



# Ōmārama Gazette

August 2025

## We're with you all the way, Sadie!

The World Rowing Under 19 championships began in Lithuania on Wednesday and our girl is there.

Ōmārama's Sadie Mason, who was selected for the New Zealand team in April after a successful season of secondary school rowing, will have her first race on Thursday at 8.50pm New Zealand time.

Yesterday, excited mum Kay Mason, who along with the rest of the family has remained at home, said for the past six weeks Sadie had been "living the athlete's life at Lake Karapiro".

"She has been training hard and squeezing schoolwork in between."

Before leaving for Europe the team were presented their New Zealand row suits by Emma Twigg. Twigg is a world champion rower and Olympic medallist.

"[It was] a very special moment," Kay said.

*-continued over*

*Wearing our Silver Fern: The New Zealand team competing at the World Rowing Under 19 championships in Lithuania, including Ōmārama's Sadie Mason show off the singlets presented to them by New Zealand champion rower Emma Twigg.*



# *We're with you all the way, Sadie! - continued*

Much hard work, training plus intensive fundraising, has gone making this dream happen.

Sadie needed to raise an estimated \$20K for training and the trip Lithuania because this is not funded by Rowing New Zealand.

As part of the community service section of the William Pike Challenge Ōmārama School pupil Charlotte Hales raised almost \$4,000 towards Sadie's goal by selling blocks of butter.

The crews arrived in Lithuania about 10 days ago.

Sadie, who attends Twizel Area School, is racing the Junior Women's Quad [JW4X] with teammates Angalla Carney (Waikato Diocesan), Charlotte Peterson (Marian College), and Eleri Clare (Cashmere High School).

The championships in Trakai, run from August 6 to August 10.

Here is a YouTube link to view live streaming from the championships. <https://www.youtube.com/@worldrowingofficial/streams>

Sadie's first race is today, August 7, at 8.50pm (NZ time).

I'll stay up !! Set your alarms!

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED Below: The NZ Under 19 team arrives in Lithuania.



# Rūnanga begins new development

Demolition work has begun on two uninhabitable former Rabbit Board houses on Crown land, now owned by Te Rūnanga o Waihao.

The Rūnanga is developing the property at 40 and 48 Chain Hills Highway and the block of land that runs behind the two properties which it bought from the Crown last year.

The houses have been empty since 2016 when Environment Canterbury began a Crown land 'disposal' process.

After buying the houses the Rūnanga set up a working group to come up with options for the land and properties it had bought.

Te Rūnanga o Waihao chairperson Dardanelle told the Ōmārama Gazette its investment company, Te Rūnanga o Waihao Holdings Ltd, was currently working through the development of the site.

"We are pleased that our initial design work, along with the demolition work, has progressed quickly given the short amount of time Waihao has owned this property. "When we are in a position to share our final vision for building for affordable housing and worker accommodation to support the local economy, we will.

"We are in the process of demolishing the uninhabitable buildings on site, and groundworks will be undertaken as the next step," she said.

The Ōmārama Gazette also asked if the Rūnanga had considered buying the remainder of the land.

"The Master Plan for Ōmārama has been developed with the community, and Waitaki District Council has clear plans for the site next to our property.

"We have not made a decision on this as it remains with the current landowner," Ms McLean-Smith said.

*-continued over*





# *Rūnanga begins new development -continued*

Last year, the council purchase of this land was raised with Waitaki District mayor Gary Kircher after it was raised yet again in a public meeting.

At the time Mr Kircher reported the council, as part of the masterplan process, had let ECan know, that if it wanted to sell then the council wanted to have “first say”. He also raised the issue with Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Justin Tipa.

Yesterday, in reply to email questions sent to Mr Kircher and council property staff Mr Kircher replied that he had no further update to report.

The property staff did not reply.

In the council's long term plan there has been \$100K set aside for each of the 2027-28 and 2028-29 financial years for spending on an Ōmārama Masterplan. There are no additional details in the plan.

The town's original masterplan was finalised in 2020 after extensive community consultation and received Government Better-off funding to see it put in place.

Last month, the Waihao Rūnanga gave the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade the opportunity to use the derelict houses for training exercises before they were demolished. (See video below)

“It’s rare for houses to be available for training, and we’re excited for the local fire brigade to utilise these properties for a test drill before demolition commences,” Ms McLean-Smith said.

The project is being run by Brad Keen Building Ltd, of Waimate with Rooney Earthmoving on the diggers.

## **Background:**

Waihao marae is located between Oamaru and Timaru, in the township of Morven. The primary hapu – kinship group - of the governing body of Te Rūnanga o Waihao is Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe and Ngāi Tahu.

In 1877 Waitaha prophet Te Maiharoa led a migration to Ōmārama, also known as Te Ao Mārama, where they settled until they were evicted by armed constabulary in 1879.

The Ōmārama Rabbit Board land, which was originally part of Ōmārama Station, was passed to ECan in the late 1980s when Rabbit Boards were dissolved and it took over rabbit control management and the land the Board owned.

The whole parcel of land which extends west to the Ōmārama Fire Station was Crown-owned [Linzi] Land – a reserve administered by the Department of Conservation and at present maintained by ECan on Doc’s behalf.

The disposal process involves first offering the land to iwi which has right of refusal before it can be offered on the open market.

Last year, the Fire Brigade was granted title for a small section of the land which runs alongside the station to be set aside for fire and emergency purposes under the Public Works Act 1981.

# Ospri to ramp up TB control measures

National bovine TB eradication agency Ospri freely admits it has dropped the ball on control in its Lindis area but says lack of funding has also contributed to the problem and it is now committed to getting things back on track.

Last month, about 70 landowners, stock agents and other affected parties, including farmers from the Tarras area, met at the Ōmārama Hall to hear from Ospri representatives about the recent discovery of TB in one cattle herd, in Ōmārama.

Ospri senior veterinarian Kevin Crews led the meeting and South Island Operations field supervisor James Horton also answered questions. The Department of Conservation, who had been invited to the meeting, sent no representatives.

In April, Ōmārama landowner David Ellis bought calves at the Omarama calf sale. He was later phoned by the vendor from the Lindis Pass area to say they had reactors to TB.

After he contacted Ospri and tests were done, it showed four of the new calves had TB.

Mr Ellis had been open about the situation and made sure surrounding landowners knew about the positive test result, Mr Crews said.

The affected stock were isolated.

The blame did not lie with the vendor, they had done everything right, Mr Crews said.

The infection was not identified in the herd before the calves were sent to the sale.

Although there had been cases in the Lindis area because it had not been under movement control the calves did not have to be tested before they were sent for sale, he said.

The meeting was told Ospri was now considering several options for control including the "most aggressive" option of expanding the existing Otago/ South

*About 70 landowners and other affected parties met with Ospri representative at the Ōmārama Hall last month to discuss ways to prevent the spread of Bovine TB in the Ōmārama area. Photo: Fiona Caldwell, Ospri*



## *Osprey to ramp up TB control measures - continued*

Canterbury movement control area (MCA) to bring in about 620 additional herds. The new MCA would include Waitaki River, Benmore, Ahuriri, Cluden, Clutha, the Lindis Valley, Outram, and the Pig Route, he said.

He stressed this was an extreme option and he was aware there would be significant ramifications for the farms included.

In MCAs - areas where TB infected possums are known to exist or where it is important to monitor the possible spread of the disease in those populations - herds are tested every year and pre-movement testing is required before any animal can be moved off a property. Extending the MCA would affect traders, breeders and those winter grazing, "down to weaners", he said.

"If you are going to sell calves, we'll have to test them, he said.

"If we want to nip this in the bud but this is the most extreme [measure]."

This move was, at present, still under discussion but could possibly be legally gazetted in a month should Osprey decide to go ahead with it. The downside of leaving out some areas was possibly prolonging the control measures, he said.

Frustrated farmers asked why Osprey had not put its Lindis area under movement control sooner when it knew of the presence of TB there.

Simon Williamson, of Glenbrook Station, asked why, when the risk of TB was known, were the Lindis farms not under movement control, and also why it had taken so long for the issue to come to light when the calf sale had been in April.

Mr Crew acknowledged Osprey had 'dropped the ball'. The Lindis area was looked at three years ago and the decision was made not to put it under control which in hindsight was probably not the best decision, he said. There needed to be a certain rate of TB in an area before movement control was imposed.

"In the Lindis it exceeded that three years ago but then quickly dropped back."

"We have learnt and have a proposal," he said.

"But the horse has bolted," Mr Williamson said. Others said that as a result of ignoring "red flags" Osprey had "let them down". "It's too hard."

Osprey would also be ramping up its primary weapon in the fight to eradicate the disease and that was possum control. It initially had a goal of eradicating TB by next year. It had been "10 to 20 years" since possum control was last done in this area, he said. That was being remedied beginning with a major 1080 drop, recently.

"The possum is the 'centre of the universe' of the problem in New Zealand," he said.

From the existing research there was no need to spend scarce funds testing the possums because once possum numbers were driven to low levels it curtailed the spread. TB did kill possums, just not fast enough.

There were questions raised about controlling other disease vectors like pigs and deer, but Mr Crews said they did not pose the same risk. Possum control was their focus. This included on Conservation land. "Doc is in our headlights."

It was not quite correct that Doc were not funded, although not levied as farmers were those funds came from the Department of Agriculture. - \$25m a year was allocated for possum control on crown land. "Provided they don't stop us having access [to the blocks] we will do possum control," Mr Crews said.

Osprey was funded directly [from the Crown] for that work and "we prefer it that way, rather than to have to go through Doc to get the money.

Farmers asked what risk the infected herd posed to others in the vicinity.

Mr Crews said Mr Ellis had isolated that herd and Ospri had confidence this was secure.

"There is no contact... it is under legal movement restrictions so no animals will be going out."

Results from further testing of that herd of about 150 were due the week after the meeting and the fate of the herd would be decided then, Mr Crews said.

All herds with TB infection undergo a testing programme along with movement restrictions.

For infected herds to return to a clear status, two clear whole herd tests are required, no less than six months apart.

These tests may include an additional blood test for part or all of the herd.

Concerns were raised that any fast tracking of the testing – using short interval testing - may not pick up the disease should it recur.

"We know this is movement related. We know there is no internal source," Mr Crews said.

He said there had been competing demands on funds which meant other areas had been prioritised for control work and Otago had been put in a holding pattern while areas like the West Coast and Southland were worked on.

Now those areas had been dealt to more resources would go into Otago, he said.

"Now, it is Otago's turn". While Ospri knew it needed to do something, stretched funding had meant some "doors had to shut".

The plan now was to have possum control across the area. Crown land would be in the control programme. In three to five years "everywhere is going to have possum control", but it needed long term investment. Ospri would work with contractors and using surveys decide where to focus, prioritise infected farms and work out from there, he said.

Mr Williamson said Ospri needed to better communicate the results of the surveys and testing – "If you want to take the community along with you.

Mr Crews was asked if Ospri had enough testers to deal with the inevitable increase in workload. He said "joining forces" withASUREQuality had increased the number of bovine TB testing technicians.

The TB free programme is funded by the Ministry for Primary Industries and farming industries and had brought the number of infected herds down from a peak of 1698 herds nationwide in 1995 to 15 herds in 2025. Ospri has recorded the number of infected herds in the Otago region as six. There is one infected herd in Ōmārama and two in the Lindis.

At last month's Hillbilly Hunt in Ōmārama, Mr Ellis and two other farmers provided a \$600 cash prize for the highest tally of possums.

About 300 were caught in total. Of those, 23 possums plus two pigs were bagged, labelled and handed to Ospri at the meeting for them to carry out postmortem testing. All were clear of TB and all hunters had been notified, Mr Horton said in an email to the Ōmārama Gazette, yesterday.

The government contributes 40% of the funding for the programme while the remaining 60% comes from the dairy, beef and deer farming industries which raise funding through the dairy milk solid levy, levies on all cattle slaughtered, levies on Deer Industry New Zealand meat and velvet and levies on live export of cattle and deer.

Contact: [info@ospri.co.nz](mailto:info@ospri.co.nz) or phone us on 0800 482 463. [www.ospri.co.nz](http://www.ospri.co.nz)

# Congratulations, Tania

*- following the proud tradition of great women leaders in our community.*

## **Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade appoints new deputy leader, by Jack Zorab**

The Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade is proud to announce the appointment of Tania Innes as its new Deputy Brigade Leader — the first woman to hold a leadership role in the brigade's nearly 60-year history.

Tania's appointment is also notable for being the first in Otago and Southland under Fire and Emergency New Zealand's new leadership model, which allows brigades to appoint the most suitable leaders regardless of operational rank.

Tania currently holds the rank of Firefighter and is soon heading away on her Qualified Firefighter course.

She also serves on the brigade's medical first response team, ensuring that this vital part of the brigade is represented in leadership.

Her appointment continues a proud family tradition of service — her daughter Maddy and mother-in-law Geva are also members of the brigade, making them one of the few three-generation families serving together in the country.

"Personally, I feel deeply honoured to be appointed to this role," Tania said.

"It's a humbling experience, especially knowing the level of support I've received from across the brigade. That trust means a great deal to me."





“I hope to bring a real passion for supporting both the brigade and our community. I want to be someone who truly listens and contributes to building a strong team culture — one that values communication, mutual respect, and looks after the wellbeing of our members.”

“It is both an honour and a responsibility I take seriously to be the first female Deputy Brigade Leader for Ōmārama,” Tania said.

“I’m proud to represent the women in our brigade, and I hope my appointment encourages other women in our community to aspire to and take on leadership roles in whichever field they choose.”

Chief Fire Officer Jack Zorab said the new model strengthened the brigade’s leadership by recognising the capability and commitment of leaders alongside the individual needs of each volunteer brigade.

Outside of the brigade, Tania and her husband Charlie Innes live on the family farm, Dunstan Downs. Together, they own and operate Dredge NZ, a gold panning supplies business.

Tania joined the fire brigade in 2020, heading away on her recruit’s course with fellow trainee Jessie Chapman and gaining her yellow helmet in March 2021 following the Covid lockdowns.

At the time Tania told the Ōmārama Gazette what motivated her to join was that she was driving home to Dunstan Downs and came across a motor vehicle accident and stopped to help.

“I could see people [bystanders] responding but not knowing what to do.”

Ōmārama Brigade first responder Liz Komen was attending and soon had her “filling out forms”.

Later, when talking things over with Geva she thought she might quite like to do that.

In the 80s the Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade became one of the first brigades to accept women fire-fighters, notably Eunice Marett (nee Blair) and Beverley Perriam.

In 1997, it was one of the first rural brigades to set up a co-response team (now known as first response) to provide emergency medical assistance, and Geva joined that first Ōmārama cohort.

Being a firefighter was about continuously challenging yourself and trying new things.

There was no easy way through just because you were female Tania told the Otago Daily Times when interviewed last year. - Additional reporting by Ruth Grundy.

*Right: Omarama’s first Co-Response crew including Geva Innes gather beside the community-owned vehicle when it was formed in 1997.*



# Let's all get ready

So, you're home here in Omarama and Mother Nature decides to throw a wobbly.

If last month's emergency mobile alert warning of tsunami action on the coast was not a reminder let's remember that not so long ago in mid-2022 she sent heavy snow and rain and rising rivers our way.

Pause for thought.

No water, no power, no internet or phone, stuck at home or can't get home, have to evacuate, so, what would you do?

Let's review the plan –

Step one is to look out for yourself and those in your household.

Being at home may mean being without power and water or any way to get supplies for three days or more.

Do you have enough food and water? What about those who need medication? Do you have enough food and water for pets to get through too?

Have a 'grab bag' ready or know how to put your hand on the essentials when you're in a panic.

Step two – look out for your neighbours. We're good at that. Remember, we did that during the Covid lockdowns when we had to shelter at home to stay safe.'

Most of us know those nearby who we might need to give a hand or who might be able to help us and we know how to share generously.

If you do need to evacuate the Omarama Memorial Hall and Community Centre is the designated emergency shelter.

A group of volunteers have been working on community preparedness in case of such an event. So, we'll be ready for you there if needed.

But the first steps will start with you, and getting to know your neighbours is key.

One thing to talk about is how you might let each other know that an emergency mobile alert has been issued.

Some didn't get one last month, others got more than their fair share.

There's some helpful tips on the Emergency Management Otago website here <https://www.otagocdem.govt.nz/get-your-home-ready> and it pays to look at this before you need it because services might be cut.

And here's where you find what you need to have on hand

<https://www.otagocdem.govt.nz/get-your-home-ready#emergency-supplies>

Yes. Look it up, read it now.

What if the internet is broken when you need to check it later?!

Here it is again:

<https://www.otagocdem.govt.nz/get-your-home-ready#emergency-supplies>

Let's do our homework so that the main event is a test we will pass.

# School bus route changes - an update

The Ministry of Education have clarified their view in reply to the question about why Lake Ōhau pupils are directed to Twizel and not Ōmārama school despite road signage saying it is the same distance.

All Ōhau pupils must travel down Lake Ōhau Rd to the SH8 junction. From that point it is 17km either way, to Ōmārama or Twizel, so an equal travel distance, or so it appears on the road signs (See photo below).

A Ministry spokesperson has offered this explanation in reply to the Ōmārama Gazette's question:

"The team double checked the distances ... We can confirm that, based on our ArcGIS mapping software, the closest school for Lake Ōhau students is Twizel Area School."

In a further update, Ōmārama School Board of Trustees spokesperson on the issue Jemma Gloag contacted Waitaki Member of Parliament Miles Anderson, whose office has sent the following reply.

"...the rural caucus will get a briefing at some stage from the Ministry of Education's transport department.

"There is no set date for the briefing as yet, but a few of the rural MP's (via the rural caucus) have had some similar bus route things pop up in their electorate and have requested a discussion on it.

"Miles is acutely aware of the issues rural communities face with school bus routes and has been involved with school boards for a number of years prior to becoming an MP."

Mrs Gloag said she planned to meet with Mr Anderson at the end of this month.

## CORRECTION TO PREVIOUS STORY

At present Ōmārama School has two Education Ministry-funded bus routes. In all, 11 pupils catch the bus at present. This will increase by one to 12 in term four - not reduce to 10. It is expected that from the middle of next year a further two will need transport. The present southern bus turn-around point is Birchwood Rd.



# WDC communications, branding get a makeover

The Waitaki District Council agreed to take a new approach to interacting with its communities at its meeting last month.

In a two-fold approach the newly adopted Communications and Engagement Strategy 2025–28 tackled both how the council plans to share information clearly, listen better, and work more closely with communities and it also approved a new logo and signage.

The new brand and strategy were developed in-house by the council's communications and engagement team with input from elected members, staff and feedback gathered from the community at the 2023 Community Conversations, the annual residents survey and other consultations, including work done on the Waitaki Story Project.

Strategic Communications and Engagement manager Sonia Martinez acknowledged in her report to councillors that, at present, council communication could be “messy and confusing”.

“We use too many different styles, channels and messages, which can make us look disorganised. Some people see council as distant or untrustworthy.

“We’re dealing with challenges like misinformation, community frustration, and barriers that make it hard for people to get involved or understand what we do. We have limited resources and need to use them wisely.”

The present approach tended to be reactive, tactical and short term.

There was “minimal review and evaluation” of completed communication and engagement activity.

“We face regular external, and internal, criticism for either not communicating enough or communicating too much irrelevant information,” the report said.

The new strategy emphasises that all in the council – elected representatives and staff shared responsibility for communication

“We want people to see us as helpful, trustworthy, collaborative and good at listening – delivering what’s needed, when it’s needed. We want our community to be proud of us and feel comfortable working with us. We want to be seen as part of the community, not separate from it.”

“All interactions that our elected members and staff have with members of the public and with each other are communications from council.

“The way we answer the phone, our email sign-offs, the way our invoices are worded, how we contact a customer about their application or infringement, how we’re quoted in the media, elected members having a chat with their constituents – these are all communications from Council and need to reflect our new ways of working.”

The strategy was a “roadmap” and hoped to provide “practical guidance” for how the council plans to do this, to make sure everyone in the district “is given opportunities to take part in shaping its future”, the report said.

It included development of a communications toolkit for staff and elected members including plain language guidelines and better website content and experience.



Work on the new branding had highlighted inconsistencies in how the council was presenting its brand, services and facilities to the community.

“The current council brand, which reflects Ōamaru’s colonial heritage, doesn’t represent our growing and diverse community.”

Developing a consistent brand would instil “pride of place”.

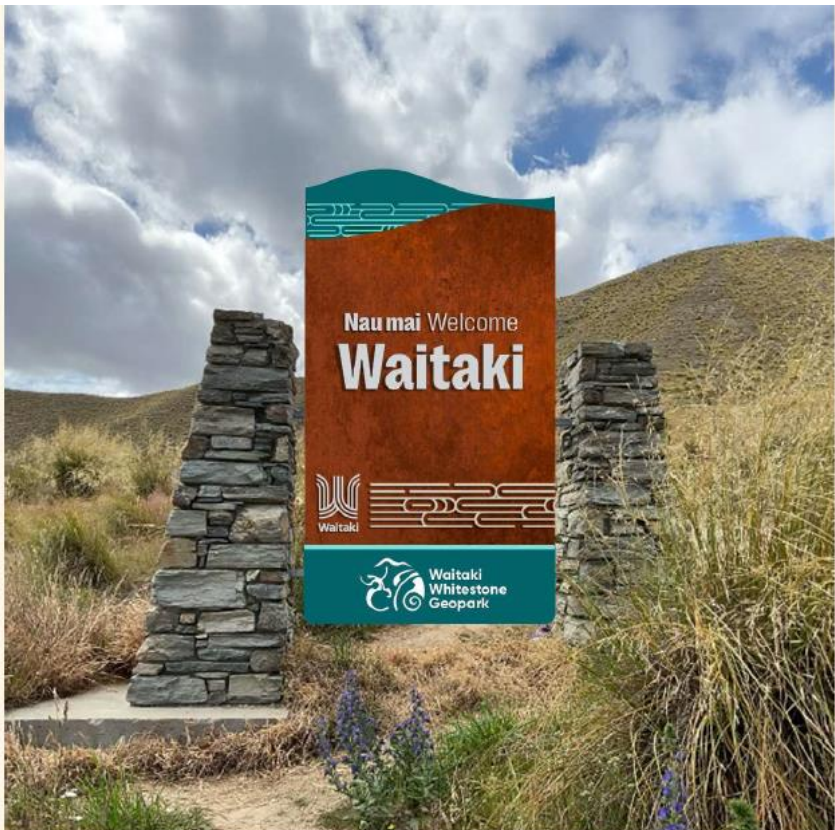
“As Waitaki continues to grow and evolve, it’s now time for a refreshed look that better reflects who we are today and where we’re heading.”

The phased implementation of the strategy will begin in August, with a staged rollout of the new logo to follow, as materials and signage are updated over time.

Check out more Waitaki District Council stories overleaf

Follow-up Ōmārama Stream meeting scheduled.

Waitaki District Council, news in brief.



# Second Ōmārama Stream meeting scheduled

A second Waitaki District Council workshop and site visit to the Ōmārama Stream Reserve is to be held in about 10 days' time.

At the initial workshop in June the group of 20 ratepayers gathered agreed any management plan for the Ōmārama Stream reserve should prioritise clearing the slash and waste from the 2022 floods, and completing other work needed to prevent further flooding.

The meeting next week will also be run by community engagement officer Jason Evered and recreation manager Lindsay Hyde, and they are waiting for confirmation a representative of Environment Canterbury will also attend.

The event will begin with the workshop at the Ōmārama Community Centre, followed by a site visit to the Ōmārama Stream Reserve, Mr Evered said. He and Mr Hyde will give an update about progress and actions already taken.

"As before we can answer any questions people have and then for those who wish, we can head on down to the reserve and look at things on the ground," Mr Evered said.

The council has \$25K allocated in this year's budget and \$5K next financial year to Ōmārama Stream Reserve Management.

Developing the Ōmārama Stream Reserve, walkway and connection back to SH83 was identified as a key goal of the Ōmārama Masterplan which was allocated Better-off funding in 2022.

The workshop is 11am, Sunday, August 17, at the Ōmārama Community Centre. You can read about June's workshop in the July issue.

The event is open to all, and people are asked to pass on the details to all those interested.



# Situation vacant

## Ōmārama Resident's Association - Treasurer

The Ōmārama Residents' Association is on the look out for a new treasurer. The Association is an incorporated society with charitable trust status, and represents all ratepayers in the Ōmārama Hall rating area levied for the Ōmārama public hall rate.

The council passes on these payments to the association's committee and this contributes to the cost of maintenance of the centre and other general running costs. The committee also fundraises for other projects.

You'll need to attend monthly meetings, work closely with the committee and want to be part of a team that looks out for the community.

You will need to put a bit of time into keeping on top of payments and accounts from month to month, producing regular reports and audits and want to be part of a team of hard-working volunteers who grapple with the complexities of local government. This grassroots democracy in action!

Some experience in a treasurer role within a community group is a benefit.

If this sounds like you, or you want to know a bit more about the role, get in touch with secretary Vicky Chambers [omarama.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:omarama.secretary@gmail.com) before Thursday, August 21.

## BLOCKS WANTED – MACKENZIE, NORTH OTAGO AND MID CANTERBURY

Precision Pest Control is currently looking for properties with:

- \* Rabbits
- \* Hares
- \* Wallabies
- \* Deer
- \* Goats
- \* Possums

We carry out humane, professional pest control through night shooting, and all meat is used for human consumption or premium pet food.

- \* MPI Registered
- \* Fully Insured
- \* Carcasses removed — no mess
- \* Discreet, respectful, and experienced
- \* Most jobs are done at no cost to the landowner

If you've got pest pressure and want it dealt with properly — we'd love to hear from you.

Call or text Luke on 021 653 066

Or message the Precision Pest Control Facebook page directly.

*Please share with anyone who may be interested!*



WAITAKI VALLEY  
**HEALTH TRUST**  
COMMUNITY WELLNESS

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Waitaki Valley Health Trust annual meeting will be held on  
**7pm, Thursday, August 21, 2025**  
at the Kurow Memorial Hall foyer.

The Trust's mission is to ensure ongoing provision of health care to the Waitaki and Hakataramea Valleys and the Ōhau-Ōmārama Basin.

Gardner Health Care provides excellent general practice cover to this region currently, operating from inadequate premises.

The Trust's Plans for a comprehensive community Health Hub for the region, based in Kurow, are well advanced. This will serve as a new home for the general practice but also with much wider inclusion of health care and promotion functions. It will have a community focus and emergency capacity.

An update of progress will be presented at the annual meeting.

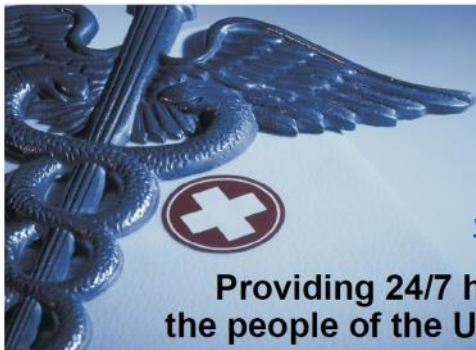
### Trustee Elections:

Each year, on rotation, a Trust member must stand down, allowing opportunity for a member of the community to stand – contested if the trustee wishes to stand again.

Nomination forms are available from the Kurow Information Centre or to nominate online, email [kate@waitakivalleyhealthtrust.nz](mailto:kate@waitakivalleyhealthtrust.nz) for a form.

Please email secretary Alison Grant at [ali@waitakivalleyhealthtrust.nz](mailto:ali@waitakivalleyhealthtrust.nz) to register your nomination by 5pm on Friday, August 15, 2025.





## Kurow Medical Centre

8 Wynyard St, Kurow  
P: 03 4360760 F: 03 4360780

E: [info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](mailto:info@kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

W: [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)  
[www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre](https://www.facebook.com/kurowmedicalcentre)

**Providing 24/7 health care and support to  
the people of the Upper Waitaki and Mackenzie**

**Kurow Medical Centre and its satellite clinics  
in Twizel (Mackenzie Health Centre Private Clinic)  
and Omarama (Community Hall)**

**are proud to offer our registered and casual patients the following services**

- \* Ultrasound performed by a qualified clinician (great for minor fractures, gall stones, kidney stones, heart and lung problems, foreign bodies, blood clots, detecting early pregnancy and much more!)
- \* Minor surgery \* Vasectomies
- \* Mole checking and removal \* Steroid injections \* Venesection
- \* Aviation, workplace and driving medicals \* Botox for Wrinkle reduction
- \* Workplace health screening \* Counselling
- \* Spirometry to diagnose asthma and COPD
- \* Hearing and sight tests for adults and children \* Ear syringing
- \* Liquid nitrogen for warts, verruca's and skin lesions
- \* Cardiovascular risk assessment and diabetic checks (funded for eligible patients) \* Travel advice and vaccination
- \* Cervical smears (funded for eligible patients)
- \* Seasonal flu shots and shingles vaccine (funded for eligible patients)
- \* Childhood immunisation \* Before school checks
- \* Postnatal and six-week baby health check

**And much more!**

**GP consult fees: Under 14yrs Free; Adult \$45.00  
Care Plus – Free to eligible patients only**

We also offer the following services from external Health Care Providers:

- \* Podiatry and Ear Health (Kurow only)
- \* Physiotherapy, Acupuncture and Massage (Kurow and Twizel)

### **Opening hours**

Kurow: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday mornings 8.30am to 1pm

Omarama: Thursday 8.30am to 12.30pm

Twizel: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 8.30 to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 12pm

Please note: We provide 24/7 on call after hours cover by our doctors and PRIME nurses for all our registered and casual patients!

**If you require further information or an appointment, please contact us on:  
For Kurow 03 436 0760 or for Twizel 03 976 0503**

*-Dr Tim and Juliet Gardner*

*Look us up on our website or Facebook page for more information*

# The Noticeboard

To have your community notice included here  
email: [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

**Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Barry Sagggers.** This message from Barry's family to the community.

*"With sadness, Barry Sagggers passed away on Saturday night, July 5, at Timaru hospital. This was an unexpected death but Barry had his daughters beside him to support his journey.*

*Our Dad (Pop as he was known to us) was who he was and we celebrated that with him being his own individual.*

*Pop could chat and loved telling a good story with a few or more colourful words. We will miss seeing Pop walking down the street in his green overalls, back pack, boots and his cap covering his long hair.*

*Pop was loved and will be missed deeply. Barry is buried at Belfast Cemetery."*

**Happiest of birthdays to all who celebrated this month** - It was a busy month!!

Mike King

Lorraine King

Ruth Grundy

Jan Perriam

Gary Sutherland

Ruth Gordon

and joint Patterson family birthdays.

(I'm bound to have missed someone , so I hope whoever you are you were thoroughly spoilt!)

**All the very best to Kim and Dave McKenzie** who are leaving Omarama to take up a new opportunity in Fairlie.

**Kurow Medical Centre Ōmārama Clinic at the Ōmārama Community Centre**, is now open Tuesdays 9am to 5pm (Nurse only) and Thursday 8.30am to 1pm with Dr Tim Gardner. To make appointments for all clinics, order repeat scripts or make enquiries please contact Kurow Medical Centre 03 436 0760 (Monday to Thursdays). [www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz](http://www.kurowmedicalcentre.org.nz)

**The Ōmārama Community Library** is open 9.30am to 11am, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Library hours can change.

**Ōmārama MenzShed** meets each Saturday at 10am and at other times too.

For further information please contact Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225

**St Thomas' Ōmārama Church Community:** Kurow Presbyterian Parish: Rev Eymbert Johannes Schoneveld, Interim Moderator, Kurow Presbyterian Parish, Waiareka-Weston Community Presbyterian Church, 48 Main Street, Weston. Phone: 022 683 5117  
email: [westonminister@gmail.com](mailto:westonminister@gmail.com)

**The Ōmārama Golf Club** Saturdays cards in 12noon, tee-off 12.30pm. Club captain: Greg Stuart 027 438 9018, secretary: Arron Chambers 027 203 2340.  
[www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz](http://www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz)

**The Ahuriri Community Catchment Group** meets once a month. For time and place contact facilitator Bridget Pringle, 021 072 2113 or [bridget@irricon.co.nz](mailto:bridget@irricon.co.nz)

**The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club** meets at 7.30pm on the first Monday of each month at the 'Top Pub' - the Blue and Gold pub, in Kurow. All welcome. Join the Facebook group.

**Ōmārama Playgroup** meets at 9.30am each Wednesday during the primary school term at the Ōmārama Community Centre. For more information phone president Nic McKerchar 022 612 7570 [rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com](mailto:rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com) or secretary Olivia Black, 027 833 0869.

**Bridge Club** - The Ōmārama Bridge Club meets on a regular basis and would welcome new members. If you are interested please phone Sylvia Anderson 438 9784 or Ann Patterson 438 9493.

**The Ōmārama Model Aircraft Club** meets on Saturdays from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon at its flying ground at the Ōmārama airfield. All welcome - Contact Bevan Allan [bjallan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bjallan@xtra.co.nz)

**FENZ Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade** meets 7pm each Wednesday and has its meeting at 7:30pm on the third Wednesday of the month. . If anyone would like more information about the various volunteer roles available within the fire brigade please get in touch. Email [omarama@fireandemergency.co.nz](mailto:omarama@fireandemergency.co.nz) or contact Jack on 020 4045 0909. You can follow us on Facebook (Omarama Volunteer Fire Brigade)

**A gentle exercises and social afternoon group** meets at the Otematata District Club at 1.30pm Thursday afternoons. Gold coin donation and a cuppa after the exercises. Contact Ethel Gray 03 438 7764.

**Waitaki Newcomers Network:** For more information about this group send contact details to E: [waitaki@newcomers.co.nz](mailto:waitaki@newcomers.co.nz) W: [www.newcomers.co.nz](http://www.newcomers.co.nz) F: [facebook.com/WaitakiNewcomersNetwork/](https://facebook.com/WaitakiNewcomersNetwork/)

**Plunket Line: 0800 933 922**

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To read more, enjoy more photos and watch our place 'come to life' check out our Facebook page and website.

[www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/](http://www.facebook.com/omaramagazette/)  
[omaramagazette.nz](http://omaramagazette.nz)

To receive email alerts between monthly editions of the Omarama Gazette sign up to our 'Local List'. Email [omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

Thank you to all who share your stories  
and contribute in other ways to the Gazette.

We all really appreciate what you do.

**The September Issue of the Omarama Gazette  
is Wednesday, September 3, 2025.**

Please submit copy  
by Thursday, August 28, 2025

# The Community Reports

## Ōmārama Police



Call triple one (111) when you need an emergency response from police, fire or ambulance.  
Use Ten Five (105) to report things that don't need urgent Police assistance.

Usual office contact details:  
Senior Constable Nayland Smith  
Sole charge Constable / Omarama / Po Box 101,  
Omarama 9448.  
Phone: (03) 438 9559 / Ext: 34580 /  
mailto:nayland.smith@police.govt.nz

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## Ōmārama Volunteer Fire Brigade



*By Ema Maramanikalou*

Bula Vinaka,

I'm Ema, I joined the Ōmārama Fire Brigade in August last year.

We have had a busy month with seven calls, six of them being car crashes and one false alarm.

This is a good reminder to drive to the conditions and watch out for ice in shady spots.

The brigade has welcomed five new volunteer members to the team. Alona and Blair Shaw, Erwin Beiboer, and Mel and Jim Bennett.

A few weeks ago we had the opportunity to have a very realistic training scenario using the Te Runanga o Waihao Holdings houses on Chain Hills Hwy. Thank you to those who came to watch and to Ruth who got a ride along in the truck. It was a valuable experience for the team.

[Ema's son Keasi was the 'trapped person' in the house having just moved to New Zealand from Fiji the day before.]

Our first response team attended the Upper Waitaki Schools' cross country last week and reported minimal injuries and maximum effort. Well done to everyone who competed.

Good luck to Tania as she heads away to Rotorua next week for her Qualified Firefighter course, we wish you all the best.

Winter is nearly over! Continue to stay warm, remember to keep your chimneys clean and stay safe on the road.



# Ōmārama Gliding Club

Congratulations to all those from the Ōmārama Gliding Club who were honoured at the recent Gliding New Zealand awards at a 75th Gala Dinner celebration at the Royal NZ Yacht Squadron, Westhaven Marina Auckland.

- Phil Plane won the Angus Rose Bowl for outstanding services to the sport.
- New Youth Glide President Felix Harper received the Air New Zealand XC Trophy for flights in the South Island last season.
- John Smith won the Air New Zealand Soaring Award for the most significant improvement in their personal standard of flying.
- Dan McComack accepted the Buckland Soaring Award for Kelvyn Flavell.
- Rod Stuart won the friendship cup for outstanding contribution to the gliding movement.
- Nigel Davy was appointed our new GNZ President.



*Left: Phil Plane receives the Angus Rose Bowl from GNZ president Steve Wallace for outstanding services to the sport. Right: Felix Harper receives the Air New Zealand XC Trophy for flights in the South Island last season. Photos: Supplied, John McCaw.*

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## Ōmārama Golf Club

Saturday Club Day: cards in 12noon and tee-off at 12.30.

If you are interested in joining the club  
email Arron Chambers,  
[secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz](mailto:secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz) for details.  
Club captain: Greg Stuart phone: 027 438 9018  
Secretary: Arron Chambers phone: 027 203 2340  
email [secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz](mailto:secretary@omaramagolfclub.co.nz)

[www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz](http://www.omaramagolfclub.co.nz)

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# P is for Party-time

And priests and pimps and pirates and parrots and shrimps? ah em, prawns!

Thank you Jan, Nikita, Luke, Boots & Jandals Hotel Omarama team for a wonderful night shaking off those winter blues!

Guests hit the dance floor at Ōmārama's annual dress-up party at Boots and Jandals Hotel last month.

Thank you  
- from Jan Perriam

Thank you to all who helped behind the scenes to stage the P- Vice-versa party, last month.

To Boots and Jandals Hotel and Staff, Luke for putting the 'sounds' together and creating the vibe, to husband Lex, Teresa Gallagher, Julie Dyson, Lesley Jackson, Tanya Humphreys, Ruth Grundy and Alona Shaw.

A huge thankyou for all the donations.

The note below is from is from Nicole and Daniel.

An absolutely amazing night at the P party.

Huge thanks to Jan and everyone who

helped put the night together. So much fun!

Daniel and I were a little lost for words

when Jan came to visit and tell us about

the money raised for future scans.

Absolutely amazed by the generosity of

everyone involved. We thank each and

every one you that have helped us in every

way, we feel extremely lucky and honored

to be a part of such an amazing and loving

community!

Thank you so much ❤️

# Ōmārama Playgroup

Ōmārama Playgroup meets at 9.30am  
each Wednesday  
during the primary school term  
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.

**For more information contact:**  
president Nic McKerchar, 022 612 7570,  
[rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com](mailto:rn.mckerchar@hotmail.com)  
or secretary Olivia Black, 027 833 0869.

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# Ōmārama Community Library

The Ōmārama Community Library's  
opening hours are 9.30am to 11am,  
Wednesdays and Saturdays,  
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.  
[omaramalibrary@gmail.com](mailto:omaramalibrary@gmail.com)

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# Ōmārama MenzShed

The Ōmārama MenzShed meets  
at 10am each Saturday  
and at other times, too.

**For further information contact:**  
**Malcolm Cameron 022 476 2225**

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**Antony Ford CA**



**Ford Simpson Ltd**

Chartered Accountants

- Farm Accounting Expertise
- Business Advice
- Family and Succession Planning

*If you would like us to visit you, please call and  
arrange a time.*

**e.** [office@fordsimpson.co.nz](mailto:office@fordsimpson.co.nz)

**w.** [www.fordsimpson.co.nz](http://www.fordsimpson.co.nz)

**PHONE 03 687 2080**



**Brodie Craig CA**

# Knit Night Ōmārama

*By Charlotte Newfield*

If you haven't heard, Knit Nights are happening in Ōmārama. We are a fun, social gathering bonding over the age-old traditions of knitting and spinning. Knitting has seen a surge in popularity amongst young people in recent years, with a rise in independent pattern designers and new variations on old techniques. If you look close enough you can see the attraction. Take some needles and a scrumptious yarn, pull some loops onto the needles in a certain way, and you've made a thing! Anything. A hat, a scarf, a jumper, a bag, or a pair of socks. The things you can make are really only limited by your imagination.

And anyone can knit. In Iceland, about 56% of males knit regularly, attending knitting groups on a weekly basis. Many countries still teach knitting in schools, which couples with educating kids on the benefits of wool as a natural fibre over synthetic fibres.

It's portable, you really can knit just about anywhere, and the rhythmic clicking of your needles and slow pace of the craft have been scientifically proven to relieve stress and anxiety. Not to mention the feeling of achievement when you cast off your project and use it for the first time.

Maybe you've always wanted to try knitting but you weren't sure who could teach you and help you along the way. That's where Knit Night comes in. There's no prior experience necessary, anyone can come along and new knitters are encouraged! Experienced knitters can come along and share their knowledge of the craft with others. Crocheters are also welcome to come and share their joy of yarn arts.

**Ōmārama Knit Night takes place at the  
Community Centre on Tuesday evenings at 5.15pm.**

## OMARAMA Pop Up Café

**Guest Speaker:**

**Fiona Chamberlain  
RN, Kurow Medical Centre**

**Healthy Aging**

**Move More Live Longer / Falls Prevention  
Healthy Nutrition  
Mental and Social Wellbeing  
Cognitive / Brain Health**



**Join us!**



**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 1pm to 3pm  
Omarama Community Centre**







# Hunting & Fishing®



Omarama Rodeo  
Club Wants to Say

**THANK YOU**  
*so much!*

*Congratulations  
to our Winners*

The Midnight  
Prowlers



**Your generous Sponsorship  
helped us raise over \$10,500  
for our up coming Rodeo**

# Ōmārama Residents' Association

The next meeting  
of the Ōmārama Residents' Association is  
**7pm, Thursday, August 21, 2025**  
at the Ōmārama Community Centre.

The minutes of the previous meeting are available from Vicky

## **For discussion at the next meeting:**

- continued work on the new constitution
- discussion about proceeding with disposal of funds from sale of St Thomas's Church.
- selecting a new treasurer.

## **Residents' Association of Ōmārama committee 2024-25**

Michelle Kitchen, chairperson and hall curator

Vicky Chambers, secretary

Hank Verheul, building convenor

Malcolm Cameron, MenzShed representative

Natalie Beiboer

Maurice Cowie

Stephen Grundy

Jennie Hales

Lindsay Purvis

Gary Sutherland

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## **THE ASSOCIATION HAS ITS OWN POST OFFICE BOX**

Could all those who want to contact the association by mail,  
send accounts to be paid,  
or have correspondence considered at the monthly meetings  
ensure it is addressed to:

**The Secretary, P O Box 93, Ōmārama 9448.**

**The association's email address is [omarama.committee@gmail.com](mailto:omarama.committee@gmail.com)**

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## **ŌMĀRAMA COMMUNITY CENTRE HALL HIRE**

To make a booking for an upcoming event or for more  
information about hall hire and availability  
please contact Michelle Kitchen 027 280 5446  
or email [hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hallhire.omarama@xtra.co.nz)



# Ōmārama School

## Upper Waitaki Schools Cross Country

### Omarama Results: CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS

Boys:	Girls:
Yr1 - Zaiden Hall (6th)	Yr 1 - N/A
Y2 - Liam Lord (1st)	Yr 2 - N/A
Y3 - Louis Aubrey (6th)	Yr 3 - N/A
Y4 - Gray Warnock (2nd) Y4 - Max Gloag (3rd)	Y4 4 - N/A
Y5 - Tom Aubrey (2nd) Y5 - Conrad Shaw (6th)	Y5 - Mazie Paton (6th)
Y6 - Toby Gloag (2nd)	Y6 - Briar McKerchar (2nd)
Y7 - Lleyton McLeod (3rd)	Y7 - N/A
Y8 - James Mason (6th)	Y8 - Nicole McMurtrie (4th)



2 Omarama Ave, Omarama

Ph: 03 4389815

*Learning and thriving in the place of light - Ki te Whei Ao, Ki te Ao Mārama e!*

Omarama School is a Full Primary School (Year 1 - Year 8)

We are welcoming new enrolments, please contact Alison Holden at [principal@omarama.school.nz](mailto:principal@omarama.school.nz) to arrange a school visit at your convenience. Give us a call, we would love to hear from you.

- Rural community with excellent support from parents, Board and Friends of the School
- Small class sizes to address learning needs, extension through Mindplus and Virtual Learning Network
- Structured Literacy (iDeal) + Structured Maths (Numicon (Y1 - Y3) & Maths No Problem (Y4 - Y8)
- School Pool with swimming coach, Garden Club, Ski Programme, Music lessons, Whanau groups
- Close liaison with Omarama Playgroup, Twizel Kindergarten and Waitaki Valley Pre-school
- PB4L Pedagogy, Incredible Years Trained staff, School LIGHT values, connections to Waihou Marae
- William Pike Challenge initiative for Y7 & Y8 students in 2025
- Transport options for students living between Twizel and Omarama and between Omarama and Otematata
- Headstart programme for children who are four years of age - one afternoon per week.



Ōmārama School contact details:

Phone: 03 438 9815

[principal@omarama.school.nz](mailto:principal@omarama.school.nz), [office@omarama.school.nz](mailto:office@omarama.school.nz)

[www.omarama.school.nz](http://www.omarama.school.nz)

# Ōmārama Community Garden

We are a group of gardeners who work together to create something for everyone in our community

Anyone is welcome to pop along to the Community Centre and have a potter, and also to pop in any plants they may have ready to go in.

Join the Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/742877880594146>

Contact: Jennie Hales, [jenniehollows@hotmail.com](mailto:jenniehollows@hotmail.com)

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## Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club

The Upper Waitaki Young Farmers Club  
meets at

7.30pm on the first Monday  
of each month  
at the Kurow Hotel.

All welcome. Join the Facebook group.

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## Omarama Storage



- Secure Lockup Storage
- 3.6m h x 3m w entry
- Short & Long term

Don't let the weather deteriorate your caravan, boat or motorhome over winter. Spaces available now.

Contact Bridget – [bridgesp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bridgesp@xtra.co.nz)  
or Ph /txt 021572798

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'The Community Reports' is  
dedicated to news  
from clubs, groups and sports teams.

Contributions are welcome.  
[omaramagazette@gmail.com](mailto:omaramagazette@gmail.com)

# Care in the community

## Ōmārama Community Care Group

If you are in need of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact Ruth Grundy 021 294 8002 and we can work together on options and put you in contact with those who can help or for whatever will best suit you.

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## Twizel Community Care Centre

If you need any of the services listed below please contact:

Twizel Community Care Centre

Mount Cook St, Twizel

Phone: 03 435 0687

Email: [admin@twizelcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@twizelcare.co.nz)

Hours of opening: 9am - 3pm

Days of opening: Monday - Friday

- **A reminder we have a food bank** available with no questions asked  
Our contact details are 03 4350687 and email [admin@twizelcare.co.nz](mailto:admin@twizelcare.co.nz) if you would like to arrange a convenient time to collect a parcel. (Donations of non-perishable or foods that can be frozen always welcome)
- **Twizel-Tekapo Community Car bookings** – this is a community car that picks you up from your house and takes you wherever you need to go such as town here in Twizel or Timaru for an appointment, whatever you need. There is a cost involved depending on destinations. Monday to Friday
- **Work and Income** – assistance with applying for benefits, helping with queries regarding superannuation, and any other financial assistance you may receive. Printing and scanning of documents.
- **Inland Revenue** – queries regarding anything IRD related, access to forms.
- **Immigration** - passport and other Government agencies.
- **Cancer Society Navigator** – support for anyone with any cancer each third Thursday of every month
- **Home Delivered Meals** – We have small roasts for \$10, Regular meals for \$8 and small snack meals for \$4. We can deliver to your home.
- **Printing/scanning services**
- **Arowhenua Whanau services** – Free health clinic on the first Wednesday of each month.
- **Access to a computer**, printing, free WIFI, community notice boards



# Waitaki District Council July news

## Elections

Nominations for the Waitaki District Council 2025 local body elections closed on Friday.

The Ahuriri Ward, which includes Ōmārama ratepayers, will vote for mayor as there are four candidates for the one position which has been vacated by Gary Kircher. They are; Guy Percival, Melanie Tavendale, Kelli Williams and David Wilson. There will be no contest for Ahuriri Ward Councillor or the Ahuriri Community Board. The existing councillor and board members, who stood again for this term, have been elected unopposed. They are:

Brent Cowles, of Otematata – nominated by Otematata residents Kirsty Cowles and Stacey Honeywill - is Ahuriri Ward councillor for the next term.

Steve Dalley, of Otematata, Alan Pont, Calum Reid and Karen Turner, of Kurow, and Mike King, of Omarama will make up the Community Board for the new term.

Mr King was nominated by Omarama residents Michelle Kitchen and Lindsay Purvis.

Voters will receive voting papers between September 9 and September 22.

Special voting is from September 9 to October 11.

October 11 is Election Day and voting closes at 12 noon.

Candidate profiles will be available on council's website later this month.

NB Environment Canterbury have three candidates standing for two seats in its South Canterbury/Otuhithui constituency.

They are: Peter Scott, Toni Severin and Nick Ward.

For those keen to follow the campaigns the Otago Daily Times is planning to cover issues in all districts throughout the South, including Waitaki.

## Rubbish bin removal

Ōmārama residents are questioning the council's recent decision to remove a rubbish bin from outside the Oasis Café.

In past months there have been numerous complaints about over full rubbish receptacles both in the town centre and at the Campervan Dump Station site with windy days seeing loose rubbish blown throughout the township.

Last month the council announced it was continuing its efforts "to improve the way public spaces are looked after, taking a more efficient approach to public rubbish bin provision and encouraging 'pack in, pack out' behaviour from the community".

A recent review recommended approximately 21% of public bins from across the district including one bin in Ōmārama be removed.

"The review has been completed as part of Council's initiatives to reduce costs – with the bins identified for removal being either under-used, over-used with illegal household waste dumping, or located near other bins, meaning people will still have access to a bin within walking distance in most areas."

This move was expected to result in annual savings of around \$42,276 or 18% of the current public bin servicing budget.

The Ōmārama Gazette understands Ōmārama businesses were not consulted about this. The decision drew an angry response on Facebook with some contacting the council to express their frustration.

A business who emailed their concerns received this response from a council staff member:

"Looking ahead to the busier summer months, we plan to install additional temporary

bins (2 x 240l) outside the toilet facilities near the bus stop to manage the seasonal increase in waste. As part of our longer-term strategy, we're exploring the possibility of installing a bin system at the toilet site — either a Big belly compacting bin or a combined recycling, waste, and glass separation system to improve both capacity and efficiency.

"We are currently investigating options and developing a plan to install signage that will guide residents and visitors to the available waste facilities.

"In terms of recycling, a service is available at the Ōmārama Transfer Station, which operates seven days a week for five hours per day during the peak summer season. "Council regularly reviews service levels for both transfer stations and public place recycling. These public recycling/waste/glass bin services will be considered as part of the proposed consultation on a council-controlled kerbside collection service planned for early next year."

### **Council agrees nine-year Long Term Plan and budget**

The council has adopted its Long Term Plan (LTP) and budget for the next nine years. It agreed on an average 9.44% rate rise for the 2025/26 year.

However, because the council has voted to keep water delivery services in house, rates are expected rise steeply and more often than initially forecast in the LTP.

As part of the LTP the council has agreed to:

- introduce water metering
- ask for a new report into the options for Beach Road
- look at converting Tourism Waitaki to an Economic Development Agency to work with businesses to boost economic growth
- put in place a programme to sell surplus property that is not delivering sufficient value for rate payers to help reduce costs and pay back debt
- investigate an additional rate for 'Airbnb' short term rentals

The 2025-34 Long Term Plan is on council's website

### **Council decides to keep water in-house - rates recast, predictions of 25% plus rises.**

The council has voted to keep an In-House Water Services Delivery Unit for a minimum of the next two years. It has also agreed to further discuss water management of water at workshops with the possibility of a future shared services/ Joint CCO approach with South Canterbury Councils and it has voted to exit the Southern Water Done Well partnership.

This is in response to public feedback and a desire to keep local control, and that the third piece of Local Water Done Well legislation, the Local Government (Water Services) Bill, is yet to be passed by Parliament.

Under present Government legislation it is required to submit its Water Services Delivery Plan to the Department of Internal Affairs by September 3.

The council's finance team presented information about the development of the In-House Business Unit Water Services Delivery Plan at a workshop last month.

This re-cast rates for the next nine years, including depreciation and was based on bringing forward water metering.

The Otago Daily Times has reported in a subscriber only story that following a first workshop councillors heard a rates rise of 25.61% in the 2028 LTP year would be needed to fund the inhouse plan. (It might also rise to about 30% if depreciation of water assets was included in the WSDP).

The existing long-term plan was put together on the understanding that the council would adopt a joint CCO water services model, as it had previously said that was its

*- continued over*

# *Waitaki District Council July news - continued*

preferred choice of model. Had a joint approach and shared services been adopted and a new entity set up ratepayers would have been levied for those costs separately in addition to council rates. The third public workshop was on Tuesday at the Council Chambers.

Presentations were made by the Local Government Finance Association (the main lender to local councils), representatives from Morrison Low, Council's Infrastructure Manager, Joshua Rendell, together with Assets Planning Manager, Paul Hayes on Council's water capital expenditure programme and compliance investment requirements.

There was also information on the introduction of water metering for water users in the District which would see users move to a charging system based on water usage.

Last week the Council submitted a working draft plan to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), and is awaiting feedback.

The deadline for providing the DIA with a final Water Services Delivery Plan is September 3, 2025.

The presentation given by Council's Team is available on Council's website now together with the Working Draft Water Services Delivery Plan.

Council will be holding weekly public workshops on this process, and they are listed on Council's calendar, here.

The community is encouraged to watch the videos of the workshops and read the presentations to be fully informed about the development of the plan.

The next public workshop is scheduled from 3.30pm to 4.30pm on Tuesday, August 12, 2025.

**Rates rebates** The Government has set the maximum rates rebate at \$805 for the 2025/26 rating year. However, changes to the qualification settings mean more people may qualify for a maximum rebate this year.

Your rates for the 2025/26 year must be higher than \$2000 to qualify.

There are also two income thresholds

- For SuperGold cardholders, the income threshold to qualify for the maximum rebate has been raised from \$31,500 to \$45,000 – which is about the rate for a couple both receiving superannuation.

- For others, the income threshold to receive the maximum is \$32,210.

In both categories, earning more than these thresholds means you may still get a rebate but it will be less than the maximum amount.

You can find out if you qualify for a rates rebate by using the Government's Rates Rebate Calculator: <https://www.govt.nz/browse/housing-and-property/getting-help-with-housing/getting-a-rates-rebate/rates-rebate-calculator/>

Rates rebate forms are available online, or at the Oamaru or Waihemo Library and Service Centres. They must be returned to Council for processing, either in-person or by post.

**Grants open:** The following grants are open.

Community Group Grants - Opens 28 July – Closes 5 September

Waitaki Biodiversity Grant – Opens 5 May – Closes 25 August

Waitaki Heritage Fund – Opens 7 July – Closes 8 September

Waitaki Waste Minimisation Fund – Open 28 July – Closes 29 August

Donald and Nellye Malcolm Trust – Opens 1 August – Closes 29 August

Information about applying for these is here: <https://www.waitaki.govt.nz/About-Waitaki/Living-here/Supporting-our-community/Community-Grants-and-Awards>

# Justices of the Peace

**JPs are available by appointment to:**

- \* Witness documents such as applications for citizenship.
- \* Certify copies.
- \* Take declarations, affidavits and affirmations.

**The service is free of charge.**

**To make your visit quick and easy:**

- \* Do not sign anything beforehand.
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**Vicky Munro**

Otematata

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**Alona Shaw**

Omarama

027 773 4214

## Miles Anderson MP for Waitaki



*Wishing you a happy summer break, I hope you can enjoy time with family and friends. Travel safe over the Christmas and New Year period.*

*Our Wanaka and Oamaru Offices will be closed from 20th December 2024 and reopen on 8 January 2025.*

 [Waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Waitaki.mp@parliament.govt.nz)

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# Garden Diary - 'You can have August.'

To take my mind off it feeling more and more like spring - but that's a long way off yet - I've been pruning.

Hat, scarf, boots, gardening gloves and sharp secateurs out in the sharp blue air. Feeling impatient, a bit brassed off with the world, and cross with myself for that. It is a sparkling winter's day. I could be grateful.

Tackling the pruning while feeling a bit crabby can be a little dangerous – but often that's what's called for – short, sharp decision making, sometimes with a shadow or more of regret for an action not thought through.

Inside there is the bright, warm glow of the fire. A flame licks around a wood shaving, a shard of pine turning it to the feather of a phoenix.

Sometimes, when it seems there's been too much icy blue I head up the valley to find beech forest.

A long walk under towering trees which wrap like a duvet overhead and furnish the thick blanket of duff underfoot quietyens footfall and the mind - Shinrin-yoku

I have only a few evergreens in this garden – mostly conifers and mostly to screen out ugly.

There are two *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Silver Queen', one each side of the gate.

They come into their own in winter, their fur coats cloaked in ice crystals or snow, as if they've been transported back through the wardrobe from Narnia.

There's my pencil cypress – *Cupressus sempervirens* - an exclamation mark, point made!

But, now after the build, she needs to be carefully shifted back to a more appropriate space where she can be encouraged to assert herself again.

Although deciduous, the hornbeam hedge does not shed its leaves in autumn but gradually, as Spring and sap begin to rise, it loosens the grip of those amber leaves, pushing back their veil to let mid-winter sunshine through.

Others are decidedly bare. There is the wide open arms of the oak stretched out to the winter sunrise and the thorny, brittle black skeleton of the Robinias are silhouetted like lace against the early setting sun.

And I am enchanted by the elegant pink-grey of the cornus branches, each twiggy offer adorned with a tight, closed bud urging me to examine each one.

The freckled thrush at the very pinnacle of them all sings out first and last in the day to that winter sky.

"You can't have it all,  
but there is this."

*By Ruth Grundy,  
I garden a small space under the big sky in  
Ōmārama.*

\*\*\* You can't have it all, by Barbara Ras







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## The weather that was @ 44°29'30.1"S 169°58'20.3"E

July 2025

Highest temperature: July 29, 13C

Lowest temperature: July 24, -7C

Most rainfall: July 11: 5.1mm

Total rainfall for July: 15.2mm

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