



## From the Mayor Meng Foon



**Tena koutou katoa, Nga mihi nui ki nga whanau whanui katoa o te rohe nei.**

**It's good to be back from my reconnaissance visit to Sichuan, China, which suffered a 7.9 scale earthquake in May. It is good to be able to sit on a nice toilet, drink water from the tap, breathe fresh air and see the sky. I appreciate the great place we live in.**

**Council has unanimously confirmed to build a wastewater treatment plant on the Banks Street site.**

**The local economy is humming along and building consents are flowing with new homes and extensions and some earthquake damage work. Hikurangi Forest Farms is expected to start foundation and building work soon. Work has begun for a new Bunnings centre on the Gisborne Milk site. By the end of 2009, a new Mitre 10 will be built on the gasworks site and a new retail precinct in Customhouse St. Our next Long-Term Council Community Plan is being developed. Township plans have been factored into this. Te Araroa is a new beauty with its main street upgrade.**

**I have been lobbying for free toll calls for East Coast people with limited success. Waimata people will be pleased to see their road has the green light from the regional development roading programme.**

**Thanks for a great year. I appreciate all those who do voluntary work. Mere Kirihimete ki a koutou katoa and happy new year.**

**Meng Foon**

## Librarians help district children gain super powers

Reading is known to be a Super Power within easy reach of every child in the district. Over the next month, children from two to 12 will be encouraged to develop this power further through Superheroes Read: Panui ano nga Hautipua – the sought-after annual summer reading programme offered in English and Maori.



**Superheroes (from left) Barbara Walsh, Saidhanya Viswanathan and Te Rangirangi Tangohau are ready to use their super powers to help improve children's reading over the summer holidays.**

Children's librarian Te Rangirangi Tangohau says the programme will again capture the hearts and interests of young readers with plenty of Super-

Hero story-telling in the library, face-painting and other activities, and Zappo the Magician culminating in the grand finale party on 21 January.

"The goal of the Summer Reading Programme is to encourage and promote the fun of reading to children. It also aims to involve family in their children's reading at home and to develop a positive relationship between children, libraries and the library staff. The programme's long

life and growing appeal show its success." The programme is available at 24 libraries in the Eastern and Central Community Trust region.

## Banks St gets nod for wastewater

The paperwork is in and a resource consent hearing is scheduled for early 2009. All going well, the first sod should be turned by mid-year with the construction of the new eastern and western interceptor transfer pipelines. And the city's new wastewater plant should be operational by the end of 2010 as planned. Councillors in November unanimously supported building the treatment plant at a Banks Street site bought in October. Variations to existing consents were lodged early this month for a "reduced scope" plant that includes one biological trickling filter and disinfection to treat the city's domestic wastewater, a pre-treatment facility for industrial and domestic wastewater, and a full industrial separation scheme. The scheme includes the flexibility to implement alternative use and disposal

of the treated wastewater in the future. Mayor Meng Foon says the agreement was a significant milestone.

"Various conditions were agreed with the Wastewater Options Review Group. These include installing a disinfection process by 2012 and, once consents are granted, forming a technical advisory group comprising Council and community representatives."

The treatment performance will be carefully monitored and modifications made to upgrade if necessary.

"The technical advisory group will report to Council by 2013 on the plant's performance and the biotransformation

achieved, taking into account the social, economic, environmental and cultural effects."

In parallel with the consenting process, consultants CH2M Beca are proceeding with the detailed design at Banks Street, modifications to the main wastewater collection system and industrial separation scheme. The Banks Street site was increased to about 1.6ha after a land swap arrangement in November.

The scheme is expected to cost about \$45m. By 2011, about \$20m will have been saved for the scheme through a special wastewater levy and accumulated depreciation funds. Another \$25m will be raised by loan.



Artist's impression of Banks Street wastewater treatment plant showing one tank at rear.

## Rates reduction likely for some

Don't expect to know this month whether your rates will rise or fall as a result of your property being revalued. But be assured, the impact of this latest revaluation will be known before the new rates year starts on 1 July 2009. People who pay rates in Gisborne should have their new Notice of Valuation for 2008 by this week. Some ratepayers – whose properties have fallen below their 2005 valuation –

could see a rates reduction. Valuations are expected to reflect a depressed market across nearly all types of property. A general revaluation takes place every three years with rates based on the value of the property. Council contracts Landmass Technology Ltd to undertake the valuation. Landmass must comply with various Acts and, together with Council, is subject to audit by the Office of the Valuer General.

Ratepayers have until the end of January 2009 to object to their new valuations. The process is outlined on the back of the Notice of Valuation. See [www.gdc.govt.nz/services](http://www.gdc.govt.nz/services) for more information on rating valuations.

### Check it out on [www.gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz)

Council's website is the place to keep up with everything from reading the news and making a submission to contacting a councillor.

## Community approach at Ruatoria

Ruatoria's flood risk is attracting a whole-of-catchment approach. Council is working with He Oranga mo Nga Uri Tuko Iho and Te Puawaitanga o Ruatorea trusts to look at issues from erosion control through to employment, with protection works the immediate focus.

Engineering and works manager Peter Higgs says the idea is to use local labour and river shingle to construct four-legged concrete shapes that would hold up each other and the bank of the Waiapu, which is eroding at a rapid rate on the town side. Work is expected to start in the next financial year.

# It's summertime — take care of yourself and each other ...

## ... on the roads

### when driving

Remember the golden rules – don't drink and drive, take regular stops, keep within the speed limits and wear seat belts. Watch out for cyclists, and respect their right to the road.

### when cycling

Remember that a hi-viz vest will help you be seen but, most importantly, remember to cycle defensively – expect that every parked car could open its door on you, that drivers of other vehicles will not see you at roundabouts or on busy roads. More cycle lanes have been developed within the city during the past few months, and more are to come. Taking a backroads route, where possible, is sometimes a safer option.

## ... by the water

Whether you are at the beach, river or harbour, STOP, look and think before you act. And remember to:

- always supervise children
- respect yourself and other people in the water
- know your limits and stay within them
- swim between the flags where you can
- check conditions before you enter the water
- never swim alone
- check river depth before jumping or diving in
- wear a life jacket when you are in a boat.

## ...around food

Follow the creed of Clean, Cook, Cover, and Chill and help keep your friends and family safe from foodborne illness.

## ...near fire

A restricted fire season is in force. A permit is required to light a fire in the open air (excludes gas barbecues) and there is a total fire ban on all beaches.

When camping, remember to:

- store LPG cylinders outside of shelters
- change LPG cylinders in open air
- ensure adequate ventilation when using LPG/meths appliances inside.

## ...in the sun

Be SunSmart – Slip, slap, slop and wrap to protect yourself and your family from the damaging rays of the sun. Slip into the shade as much as possible.



wherever you are, whatever you're doing RESPECT goes a long way

## Get your permits first please before setting up camp

The sun is out, the salt spray is in the air. It's time for the annual jaunt to the beach to live it up under canvas. But, before you set up at your favourite freedom camping site, please get a permit first. Buy them online at [ww.gdc.govt.nz/Services/FreedomCamping](http://ww.gdc.govt.nz/Services/FreedomCamping), over the phone or through the post with payments to a specified bank account. Next up is the chemical toilet. Don't leave home without it. Freedom camping offers the cheapest accommodation in town – just \$60 for six people to camp 28 nights, \$25 for 10 nights and \$10 for two

nights. Each permit includes one rubbish bag for each night's camping. Extra bags can be bought for \$2 each from Council offices, the rubbish contractor or their agents.

Reserves supervisor Jenny Allen says those without permits and chemical toilets will be jumped on quickly, thanks to Council's freedom camping bylaw. Illegal campers will be issued trespass notices, ordered off and refused entry to any district reserve. And remember, no camping at Turihaua until Boxing Day.



## Amping 4 Camping

Look out for the December issue of Arts & Entertainment Guide Wasabi, available at an outlet near you. The sometimes-serious, always-quirky, free monthly publication, partly funded by Council, also comments on Gisborne issues and documents history as it unfolds.

## ... and don't forget to care for the environment

Please take care of our coastal environment.

Don't drive on the reefs at Makorori or Kaiti Beach or over the dunes, or around Wherowhero Lagoon where rare birds nest. Doing so could attract a fine of up to \$400.

Imagine the weight of a vehicle on a periwinkle, chiton, crab, sea anemone or neptune's necklace seaweed. Then imagine their state after being run

over many times a day. Obviously, fewer species will be alive afterwards – and each rocky shore species plays an important role in the biodiversity of the shoreline.

Community facilities asset manager Terry McMillan says Council and police inspectors will be watching out over the summer to help keep vehicles off the reefs. And he encourages residents and beach-goers

to "dob in a drongo" by taking note of the time and date of any offence and vehicle registration numbers. Photographs would also be good.

"Under our current bylaws, vehicles and motorbikes are not permitted on any dunes.

"We are also reviewing access to other areas where there are issues of safety or potential damage to the environment, and other restrictions may follow."

## Safety the aim with early parapet-strengthening

Building parapets in the inner city could be strengthened as early as March 2011 if a proposed change to Council's Earthquake-Prone Building Policy goes ahead as planned.

The draft policy, now out for public consultation, proposes that parapets on pre-1976 buildings be strengthened within two years of the policy being approved. Gisborne is believed to be the first council in the country with such a clause.

The parapets are expected to be assessed by March 2009 and notices issued for strengthening where required. Construction consents administrator Ian Petty says the collapse of parapets – low walls

along the edge of a building's roof – caused about 90 percent of damage in the inner city during last December's earthquake. This was notable where parapets from buildings fell on to neighbouring lower buildings and caused major damage.

Another change in the policy allows for a building to be reassessed after an earthquake and a shorter timeframe than the original given for strengthening if required. Rural churches with low occupancy rates also come in for special treatment.

"We don't want to lose the historic fabric of our community by saying these churches have to be strengthened. Some churches, including one at

Tokomaru Bay, are only used for weddings and funerals. We don't want communities to have to sell or demolish these churches because they cannot afford earthquake-strengthening. We will look at them on a case-by-case basis and if quake-prone will see how any danger can be mitigated in a cost-effective way. We want to make them as safe as possible but retain them for future use."

The revised policy also clearly sets out the requirement to strengthen a building to two thirds of the current building code.

Submissions close on 23 January. Copies of the draft policy are available from Customer Services.

# In short

## Flush water before drinking

Residents are reminded of the Ministry of Health recommendation to flush a mugful of water from drinking-water taps (including those with filters) each morning before use to remove any metals that may have dissolved from plumbing fittings. This simple precaution is recommended for all households, including those on public and private water supplies.

## Realignment for problem hill

Work is progressing on the \$2.5m realignment of the state highway south of Ruatoria. Council is working with New Zealand Transport Agency to facilitate various issues around the 1km realignment which will take the road over Goldsmith's Hill (formerly Kemp's Hill) and provide security of access to those living north of the area. The realignment, which involves 5ha of Maori land and 280,000 cubic metres of earthworks, is expected to be completed by early February 2009.

## Collaboration the aim at Wainui

Wainui and Okitu residents have been discussing with Council the sustainable management of their on-site wastewater systems. The meetings early this month were the first step in a collaborative approach to develop and implement an annual programme of inspections and monitoring. Plans for reticulation were abandoned mid-year and in late October a bid to set up an elected group of five to represent the Waini, Okitu and Sponge Bay communities was tossed out.

Chief Executive Lindsay McKenzie says Council didn't think an elected group would achieve the desired purpose.

"It was suggested that we meet on an area-by-area, issue-by-issue basis. We did not want to repeat the experiences of the past; we wanted to make sure we were in tune with community needs and aspirations."

## Assets under review

The spotlight remains on the ownership and performance of some of Council's significant assets. Chief Executive Lindsay McKenzie says business plans have been developed for the Waikanae Beach Holiday Park, forestry holdings and the Vehicle Testing Station. These provide five-year budgets and outline return on capital investments. This more commercial approach also led to the division of Council's community facilities team into separate community and commercial functions. The asset review subcommittee is now looking at how best to protect the proceeds of any asset sales made for the benefit of ratepayers long-term.

"The idea is to take a staged approach, starting with a simple arrangement when the fund is small but becoming a more complex governance arrangement, similar to Taranaki Investment Management Ltd, as the fund grows. We need to give councillors and the community confidence that the proceeds from any asset sale would be protected. Having an investment fund set up with good policies around it is preparing the ground for this."

# GISBORNE DISTRICT COUNCIL Annual Report 2007-08

## FOREWORD

from the Mayor and Chief Executive

This section highlights the main points from the Annual Report 2007-08, which covers all activities undertaken by Council during the year. The full report is available from Customer Services.

*Tena koutou nga mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa*  
It's fair to say that not all of the things we sought to achieve during the year went to plan. On 20 December 2007, Mother Nature chimed in with a reminder of her own about the uncertainty of these times with a magnitude 6.8 earthquake. The resources of the community and of the Council were tested that night and over the coming weeks. You should all be proud of your response [Council Revenue 2007/2008](#) and resilience.

It is especially noteworthy that on top of the workload from the 'quake' the Council's Building Control team led us to become one of the first councils in the country to be accredited as a building consent authority under the new law. Heavy rain in the autumn and winter also challenged us with access to coastal communities, SH35 north of Ruatoria and the Waiomatatini Road, badly affected. There was good news on the roading front with the opening of the new port bypass route – Rakaiaatane Road. This project was a joint effort in the truest sense with the Government, Council and port company sharing the funding, and the contractors, Council and the port company sharing project management. While these roading projects remained a priority along with the Regional Development Roothing Programme, our efforts to improve opportunities for walking and cycling in and around the city were increased. Some major planned works did not go ahead. Council decided against a landfill at Mander Road after reviewing the business case. The proposed Wainui and Okitu water and wastewater reticulation project did not go ahead when the community opposed the scheme on account of cost. Council has undertaken to work with the community to develop a system of sustainable on-site sewage disposal.

The proposed wastewater project for Gisborne city, which was granted resource consents in late 2007, was major project "number one". Since then Council has designed a consent compliant plant and fully scoped and costed the project. The cost of up to \$84M excluding GST led to further work on the

options and to serious questions about affordability. Making the project affordable, while achieving the desired environmental outcomes, led to Council pursuing a "reduced scope" scheme (see page 1). There has been an ongoing commitment to our rural communities as well. Work on township plans has continued and we are now implementing them. Also, about 10 years of work and community consultation concluded with the hearings and decision on the variation to our District Plan to assist and manage the district's most erosion-prone land.

The Government made it clear in late 2006 that the Council needed to support the East Coast Forestry Project aims by introducing a regulatory measure so that the Government's annual funding of about \$6m could continue. We have achieved that, subject to appeals.

## Future

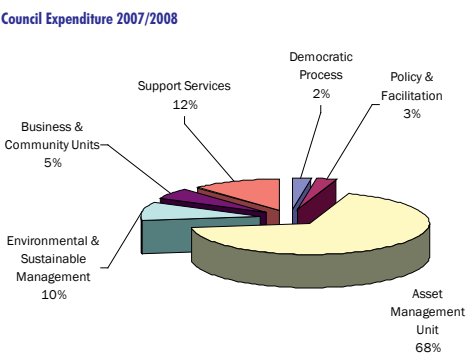
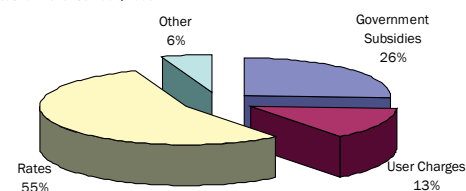
As we reflect on the year and thank all of you, members of the community, councillors and staff, who have contributed so much to the district this past year, it is appropriate to look ahead.

Globally there are financial and economic pressures as economies adjust to the credit crisis, the value of the currency, commodity prices and instability in the price of oil. Gisborne will be affected by these outside pressures.

As we come off our own growth spurt, there is some hope we may be buffered by the investment Hikurangi Forest Farms have committed to now they have their resource consents. The settlement of the Turanganui a Kiwa and Ngati Porou Treaty claims will also bring new capital into the region and provide a new and sound economic basis for tangata whenua to grow. Council has been able to support the office of Treaty Settlements in that process, although it is too early to report on the result of that involvement.

If you want to read more detail, please get a copy of the full report from Customer Services.

Meng Foon, Mayor Lindsay McKenzie, Chief Executive



## FINANCIAL REPORT

The Income Statement shows an overall operating surplus of \$5.49m compared to a 2007-08 Annual Plan surplus of \$11.7m. The operational Net Cost of Service shows a net cost of \$43.57m against an LTCCP budget of \$41.48m, a variance of 5.02%.

Some capital work was deferred with only \$17.42m from a budget of \$25.48m being undertaken.

Public debt has remained at \$24m. However, as noted above, significant capital work has been deferred. If all of this capital work were completed by 30 June 2008, the public debt balance would be about \$32m.

| FINANCIAL STATISTICS                                   | ACTUAL 2004 | ACTUAL 2005 | ACTUAL 2006 | ACTUAL 2007 | ACTUAL 2008 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Proportion rates to total income                       | 53%         | 49%         | 53%         | 52%         | 55%         |
| Average rates per rateable property (city residential) | \$1,812     | \$1,827     | \$1,995     | \$2,071     | \$2,192     |
| Net public debt (as % of total assets)                 | 3.36%       | 2.22%       | 1.98%       | 1.37%       | 1.39%       |
| Public debt (per rateable property)                    | \$1,601     | \$1,571     | \$1,422     | \$1,134     | \$1,120     |

| FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY | 2004 \$000 NZ GAAP | 2005 \$000 NZ GAAP | 2006 \$000 NZ GAAP | 2007 \$000 NZ IFRS | 2008 \$000 NZ IFRS |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Rates (GST exclusive)         | 31,717             | 33,710             | 35,131             | 37,114             | 38,894             |
| Net Surplus / (Deficit)       | 9,578              | 14,317             | 4,485              | 4,359              | 5,492              |
| Working Capital               | 1,088              | 5,017*             | 5,439              | 967                | 4,250              |
| Net Public Debt               | 32,002             | 32,002             | 30,000             | 24,000             | 24,000             |
| Total Assets                  | 954,397            | 1,440,365          | 1,516,231          | 1,755,114          | 1,729,782          |

\*excludes current portion of public debt as this was refinanced.

## Tauwhareparae Farms

The farming activities returned a net operating loss after tax of \$688,000.

## Pacific Rim theme for Botanical Gardens

Four new gardens, scores of tree labels and a revamped aviary could begin to be developed mid-2009 at the Botanical Gardens.

Consultation has begun on the gardens' draft management plan adopted last month, giving the public until the end of February to make submissions. Special projects planner De-Arne Sutherland says the key objective of the management plan is to further enhance the reserve as a Botanic Garden.

"This means improving plant collections and

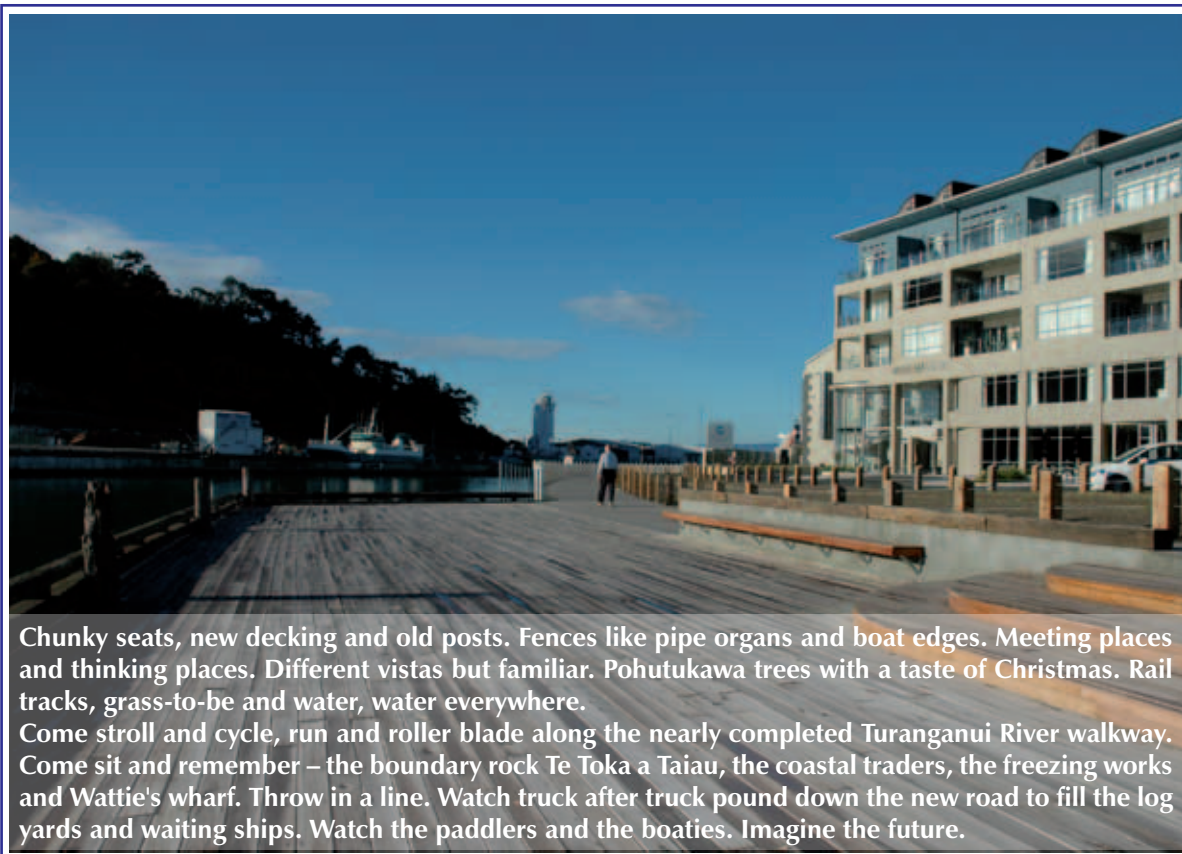
developing new collections, recognising the Pacific Rim as a theme, and providing learning and passive recreation opportunities. It involves labelling trees, having plant and bird inventories, and creating storyboards to help people interpret the gardens and explain what plants the gardens hold and why." The playground will remain on its site but will be upgraded. A new aviary will be built between the Japanese Garden and the playground.

Two of the four new gardens planned will provide formality and a traditional component. The Meeting

Place garden will include a ground level water feature with shooting jets of water about 3m high, surrounded by hard surfacing and lawn. The Maze Garden, to be developed on the current aviary site, will use low-growing species of Hebe or Coprosma which can be clipped.

"This will be a modern take on the traditional maze gardens and kept low for safety reasons."

A Bog Garden and the New Zealand Garden Walk are also included in the draft plan, available on line, through Council offices or the public library.



Chunky seats, new decking and old posts. Fences like pipe organs and boat edges. Meeting places and thinking places. Different vistas but familiar. Pohutukawa trees with a taste of Christmas. Rail tracks, grass-to-be and water, water everywhere. Come stroll and cycle, run and roller blade along the nearly completed Turanganui River walkway. Come sit and remember – the boundary rock Te Toka a Taiau, the coastal traders, the freezing works and Wattie's wharf. Throw in a line. Watch truck after truck pound down the new road to fill the log yards and waiting ships. Watch the paddlers and the boaties. Imagine the future.

## Variation aims to make Tokomaru Bay safer

Building a house or creating a subdivision on Tokomaru Bay's high-risk coastline could be prohibited in some areas if a proposed plan variation and plan change come into effect next year.

Other activities such as installing or altering coastal protection works may require resource consents.

Council is seeking a variation to its Coastal Plan and a plan change to its District Plan to address coastal hazard risks at the bay. The proposed changes would particularly affect people wanting to build or subdivide on land in extreme and high risk coastal hazard zones.

If the proposed changes go ahead, coastal hazard zones would be added to the Coastal Plan and the District Plan to show areas of extreme, high and moderate risk, as detailed by coastal management expert Dr Jeremy Gibb earlier this year.

Natural resources senior planner Yvette Kinsella says

Dr Gibb found that, generally, the southern end of Tokomaru Bay is eroding slowly while much of the coastal margin at the Waima end was subject to extreme landslip and erosion risk.

"Dr Gibb also found that coastal flood risk is greatest in the centre of the bay where human settlement is most intense. Some parts of the bay are exposed to extreme coastal hazard risk including a significant amount of community infrastructure, most notably Waima and Beach roads. The proposed changes are aimed at ensuring a pattern of settlement that doesn't expose residents to significant coastal hazard risks." The variation and plan change are expected to be notified in December, with consultation continuing in early February.

Tokomaru Bay is the latest area in the district to have coastal hazards mapped. Other areas are Muriwai, Poverty Bay, Wainui, Tolaga Bay and Anaura Bay.

## Keep stream banks clear

Don't use the stream or river bank on your property like a tip. If you are lucky enough to have a stream or river border your property, please look after it by keeping the banks free of green waste and rubbish. While it is illegal to put organic waste or rubbish on the banks and rivers, the practice is all too common. With the first high river flow, debris washes down waterways, clogs culverts and under bridges, and ends up on the Waikanae and Midway beaches, the annual clean-up of which costs Council about \$20,000 a year.

Rivers and land drainage asset manager Jürgen Komp says the Queen's chain does not apply beside city streams and rivers. City landowners are responsible for looking after the riverbank on their property. Council is responsible for the stream and river bed, and ensuring the water can flow as intended.

He also says people need to regularly maintain trees like willows and poplars, many of which have grown too big for their situation.

Over-large, unstable trees can fall on buildings and people, or into streams, causing blockages and flooding in rain events. This can lead to erosion of the banks, resulting in valuable soil and land lost to sea.

"Willows and poplars also need to be maintained in rural situations. Old trees that are too big, and cannot be layered to grow new trees, should be removed and new trees planted.

"We encourage people to contact Council if they know of dangerous trees beside waterways and maintain trees before they get too big. We can assess the danger and advise them of the best options."



The Hirini Street grille (above) helps trap debris from further up the Kōpuawhākapata Stream (below).



## Improvements already noticeable within Lysnar Reserve

Visible changes are taking place within the Lysnar Reserve. At the Makorori Headland, gum trees have been removed, the last set of steps installed and the entrance on the southern side repaired. At Okitu, two new sets of swings have been erected in the new playground area and some old play equipment relocated and refurbished. Bollards have been installed to keep traffic out of the area.

Having dry feet is the aim of metal laid either side of the Murphy Road bridge, where a horse access has been developed at the southern approach. The natural track through the reserve will be improved by



the addition of "duck" boards next winter to enable dry-feet access across stormwater outlet areas.

Special projects planner De-Arne Sutherland says the community has become involved in some parts of the work plan. A fundraising group will cut the felled gum trees at Makorori Headland, remove the wood and chip the brush. Another group is potting up surplus pohutukawa seedlings and growing them on for future replanting at the headland.

The Lysnar Reserve Management Plan includes the removal of exotic trees such as Norfolk pines and Pinus radiata, some of which have already been

removed from the Hamanatua Stream area. However, Council has since resolved that Norfolk pines will not be removed during the life of the current management plan. Staff will amend their works programmes accordingly.

The removal of Norfolk pines from the Whales grave, at the northern end of the Okitu beach, was halted following a protest. Tangata whenua were waiting for the trees' removal to begin tidying up of the Whales grave site and planting of medicinal native plants. The aim is to move the information panels away from the highway and develop new panels facing towards the car park area, a short walk away.