



Council News

a newsletter from the Clutha District Council

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From the Mayor



There was a time when it seemed our district had almost accepted rural decline as being an unavoidable fate for Clutha.

Many forget it was just over a decade ago that our district's population sat at near 16,000, having plummeted from 19,200 at its peak, and the long-term impacts of sustained and almost systemic decline

Mayor Bryan Cadogan

were manifesting in many facets of society.

Clutha was exposed to the ravages of decline more than most towns, its population spread over a vast land mass with small communities dotted throughout. This exposure was most apparent in sport and cultural groups. As numbers rapidly reduced many were unable to adjust and some clubs and groups were forced to cease operations.

This is not a tale of doom and gloom because in recent times Clutha has recovered the ground and has restored numbers near to where they were. However, it is imperative as we consider the vibrancy and future direction for our district that we do it without rose-tinted glasses because hard reality needs a realistic response.

The largest cohort of those that left the district were our young adults who saw a limited future for themselves.

And when young people leave, they take with them their vibrancy, their economic stimulus and, dare I say, their

ability to reproduce which adversely impacts schools and hospitals.

Just as young people were the largest cohort to leave, they are now the largest to return, and why wouldn't they with so much potential on offer in the district. People considering relocating are looking for more than my generation ever contemplated. Clutha is competing with every other district, and if you don't present a vibrant package collectively the whole district misses out.

There are still some areas of New Zealand that are draining their population and lack the strategies to break the inertia. Thankfully Clutha is moving forward and we are now seeing tangible evidence that the strategies created in tandem with our communities are coming to fruition and ensuring we have a strong base to capitalise on future opportunities.

In recent months we are seeing a number of key projects move nearer to completion. Te Pou ō Mata-Au (Clutha Community Hub) and the Lawrence to Waihola cycle trail are both opening on 25 August - what a day that is going to be for our district!

While these projects are both high profile and much-awaited additions to our district's excitement package they are by no means the only ones.

A multi-million dollar upgrade of underground infrastructure in Milton is underway – it might not seem appealing on the surface, but it addresses surface flooding issues and allows for expected future growth – a big win for the town.

[Read More](#) →

From the mayor continued...

New destination toilets have opened in Balclutha and Milton, an asset for locals and visitors, expected to encourage travellers to stop when passing through.

An upgrade of the Centennial Park playground and a new dog park have been completed, followed by the redevelopment of the Lake Waihola playground, with an upgrade of the Lawrence playground underway. Exciting projects not just because they are fantastic assets, but because they are community-led projects supported by Council.

There is a cunning plan for Council to invest in these sorts of projects.

Quite simply, districts in decline have a reducing ratepayer base, and costs get divided by fewer and fewer people until the decline locks communities into a very challenging future.

On the other hand, encouraging growth will mean more people to help absorb the costs of providing essentials in the future. Ultimately for us it means containment of rate rises and a vibrant future that offers communities options and the ability to control their own destiny.

I suppose that is the true definition of Onwards and Upwards.

Bryan Cadogan, Mayor

Balclutha Centennial Pool update

Swimmers can now stay longer at the Balclutha pool at the weekend with opening hours extended to 10am to 4.30pm every Saturday and Sunday.

Council agreed to fund these extended hours during last year's annual plan process as part of increasing the level of service at the pool.

It took some time to recruit and train new pool staff to make this possible, with the longer hours running since May.

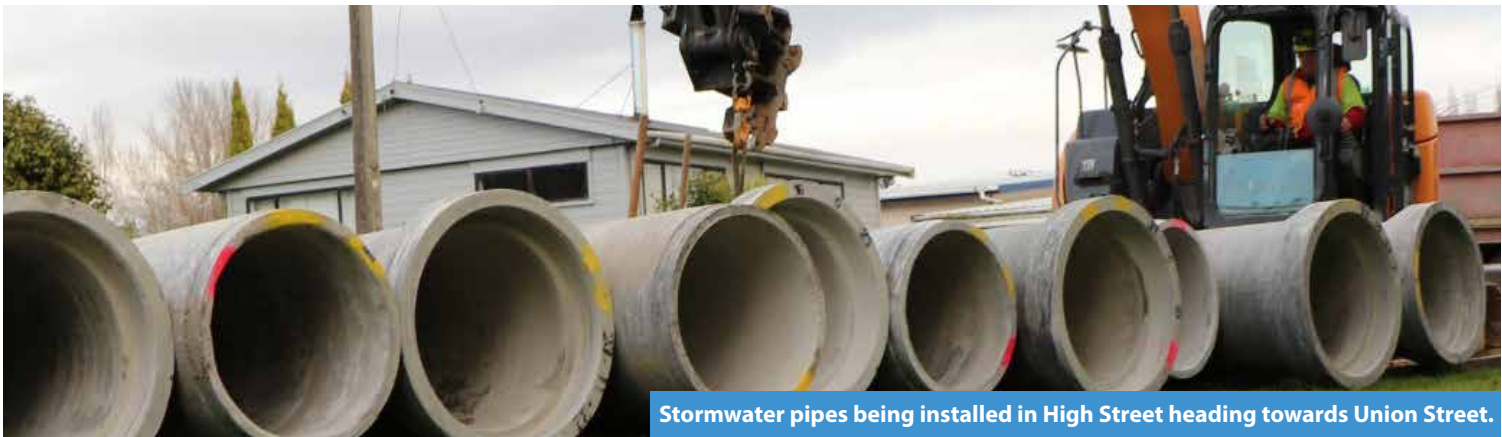
Please remember the pool is **temporarily closed from Monday, 17 July to Monday, 7 August** for its annual maintenance and spring clean. The spa pool will be also operational when the pool re-opens. The spa pool had been closed due to faulty valve which has been replaced.

We look forward to seeing you when the pool re-opens!



spotlight on / Milton...

“ Main street upgrade underway



Stormwater pipes being installed in High Street heading towards Union Street.

An infrastructure upgrade of pipes under Milton's main street is underway.

Clutha District Council is investing \$6 million improving the infrastructure underneath the main street.

Mayor Bryan Cadogan said the upgrade replaces critical infrastructure that is at the end of its life, addresses long-standing flooding issues, and allows for future growth.

This includes replacing old water, stormwater and wastewater pipes on Union Street (between High Street

and Abercrombie Street), as well as undergrounding power cables.

The work, which will take more than a year, is being completed in 50 metre sections to minimise disruption as much as possible.

There will be reduced parking, stop-go on the main street and short detours on our local roads.

The work is complex due to the location of pipes, and how much pipework is being upgraded.

Shops are still accessible during this

work, although parking directly outside may be affected at times.

Local contractor Andrew Haulage (2011) Ltd is carrying out the pipe replacement work, while PowerNet will complete the undergrounding of the powerlines.

Main street landscaping is a separate project and, along with a new footpath, will be completed in the future.

Get the latest information:

www.cluthadc.govt.nz/milton-roadworks

Brand new destination public toilets in Balclutha and Milton were officially opened in recent months, giving locals and visitors a modern, safe, and accessible place to stop.

Mayor Bryan Cadogan said the new facilities promised to bring benefits to both towns.

They give people another reason to stop, and being in the heart of the towns, there's a greater chance people will also spend time and money at the surrounding retailers, he said.

The projects are a result of the community planning work that Council is undertaking throughout the district.

Milton's toilets cost about \$660,000 and Balclutha's approximately \$683,000. A funding contribution of \$420,000 was awarded from central government's Tourism Infrastructure Fund.



Pictured: Balclutha toilet (top) and Milton (below).

Public health notice

Household plumbing and fittings contain metals like copper, brass, and steel. They can withstand high temperatures and pressures, making them ideal for carrying water and other fluids through pipes. They're also resistant to corrosion, which helps prevent leaks and other damage over time. Some plumbing fittings potentially allow minute traces of these metals to accumulate where water sits in the fittings for several hours.

Although the health risk is low we recommend you flush a cup full of water from your drinking water tap each morning, or after you have been away from your property, to remove any metals that may have dissolved from the plumbing fittings.

This simple precaution is recommended for all households in New Zealand, including those on public and private water supplies.

This is separate to the aluminium advisory in place for some water schemes and towns in the Clutha District after aluminium was detected in the water in February.

Details matter...

It's important when paying your rates via online banking that you put in the correct valuation reference. Otherwise, your payment is credited to the wrong account, and you'll be sent a penalty payment notice, when in fact you have already paid your rates on time!

Every address has its own valuation reference, which can be found in the bottom left-hand side of your rates bill, beside the instructions for different payment methods.

Help us avoid the confusion by checking your details when paying rates.

Notice to all dog owners

All dogs should have been registered by the end of July.

Every dog who is older than three-months must be registered by their owner **every** year.

Remember registering your dog is easy, you can use Council's online portal at:

onlineservices.cluthadc.govt.nz

If you haven't done so yet, please register your dog **immediately**.



Rates rebate reminder

The rates rebate scheme provides financial assistance for households with low incomes.

More people became eligible for the scheme in recent years, so it's worth checking if a rates rebate could help you.

Check out further details, including your eligibility at www.cluthadc.govt.nz/rates-and-property, over the counter at one of our community libraries, or give us a call on 0800 801 350.

WINTER IS HERE DRIVERS

It's time to make sure your vehicle is safe, roadworthy and well-equipped for winter driving. This means having a safe spare tyre, brakes, lights and windscreen wipers that all work and a clean windscreen!

Also check your engine oil and the levels of your windscreen washer, radiator, oil, and brake fluid. Remember anti-freeze if you live in a cold area.

To reduce the risk of losing traction on the road, check your tyre tread is at least 1.5mm deep and that you have the correct and equal pressure in all four tyres.

Motorists must also "drive to the conditions", which means:

- Slowing down and maintaining a greater following distance than usual.
- Avoiding sudden braking or sharp turns as these can cause the car to skid.
- Dipping your headlights on foggy, snowy or very cloudy days.
- Using the lowest reasonable gear when travelling downhill and the highest going uphill.
- Watching out for shady spots where ice will form faster and linger longer.
- Being aware of black ice, which is particularly slippery. It can appear as a glossy sheen on the road but is sometimes impossible to spot (common on quieter roads).
- Slowing down for bridges and shady patches.
- Being aware of frost if you're travelling at dawn.
- Watching out for unexpected debris after high winds or stormy conditions.

Keep safe and look out for each other!



Community awards celebrate Clutha District's volunteers

Outstanding individuals and community groups who have made a significant impact in their community were honoured at the 2023 Clutha District Community Awards, held at the West Otago Community Centre in June.

The annual awards are held by Clutha District Council to formally recognise the great volunteer work being done throughout the district.

Waihola Looking Forward was the supreme winner of the group award for the successful completion of the community led Waihola Playground Redevelopment Project.

The project involved redevelopment of the existing lakefront playground site, including the replacement of aged equipment.

Individual award winners:

- Evan Dick for services to Kaitangata.
- Edward Fitzgerald for services to Lawrence/Tuapeka.
- Pam Keddell for services to the Toko Golf Club.
- Jill Wallace for services to Lawrence/Tuapeka.
- Graham Walker for services to West Otago.

- Hans Van Der Linden for services to West Otago.

Clutha District Council Mayor Bryan Cadogan said the event was an evening to celebrate our community champions.

"These people put in tireless hours of their volunteer time to support and make improvements to their communities.

We are just so appreciative of what they have achieved and continue to achieve for Clutha," Mayor Cadogan said.

Other groups presented with awards in the various categories included:

- Te Whare Puawai o Tokomairiro Inc - health and well-being
- Lovells Flat Women's Institute – heritage and environment
- Tokomairiro Toy Library – arts and culture
- Tokomairiro Junior Netball Club – leisure and recreation
- West Otago Rural Kids – educational and youth

Winning recipients in each of the Community Group categories received \$1,000 and the Supreme Winner received \$2,000.

Year 13 Blue Mountain College student



Sven Captijn was the successful recipient of the Youth Spirit Award for his outstanding contribution to his school and community and was presented with \$750.

A high calibre award was presented to Ryan Williams and Charlotte Benington (South Otago High School) and Elizabeth Lamb (Blue Mountain College).

Inspired to volunteer?

There are a number of community plan projects on the go throughout the Clutha District, being run by volunteers as part of our place community plans, with support from Council. You can read these plans online:

www.cluthadc.govt.nz/community-plans