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# THE FIRST EDITION

Southland District Council's magazine



**A** war memorial restoration at Isla Bank will keep the memory alive of the 22 servicemen from the area who died in World Wars I and II.

The striking marble statue of a young soldier has kept a solemn vigil at Calcium Cemetery for around a century but the concrete blocks beneath him had fallen into disrepair.

Ann Robbie, the driving force behind many such war memorial restorations and recovery efforts throughout Southland over 20 years, launched the project to rectify the young soldier's condition about 18 months ago and it is coming close to fruition.

Bricklayer and plasterer Chris Jaeger was commissioned to carry out the work, and he has been helped voluntarily every step of the way by Otautau RSA and Wallace Takitimu Community Board member Peter Gutsell.

When they scratched the surface of the crumbling concrete base they found that the job was bigger than initially thought.

"We thought we'd just grind the paint off it and replaster it," Chris says. "That would have been a waste of time because it was totally rotten."

"There's no real plans around of how it was built," Peter says. "You really have to take the covers off to find out what you've got underneath."

Chris and Peter had to bore holes more than three metres long through the base in order to drive long metal anchor rods through and grout them in to fasten the base layer together. The job of drilling the holes was made more difficult because they discovered that the concrete had a lot of eroded strips of hoop iron off packing cases through it. Each time their diamond-tipped drills hit a piece of steel the drill was destroyed, a costly setback at \$400 a bit.

"It took us one day to bore one hole," Chris says.

He explains that when the structure was erected the concrete was of a poorer quality, so steel was put into the concrete to help bind it. "But

# War memorial at Isla Bank gets full attention

when the air gets to the steel it corrodes the steel which expands and blows concrete to bits. That rusty steel is like cancer. It expands several times its own volume."

"And at the end of the day it didn't do any good because the thing still fell apart," says Peter.

The pair started work on the restoration in late June. At the point First Edition visited the site they had been on the job for 140 hours and Chris estimated there was probably about another 100 hours to go, with work including fixing the cracked marble plaques.

Chris was originally from Switzerland and is now based at Lochiel. He learned his craft from Tom McDowell in Invercargill and worked on many restorations in the city, including First Church.

Ann has personally overseen the restoration of up to 40 mostly rural war memorials so far, with more always on the go. For her, it's more than a labour of love – it's a burning passion to ensure that the sacrifice of our service people is not forgotten, and it comes at a personal cost of her own time and money.

"It's a minuscule amount of my time and money compared with the massive sacrifice that these men and women and their families gave," Ann says. "If this makes a difference then it must be right."

"We can't let these memorials go. Once they're gone nobody will replace them."

The Isla Bank restoration is an expensive project, with a total budget likely to run higher than \$20,000.

Southland District Council supports the work through community funding, which has come from a range of sources. The Southland Regional Heritage Committee granted \$3,000 towards the restoration, while Community Trust South gave \$30,000 to the former Venture Southland for war memorials, of which \$5,000 was allocated for this project. As well, various reserves were being accessed.

Even so, projects like this one can only proceed with a huge investment of voluntary time and effort and a lot of goodwill from the community.

McGregor Concrete donated five



cubic metres of concrete for the base. The ground in the cemetery was too soft to get a concrete truck in so a neighbouring farmer brought it in by the tractor bucket load. The soft ground bears deep track ruts from where somebody else recently drove their truck into the cemetery.

"The neighbours here have been really good," Chris says. "Adolf Hardegger says that once we're finished he'll come in with his tractor with the rotary hoe and hoe it up about eight inches deep and sow it out in grass to get it all tidied up."

The final flourish in the restoration will be to refill the lettering of the 19 soldiers' names and citations on the memorial plaques. In the days when lead was a lucrative commodity burglars would gouge the metal out of memorial stones to sell. Ann says they'll be refilled with epoxy resin, which is a cheaper, durable material commonly used now by monumental masons.

To illustrate the importance of the work at Calcium Cemetery, Peter points to the names of three men with the surname Poole – Albert, Edward and Thomas. "They were brothers," he says. "Their mother opened the war memorial at Otautau because she lost three sons."

Both Peter and Chris see huge value to the community in doing this work now, to honour those who served and sacrificed their lives for future generations.

When the job's complete it will preserve their memory, Peter says.

**"It's been here probably 100 years and it'll be here another 200 years from now on."**



Chris Jaeger points out names on the Isla Bank war memorial.



## MAYOR GARY TONG

We all know 2020 has been a shocker but at Southland District Council we've remained focused on the future.

We have to stay positive, and continue to make plans that position our great District in the best place possible. Strong planning and decision-making will help us get through the twin challenges we've faced this year of flood recovery and the Covid-19 pandemic.

I'm proud that the Southland Mayoral Relief Fund has been able to allocate more than \$146,000 to Southlanders seriously affected by the February floods.

But I'm equally proud that in recent weeks Southland District councillors have made some big forward-thinking decisions that will have a lasting positive impact on our people.

On Stewart Island/Rakiura, wharves and jetties are about as important as state highways are on the mainland. That's why Council approved \$340,000 in unbudgeted expenditure towards the renewal of the Ulva Island wharf. The critical piece of infrastructure is the stepping stone for awesome tourism opportunities on the island and its development will ensure continued access by visitors.

There is still some work to do behind the scenes but we've been working very closely with the Stewart Island/Rakiura Community Board, the island community, DOC and the private landowners towards getting this project under way. Council's funding commitment is a big step in that process.

By the same token, I feel very pleased that Council has pledged a further \$1.3 million of unbudgeted expenditure for the refurbishment of the Winton office and library site in Wemyss Street.

The landmark building has been closed since testing confirmed the presence of airborne mould spores and fungal contamination in March 2019. Our area office and library staff have been absolute troopers through two separate shifts, first into the memorial hall and then into the current site in the RSA hall, continuing to provide friendly and efficient service to our Winton customers. We know that it's been tough on everyone concerned.

This decision will provide certainty and a bright light at the end of the tunnel for the people of Winton and the surrounding area, for many years into the future.

My philosophy is that as a Council we must continue to lead the way by progressing positive projects for the community, if we can do so in a financially responsible way that does not place an unnecessary burden on ratepayers.

There is a greater public good element to a lot of our thinking and work, not just as a result of the rotten year we've experienced so far, but because of the vast and rapid changes we know are coming our way.

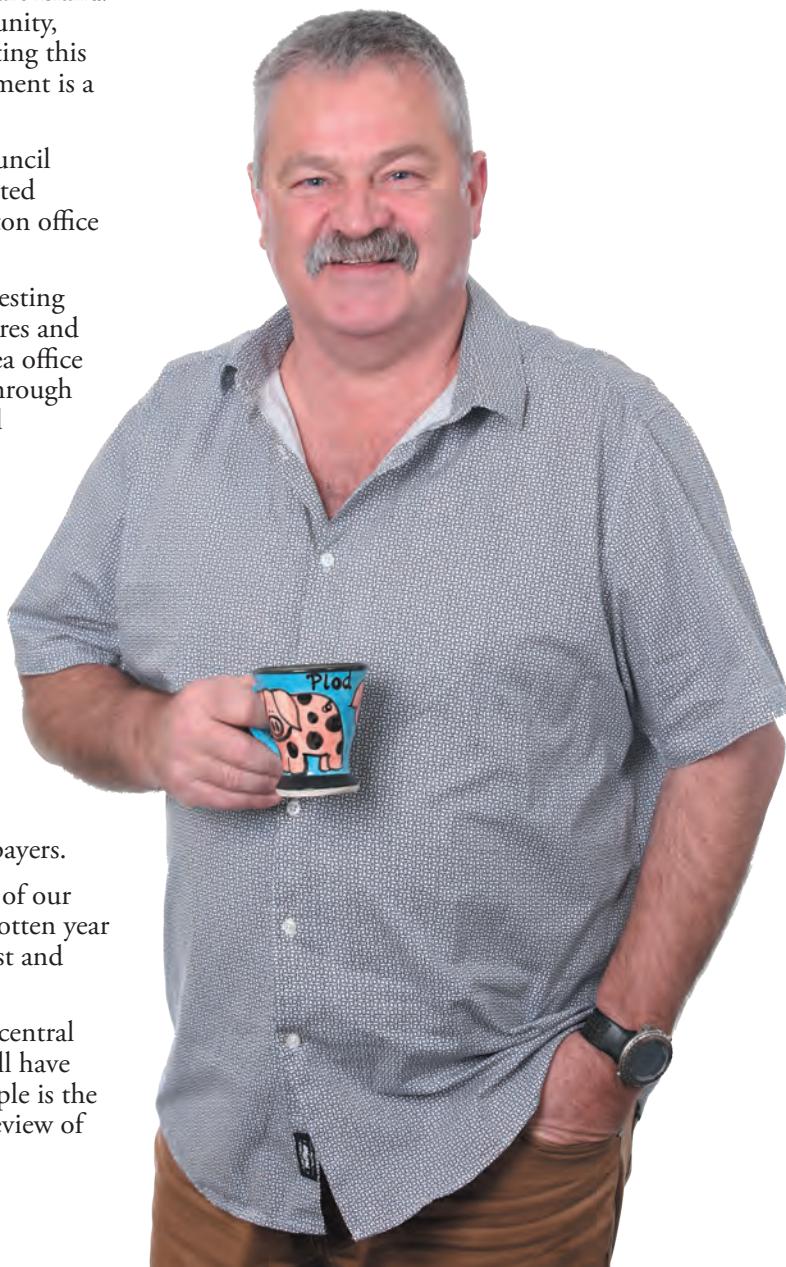
There is a lot of legislative review going on by central government at the moment and much of it will have an impact on SDC's business. A shining example is the three waters reform. It may have started as a review of

national water services following the gastro outbreak in Havelock North in 2016, but it has developed into a massive re-evaluation of how drinking water, stormwater and wastewater services are provided.

In short, the government is looking to establish a small number of publicly owned multi-regional entities to take over the delivery of the water services currently delivered by local authorities, including SDC. As a Council we were asked to accept the need for reform, accept the creation of a new national independent water regulator, Taumata Arowai, and opt into the process of exploring cross-regional opportunities. If we did, SDC would have access to \$13.5 million of funding to help stimulate the local economy.

In the end, I believe we made the only decision we could. The change was coming anyway. Now Southland District Council will be part of the solution. However, it will bring with it many resourcing challenges and a vastly different way of doing things for our organisation.

It's going to bring the biggest change to local government since the amalgamations that created Southland District Council in 1989. Hang on to your hats, people, and let's all stay positive.



**T**he quest to protect one of the world's iconic places has reached a vital phase, with public feedback again sought on ideas and options.

The Milford Opportunities Project, established in 2017, is a multi-agency project that aims to create an ambitious and innovative masterplan for the area.

On 5 October the project will launch a nationwide campaign. This will be the final chance for large-scale engagement on this project as the team makes the decisions for the final masterplan in December.

The engagement will feature on the website [www.milfordopportunities.nz](http://www.milfordopportunities.nz), and there will be drop-in sessions in Te Anau, Milford Sound Piopiotahi, Queenstown and Invercargill where members of the team will be available to chat. If you're elsewhere in the country, don't feel left out as we would love to hear from you too. Please have a look at the website next month and have your say.

People will be asked to comment on the many options that have come to light from earlier consultations and from within the project. They will all have relevance to the surrounding Te Anau district, the Milford Road, and Milford Sound Piopiotahi, along with transport and access and conservation.

The Milford Opportunities Project is a chance for the public to shape the future of one of New Zealand's iconic areas. Gathering feedback from a diverse range of New Zealanders is absolutely crucial.

This is such an incredible place and it's our responsibility to preserve the Milford Sound Piopiotahi area for generations to come.

The project was initiated because of issues of congestion at Milford Sound Piopiotahi and along the Milford corridor by tour buses and other vehicles at particular times. Stage one was completed in



# Public feedback vital to preserve iconic Milford Sound Piopiotahi

late 2018. It consisted of research and gap analysis, along with some preliminary engagement.

Stage two, which began late last year and will be completed when the masterplan is made public in mid-2021, has seen the team defining and choosing options to be included in the masterplan, and ensuring these options/recommendations are backed up by data and research.

In July a two-week survey was conducted nationwide, with key themes emerging as important to New Zealanders. These included cruise ships, the arrival experience, a visitors' centre, vehicle parking and 'Park and Ride' options, accommodation, activities, air services and whether a user-pays model should be introduced, particularly for international visitors.

Keep an eye on the website, Facebook and Instagram as more opportunities are added.

- Facebook: Milford Opportunities Project
- Instagram: Milford Opportunities
- Website: [milfordopportunities.nz/](http://milfordopportunities.nz/)
- Subscribe to receive the Milford Opportunities newsletter, surveys and any other upcoming engagement opportunities online at [milfordopportunities.nz/get-involved/](http://milfordopportunities.nz/get-involved/) and enter your email address at the bottom of the page.

The masterplan will be made public by June next year.

**Piopiotahi – New Zealand as it was, forever.**



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE STEVE RURU

**N**obody can say for sure what local government will look like in five years, but one thing is certain – it will look very different than it is today.

Southland District Council, the same as all our colleagues in local government, is going through a period of upheaval, the result of a number of reforms and new standards being driven by central government. As a result, we are rethinking the way we deliver many of our current services.

Leading the charge is the government's reform of three waters service delivery, which promises to bring the biggest change to the way local government operates since the amalgamations of 1989.

Three waters refers to drinking water, wastewater and stormwater, and the delivery of these services, which is currently done by territorial authorities including Southland District Council, is under the microscope.

The three waters sector faces many challenges, including rising costs, increasing environmental standards, climate change and seasonal pressure from tourism. These challenges, along with recommendations from the inquiry into the Havelock North water supply contamination incident in 2016, mean that our business as usual will have to change.

The government inquiry into Havelock North drinking water identified widespread systemic failure of suppliers to meet the standards required for the safe supply of drinking water to the public, and made a number of urgent recommendations.

The inquiry highlighted that, in many parts of the country, communities cannot be confident that drinking water is safe or that good environmental outcomes are being achieved. This work also raised concerns about the regulation, sustainability, capacity and capability of a system with a large number of localised providers, many of which are funded by relatively small populations.

The regulatory parts of the reforms are well advanced with the development of new legislation and the creation of Taumata Arowai, the new, independent water services regulator. This new Crown entity is currently being built and will become responsible for drinking water regulation once a separate Water Services Bill, currently before Parliament, is passed. This is expected in mid-2021.

In July this year, the government announced a \$761 million funding package to provide post Covid-19 stimulus across the country to improve three waters infrastructure, support a three-year programme of reform of local government water service delivery arrangements and support the establishment of Taumata Arowai. This package replaced the

applications that local authorities made to the shovel-ready fund.

In August, Southland District Council opted into the first stage of central government's three waters reform process. This part was voluntary but it came with the incentive of SDC getting access to \$13.5 million of that funding stimulus package, provided that we signed a memorandum of understanding and supplied a work plan on how the money will be spent. Opting in signals that Council agrees with the need for reforms and the new delivery model proposed.

There is also a requirement that we work closely with other councils across Southland and Otago to investigate a cross-regional approach to three waters delivery, a key part of the government's strategy, which will free up more funding. We have already been involved in the Otago/Southland Water Collaboration forum since the beginning of this year. The \$13.5 million has to be spent on additional three waters services or infrastructure, and must support economic recovery through job creation. If we don't spend it in the agreed timeframe of 18 months it has to go back into central government's funding pool.

While this work will keep our services and assets group extremely busy, there is much more happening nationally to keep our minds focused on the changes that lie ahead.

Radical reform of the Resource Management Act is imminent, and with it will come a raft of changes to the work we have to do and the resources we have to do it with. The focus is on introducing new legislation that will improve outcomes for the natural environment as well as urban and other development outcomes. Our current District Plan would be replaced with something that aligns with national planning direction. Much more will need to be done on identifying, assessing and protecting our significant natural landscapes, a vast body of work requiring highly specialised expertise that Council does not currently employ.

Central government's ongoing reforms of vocational education, the district health board model and new Public Service Act mean that as a territorial authority we are operating in a new world, with new thinking and new processes required. Work is already well under way at a national level on scoping what the role of local government will be going forward, taking into account our legislative obligation to the four aspects of community wellbeing – social, economic, environmental and cultural.

So while as an organisation we are unlikely to arrive at our new destination for three to five years, we are already on the journey. It promises to be an eventful and exciting ride.

**Ka kite anō au i a koutou.**



# Youth voice needs to be heard

Southland's youth have a vital role to play in the future of our District and it's a responsibility Jack Ruddenklau has embraced.

The Central Southland College student has been a member of SDC's Youth Council for the past two years, relishing the opportunity to champion the views of his peers in the world of local government.

**"I believe that the future is edging into the hands of the rangatahi of Aotearoa."**

- Jack Ruddenklau.

"It's essential that youth are represented in local government because our young people are the future of Southland. As a Youth Council we've been able to provide constructive ideas and opinions to better our community for the future – a future that's in our hands. All we need to do is grab it and talk about it.

"As people we should be playing a part in positively liaising with the wider community and encouraging community spirit. All it takes is applying a hands-on approach and what we all have learnt through good will, connectedness and inclusiveness."

Jack, 18, was selected as Southland's representative to attend the annual Aotearoa Youth Declaration – United Nations Youth's flagship civics education conference which gives young people a platform to learn and discuss issues faced throughout New Zealand. Conference participants collaborate to produce a tangible rangatahi policy advisory document to take directly to decision-makers.

While the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the physical event being cancelled, Jack joined fellow youth from throughout New Zealand in a video conference in May.

"I enjoyed taking apart in the event because some members of Parliament, CEOs, councillors and decision-makers read the document we produced," he says.

"I was a part of the education rōpū which covered a wide variety of issues, from the content of our curriculum to the accessibility of further education in our universities to the design of our classrooms and schools of tomorrow.

"I gained an understanding of critical areas in education like social efficiency, social mobility and democratic equality. I also learned about the importance of rangatahi and tikanga Māori and what it means in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand."

It proved an eye-opening experience.

"I found out that Aotearoa's education system is one of the most unequal in the world. UNICEF's 2018 Innocenti Report Card ranked Aotearoa 33rd of 38 OECD countries for educational inequality across pre-school, primary school and secondary school levels," Jack says.

"The decile-based funding system has failed to account for larger voluntary donations at high-decile schools. Therefore, quality teaching staff, opportunities and resources are less accessible at low-decile schools.

"We all also came up with ideas and policies to address the inequality of our education system – implement an anonymised risk-based funding system calculated by an equity index which accounts for factors such as socio-economic disadvantage, parents' average income and ethnicity; additional funding to help students facing disadvantage; retaining quality teaching staff at higher risk schools through targeted financial incentives."

Jack will embark on his own educational journey at university next year.



▲ Mayor Gary Tong with Youth Councillor Jack Ruddenklau.

"I'm applying to study a BCom majoring in management, strategy and entrepreneurship at the University of Canterbury, along with a political paper. I think these study choices are a great combination as they can lead me into a vast range of different careers," he says.

"I could see myself working in businesses or enterprises. I feel that working in companies with a great team environment and that make a change for the benefit of our future would be incredible.

"I could also see myself in government policy, or politics, which has always been an interest to me as I actively engage and make conversation on my own opinions about issues in Aotearoa. While these careers are optimistic, I think anything is possible because my generation is the future."

SDC's Youth Council is now in the process of developing a Southland Youth Declaration to assist Council with its long-term planning. The youth councillors will be engaging with the community early next year, so keep an eye out for their initiatives.



Contractors from Te Anau Earthworks and Fulton Hogan celebrate connecting the pipeline with a team photo.

# Milestone for wastewater project

A significant milestone in the Te Anau wastewater upgrade project passed without fanfare when the 18.6km pipeline from Te Anau to the Kepler block was completed.

Contractors from Fulton Hogan and Te Anau Earthworks connected the two lengths of pipeline on 26 June, at a spot beside State Highway 95 near the intersection with William Stephen Road, southeast of Te Anau.

Council senior projects manager Geoff Gray says the pipeline will now sit in readiness for the commissioning of the new wastewater treatment system, which is expected to occur in June 2022.

Two contracts have been awarded – one to Downer for the design and build of the wastewater treatment plant at Te Anau, and one to Fulton Hogan for construction of the subsurface drip irrigation dispersal field at the Kepler block. Work at both sites is scheduled to begin on 5 October.

The project is now forecast to cost approximately \$25 million, as opposed to the original \$22 million.

Southland District Council group manager services and assets Matt Russell says the increase is attributable to higher costs for procurement as a result of the design solution becoming more complex than originally anticipated. Further, a protracted and expensive consenting process added to costs.

“When you’re procuring competitively you’re exposed to market costs and forces,” he says.

There have been flow-on cost implications from the Covid-19 pandemic too, he says, with delays in procurement of supplies.

Geoff says Council has been engaging with iwi and the community in readiness for the construction phase.

A community liaison group, which includes the Fiordland Sewerage Options group, Fiordland Community Board, a representative

from the Manapouri community and Te Ao Marama, is in the early stages of establishment. This group is expected to form a key link between Council and community stakeholders into the future.

Council has been working closely with the Oraka Aparima runanga and Te Ao Marama on some restoration plantings on the banks of the Upukerora River near the river mouth at Lake Te Anau. This work will contribute to addressing the effect the current discharge is having, and has had, on the cultural values of the area. It is also a way of recognising the historic association of Ngāi Tahu with the area.

The area’s historic name is Te Kowhai, and the restoration plantings will reflect that by including kowhai, harakeke (flax), ti kouka (cabbage trees) and toetoe.

“They’re very specific on what they want to do,” Geoff says. “They’ve been really good to us ... there’s some important milestones that they’re really interested in.”

# Talks begin on Winton wastewater plant

Preliminary discussions about the future of the Winton wastewater treatment plant have started, with a working group established to consider potential options for the plant's upgrade and associated consenting process.

The current consent for the Winton wastewater treatment plant is due to expire in 2023 and, with new restrictions coming into effect, Southland District Council strategic manager water and waste Ian Evans says the reconsenting process is unlikely to be straightforward.

"A number of new regulations and environmental standards have come into play in the time that the Winton treatment plant has been running so, with consent due to expire in 2023, we are starting work early to determine what the best, long-term and sustainable solution may be," he says.

The working group comprises representatives from a range of sectors, along with consultancy firm GHD, and

has been set up to ensure there are multiple perspectives around the table when the group is considering options.

The group is tasked with determining a shortlist of options for the upgrade and reconsent, after which a set of potential options will be presented to the community for feedback.

**"We are really keen to involve the community in this process so that we can determine a preferred option that will have the best long-term outcome for everyone involved."**

- Ian Evans.

To find out more visit [makeitstick.nz](http://makeitstick.nz)



Some plumbing fittings have the potential to allow minute traces of metals to accumulate in water standing in the fittings for several hours.

Although the health risk is small, the Ministry of Health recommends you flush a mugful of water from your drinking-water tap each morning before use to remove any metals which may have dissolved from the plumbing fittings.



We are recommending this simple precaution for all households, including those on public and private water supplies.



# Bridging the gap

**C**ontractors are over halfway through an ambitious bridge replacement programme just four months into the year-long job.

Since the project officially kicked off at Cook Road on 4 May, 10 new bridges have been completed and contractors were forging ahead.

At the time of writing new bridges had either been installed or were under construction at Cook Road and Moffat Road (Kapuka South), Ashers Road (Kapuka), Pullar Road (Tussock Creek), Braid Road (Fortification), Waituna Lagoon, Dunrobin Road, Biggar Road (Longridge North), Pourakino Valley Road, Fortune Road (Mandeville) and the Lake Monowai Road bridge over Pioneer Energy's hydro canal.

This leaves up to eight bridges and four large-diameter culverts to complete before the targeted project end date of April 2021.

The programme was split into two contracts, northern and southern, with a boundary line drawn through Winton. SouthRoads has the northern contract for up to nine bridges and Downer the southern contract for up to 10 bridges.

Last year, in a bid to accelerate the replacement of at-risk bridges, Council applied to government co-funder NZ Transport Agency

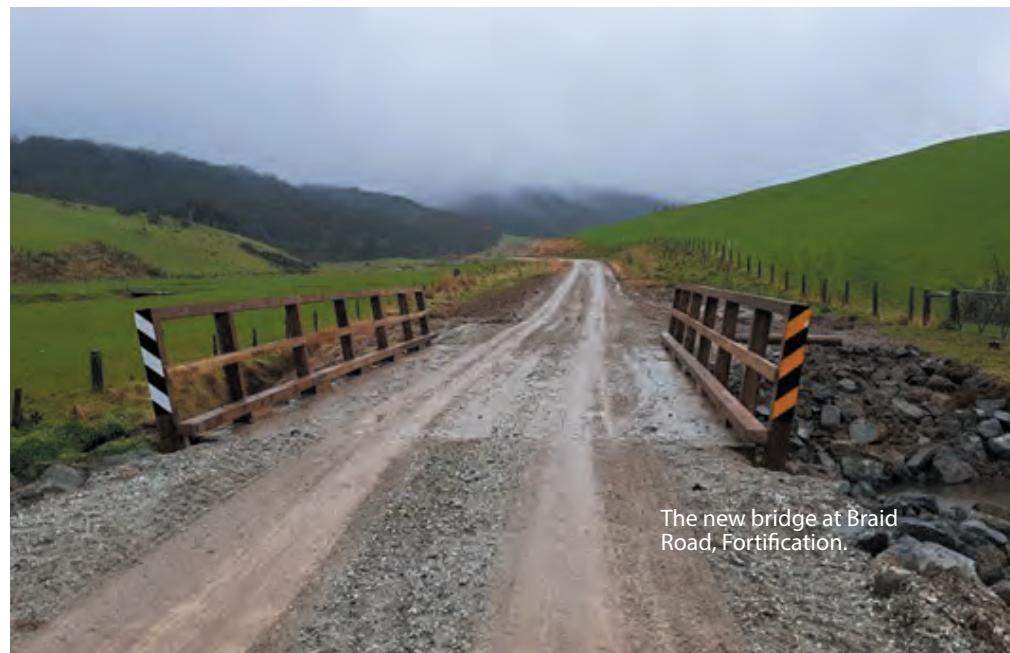
for an additional \$3 million, which NZTA approved. Of this \$3 million, Council has to provide \$1.47 million, or 49%, while NZTA provided the other \$1.53 million (51%). Council's 49% stake is funded through rates, while NZTA's contribution comes primarily from road tax.

There are 850 bridges in Southland District, 171 of which need to be replaced or closed in the next 12 years and a further 22 in the eight years after that. Based on current allocated funding there is a significant shortfall in money available to replace all these bridges.

Many of the Southland District's bridges are old timber structures built after World War II. They

were well constructed at the time, but weren't designed for the larger vehicles, heavier freight loads and greater frequency of traffic that occurs today.

The 19 selected for replacement are all timber single-span bridges where there is no alternative access to nearby properties. The contracts are for 10 to 12-metre design and build bridges, which means that, generally, one design works for all of the bridges being replaced in the contract as they are all very similar small structures. It's a much simpler, and therefore faster, process than having to create a unique design for each bridge.



# Pyramid passes test

**I**t was quite a remarkable feat getting the Pyramid bridge opened on time and under budget in June.

The major construction project was stalled momentarily by the enormous logistical challenges of February's floods and the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, but was still completed ahead of schedule and more than \$2 million under the initial budget.

The Pyramid Bridge build was a joint venture between Southland District Council, Gore District Council and NZ Transport Agency (NZTA). The bridge is a key strategic structure for both councils because it connects both districts across the Mataura River, about 5km east of Riversdale on the Riversdale-Pyramid-Otama road.

A 50m section of the old bridge was washed away in February 2018, after flooding caused a build-up of debris against the wooden piers.

The new design passed its greatest test when the concrete piles stood firm, well clear of the raging floodwaters that thundered down the Mataura River during the February floods. Gore District Council roading asset manager Peter Standring says "that was our biggest yahoo moment".

He attributes completion of the bridge ahead of time to the efficiencies of the construction team.

"It's quite a feat given the project has had to endure two civil defence emergencies – a flood and a pandemic," he says.

An added challenge was that the 15 25.5-metre-long concrete beams were precast in Christchurch and individually trucked slowly to the site on the Riversdale-Pyramid-Otama road, about 5km east of Riversdale.

The bridge opened with some fanfare and the sun shining on 26 June. A large crowd gathered for the formalities, which began with a karakia by Hokonui runanga kaiwhakahaere Taare Bradshaw, followed by a stirring waiata from Riversdale Primary School children.

The bridge was formally opened when the ribbon was cut by Southland District Mayor Gary Tong, Gore District Mayor Tracy Hicks and NZTA South Island regional relationships director Jim Harland.

Mayor Tong says the project was a very successful collaboration between the two councils, NZTA and project managers/contractors Concrete Structures (NZ) Ltd.

"Compared with the previous asset we shared with Gore this is a quality bridge that has already been, in part, tested by the flood event in February.

"I am sure that users will be very happy with the bridge."



▲ NZTA's Jim Harland, Gore District Mayor Tracy Hicks and Southland District Mayor Gary Tong lead the crowd on to Pyramid bridge.



▲ Taare Bradshaw delivers the karakia.



▲ Vintage cars were the first vehicles to officially cross the newly opened bridge.



▲ Pupils from Riversdale Primary School set the scene with a waiata.



**By Chris Chilton**

**D**eparting chief executive Steve Ruru sees rapid change on the horizon for local government.

Steve leaves Southland District Council after six years at the end of September to take up his new role as chief executive of Taranaki Regional Council. The move is largely so he and wife Alison can be closer to extended family.

It is a time of change for local government, Steve says. He sees councils' primary role evolving from that of infrastructure management and service provision to helping to position and lead communities to meet the opportunities and challenges that the future will bring. This will bring the need for more innovative thinking and ways of working, including increased partnership with communities and collaboration between agencies. The signals are clear for all to see, he says.

A comprehensive review of the resource management system led by retired Court of Appeal Judge Tony Randerson QC recommends the repeal and replacement of the Resource Management Act 1991 and new strategic planning legislation.

"The Randerson report says, 'it's outside our terms of reference but we strongly recommend there's reform of local government,'" Steve says.

"Included in its recommendations is a move to regional spatial planning and movement to national planning standards, which has been talked about for some time. It now takes on an even greater emphasis.

"How much of it gets accepted by central government we'll have to wait and see post-election, but I think all of the political colours agree that the RMA needs to be reformed, and exactly what the new legislation and new frameworks look like will depend on who's sitting around the cabinet table post-September 19.

"But there will be change."

Alongside the RMA review there is, of course, the three waters reform process through which central government has indicated a move to form multi-regional water entities to take

# Steve Ruru signs off from SDC

over the delivery of water, wastewater and stormwater services from local authorities. These sorts of changes will cumulatively drive the biggest change to local government since the amalgamations of 1989, he says.

In terms of how that will affect local government organisations such as SDC, he says there will be “a much stronger focus on what are the needs of the communities, how are those needs met and how are they best delivered?”

Steve believes the structural reform of local government will be the secondary issue. The bigger issue will be “what is it that local government’s doing and how do we continue to define and implement that delivery piece? It’s stuff that we’ve already been doing. How do we accelerate that journey in the form and the functions?”

Improving the overall wellbeing of the communities we serve, rather than protecting 30-year-old structures, needs to be the main driver of change in the local government sector, he says.

The journey was interrupted when the well-beings were taken out of the act in 2011, before being reinstated in 2019. But “there are lots of lessons there of working together – multi agencies explicitly measuring community well-being, economic well-being, environmental well-being and all the rest of it, which is the platform on which we’ve (at SDC) been pushing community-led development.

“That’s the sort of thing we need to continue to build on.”

In 2017 Steve went to the United Kingdom as part of a New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers’ study tour and saw first-hand how local authorities there have adapted to reductions in government funding, growth in demand for key services and rising social hardship.

“In Wales all those agencies are required under a Wellbeings Act to produce a joined-up service plan which delivers against well-being indicators for their communities.

“It was relatively new when I was there but those are the sort of models we should be exploring here, to build on the work we’ve already been doing.

“That becomes part of the future role of local authorities.

“Rather than having a predominant focus on infrastructure delivery, what are the needs of our community in a broader sense and how do we ensure

that the right agencies are delivering services which address those needs and plan for them in an integrated way?

“Alongside that we’ve got RMA reform which is driving spatial planning at a regional level, or integrated strategic planning as we’ve been calling it. It’s likely to become mandatory at the regional level, looking at having national joined-up planning consistency across the country for district planning. That’s coming.”

Steve says it meshes with the raft of reforms occurring now, including water, health and the new national polytech. “Southland needs to adapt. There’s a very strong centralisation theme to a number of those changes, so how do you take the national construct and apply it to the local level so that it’s appropriate for Southland’s needs? That’s the challenge.”

It’s important for Southland that its local voice is not lost nationally, but he accepts that geography and population present particular challenges of scale, size and distance for the region.

“That’s some of the opportunity – how do local authorities achieve that broader wellbeing and have that integrated planning which is hopefully more consistent and efficient across the country?”

It requires collaborative planning by a wide range of agencies, from council, health and justice to infrastructure providers such as the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), power companies and telephone companies.

“It helps them do their long-term planning ... It makes a lot of sense.”

Steve previously experienced the four wellbeings when they were first introduced, as a member of the Lakes District Health Board in Rotorua.

“As part of that we had to do joined-up planning between the public sector agencies – district health boards, police and justice and all those other agencies – and agree on measures of community well-being.”

Indicators showed there was a problem with the health status of the community. Rotorua had the worst rate of dental caries in under-fives in the country.

“If you put your health hat on, the obvious answer to that is fluoridation of the water supply and Rotorua wasn’t fluoridated. It was a lower socio-economic community and no surprises you’re getting high rates of

dental caries in under-fives. And of course once your teeth are stuffed, your teeth are stuffed.”

The board put a lot of work into trying to convince the Rotorua council to fluoridate the water supply.

Another example was the high rate of Māori obesity and diet. There was a lot of work between the health board and councils around green prescriptions but also smokefree reserves, cycleways and walkways around the city to make physical activity easier. “That’s the sort of work the local government sector was moving down the pathway of – multi-agency planning and working together.”

From his time at Southland District Council, one of the pieces of work he is most proud of is Council’s role in the Milford Opportunities Project, an example of the new order of planning. This ambitious multi-agency initiative involving iwi, Southland District Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, the Department of Conservation, NZTA, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and tourism business operators, is designed to manage tourism through the Milford corridor to Milford Sound while safeguarding its unique character and values.

“It’s been made even more timely because of the impacts of Covid on international tourism,” Steve says. “It’s created an easier change process.

“It’s a collaborative model where we’re completely rethinking the way in which services are delivered. I think that applies over so many areas of our business. It’s a tangible one where we’ve thrown away the shackles of what we have today and are trying to rethink the right model going forward.”

He says he has enjoyed his time in Southland immensely.

“The sad part about leaving is that we’re still on an organisational journey and the community is still on a journey. The important piece it seems to me is that the journey continues.

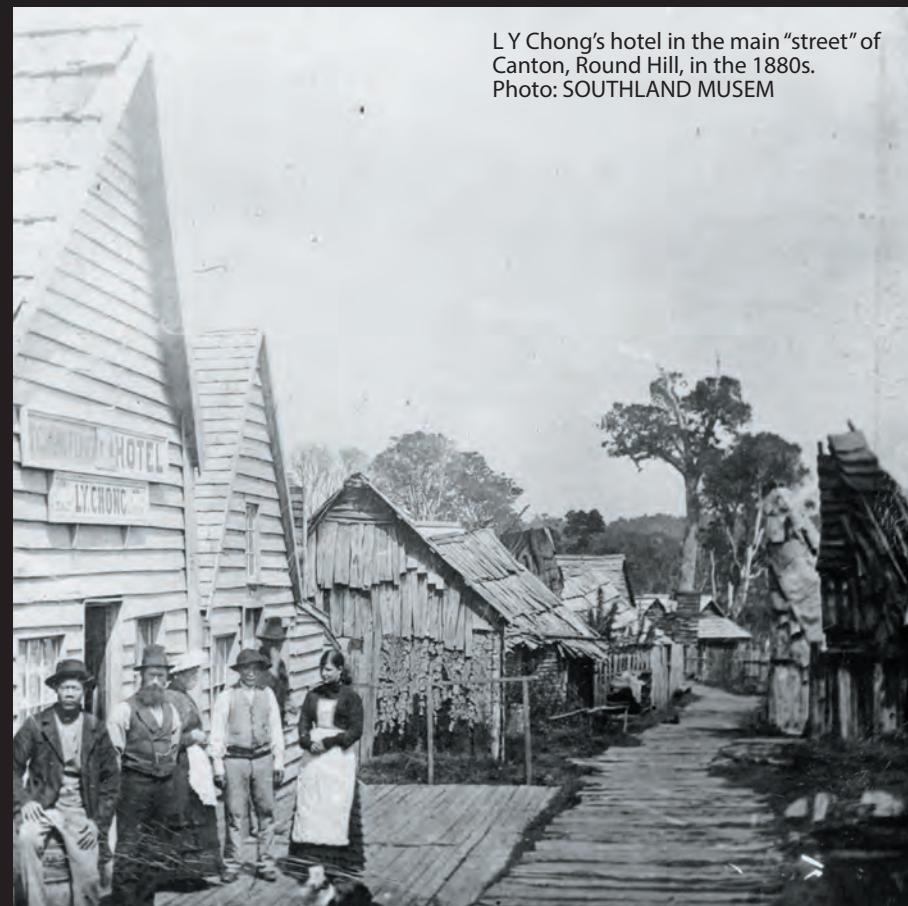
**“We’ve got to get better at looking beyond our borders at what’s going on and learning some lessons. That’s the big challenge for Southland.”**

**Welcoming Communities is led by Immigration New Zealand in partnership with the Office of Ethnic Communities and the Human Rights Commission. It brings together local government and communities to make the places we love welcoming for everyone.**

**Southland District Council is a formally accredited "established community" under the national Welcoming Communities standard.**

**Southland District Council is committed to seeing newcomers to the District settled and integrated successfully into their new lives.**

**Southland District Council is committed to embracing and celebrating the District's cultural diversity and to building and strengthening a cohesive and culturally connected community.**



L Y Chong's hotel in the main "street" of Canton, Round Hill, in the 1880s.  
 Photo: SOUTHLAND MUSEUM

# A unique Chinese settlement in the south

The Chinese goldmining village of Canton is a brief and often forgotten chapter in Southland's history.

Yet at its peak the township at Round Hill, near Orepuki, was a bustling community with a resident population of somewhere between 500 and 700 Chinese migrants, the vast majority of them male.

In 1882, Canton was the largest Chinese settlement in New Zealand. It had 20 buildings in its main "street" with a further 100 miners' huts scattered around the surrounding goldfield. There were hotels, stores, shanties, a temple, a Presbyterian church, gambling and opium dens and a sports bar complete with billiards table.

The Chinese who came to Round Hill, or "Long Hilly" as they called it, were attracted by the gold that was reasonably plentiful in the

locality, but hard to get at because of a shortage of water for washing away the mine tailings. The Europeans labelled it a "poor man's field" and abandoned it when easier takings were discovered at nearby Orepuki.

Lack of water was undoubtedly the biggest impediment to gold mining at Round Hill.

Mr Warden McCulloch's report in the 4 August 1883 edition of the Western Star states: "The want of water still continues to be the great cause of complaint at Round Hill, preventing the development of a considerable area of what is stated to be payable ground."

The Chinese developed their own method of getting the gold out.

The Otago Daily Times reported in a retrospective article on 26 May 1900: "It was found that the leads of good washdirt were highly

payable if driven out and then broken down so as to save the gold, very little water being used. So these new chum Celestials learned how to mine underground and work in a manner that could hardly be improved on with the object in view."

At the time, Chinese were frequently known as "Celestials", a reference to the "Celestial Empire", a historical literary name for China. It later fell into misuse as a racial slur.

The Chinese were extremely hard workers prepared to endure harsher conditions than the European miners, hence the disproportionately high numbers of Chinese who worked the diggings there.

Their hard labour often reaped rich rewards, and there was quite deeply entrenched resistance to their presence from some, and open hostility from others, which was freely expressed in the

newspaper columns of the time.

Perhaps this was the result of envy at the Chinese capacity to work hard in conditions considered unpalatable by Europeans, and the large returns of gold they often netted as a result of their endeavour. Either way, the Chinese were widely misunderstood and they tended to stay together in Canton.

Today, it seems only right that many Chinese made their fortunes on Round Hill because they did nearly all of the work, either for themselves or under contract to mining companies. Ironically, this willingness to work would prove to be the undoing of Canton.

The Otago Daily Times reported in May 1900: "The European labour could not be got on the field, and the larger water races had to be cut in by the Chinese, under special contract, to get a preference of the water brought into the field. Thus things were entirely in the hands of the Chinese; stores, hotel, mission church, water races, claims and mining rights being principally controlled by them."

The Chinese settlement of Round Hill lasted just 15 years. Private Chinese and European miners were effectively squeezed out by the Round Hill Gold Mining Company, which reneged on its offers of access to water rights in return for cheap labour, and bought all the main water races, which had been built largely by the Chinese. Deprived of water, the independent miners, including the last Chinese, left the area.

By 1896 most of the Chinese had gone, having either made their fortunes or found more gainful employment elsewhere. It is no surprise that they moved on, given the shabby treatment many of them received when they were here. The Chinese were industrious, communal and hard-working, and contributed much to the short-lived goldmining industry.

Today it is hard to imagine the existence of a purely Chinese township being established in our midst. Chinese, along with many other cultures, are welcome to settle here and they



play an important part in the wellbeing of the south.

The story of Chinese settlement at Round Hill took a final tragic turn in 1902.

At the instigation of the Cheong Shing Tong benevolent society, the remains of 489 Chinese miners who had died in New Zealand, including all those who perished at Round Hill, were to be repatriated to their homeland. Their bones were exhumed and prepared for a voyage on the SS Ventnor, bound for Hong Kong.

Sadly, the ship struck a reef off the coast of Taranaki in the early morning of 27 October. The captain tried to make for Auckland but the SS Ventnor sank on 28 October 1902, about 21km west of the Hokianga Heads. Thirteen crewmen drowned when a lifeboat was swamped and searchers were able to retrieve only a few of the Chinese coffins. As remains washed ashore in Northland, local iwi accepted them and buried them in their own ancestral burial grounds.

Today there is little evidence of this fascinating part of our history, save for a small portion of the Round Hill company's mighty water pipe that ran 1.8km downhill from a natural reservoir at the top of the hill all the way to the Ourawera flats, an overall fall of 100 metres. It was built largely by Chinese labour.

No traces of Canton village remain today, but Chinese lilies still flower annually in the area – an elegant reminder of the unique contribution made to Southland's pioneering history by the hardy Chinese miners.



Lemple Public Hall, Round Hill.



Roundhill goldmine. 1902.

# Dale Wairau

By Phil McCarthy

**W**e're all in the same waka.

It's a useful thought to keep in mind when we're living through challenging times.

For Te Anau community worker Dale Wairau, it's one of a handful of phrases that reflect a caring mindset trained on helping the Fiordland community respond to challenges the best way they can.

It's a mindset where people are not marginalised or stigmatised because of their socio-economic or cultural status.

Dale is one of a broad team of leaders who helped initiate the Fiordland community support response to the Covid-19 lockdown, and who in his role has been helping sew together the social fabric of the region for the past 15 years.



He says the Te Anau basin was Southland's fastest growing area in terms of population pre-Covid-19, an idyllic place teeming with tourists and investment.

"We've got a better climate than Dunedin."

When challenged through the likes of floods, Covid-19 and the subsequent drop-off in tourism, a different face emerged – one of a community showing resilience and character, he says.

Community leaders, including the Fiordland Community Board, police, health representatives, Emergency Management Southland and local councillor Ebel Kremer, stepped up to the plate and dealt with the waves of issues that rolled in.

"We had clarity in our communication out to our community," Dale says.

Families shone. Migrants were supported. But some businesses are struggling. The strain is ongoing – and the uncertainty the community faces continues.

Working out how to operate and cope in the current climate is a crucial question. It's something Dale spends his days helping people work through.

He encourages parents to be honest with their kids and not be afraid to say; "We're a little scared too, maybe let us do this together". These are uncertain times.

When there are issues challenging the community, an inclusive and non-judgmental community response is

needed, one that does not cause more harm. This requires a finely balanced approach.

Dale follows a Te Ao Maori perspective where the foundation for a healthy community is strong individuals working together with mutual respect and aroha.

"The Te Ao Maori perspective is open and available to all."

His community work follows the well-established Whare Tapu Wha health model where Taha Hinengaro (Mental Health) incorporates mind, body, thoughts and feelings. It also encompasses Taha Whanau (Extended Family Health), Taha Tinana (Physical Health) and Taha Wairua (Spiritual Health).

He says we tend to isolate or focus on one area of our wellbeing at the expense of the others.

"You need four wheels on your car," he says.

When growing up, sports helped Dale learn about team commitment, integrity, respect and work ethic, and he had positive mentors that believed and invested in him.

Now he's the coach, giving back. In August, Dale was head coach of the Te Anau rugby team which upset Midlands 27-24 to win Southland's division one Ack Soper Shield title – helping bring a bit of much-needed uplift to rugby fans in the area. He's also involved in the New Zealand Maori under-18 rugby set-up.

Above and beyond his role as a coach is his role as a husband and father. It's all part of being balanced, Dale says.



"Knowing your history and knowing who you are. I'm balanced. I'm centred. I know my turangawaewae. Young people and people in general ... too often they don't know where they stand. They're unable to make a stand."

He subscribes to a saying from All Blacks legend Sir Brian Lochore that "better people make better players", and this belief helps players to be responsible, accountable men.

"I coach rugby but we really coach our teams for life as well."

The sense of whanaungatanga – the relationships through shared experiences and working together – are hugely meaningful to him.

He says he was raised in a "normal dysfunctional family". Likewise, he considers every youth is "at risk" if they don't have positive role models.

Dale worked in several roles around health and wellbeing in Invercargill before moving with wife Kelly and their family to Te Anau 15 years ago. The couple have 11 children – 10 boys and a girl, ranging in ages from 30 to 11. Monday night family

dinners are his highlight of the week, when more than 20 whanau and friends can be around the table.

He says as a community worker building trust is essential to getting people to engage.

"If you don't connect, it'll be a bumpy journey."

He never claims to be walking in someone's shoes, but rather casts out a vision, which a person can own, drive and run with.

"And that kaupapa runs through my job, my sport and my family."

Outside of work, family and sport Dale enjoys reading, and wants to make more time for hunting deer and pigs.

"It's odd. I used to hunt more when I lived away from this place. I appreciate bringing home the bacon, or the venison."

He says Kelly has the hardest job in the world – being a mum.

"She is the taxi driver, hairdresser, the Inland Revenue, the nurse, everything."

He has an eye for a catchphrase and has built up a few during the years.

One comes with the B.E.D acronym, meaning we can't use "blame excuses and denial" when things don't go right. We need to replace these ideas with ownership, respect and responsibility to ourselves, Dale says.

His "second office" is the mouth of the Upukerora River at Lake Te Anau.

It's where he comes with clients to skim some stones and have a yarn.

**"It's a neutral, natural and beautiful place. This is the best office in the world."**

Dale has also been integral in somewhat of a cultural awakening in Te Anau, introducing a hugely successful Waitangi Day celebration and adding a rousing haka to Anzac Day commemorations.

He was also part of Te Ara Reo group, which held hui for Maori whanau to implement a Maori LAT (limited authority to teach) teacher in the Fiordland area.

He is excited at plans for Waka Ama to be rowed across the lake, and his ultimate dream is to have Waka Ama for Hauora Health and Wellbeing on the water as another way to connect with people.

Dale will soon be joining Te Putahitanga team as a Navigator Hauora worker but will still be based at the Fiordland Community House.

He says having some fun and introducing a bit of humour to what we do is crucial, as is considering the world through a different lens.

"We complicate things so much, sometimes it's good to go back and see things from a child's perspective," he says.



## COVID-19 funding for Southland businesses!

**Your business could be eligible for up to \$5,000 - or up to \$10,000 if you are a tourism business - to help navigate the impacts of COVID-19**

### Eligibility criteria:

- ✓ Have fewer than 100 full-time equivalent employees
- ✓ Are GST registered in NZ
- ✓ Have a New Zealand Business Number
- ✓ Are operating in a commercial environment
- ✓ Are a privately-owned business or are a Māori Trust or incorporation under the Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 or similar organisation managing Māori assets under multiple ownership
- ✓ Have undergone an assessment with a Great South Business Advisor

**Great South is administering the funding which will allow your business to access expert advice in the following areas:**

- HR & Employee Relations
- Legal, Financial and Cashflow Management
- Health and Wellness
- Business Continuity Planning
- Marketing Strategy
- Digital Enablement Strategy
- Business Hibernation (up to \$5,000 for tourism businesses only)

**REGISTER ONLINE AT:**  
[app.regionalbusinesspartners.co.nz/business/selfregister](http://app.regionalbusinesspartners.co.nz/business/selfregister)

**OR EMAIL:**  
[business@greatsouth.nz](mailto:business@greatsouth.nz)

# Antenno:

## What you need to know, when you need to know it

### Water outage? Roadworks? Dog registration reminder?

Southland District residents will soon be able to be notified about important events or happenings in your community as quickly as possible, with information sent right to your phone.

Council is preparing to launch Antenno; a free mobile phone app that will send you notifications and alerts about places you care about.

You'll be able to select the places you want to be informed about, which could include your home, your workplace or where your kids go to school. And you can opt out of topics you're not interested in.

The app is not only about ensuring you are informed about things like water shutdowns, rubbish and recycling collection, roadworks, rates reminders or library updates as quickly as possible, but it also allows you to tell us about issues you would like fixed.

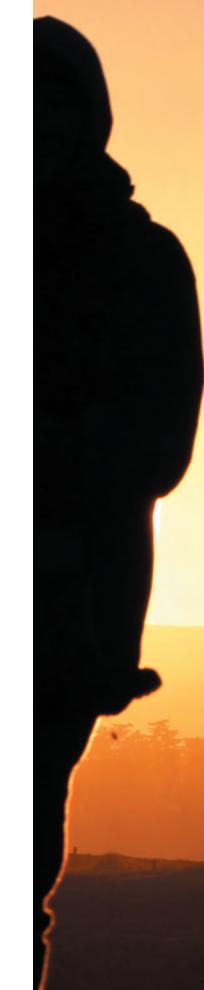
Flooding, road issues, street light out?

You'll be able to report all of this and more via the app.

Watch this space – Antenno is coming.



# What's Your View?



Southland is a remarkable region with many landscapes and natural features that contribute to its unique scenery and place in the world.

Now Southland District Council, in partnership with iwi, is embarking on a project to identify where these important landscapes and features are within our District.

Community views, as well those of experts, are set to form an integral part of the work to identify such spaces. In the coming months we will be asking you to tell us about the areas that hold value to you.

The landscapes or features that you deem important could be right on your doorstep or simply in the background of your everyday life – either way, we want to know what your view is.

Resource management policy planner Margaret Ferguson says Council will be considering a wide range of views to identify the landscapes and natural features significant to Southland.

“We’re so fortunate here in Southland to have such incredible natural scenery.”

- Margaret Ferguson.

“Our work at the moment is about better understanding the landscapes and features that hold value and that are distinctive to Southland.”

The identification work will be three-fold, with a professional report, a cultural assessment and community views all combining to highlight certain landscapes and features that are important to Southland. Once complete, Council will again be looking to work alongside the community to discuss the findings and to determine ways we can work together to look after these important spaces for generations to come.

Head to [www.makeitstick.nz](http://www.makeitstick.nz) for more information.

We want your help to identify our significant landscapes and natural features

# Cemetery project honours Southland's past

By Kate Buchanan

The words etched on them may be scarce but headstones tell a story.

Donna Hawkins has uncovered many interesting tales since embarking on an ambitious project to establish memorial boards in Southland cemeteries.

"Every cemetery tells a story – a story of shopkeepers, bakers, politicians, sickness and sadness, peace and war. It paints a picture of great loss, the struggles, the triumphs, dances, music, love and family. Harsh realities when breaking in the land by the people who walked before us, the people who make up each and every community that exists today," Donna says.

"Decades of families, young and old, every life mattered and the memorial boards are a living record dedicated

to Southland's ancestors, Southland's people of all races and nationalities.

**"Cemeteries are my passion and I am very proud of a project that honours Southland's ancestors. Southland people are proud of their heritage."**

- Donna Hawkins

There are 62 cemeteries scattered throughout the Southland District and, as a result of Donna's dedicated efforts, 22 of them now have their history captured and on display.

The cemetery project was first discussed in 2006 when Jack and Rosalie McLean, from the Balfour Cemetery Trust, approached Southland District Council about a memorial board.

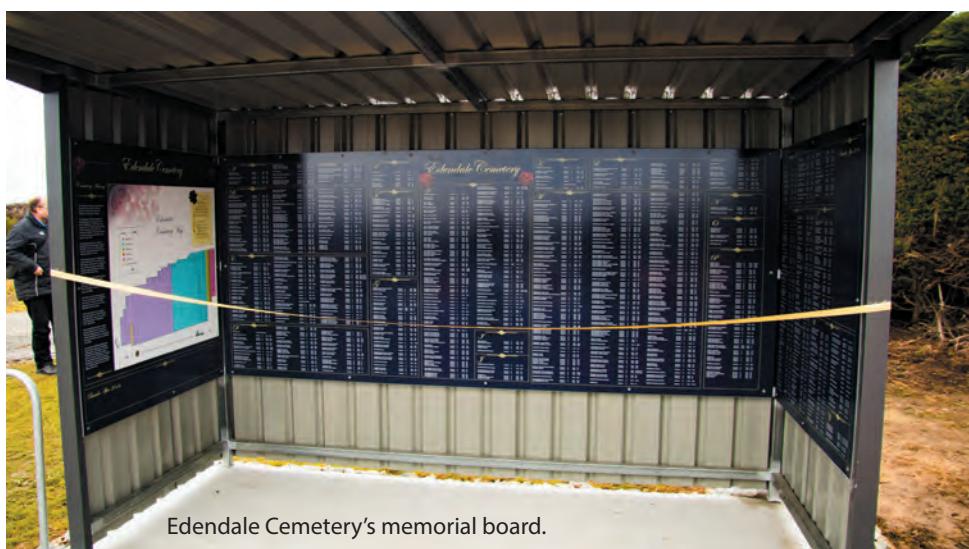


"Genealogy trended and families starting looking for lost relatives, some travelling to Southland's cemeteries to repair graves and erect headstones," Donna says.

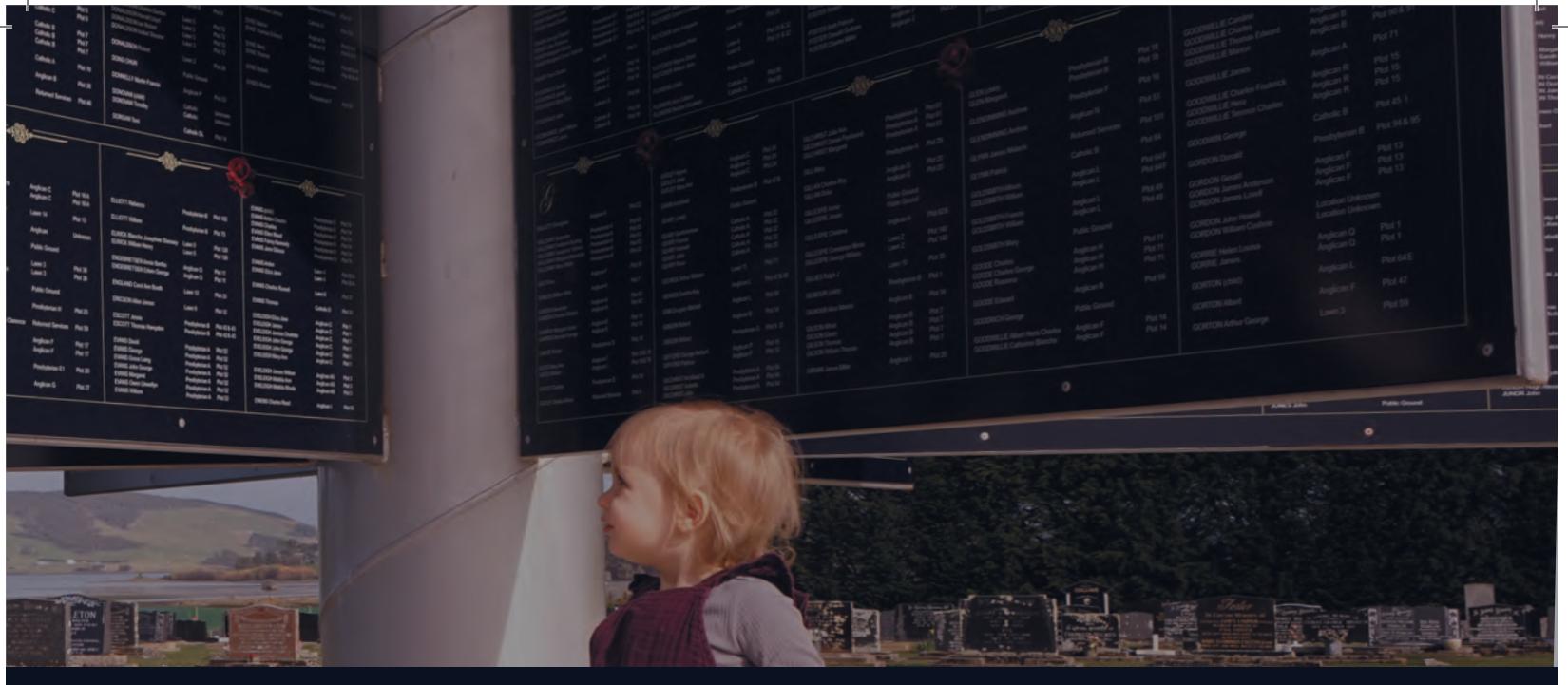
"There was an influx of people knocking on the doors of the local communities asking for information and some very late at night."

Southland District Council is the first in New Zealand to attempt a project like this. I did some extensive research and talked to other councils in New Zealand. Some had a system, but no-one really knew how to go about creating a living memorial board."

For Donna, a senior graphic artist at SDC, it became a classic "labour of love" with help from organisations such as cemetery trusts, Lions, Rotary, community boards, Ngā Tahu and genealogists.



Edendale Cemetery's memorial board.



"They were only too eager to help, right down to the genealogy groups assisting with research," Donna says.

"My Council colleague David Joll has also been a valuable asset with his extensive knowledge of Southland's cemeteries."

Most of Council's historic cemetery data has had to be reconstructed and researched internally.

"Back in the 18th century records were kept with the bank manager and often taken home at night in a briefcase. Fires were prevalent during this historical period and nearly every cemetery's records went up in flames."

Donna and Dave even ventured to Births, Deaths and Marriages in Wellington in 2009 to research the microfiche records for Old Otautau, Wyndham, Edendale and Mokoreta cemeteries.

Each memorial board is a unique structure with Southland's environment often dictating the style used at various locations.

"If it's a coastal cemetery the structure has to be protected from sea salt where possible, such as Orepuki, Fortrose and Halfmoon Bay."

The purple and gold theming was chosen as they are common mourning colours over all religions.

"The community has preference when choosing the flowers to go on the boards as some flowers have personal meaning," Donna says.

Winton Old Cemetery is the latest memorial board in development and will feature the story of the infamous baby farmer Minnie Dean – the only woman to be hanged in New Zealand.

**Just some interesting stories which emerged during the Cemetery Project:**

**Fortrose:** The first European cemetery in the Catlins with a recorded burial in 1873. The grave of James Welsh, the first person hanged in Invercargill, is here. He murdered his wife at Waikawa Station on 15 September 1878. She was only 20 years old and the residents raised enough money for a headstone. Her headstone has since had the words "murdered by her husband" chiselled off following a request by a local priest.

**Quarry Hills:** The only cemetery in Southland where graves are still dug by hand – the chance for the community to say a last goodbye as they dig and chat.

**Dipton:** Most of former Prime Minister Sir Bill English's family are buried here so it was appropriate for him to officiate at the opening. Sadly, the graves of some children are buried near the riverbank in Dipton as their mothers were unmarrried.

**M**okoreta: A challenging place to dig graves due to semi-hard rock so explosives had to be used. Flora Keeler, a 10-year-old farm worker, lay in an unmarked grave after dying from blood poisoning following a pig bite. During research a relative was found who then made a headstone for Flora.

**E**astern Bush: Operated by a trust, the price of a plot has remained unchanged at \$1-\$3 since 1904.

**T**uatapere: One of the best maintained cemeteries in the Southland District. The first burial was of Richard Rodgers, a butler who eloped from Sweden with the daughter of his employer to settle in Tuatapere.

**L**ynwood: This Te Anau Cemetery opened for burials in 1974. With many graves scattered in rugged parts of Fiordland which can't be accessed, a panel in their honour was inserted on the memorial board called Fiordland's Lonely Graves. A second panel, Lost But Not Forgotten, is in memory of all the people who died in Fiordland and whose bodies were not recovered.

**W**airio: Nightcaps and Wairio suffered one of the highest death rates in the country during the 1918 influenza pandemic – 45.9 per 1000 people – including the Rogers family who tragically lost 10 of their children within days.

**R**iversdale: In 1888, the Riversdale Amateur Dramatic Society organised a cemetery fundraiser: "Come to Riversdale and be buried - desirable front lots available."



Each presentation is unique. Balfour Cemetery's kiosk (above) looks quite different to Wyndham's (below left) and Mokoreta's (below right).



### Cemeteries completed

Balfour, Fortrose, Eastern Bush, Waikawa, Riversdale, Wallacetown New, Quarry Hills, Tuatapere, Woodlands, Centre Hill, Halfmoon Bay, Te Anau (Lynwood), Garston, Athol, Lumsden, Wairio, Edendale, Dipton, Riverton, Old Otautau, Wyndham, Mokoreta.

### Cemeteries updated

Tuatapere, Balfour, Quarry Hills, Lumsden, Garston

### In consultation

Forest Hill, Waikaia, Wallacetown Old, Calcium (Isla Bank), Tokanui, Clifden, 1940 Farm Access 15 Horseshoe Bay, Ryal Bush, Jamestown, Not Used Burial Site 1915, Hedgehope, Braggs Bay (private Māori burial ground), The Neck (private), Tararua Acre, Nokomai public burial ground Chinese burial site 4, Oraka Colac Bay (Maori burial grounds), Wakapatu (Maori burial ground).



# MAYORAL RELIEF FUND DELIVERS CRUCIAL HELP

**M**ore than \$146,000 was granted from the Mayoral Relief Fund to Southlanders affected by the February floods.

Southland Civil Defence Emergency Management group controller Angus McKay says 61 applications were received by the 30 June deadline, with a total of \$146,691 granted to date. Three applications were still in the process of being reviewed.

"This fund was established following the 1984 floods to deliver crucial help to those in our community impacted by the disaster. Now, 36 years later, it continues to do exactly that, which is fantastic," Angus says.

The Southland Mayoral Relief Fund was available to help those affected by the floods who had exhausted other avenues for support. A Mayoral Relief Fund Committee comprising local leadership administers the fund.

Of the grants approved, 65% were for individuals, 19% were for businesses and 16% were for

farming. Regionally, 80% were from the Mataura/Gore area, with 20% from Te Anau.

"The need was very real amongst the applications received so this fund has been a real asset in giving us the ability to help at such a challenging time," Angus says.

Applications for the fund included support for everything from household items, lost revenue for businesses, vehicles and machinery to school resources and children's car seats.

Following the 1984 floods, a total of \$174,661 remained in the fund. In February this year the fund was boosted by a \$100,000 contribution from the government, along with an \$86,956 donation from the Invercargill City Council. Local businesses and members of the public also donated a further \$5202.



▲ Angus McKay

**"In challenging times, Southlanders rally together and this is testament to that."**

- Angus McKay.

An RNZAF helicopter flies over the flooded Mataura River at Mataura.





# Up ✓ to code

## WITH JULIE CONRAD

**News from Southland District Council's building solutions team.**

### WHAT'S NEW WITH FEES?

1 July 2020 brought with it some new fees here at SDC. While most of our fees remain well below average for New Zealand, all fees have been increased by 7%. In addition, Council has introduced the below changes to its fee structure:

- From 1 July 2020, the MBIE levy rate has reduced from \$2.01 to \$1.75 including GST, for any building work that is over the \$20,444 threshold (including GST). Council notes that the new levy applies for consents 'granted' from 1 July 2020 onwards. All Council-related fees for applications lodged before 1 July 2020 will be charged at the 2019/2020 financial year rate, except for this levy, which will be charged according to the date your consent is granted.
- We now have a non-refundable 'base fee'. This fee includes the minimum amount of processing and inspections typically required for each building type. If your build requires additional processing hours, or more inspections than the base fee, these will be charged on top of the base fee. Only those additional inspections charged will be refunded if they are not used.
- We have introduced five new fees that most councils already charge. Like all other fees these are a 'base fee' that includes the minimum required activities. Council will then use the hourly rates advertised to charge for any additional processing and inspection costs that more complex work may require (when this work exceeds that included in the base fee).

#### The fees are:

- Swimming pool inspection \$165.00
- Annual renewal of Building Warrant of Fitness \$111.00
- Inspection of a Building Warrant of Fitness \$350.00
- Application for Amendment of Building Consent \$400.00
- Discretionary exemption from a building consent fee \$342.00

You will notice that most of these new fees relate to the monitoring and enforcement roles of Council, an essential service that we perform to keep our community safe. Further details regarding this year's fees can be found on SDC's website in our Schedule of Fees and Charges.

### BWOF RENEWAL CHANGES

Council has completed a review of procedures regarding BWOF renewals and on-site BWOF audits and we've decided to make a few changes. From July 2020, these changes include:

- Council will send out only one reminder letter, one month before the Building Warrant of Fitness (BWOF) is due.
- Overdue BWOFs will be sent a Notice to Fix (NTF) and there will be a two-month time limit to remedy the NTF.
- Reminder letters will be sent out weekly to both the agent or owner.
- We are transitioning our reminders to an electronic process. Initially we will continue sending out the reminders by post, but in the future we will move to emailing them out.
- Annual BWOF renewals will be processed at the cost of \$111.00 each.

We recognise that some BWOF inspections may have been missed due to the Covid-19 lockdown. To address this, we are aligning ourselves with the below MBIE guidance. This relates only where

inspections have been missed due to COVID 19. Your IQP will be able to assist in presenting clear documentation to us.

[www.building.govt.nz/covid-19/inspection-and-maintenance-of-specified-systems/](http://www.building.govt.nz/covid-19/inspection-and-maintenance-of-specified-systems/)

MBIE requires a greater number of on-site BWOF audits to be carried out annually than we have completed to date. As a result, you will also see Council doing more of these on-site audits in the future.

### NEW BUILDING CONSENT EXEMPTIONS

Additional building consent exemptions have been added to the Building Act 2004. Building consents may no longer be needed for a number of new or expanded types of low-risk building work, such as sleepouts, sheds, carports, outdoor fireplaces and ground-mounted solar panels.

Building work that does not require a building consent must still comply with the Building Code and other legislative requirements, such as those under the Resource Management Act 1991, the Electricity Act 1992 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

The new exemptions commenced from 31 August 2020.

Before carrying out exempt work, it's important you follow the MBIE guidance (<https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/planning-a-successful-build/scope-and-design/check-if-you-need-consents/building-work-that-doesnt-need-a-building-consent/>) correctly. If you are unsure what legislation may apply, and what the requirements are, it's best to consult a professional.

- Julie Conradi is Southland District Council's building solutions manager.

## For all building inquiries

Please email us on [building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz), or phone 0800 732 732.

Please note that we will not accept building inspection bookings directly through individual inspectors.

To book a building inspection, email [building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz) or phone 0800 732 732 at least 48 hours, and preferably 72 hours before you require an inspection.

The call taker will require the person requesting the inspection to provide the building consent number, the address of the property the work is being carried out at, the type of inspection required, the day the inspection is required and the contact details of the person who will be on site.

The building inspector will contact the person who will be on site before 5pm on the working day preceding the day that the inspection is due to take place, to confirm the time of the inspection.

It is imperative that the stamped consented drawings are on site to allow the inspector to carry out their inspection.

### How it works

If you need an inspection on a Thursday, contact us no later than 5pm on the Monday beforehand, and preferably earlier than this. See the table.

Book inspection no later than 5pm on	Inspection day following booking
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday

SDC's building solutions team receives a lot of communication. We highly value our contact with our customers, but so we can efficiently process and record it all we ask that all inquiries regarding inspection notices be emailed to us at: [building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:building-cs@southlanddc.govt.nz).

## ANIMAL CONTROL

# MICROCHIPPING TIMETABLE

AREA	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Invercargill Office (car park)	Wednesday, 7th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Wednesday, 2nd 11.30 – 12 noon
Otautau Office (at rear)	Tuesday, 6th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Tuesday, 1st 11.30 – 12 noon
Lumsden Railway (at rear)	None	Wednesday, 1st 11.30 – 12 noon	None
Riverton Office	None	Tuesday, 3rd 11.30 – 12 noon	None
Winton (opposite SDC Office)	Thursday, 8th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Thursday, 3rd 11.30 – 12 noon
Te Anau Office (at rear)	None	Thursday, 5th 11.30 – 12 noon	None
Wyndham Office (at rear)	None	Tuesday 10th 2.00 – 2.30 pm	None

All dogs eligible to be registered with the Southland District Council can be microchipped for free.  
ALL dogs must be registered by 3 months of age

# Winton Library refurbishment gets the green light from Council

An important page has been turned on the Winton library project.

At its 27 August meeting, Council approved unbudgeted expenditure of \$1,314,918 to refurbish the Wemyss Street library and office site. A total of \$500,000 will be allocated from existing residual property budgets with a 30-year loan funding the remaining \$814,918, beginning in the 2021/2022 financial year.

Southland District Council group manager services and assets Matt Russell says the project to reinstate the library and office facilities for the community has made great progress in recent months.

“We recognise the time it has taken to get to this point and appreciate the patience and understanding of the community given the events of 2020,” he says.

## **“We’re excited to now take another important step forward with this project.”**

Matt says the focus is on developing a great community facility while maintaining flexibility for the future.

“This concept plan incorporates library services, community spaces and access to Council staff and services. It also features the functionality needed to meet the expectations of our customers both today and into the future,” he says.

A recent seismic assessment found the Wemyss Street building was safe and able to be increased to 100% of national building standards as part of the proposed works.

The Winton Library was closed in May last year after mould spores were discovered. In November, the results of comprehensive testing following remedial works confirmed the mould issue and fungal contamination had been eliminated.



▲ Trudie Hurst



▲ Cr Christine Menzies

The concept that received Council’s nod of approval opts to change the layout to incorporate the storage site from Brandon Street and a new community room. An automatic door will be installed, along with the addition of shelving on wheels to create a flexible space. Another meeting room will be created and hot desks available for other Council staff to work from or meet with customers.

Councillor Christine Menzies believes it will offer a safe space that encourages connectedness.

“I am really pleased we haven’t made the mistake of thinking a library exists just to improve the community through access to books,” she says.

“Why would we not take the opportunity to consider the social wellbeing that this upgrade can provide and, indeed, one can argue the cultural wellbeing of our community.”

Group manager customer delivery Trudie Hurst pays tribute to the Winton library team.

“During this challenging time, they have been amazing, resilient, community-focused and professional,” she says.

The next step is to get the formal design and consenting under way, which is likely to take until Christmas.

The temporary Winton library and office will continue to operate from the RSA Hall in the foreseeable future.



# Mobile Library Timetable

SOUTHLAND  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



**Sep 2020 - Dec 2020**

Athol	Shop	Noon-1pm	Tues	29-Sep	27-Oct	24-Nov	22-Dec
Balfour	Tavern	5.30-6.30pm	Tues	15-Sep	13-Oct	10-Nov	8-Dec
	Tavern	1.30-3.00pm	Thurs	1-Oct	29-Oct	26-Nov	*
Blackmount	Wairaki Stn	11.30am-12.15pm	Mon	28-Sep	*	23-Nov	21-Dec
Dacre	Hall	9.00-10.00am	Fri	18-Sep	16-Oct	13-Nov	11-Dec
Dipton	School	11.00am-Noon	Tues	15-Sep	13-Oct	10-Nov	8-Dec
Drummond	School	10.30am-Noon	Wed	16-Sep	14-Oct	11-Nov	9-Dec
Edendale	Car park	1.00-4.00pm	Fri	2-Oct	30-Oct	27-Nov	*
	School	10.30am-Noon	Fri	18-Sep	16-Oct	13-Nov	11-Dec
Fortrose	Picnic Area	3.00-4.00pm	Fri	18-Sep	16-Oct	13-Nov	11-Dec
Garston	School	1.30-2.30pm	Tues	29-Sep	27-Oct	24-Nov	22-Dec
	Village	2.30-3.30pm	Tues	29-Sep	27-Oct	24-Nov	22-Dec
Glenham	School	1.00-2.00pm	Fri	18-Sep	16-Oct	13-Nov	11-Dec
Gorge Rd	Hall	11am-12.30pm	Tues	22-Sep	20-Oct	17-Nov	15-Dec
Hauroko Valley	School	1.00-1.30pm	Mon	28-Sep	*	23-Nov	21-Dec
Heddon Bush	School	1.30-2.30pm	Wed	16-Sep	14-Oct	11-Nov	9-Dec
Hedgehope	School	11am-12.30pm	Fri	11-Sep	9-Oct	6-Nov	4-Dec
Hillside School	School	11am-12.30pm	Thurs	10-Sep	8-Oct	5-Nov	3-Dec
Invercargill	SDC Office	9.30-11.30am	Thurs	24-Sep	22-Oct	19-Nov	17-Dec
Limehills	School	9.15am-10.30am	Thurs	10-Sep	8-Oct	5-Nov	3-Dec
Longbush	Kindergarten	9.00-10.00am	Fri	2-Oct	30-Oct	27-Nov	*
Mossburn	RSA	9.30-10.30am	Tues	29-Sep	27-Oct	24-Nov	22-Dec
	School	1.30-3.30pm	Tues	15-Sep	13-Oct	10-Nov	8-Dec
Nightcaps	Johnston Rd	9.30-10.30am	Mon	28-Sep	*	23-Nov	21-Dec
Ohai	Com Centre	2.00-4.00pm	Thurs	10-Sep	8-Oct	5-Nov	3-Dec
Orepuki	Main St	3.00-4.00pm	Mon	28-Sep	*	23-Nov	21-Dec
Otara	Hall	2.30-4.00pm	Wed	23-Sep	21-Oct	18-Nov	16-Dec
Pukerau	School	9.30-11.30am	Wed	30-Sep	28-Oct	25-Nov	23-Dec
Rimu	School	10.30-11.30am	Fri	2-Oct	30-Oct	27-Nov	*
Riversdale	Com Centre	11am-12.30pm	Thurs	1-Oct	29-Oct	26-Nov	*
	Com Centre	2.00-4.30pm	Thurs	17-Sep	15-Oct	12-Nov	10-Dec
Riverton	BUPA Village	2.00-4.00pm	Thurs	24-Sep	22-Oct	19-Nov	17-Dec
Roslyn Bush	Playcentre	9.15-10.00am	Tues	22-Sep	20-Oct	17-Nov	15-Dec
Ryal Bush	Com Centre	2.30-4.00pm	Fri	11-Sep	9-Oct	6-Nov	4-Dec
Te Tipua	School	9.30-10.30am	Fri	11-Sep	9-Oct	6-Nov	4-Dec
Thornbury	School	1.00-2.00pm	Wed	9-Sep	7-Oct	4-Nov	2-Dec
Tokanui	Main St	1.30-4.00pm	Fri	25-Sep	23-Oct	20-Nov	18-Dec
	School	9.30-11am	Mon	14-Sep	12-Oct	9-Nov	7-Dec
Waianiwā	Hall	3.00-4.00pm	Wed	9-Sep	7-Oct	4-Nov	2-Dec
Waikaia	School	9.00-10.30am	Thurs	1-Oct	29-Oct	26-Nov	*
	Com Centre	10.15-11.30am	Thurs	17-Sep	15-Oct	12-Nov	10-Dec
Waikaka	Com Centre	2.00-4.00pm	Wed	30-Sep	28-Oct	25-Nov	23-Dec
Waikawa	Hall	10am-Noon	Fri	25-Sep	23-Oct	20-Nov	18-Dec
Waimahaka	Hall	11.30am-1.00pm	Wed	23-Sep	21-Oct	18-Nov	16-Dec
Wallacetown	Com Centre	9.00am-Noon	Wed	9-Sep	7-Oct	4-Nov	2-Dec
Wendon	Hall	Noon-12.30pm	Thurs	17-Sep	15-Oct	12-Nov	10-Dec
Wendonside	Hall	9.30-10.00am	Thurs	17-Sep	15-Oct	12-Nov	10-Dec
Woodlands	Shop	2.00-4.00pm	Tues	22-Sep	20-Oct	17-Nov	15-Dec
	School	2.00-4.00pm	Mon	14-Sep	12-Oct	9-Nov	7-Dec

\* denotes public holidays

Southland District Libraries Ph: 0800 732 542 Email: winton.library@southlanddc.govt.nz

# Funding available for community projects



Whether it's the arts, sport and recreation, education, health or social welfare, a vast range of community projects contribute to Southland's unrivalled lifestyle.

We've earned a reputation for making things happen and that's credit to the many people in our District who are the driving force behind each accomplishment.

Sometimes a financial boost is needed and Southland District Council has a variety of funding options available. More information can be found in the My Council section on our website [www.southlanddc.govt.nz](http://www.southlanddc.govt.nz).

Community Partnership Funds are administered by each of our nine community boards. Several closed on 31 August but applications in the Fiordland, Oreti, Ardlussa and Waihopai Toetoe community board areas close on 30 September, and Stewart Island/Rakiura applications close on 31 October. Application forms and criteria are available at [www.southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf](http://www.southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf)

For projects of a larger scale which

benefit the whole region, or at least two community board areas, the District Initiatives Fund supports the development and implementation of initiatives. The total fund available for distribution in the 2020/2021 financial year is \$38,080. Applications for the current funding round close on 30 September.

The Southland District Heritage Fund has a total of \$60,000 annually to support the conservation of heritage collections and encourage the development and application of professional museum standards. The current funding round closes on 30 September.

Local arts initiatives can benefit from Creative Communities funding, with applications open until 30 September.

The Ohai Railway Fund provides grants and loans for the benefit of residents of the former board area and is accepting applications until 30 September.

Those in the Wyndham area can apply to the John Beange Fund which is available to support recognised community groups or organisations and individuals or projects for the benefit of residents within the area. Applications for 2020 close on 30 September.

The next funding round of the Northern Southland Development Fund also closes on 30 September, while the Stewart Island Rakiura Visitor Levy Fund closes on 31 March.

If you're embarking on tertiary education next year, SDC's Centennial Bursary scholarships can assist with costs. We award \$2000 to two recipients each year, with applications closing on 20 December.

For those with an adventurous spirit, the Eric Hawkes Outward Bound Scholarship supports two Southlanders to attend the renowned course at Anakiwa, near Picton. Each year scholarship recipients benefit from increased self-responsibility, confidence and motivation as a result of this opportunity. Closing date for applications is 20 December.

The Valmai Robertson Arts Scholarship encourages Southlanders to increase their skills through the attendance of development courses, workshops, projects or study in the arts.

Awarding up to \$2500 annually, the scholarship was established to acknowledge the incredible contribution of Blackmount's Valmai Robertson, whose dedication to dance spanned over 50 years.

Applications close on 20 December for those involved with genres including speech, dance, drama, music or visual arts.

Junior sports teams could be eligible for the Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund to help subsidise transport costs to games when competing regularly in a local competition.

Southland District Council has a range of scholarships and grants available for residents of Southland District.

Full details, criteria and application forms are available on our website: [southlanddc.govt.nz](http://southlanddc.govt.nz) > My Council > Funding & Grants

For more information on any of these funds and scholarships, call Shanin Brider on 0800 732 732.

## SDC Grant Funding

### Community Partnership Fund

Administered by each of the nine community boards and available to support projects in their respective areas. Closing dates and application forms can be found online at [southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf](http://southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf).

### District Heritage Fund

Available to support the conservation of heritage collections and encourage the development and application of professional museum standards. Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### Sport NZ – Rural Travel Fund

Available to assist with transport expenses associated with participating in regular local competitions. Ages 5-19.

Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### Creative Communities

Available for arts and cultural projects and initiatives which stimulate and strengthen local arts activity and participation.



Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### District Initiatives Fund

Available for projects of a larger scale which benefit the whole region, or at least two community board areas. Applications close on 31 March and 30 September.

## SDC Scholarships/ Bursaries

### Centennial Bursary

Two scholarships valued at \$2,000 each, awarded annually. Applications close 20 December.



### SDC Eric Hawkes Memorial Outward Bound Scholarship

Two scholarships in this category: one for 18 to 26 years and one for 27 years and over. Applications close 20 December.

### Valmai Robertson Arts Scholarship

Contestable fund of up to \$2,500 annually. Applications close 20 December.



## Other opportunities

### Northern Southland Development Fund

Available for the development of initiatives which benefit the residents of the Northern Southland Development Fund area (represented by the Southland District Council Five Rivers ward and the Dinton Community Levy area). Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### Ohai Railway Fund

Available for residents of the former Ohai Railway Board area, for the development of community facilities, programmes and other activities, tertiary education and employment training. Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### John Beange Fund

Available to support recognised community groups or organisations and individuals within the Wyndham area, or for projects for the benefit of residents within the Wyndham area. Eligible purposes include assistance occasioned by age, illness, congenital defect, accident or other misfortune, as well as the advancement of education and learning. Applications for 2020 close on 30 September.

## Contact us



All offices:

**0800 732 732**

District libraries: **0800 732 542**

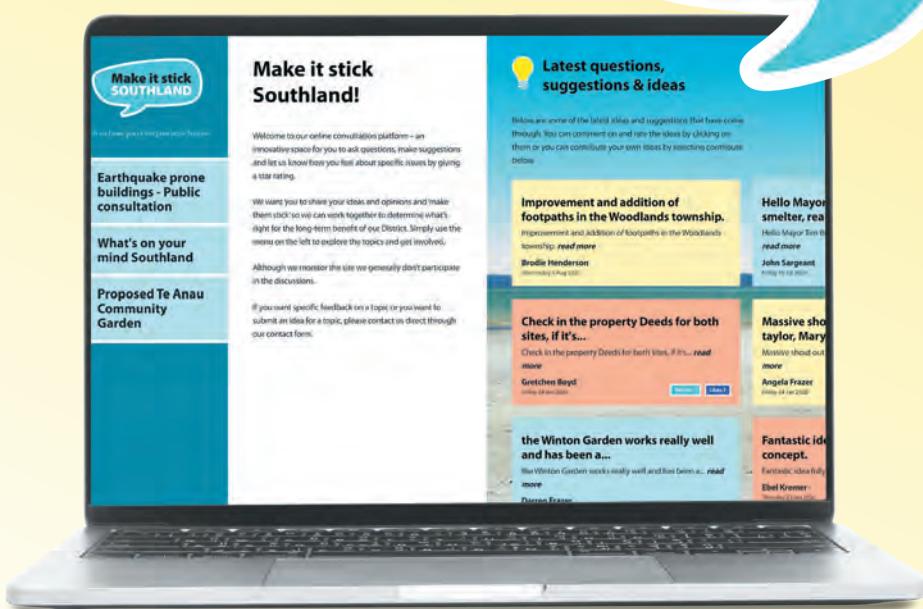


**0800 732 329**

[sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz)

[southlanddc.govt.nz](http://southlanddc.govt.nz)

# Make it stick SOUTHLAND



## What do you think, Southland?

Southland District Council wants to understand your views on a whole range of topics – your input helps shape the future of the district, so it's integral that you have the chance to have your say.

SDC has developed a website specifically for you to do just that – [www.makeitstick.nz](http://www.makeitstick.nz).

Make it Stick is our online consultation platform – an innovative space for you to ask questions, make suggestions and let us know how you feel about specific issues.

We want you to share your ideas and opinions and make them stick so we can work together to determine what's right for the long-term benefit of our District.

### Current consultations

We're currently consulting on earthquake-prone buildings in the medium earthquake seismic risk areas of Southland District.

The Building (Earthquake-Prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2016 introduced a new system for identifying and remediating

earthquake-prone buildings, and means we need to prioritise certain buildings for remediation.

While some buildings are already prioritised (certain hospital, emergency and education buildings which are earthquake-prone), the work we are now doing is looking at others that may be classed as priority buildings because of their location and the potential impact on people if they failed in an earthquake.

We've started this work by identifying thoroughfares that have unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings and sufficient vehicular or pedestrian traffic to warrant prioritisation.

We've identified thoroughfares in Otautau, Tuatapere, Riverton, Winton and Wyndham that may meet the criteria, but we need your input to better understand how these areas are used and if there are other areas not listed that you want to tell us about.

For more information or to have your say, check out [www.makeitstick.nz](http://www.makeitstick.nz).

**Submissions are due by Friday 30 October, 2020.**