



BULLER
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera O Kawatiri

Connect

Keeping you up to date with news from your Buller District Council



Mayor Jamie Cleine
Photo by Nomad AV

Mayor's Message

Welcome to the autumn edition of **Connect**. It has been an extremely busy start to the year for Council.

With great pleasure, I welcomed our new CEO Simon Pickford to Buller on 25 March. Simon has 20 years' experience as a senior local government manager and will be a great addition to the senior leadership team. I can't wait to get Simon up to speed and introduced to our key stakeholders and look forward to introducing him to everything our district has to offer.

The government has begun implementing its Local Water Done Well (LWDW) legislation. This means small Councils face a more challenging pathway to achieving affordable water services for those connected to their networks. Council is continuing to advocate for solutions that will ease the costs to our ratepayers, which are already the highest in the South Island. There will be further LWDW legislation implemented over the next 12 months, after which we will clarify our options.

Council has been very open with ratepayers about the key drivers of rates increases, and the challenges we need to work through as a community.

In response to feedback from Councillors and the recent move to public workshops, new portfolios based on Council's organisational structure have been established for elected members.

These will increase the transparency of Council decisions and strengthen connections within governance. This portfolio approach will spread the workload across all Councillors, with each having a greater degree of responsibility, and more opportunities to lead and work more collaboratively with their peers and group managers.

The councillors appointed to each portfolio will have governance oversight of key work programmes and strategic issues for each. Once Councillors settle into these new portfolios, they will provide a more efficient, inclusive and positive way forward for the Buller District.

Take care and enjoy the autumn weather.

Mayor Jamie Cleine

Have your say!

Enhanced Annual Plan

As the name suggests, the Enhanced Annual Plan 2024/25 is a one-year plan and part of a longer-term planning process. It serves as a concise overview of our proposed services, activities, and financial strategies for the forthcoming year.

This year's Enhanced Annual Plan is distinctive. It extends beyond the usual annual planning process to incorporate insights and directives from the fourth year of our Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2021-2031.

As we present this draft plan, we invite you to share your thoughts, insights, and visions for Buller. Your input is critical in ensuring our plans align with the community's aspirations, guiding how we allocate resources and prioritise projects that matter most to you.

Council has identified two key issues we must address over the coming 12 months. These are how we respond if Council does not receive the current funding level from Waka Kotahi - New Zealand Transport Agency and how we rate for drinking and wastewater.

Please use the enclosed submission form to have your say or make a submission online.

SCAN ME
to find out more
online.



2024 is shaping up to be a busy year for our district and there is plenty going on in our community. Find out what's happening and learn about some of the awesome initiatives underway.

Rates Rebate What is it and how can I apply?

If you're on a low income or struggling to pay your rates, you may be eligible for a rates rebate.

This is a once per year subsidy payment deducted off your District Council rates. The rates rebate scheme is overseen by the Department of Internal Affairs to provide assistance with rates for low-income earners.

The amount you receive from this payment depends on the combination of your income, the amount of rates you have to pay, and the number of dependents you have.

- The maximum rebate is \$750
- Your spouse's income is taken into account as well as your own (that's total household income)

You'll need to provide your rates accounts for BDC and the West Coast Regional Council, plus proof of your income when applying.

Submit your rates rebate application for the rating year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 now. Applications will be accepted until 30 June 2024.

Forms and supporting information can be collected from Council offices in Westport and Reefton or via our website, bullerdc.govt.nz/property-rates-and-building/rates-rebate/

SCAN ME
to find out if you
are
eligible for a
rates rebate
online



The BCCH Development Group visits Christchurch's Youth Hub project
Photo by Buller Cultural and Community Hub

Buller's new Cultural and Community Hub moves forward

The Buller Cultural Community Hub (BCCH) project is guided by the wisdom of the whakatauki: *'Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari, he toa takitini'* – My successes are not mine alone, they are ours.

Over the past twelve months, the BCCH development group, in collaboration with the Buller District Council and Feldspar Associates, has conducted a comprehensive feasibility study to advance the realisation of the BCCH.

Generously funded by Department of Internal Affairs' Better Off funding, the project involves key organisations including Homebuilders West Coast Trust, Te Hā O Kawatiri, Buller District Council, Ngāti Waewae, and Buller REAP.

Feldspar Associates Limited have played a crucial role in guiding the feasibility study, addressing strategic briefs, site assessments, and future project planning.

Outlined in the feasibility study reports, the next pivotal steps include establishing a charitable trust for project oversight, appointing a project delivery team, negotiating the preferred site, developing concept design documentation,

establishing organisational development and governance plans, continuing stakeholder engagement, developing communication plans and formulating a fundraising strategy.

Central to the BCCH project is the commitment to building and sustaining resilience.

The project involves key organisations including Homebuilders West Coast Trust, Te Hā O Kawatiri, Buller District Council, Ngāti Waewae, and Buller REAP.

Recognising success as a collective achievement, the BCCH project emphasises collaboration and community involvement, to bring the vision of the BCCH to fruition.



Find out more about the Buller Cultural and Community Hub by visiting bullerdc.govt.nz/your-council/buller-cultural-and-community-hub/

Westport Airport a hive of activity



 **The Westport RSA crew heads to Warbirds Over Wanaka**
Photo by Westport RSA

Westport Airport carried out a planned full emergency response exercise on 6 April.

This was a full practical simulation, attended by approximately 60 airport and emergency services staff, and community members as actors, staging the scene.

As the holder of an aerodrome operator certificate issued under Civil Aviation Rule Part 139, Westport Airport is legally required to have an aerodrome emergency response plan in place, maintain it, and physically test it at regular intervals.

The aerodrome emergency plan sets out procedures that need to be followed when coordinating the response of the airport, emergency and community agencies and services that could be of assistance when responding to an emergency.

Emergency response exercises give airports an opportunity to assess their preparedness and response capabilities in the event of an actual emergency, testing that communication and coordination is

effective amongst key personnel.

The April 6 exercise went incredibly well in terms of organisation and participation, and a full debrief will now be held, allowing any strengths and weaknesses in the existing emergency response plan to be identified and any modifications required made to the plan to improve overall emergency preparedness.

A big thank you to all agencies, staff and volunteers who attended the exercise and brought a huge amount of energy and

enthusiasm, as well as their professional skills to the task.

Westport RSA members fly in style to Warbirds Over Wanaka.

A group of Westport RSA members keen to attend the Warbirds Over Wanaka air show this year tried something a bit different to get them from A to B.

Wanaka is a bit of a hike from Westport, so Sam Fraser, local RSA member and ex-aircraft engineer ('flying spanner') for the RNZAF decided to try the group's luck and see if they could charter a Sounds Air Pilatus PC12 to fly them to Wanaka.

Sam approached the Airport Operations Officer to see if they could charter a Sounds Air PC12. The boys rallied round and found enough RSA punters to charter a flight to Wanaka.

With a little help from Sounds Air, the RSA crew were rapt to find out they could be picked up at Westport Airport, flown to Wanaka and land at the show in style on board the legendary Sounds Air PC12, attracting the attention and admiration of RSA members in surrounding districts!



 **Firefighters in action at Westport Airport**
Photo by Buller District Council



 **Old man's beard seedhead**
Photo by Carolyn Lewis

Old man's beard must go!

The Kotahitanga mō te Taiao (KMTT) Restoring and Protecting Flora team has just completed an impressive 200 hours of old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*) control in the Buller Gorge.

The control operation covered an area of 240 hectares to support the Department of Conservation's work on this pernicious weed.

Many people will remember the old catchphrase "old man's beard must go!" but not realise what an incredible job has been done to keep it out of Buller. In other parts of the mōtu it is becoming an entrenched problem, beyond the scope of traditional control methods.

It's fantastic that the externally-funded KMTT Flora project has been able to support the Department of Conservation with a thorough ground control operation this year, to help keep on top of the few incursions in our otherwise uniquely intact environment.

Recycling and waste

Catch up on recent developments around Buller's recycling and waste systems and what you can do to maximise your recycling efforts.



Maruia School joins the Enviroschools network

We are excited to welcome Maruia School to the Buller Enviroschools network this year.

Located in the stunning Maruia Valley, between Springs Junction and Murchison, the school has an active programme of education using nature as a classroom.

Students are learning how to grow fruit and veggies in their school garden and orchard, they maintain a local bush walk, grow kōwhai trees from seed, and look after the Kōhanga Atawhai – Manson Nicholls Hut at Lake Daniell. With the Department of Conservation and the New Zealand Panels Group, the school plans to grow more native plants, including two threatened and at risk species that live along the Maruia River at Marble Hill.

Principal Alex Wilson says, "Here at Maruia School, we are extremely passionate about caring for our unique place in Aotearoa and want to enhance our connection with our whenua. This is why we are so excited to have become part of the Enviroschools team. We are looking forward to building on the amazing mahi we have already started and strengthening our connection with Enviroschools to take our learning and

experiences to the next level!"

Enviroschools is an environmental action based programme where young people are empowered to design and lead sustainability and waste reduction projects in their schools and communities. Buller District Council supports seven Enviroschools in the Buller District. West Coast Enviroschools are part of a network of over 1,500 schools and early childhood centres nationwide.



 **For more information about the Enviroschools programme, visit www.enviroschools.org.nz**

Info

Polystyrene recycling takes off in Buller

The polystyrene recycling initiative introduced in September 2023 as a collaboration between Mitre 10, EXPOL, Hilton Haulage and the Buller District Council has had excellent uptake by Buller residents.

Households can drop off up to 240 litres of clean polystyrene (no dirt, food waste/residue, stickers or tape) in the collection cube in Mitre 10's trade drive-through, free of charge. The polystyrene is sent to Christchurch, where it is recycled by EXPOL. EXPOL is a polystyrene manufacturer which incorporates recycled content into a number of its products.

The first collection of 21 cubic metres was sent to Christchurch in early December 2023. The next load will be sent in early April 2024.

Hilton Haulage Ltd stores and carts the full cubes. BDC funds the freight costs from Hilton Haulage's storage area in Westport to the EXPOL factory in Christchurch via Waste Minimisation Levy funds received from the Ministry for the Environment.

Mitre 10 also provides trade customers (e.g. builders) with bags to collect their polystyrene at a cost of \$40 per cubic metre bag. The costs claimed are used to fund the freight for commercial clients' polystyrene.

This initiative means Westport residents no longer have to pay to dispose of polystyrene as refuse at the transfer station.

For more information, visit www.expol.co.nz/recycling-programmes

Zone One Rubbish Collection Consultation

Have your say!

Council is proposing changes to the way that rubbish collection services are delivered and funded in zone one from 1 July 2025.

There are four options to consider through this consultation:

- **Option 1** - Status Quo - Private sector provides a weekly pre-paid bag and wheelie bin collection via Pay As You Throw. Contractor sets pricing and charges for the service.
- **Option 2** - Private sector provides a fortnightly wheelie bin collection via Pay As You Throw. Contractor sets pricing and charges for the service.
- **Option 3** - Council, through a private contractor provides a fortnightly wheelie bin collection with a single 120 litre bin size, Pay As You Throw. Council sets pricing and charges for the service (each household will receive a 120 litre wheelie bin).
- **Option 4** - Council, through a private contractor provides a fortnightly wheelie bin collection with several different bin size options, i.e. 80 litres, 120 litres or 240 litres. Council sets rate for each bin size and charges via targeted rate (each household will receive a 120 litre wheelie bin unless they opt for a different size).

i **Unsure of which recycling and refuse zone you are in?**
Go to: <https://bullerdc.govt.nz/waste-and-recycling/refuse-and-recycling-zones/>

The above options do not include the current recycling rate of \$178, - incl GST as of 2023/24 financial year. The recycling rate will continue to be in addition to the costs for rubbish collection in Zone 1.

The option Council decides on will be rolled out for all households in Zone 1 with rubbish collection from 1 July 2025.

We encourage you to read the Statement of Proposal, which includes cost estimates, advantages and disadvantages for each option.



All costs presented in the Statement of Proposal are in 2023/24 financial year figures to allow an accurate comparison of options using today's pricing. They will be subject to change when implemented from 1 July 2025.

For more information or for sending us your submission

Email
info@bdc.govt.nz with the subject *Zone One rubbish collection consultation* if you have any questions.

Online
Submissions can be completed online by visiting: www.surveymonkey.com/r/Zone1rubbishcollection

Post
Return your submission to the mail slot at Council Offices in Brougham Street, Westport or the Reefton Visitor and Service Centre.

Talk to us
Staff are available during drop-in sessions to discuss any aspects of the proposal. You can find dates, times and locations on www.bullerdc.govt.nz.

Find out more
Visit Council's website or grab the Statement of Proposal from Council's offices and libraries in Westport and Reefton, i-Sites, and resource centres across the district.



The consultation period is from Friday 12 April to Monday 20 May 4:30pm.

Submissions received outside these dates will not be accepted.

Buller District Council is busy working on a number of major projects. Find out how these are tracking along.

Infrastructure Acceleration Fund

Buller District Council has been granted \$13.6M of Infrastructure Acceleration Funding by the Government.

The Infrastructure Acceleration Fund (IAF) was established by the Government in June 2021 and Council applied for funding for five projects.

The \$1 billion dollar fund was contestable and massively oversubscribed, so BDC was fortunate to receive funding for the Alma Road programme.

The IAF was established by the Government to support new or upgraded infrastructure - such as roading and water services to enable new homes to be built in areas of high housing need. The fund is administered by Kāinga Ora.

Kāinga Ora has agreed to fund stormwater/wastewater/drinking water and roading projects to support housing development in the Alma Road area.

The Government's funding is contingent upon Council contributing \$200,000. The Council's contribution is recoverable through future development contributions.

This Government funding is currently available in three tranches: Stage one (design), Stage one (construction) and Stage two (design and construction).

Design funding of \$1.1M from Kāinga Ora is currently being released to BDC for Stage one (design).



You can learn more about the IAF Alma Road project at bullerdc.govt.nz

Pressure reduction success for Westport water supply

The Westport and Carters Beach water supply pressure reduction program was launched on 29 February 2024, with the aim of reducing water loss by decreasing the general leakage across the water network.

Progress has been smooth, with three pressure reductions taking place so far, on 29 February, 13 March and 27 March, with the water pressure currently set at 700 KPa.

Both town water usage and network pressure are closely monitored, with both values showing a decrease and proving the program's effectiveness.

Of key importance, there haven't been any low-pressure water issues linked to the program reported by the community, again highlighting its success.

The pressure reduction process is currently on hold at 700 kPa so more comprehensive reticulation pressure data can be collected. Once this data is analysed, Council will reassess the continuation of the program.

Council thanks residents for their cooperation, emphasizing the importance of our shared commitment to reducing water loss and improving the sustainability of our water system.



Shaping our reserves' future

Buller District Council will start informal consultations with the direct stakeholders of a number of Buller reserves soon and will formally begin drafting the Reserve Management Plan in July 2024.

Reserve Management Plans (RMPs) act as a guide for Council Officers, Reserve and Hall Subcommittees and other stakeholders in making both day-to-day and long-term decisions about how Council's reserves are used, managed, and developed.

RMPs provide for the enjoyment, maintenance, protection, preservation and development of our reserves. Moreover, these plans ensure we are using the reserves in the best interests of our

community.

Council is required to prepare and review RMPs for the many reserves and areas of open space that it manages or controls under the Reserves Act 1977.

There are two phases of public consultation, informal and formal, involved in the review and preparation of RMPs. Public notices signal the start of both phases. It's important to ensure your comments are provided to the Council Officers by the specified date and time to ensure they are included in the process.

We will bring you more information closer to the time and invite your feedback.

Roading repairs making headway

The Buller region's road network suffered significant damage during the July 2021 and February 2022 weather events. In December 2022, the Council received \$13.2M funding approval from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency for the repair of the Buller District's storm damaged roads.

What's been done?

Across the entire programme, 49 of the 82 project sites have now been completed. Works to construct five retaining walls on Denniston Road have been completed and the road is now fully open in both directions. The first phase of works on the Karamea Highway and bundles of projects in Little Wanganui, Mokihinui, Seddonville, Springs Junction, Reefton and Inangahua have all been completed. The second phase of construction activity on the Karamea Highway has commenced and will continue through to the beginning of 2025. This phase involves 17 individual projects.

What is ongoing?

Works continue to be focused on the Karamea Highway, with one other significant project in Darkies Terrace and five minor works projects around the district likely to commence in June.



Contractors busy working on the Denniston Road
Photo by Buller District Council

Resilient Westport

The Resilient Westport Programme teams are focusing on delivering the Stage One flood protection works, planning for Stage Two and engaging with stakeholders in the community over Master Planning. The Resilient Westport Package works are coordinated by the Resilient Westport Steering Group, with \$22.9 million in government funding.

Stage One protection works: The **Floating Lagoon** is a length of land near Westport where a stopbank and 200-metre-long proprietary portable flood barriers are planned. Its final geotech and engineering design is underway.

A stopbank on the **Avery's** stretch of the Orowaiti River is estimated to provide protection from a one-in-100-year flood for the next 30 years of climate change. Its final geotech and engineering design is underway.

The **Abattoir Drain** project is a small earthen bund which will redirect floodwaters in Cats Creek to the Abattoir Drain. The geotechnical work is complete and will enable the engineers to assess the soil and other associated materials for the final engineering works. Work is programmed for May/June 2024.

The **McKenna Road** project is a 400 metre low earthen bund which will assist with preventing overflow from the Orowaiti River. The final geotechnical assessment and design works are underway. Construction is scheduled from May to July 2024.

Wave buoy: The Sofar Spotter Ocean wave buoy has been purchased and will be soon located a short distance offshore from Westport. The sea level monitoring and tide gauging will improve flood warning information.

Stage Two (flood walls): Flood Protection Structures Stage 2 protection includes Westport's flood walls. This is currently in design, with the aim of completing 90% of the works by June 2026.

Resilient Westport Master Planning: The Master Planning process seeks to provide a holistic road map for the short, medium and long term future of the greater Westport area. A range of stakeholders have been invited to look at Stage One of the plan – a Vision for the Future – to help guide the next steps for Stage Two. Wider community input will be sought in 2024 and 2025.

Community and Council notices

Water notices

Water supplies

Council would like to remind consumers to flush their taps with a mugful of water in the morning prior to use.

This applies to all supplies including rainwater. Visit Council's website 'water - plumbosolvency' for details. There are different levels of water treatment in Buller. The Cape Foulwind water supply (Wilson's Lead Road and Bulls Rd) is for stock use only, not intended for human consumption.

A permanent boil water notice applies for Little Wanganui Subdivision, Mōkihinui, Ngakawau/Hector, South Granity and Waimangaroa. Reefton's chlorination has been completed, and the permanent precautionary boil water notice has now been lifted.

For more information contact Council or your local water supplier for Ngakawau/Hector and South Granity.



You can sign up to Council's email list and receive key information about your local water supply under bullerdc.govt.nz/do-it-online/water-supply-update-sign-up/

Wastewater

Council operates sewerage treatment in Little Wanganui, Reefton and Westport.

Please don't flush any wipes, including those labelled as flushable, or paper towels down the toilet. People who have a connection to the Orowaiti sewerage scheme are reminded that they should no longer be using septic tanks and should be connected to the reticulation.



For more details contact Council or visit bullerdc.govt.nz/infrastructure/wastewater

Stormwater

Please consider stormwater and wastewater separation. Stormwater that enters the sewer must be treated as sewerage. This can cause sewer capacity problems during prolonged and heavy rain.

The majority of the stormwater is discharged untreated into the district's rivers. Please consider this when discharging fluids into the stormwater system. If you wouldn't want to swim in it, it shouldn't be going into the stormwater and needs to be disposed of as wastewater.



For more details contact Council or visit bullerdc.govt.nz/infrastructure/stormwater

Meetings

May to August 2024

All Council and committee meetings and workshops will be livestreamed to Council's Youtube channel Buller District Council.

The 2024 meeting calendar can be found at bullerdc.govt.nz/your-council/meetings/

Please check the calendar for any updates and additional meetings.

Ordinary Council Meetings

- 29 May, 3:30pm
- 26 June, 3:30pm
- 31 July, 3:30pm
- 28 August, 3:30pm

Risk and Audit Committee

- 12 June, 3:30pm
- 14 August, 3:30pm

Inangahua Community Board

- 7 May, 5pm
- 9 July, 5pm

Council Workshops (content will be advised)

- 15 May
- 26 June
- 29 May
- 17 July
- 12 June
- 14 August

If you would like to join the meeting, have any questions regarding these meetings, or would like to address Council during the public forum part of the ordinary council meeting please contact:

Governance Assistant

Email governance.assistant@bdc.govt.nz or

Phone 0800 807 239



Please visit Buller District Council's website bullerdc.govt.nz for to check for any updates to the Council meeting calendar

Westport office

6-8 Brougham Street, PO Box 21,
Westport 7866, New Zealand

Freephone 0800 807 239

Phone 03 788 9111

Reefton Visitor and Service Centre

67-69 Broadway, PO Box 75,
Reefton 7851, New Zealand

Phone 03 732 8821

Phone 03 732 8391

24 hr Noise and Animal Control Services

Phone 03 788 9115

After hours Operations emergencies

Phone 03 788 9119 Westport,
or 03 732 8821 Reefton



Like what you see? Sign up to receive our newsletter via email at www.bullerdc.govt.nz/do-it-online/newsletter-sign-up/

bullerdc.govt.nz