

Tuia te Taitonga tāpiringa

Southlink Extra

Spring 2026



Welcome to Southlink Extra

Welcome to the Spring edition of **Southlink Extra** for 2026. This quarterly newsletter complements our Council Southlink publication, which appears fortnightly in the Ōpunakē Coastal News and monthly in the Pātea and Waverley Press and provides another way for us to keep you informed about what the Council is doing in our District.

Community Spirit Celebrated at South Taranaki Community Awards

Local volunteers and community champions were celebrated on Thursday 17 September at the South Taranaki Community Awards, held at the Hāwera Memorial Theatre.

The awards recognise individuals who have made a significant contribution to their communities through leadership, dedication, and service to others.

South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon said the awards are an opportunity to acknowledge the many people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to support others.

"These awards are for the incredible volunteers who give their time, energy, and skills to strengthen our communities. Their contributions often go unseen, but the positive impact they have on the lives of others is immeasurable. South Taranaki is fortunate to have so many people who are willing to step up, lend a hand, and help our communities thrive," says Mayor Nixon.

Recipients were celebrated for their contributions across a wide range of areas, including community development, environmental conservation, youth mentoring, animal welfare, sport, arts and culture, and support for vulnerable members of the community.

From mentoring young people and supporting local charities to protecting the environment and strengthening community



connections, this year's recipients reflect the very best of South Taranaki's community spirit.

Award Recipients:

Individual Volunteer Awards – Raewyn Frederickson, Maryanne Forsyth, Joshua Bond, Graeme Hughes, Nick Williams, Hazel Robinson, Christopher Oliver, Hauraki Erb, Donald Stockwell, Malcolm Hurley, Jenny Meechin, and Summer Stewart-Heather.

Joint Volunteer Awards – Jenny and Guy Oakley, Robert and Georgina Goble and Tyler Greenwood.

Organisation Volunteer Awards – Hāwera Basketball Association Volunteer Committee, Ngā Waihotanga Sports and Cultural Club, Hāwera Volunteer Fire Brigade, Eltham Craft, Crochet and Knitting Group, and Eltham (Foodbank) Community Care.

Visit www.southtaranaki.com/communityawards to see the full award information.



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New Manaia Community Facility Takes Major Step Forward

Council has reached a significant milestone in the delivery of the new Manaia Community Facility, with Clelands Construction Ltd engaged to lead the design and construction of the project.

The milestone follows the recent demolition of the former Manaia War Memorial Hall and Manaia Sports Complex, clearing the way for the \$4 million Manaia Community Facility project on the old Sports Complex site. The modern, multi-purpose facility will serve as a hub for sport, recreation and community activities for generations to come.

Following a competitive open tender process, Clelands was selected as the preferred partner based on its proven capability, delivery confidence and strong track record in community and recreational infrastructure projects. Mayor Phil Nixon welcomed the signing of the contract and the progress being made on the project.

“It’s great to see this project continuing to move forward. The demolition of the old facilities marked the end of an era for Manaia, and this contract signing marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the community.”

“The signing of this contract is an important step towards delivering a high-quality community facility that will serve the Manaia community for generations to come.”

Clelands Construction Managing Director Michael Braggins said the company was excited to begin work on the project.

“We’re excited about the opportunity to work with Council and the community on this important project.”

“Facilities like this create spaces for people to connect, participate and come together. We look forward to

developing a facility that delivers lasting benefits for the community and supports a wide range of activities for many years to come.”

The project will now move into detailed design and construction planning, with Council and Clelands Construction working together to refine the design, complete consenting requirements and prepare the project for construction.



Waverley Town Belt Pathway Project Reaches Next Milestone

Stage 2 of the Waverley Town Belt pathway project is now complete, delivering a new shared-use pathway, improved access, walkway formation and bridge approach improvements on Chester Street. The works continue the development of the Town Belt track, creating stronger recreational connections through the reserve.

The project was identified as a priority by the Waverley Co-Design Group in 2025, with a focus on urban reforestation and strengthening connections throughout the Town Belt. It forms part of a wider programme of town revitalisation projects being delivered by Council across South Taranaki.

As part of the reforestation work, Waitōtara School students joined the project team on 25 August to plant native trees, helping restore biodiversity and create a greener space for the community.

Community Development Advisor Fran Levings said the project had been a great example of collaboration.

“It’s been great to work together to create connected spaces for our communities as part of the Town Revitalisation projects. The Town Belt is already a wonderful space, and as the trees mature and become established, they will add even more to the character, amenity and enjoyment of the area for the community.”

The pathway and planting work support recreation, wellbeing, biodiversity and connection to the natural environment, building on the Town Belt improvements already completed.



Te Puna Manawa Ora Vision Coming to Life in Ōpunakē

The vision for Te Puna Manawa Ora (formerly known as the Ōpunakē Greenspace) is becoming increasingly visible, with significant progress made across the site in recent weeks.

Much of the concrete and corten steel work is now in place, alongside timber tops, seating and a range of playful features that will help create an inviting and engaging space for the community to enjoy.

The project’s distinctive feature tiles are also taking shape.

With many of the key elements now installed, it is exciting to see Te Puna Manawa Ora begin to reflect the original vision and emerge as a vibrant community space for Ōpunakē residents and visitors.



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