1893, Governor Lord Glasgow signed a new Electoral Act into law.

This law saw New Zealand become the first self-governing country in the world to enshrine in law the right for women to vote in parliamentary elections.

At the end of the 19th century, women across the country were involved in the suffrage movement, where they fought for the right to vote to elect members of the New Zealand House of Representatives.

The movement involved groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union New Zealand (WCTU) and trade unions.

The WCTU launched a petition, and 31,872 people signed what was the largest petition ever gathered in Australasia.

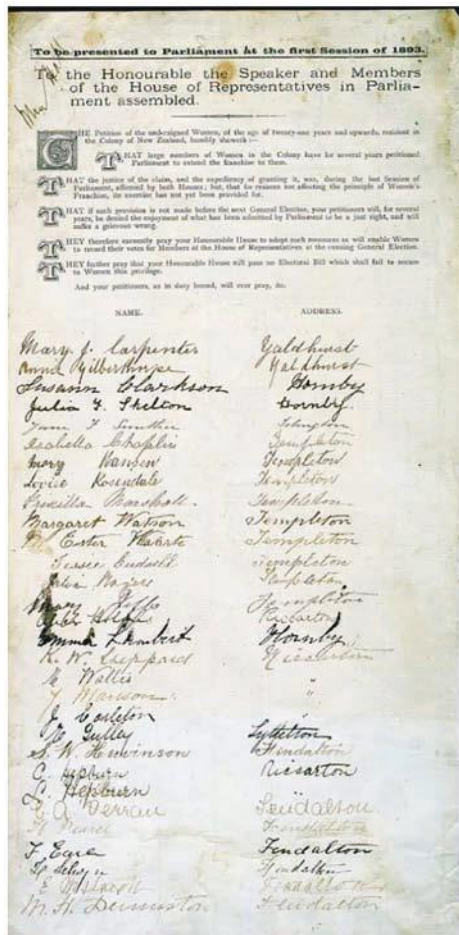
The largest petition, containing 25,519 signatures is the only one of the 13 that has survived and it is now on display in the He Tohu exhibition at the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa.

The petition contains the signatures of many leading suffragists and feminists, including Kate Sheppard, Marion Hatton, Rachel Reynolds, Ada Wells, Tailoresses' Union leader Harriet Morison, writer Edith Grossmann, and Christina and Stella Henderson.

This petition was presented to Parliament, and lead to the creation of the Electoral Act 1893 which enshrined in law that all adult women had the right to vote.

Less than two months later, 109,461 women enrolled to vote in the 1893 election.

When the Act was passed, suffragists celebrated throughout the country, and



The petition asking Parliament to give women the right to vote with just some of the signatures.

congratulations poured in from suffrage campaigners from around the world.

In other democracies, women did not begin to gain the right to vote until after the First World War.

Six girls want to make a difference.

All the 56 year 7 and 8 pupils at St Benedict's School in Khandallah are participating in this year's William Pike Challenge.

This challenge encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and give back to the community.

Every student needs to complete 20 hours of a passion project – a hobby that is completely new to them – and community service.

Six of the students taking part in the challenge – Elliana, Rosa, Ellie, Alex, Haidy and Esther – decided to fundraise \$1,000 dollars for the Cancer Society Wellington Division by running.

The six year 8 students will be running as a fundraiser for people suffering with cancer as their community service challenge.

“In our community many families are suffering from cancer, and we are hoping to make a difference, big or small, to help them,” the girls say.

People can donate to them on their GiveALittle page: givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/kilometers-for-cancer.

25 September is the anniversary of the day in 2007 when William Pike was badly injured.

He had climbed Mt Ruapehu with his friend James Christie and on the way back down they decided to spend the night in Dome Shelter.

The evening Mt Ruapehu erupted, sending rocks, water and mud crashing into the hut.

Crushed and critically injured, William hung onto life while James ran down the mountain in the dark to get help.

William was taken to Waikato Hospital where his right leg had to be amputated below the knee.

William learned from his Mt Ruapehu experience that when you are faced with a challenge and change, success comes down to one thing – whether you are already prepared to step outside your comfort zone.

“So, when the chance came up to build a programme that helps young New Zealanders step outside their comfort zones, I jumped at it,” William says.

That programme is the William Pike Challenge, which he founded in 2010. It is designed to help year 6 to 13 students develop 21st century skills such as resilience, confidence, teamwork and problem solving by engaging in meaningful challenges.

History of Khandallah Park

The history of Khandallah Park will feature in the next issue of the ‘Onslow Historian’, due to be released before Christmas.

It will be entitled ‘Ravaged by fires, threatened by flood’.

“We welcome the news that the Khandallah pool is to be refurbished with its character retained – even if it has to be closed this summer season,” the Onslow Historical Society says.

“Perhaps the City Council could turn its attention to the increasingly overgrown, shady and unkempt grassy picnic and play areas around and beyond the pool.

“Photographs in this future issue of the

‘Historian’ (and the previous issue, vol 50 of 2020) highlight the present day rather stunning contrast with the open, sunny and spacious character which the park had from its creation in the 1920s until late last century.”

Dave Parsons will be the speaker at the 20 September meeting of the Onslow Historical Society.

He will talk about the Johnsonville train, and a “NZ Railways” afternoon tea will follow.

The meeting will begin at 2pm at KATE (the former Khandallah Automatic Telephone Exchange), 86 Khandallah Road.

Tiaki Wai survey on fixes and improvements

Tiaki Wai is inviting feedback from people across Wellington, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt and Porirua to help it build the next edition of the plan to fix and improve the region's water services.

People are invited to fill out a short survey at haveyoursay.tiakiwai.co.nz before 4 October to rank priorities across the breadth of work Tiaki Wai is responsible for.

“We want to hear from people about what they think we should prioritise, so we can build our work programme in a way that meets the expectations of the people we serve,” says David Ward, Tiaki Wai Chief Strategy and Planning Officer.

“In March 2027, we will be consulting on our next Water Services Strategy, the document that sets out our work plan and proposed charges for the next 30 years, with a focus on the next decade.

“This will cost many billions of dollars, so we'll need to space out the work to spread the cost over many years.

“With your help, we'll develop a plan for what we should focus on first.

“To build our work programme, we're looking at the current state of our water infrastructure, the things Parliament and our regulators have told us we have to do, and now we want to add the views of our customers and the people we serve into that mix.”

The online survey, David says, “should take less than five minutes, so we urge you to fill it out and to share it with your friends, neighbours and colleagues so that everyone can have their say.

“If you need assistance filling out the survey, you can request a callback from our call centre at <https://www.tiakiwai.co.nz/about-us/contact/general-enquiry>.

“We're planning for a future with better drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services for our region. Thanks for your help,” David says.

Glenside Reserve dog access review

Wellington City Council is seeking feedback about dog access on Glenside Reserve.

The reserve of around 13 hectares includes the historic Halfway House, which is classified as an Historic Reserve and zoned Open Space.

The rest of the reserve is zoned Natural Open Space.

Dogs are currently allowed on the Reserve but must be kept on-leash.

Community observations indicate that ground-nesting bird species are present, and that some species nest and breed within the reserve.

Off-leash dogs can pose a risk to nesting and breeding success. For this reason, dog access needs to be considered alongside the reserve's ecological values and the community's aspirations for increasing birdlife.

There is community interest in enhancing birdlife at Glenside Reserve and, over time, creating a sanctuary-style environment like Zealandia. Achieving this vision would likely require excluding dogs from the reserve.

The Council is considering the following three options:

- dogs are allowed on-leash on existing walking tracks but are prohibited on the rest of the reserve;
- dogs are prohibited from the reserve at all times; and
- dogs must be kept on-leash at all times, supported by increased signage and education on the reserve.

People can provide feedback by 5pm on 30 September. For more information and to provide feedback visit www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/glenside-reserve-review-dog-access.

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