Council News

a newsletter from the Clutha District Council

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Showcasing our community champions

The 2026 Clutha District Council Community Service Awards were held at the Kaitangata Community Centre in June, celebrating the wonderful individuals and groups who make a positive difference in Clutha's communities.

Congratulations to the Kaka Point Community Group (pictured right), who won the Supreme Award.

The group was honoured for its commitment, generosity and a shared love for their community, and for their work delivering outstanding new toilets and changing rooms at Kaka Point.

It was also the recipient of the Recreational and Leisure Award.

Mayor Jason (Jock) Martin says the awards are a fantastic opportunity to shine a spotlight on the incredible passion and dedication community members demonstrate every day.

"We are lucky to have so many champions among us. People who drive projects, inspire others, and create positive change that benefits us all."

"I encourage everyone to come together to honour the remarkable individuals and groups that make Clutha such a vibrant and caring place. Their contributions inspire future generations to carry the torch of community service," Mayor Martin says.

Awards organiser Sonia Farquharson thanked everyone who took the time to put forward nominations saying the standard of recipients was incredibly high.

"As a council we are very proud to support the awards that highlight the meaningful work that is taking place across the district," Sonia says.

A total of eight individual awards were also presented on the night.

The awards recognise groups, individuals, and year 13 students in the community who have demonstrated great mahi volunteer work.

Winning recipients in each of the Community Group areas receive $1,000, Youth Spirit, $750, and Merit Prizes $350 while the Supreme Winner receives an additional $2,000.

You can read more about the award winners on page 3.

Pictured: Mayor Jason (Jock) Martin with members of the Kaka Point Community Group, winner of the Supreme Award (L-R) Lisa Biginato, Neil Belvoir, Deborah Whyte, Ken Stephens and Tony Somerville.

Reflecting and looking forward.

As we enter a new rating and financial year, it seems timely to reflect on the decisions made by Council for the 2026/27 Annual Plan.

It is never easy making the impossible happen, but with the ratepayers and residents of the Clutha District front of mind we have done our best to carefully stretch every dollar out further.

This process was always going to be challenging. When we went out for consultation we indicated that we'd have to make some difficult decisions, including breaching our self-imposed 20% rates cap to balance everything for this annual plan and make things work.

An indicative overall rates increase of 20.54% district wide was adopted in the end. We appreciate that this isn't the news our people want to hear, with rising living costs and fuel costs making it tough on all households right now.

To get to this decision, your councillors engaged in significant deliberation and fine-tuning during the two days of Annual Plan decision meetings. We asked the "Why?", with fiscal responsibility and integrity front of mind. I'm proud of the scrutiny and dedication that was shown by Council during these difficult decisions.

With the annual plan behind us, there are more significant challenges that lie ahead.

We must meet the government's approaching August deadline for simplifying local government reforms.

The ministers have made it clear that we need to sort this out ourselves or they will intervene. The Honourable Chris Bishop stated that we cannot keep "kicking the can into the long grass".

Clutha District Mayor Jock Martin

All of this reset and refocus attitude being placed on local government may be well intentioned, but it does have me wondering if central government has looked at the bigger picture and asked the "Why" well before now?

A 4% rates cap may be politically appealing, but it risks oversimplifying a more complex issue: keeping infrastructure safe, operating, reliable, and properly maintained. The Clutha District experienced 4% rates capping between 2015 and 2024, and we are now dealing with the consequences of it.

With territorial and regional authorities currently having a combined national debt of $30.36b (a record level), how did the past governments and the current one not have alarm bells ringing before now?

With an increasing list of expectations coming in from central government, and an already stretched amount of time and resources available, there is plenty of work ahead.

However, I am confident that together as a district, we can rise to the occasion and navigate these challenges, to build a brighter future for our communities and tamariki.

Your Mayor,
Jason (Jock) Martin

updates / Clutha Development

CluthaNZ branding refresh: Our new logo captures the essence of Clutha as a place to explore, discover and connect. The iconic Nugget Point Lighthouse reflects one of the district's most recognisable landmarks, while the Nuggets celebrate both our dramatic coastline and thegold nuggets discovered at Lawrence that sparked the Otago Gold Rush. The blue lighthouse beam represents the Clutha River that winds through the district and the historic sluice guns that helped shape our gold-mining story. Together, the colours reflect the waterways, landscapes and natural beauty that make Clutha a unique destination.

Showcasing Clutha Businesses through Stay for Good Campaign: Over the last 18 months, our Stay for Good campaign has been sharing the stories of the people, businesses, and opportunities that make Clutha a great place to live, work, and build a future. As part of the campaign, we're continuing to create and share business profiles that highlight the diverse range of local businesses across the district. Through photos, videos, interviews, and behind-the-scenes stories, we want to celebrate the people behind these businesses, showcase their contribution to our communities and economy, and help raise their profile across our social media channels. If you'd like your business featured, we'd love to hear from you and help tell your story. Please email **sarahhomer@cluthanz.com**.

Interested in helping electrify Clutha? Rewiring Aotearoa is building electrification knowledge and capability within our households, communities, and small businesses. They support community-led action to help people save money on energy bills, lower emissions, and improve resilience. The future of our communities can be bright as we transition from spending millions on fossil fuels every year to investing that money locally and powering our lives with New Zealand-made electricity.
If you're interested in being part of a local group exploring how we can electrify Clutha and support households, businesses, and communities through this transition, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact **sarah@cluthanz.com** to register your interest.

SAVE THE DATE:
24th November 2026

Clutha District Training and Development Awards

- **Community Law and IRD Clinics monthly:** Phone 418 4048 or email **info@cluthanz.com** to book.
- **Justice of Peace:** every Friday 2-5pm. No appointment necessary.

$2.5m funding boost for West Otago

Clutha District Councillors have committed up to $2.5 million for a new building in Tapanui that will integrate both the existing community centre and library.

This will be loan funded to spread the cost and will be funded 47% through the Uniform Annual General Charge and 53% through Community Facilities rates.

The funding has been warmly welcomed by people connected to both the existing library and West Otago Community Centre.

West Otago Ward councillor and deputy mayor Michele Kennedy says creating a new building is about future proofing for the next generation.

"This will give our district a viable building that can be used for multiple purposes from sports, a theatre, library, meeting place, service centre, Civil Defence and many more activities," Michele says.

Cr Kennedy describes the West Otago community as resilient and resourceful, and one that backs local projects.

Her sentiments are echoed by West Otago Community Board chairman Bruce Robertson.

"It makes sense to have a new building especially as the library is no longer fit for purpose and the maintenance that is required for the roof of the existing West Otago Community Centre," Bruce says.

West Otago Community Centre spokesperson Hans van der Linden says without significant funding from the Council it would not have been possible for the community to fund the replacement of the Tapanui library and incorporate it into the community centre.

Pictured L-R: West Otago Community Board chairman Bruce Robertson, Community Centre spokesperson Hans van der Linden, Councillor Michele Kennedy, and CDC Community Services Group Manager Mike Goldsmith.

The WOCC have already spent money on roof strengthening and infrastructure, but further renewal work is required to replace the roof structure over the central part of the centre.

While council has committed up to $2.5m to the new building the overall project is likely to cost up to $3.5m.

"Our contractors have started the final detailed design work. This will complete the design to building consent application detail and enable fixed pricing to be determined. In the meantime, our fundraising committee will be highly active and do their best to raise the additional money required to see this project through to completion. This is likely to be in the vicinity of $1 million," Hans says.

A tentative timeline puts demolition of the existing centre and library taking place in January 2027 and the new integrated building open in February 2028.

Community Service Award recipients

Supreme Award: Kaka Point Community Group.

Health & Wellbeing Award: Knit and Yarn. Since 2009, these dedicated knitters have created handmade garments for babies and young children, supporting hospitals in Auckland and Invercargill, and previously reaching children overseas, including in Ukraine.

Recreational and Leisure Award: Kaka Point Community Group for recognition of their outstanding community work, and their dedication to improving local facilities for residents, visitors, and the wider South Otago community.

Individual Awards:

Nathan White for his outstanding service to the community through Nathan's Taxis, and for his valued contribution to theatre and church.

Salu Hakeelah Tuia Ta'avili for her extraordinary service, quiet leadership, and dedication to the Pasifika community in the Clutha District.

Iosefa Setu in recognition of his extraordinary leadership, deep faith, and generous service to the Clutha District community.

Jeannine Basquin in recognition for more than 20 years of outstanding service to the Taieri Mouth community, providing steady leadership, practical support, and unwavering dedication.

Joel Crook for supporting local projects with a steady, positive, and hands-on approach. Joel has also contributed to the Milton Menz Shed and supported the Milton Rotary Tramping Club for about 40 years.

Kirsty Nicol has given more than 10 years of outstanding service to the Kaitangata Black Gold BMX Club, supporting riders, families, and the wider BMX community with energy, care, and commitment.

Sue Harrex and Pam Hunter are both receiving individual awards for their work connected to the Mainly Music Clutha Valley group, helping to create a warm and welcoming place for young families to enjoy music and movement and make friends.

Youth Spirit Award: Jorja Andrews (South Otago High School) in recognition of her outstanding leadership, confidence and commitment to her school and community. Certificates of Merit went to Bella Paterson and Rashaun Melvin.

Recycling in the Clutha District

Residents can recycle clean paper, cardboard, plastics 1, 2 and 5, and aluminium and tin cans in their yellow-lidded recycle bins, and at the recently-reopened transfer stations in Clinton, Lawrence, Milton, Ōwaka and Tapanui.

Glass and plastic lids are not accepted, so please leave them out to help avoid contamination.

We know everyone is really keen to get glass recycling underway in our district. Rest assured that Council is investigating options, but this service is unlikely to be available until 2027. In the meantime, glass should only go into your red or green-lidded bin, or to Mt Cooee Landfill.

Please only put the accepted items into your yellow-lidded bin.

This also applies for the recycling bins that are located at our transfer stations, so this service can stay available for local communities.

These recently-reopened transfer stations operate under a three-strike system, and if a station receives three strikes for misuse or contamination, it may have to close.

For hints and tips on recycling go to **www.cluthadc.govt.nz/rubbish-and-recycling.**

Alternatively, if you have any questions you can get in touch directly with council's Waste Team on 0800 801 350 or by emailing **help.desk@cluthadc.govt.nz**.

What CAN and CAN'T go in yellow-lidded bins?

YES! Pop it in.

- CLEAN PLASTIC CONTAINERS 1, 2 AND 5 (WITHOUT LIDS).
- CLEAN STEEL, TIN AND ALUMINIUM CANS.
- CLEAN PAPER AND CARDBOARD.

NO. Put it in the red/green bin.

- GLASS
- LIDS
- POLYSTYRENE
- SOFT PLASTICS
- GENERAL & GREEN WASTE

DID YOU KNOW?

If you're unsure about what can go in their recycling bins and what causes contamination you can reach out to our Waste team. We offer home visits to audit your bins and provide education around the do's and don'ts of recycling.

Receive your rates by email

Ready to ditch the paper?

If you haven't already signed up to receive Council correspondence by email, now is a great time to do it.

Don't forget to also let Council know if your bank account has changed, so that we can update your direct debit details.

Save on paper and postage costs, receive your rates notices by email.

Visit **www.cluthadc.govt.nz/email-signup** to sign up.

Direct debit processing changes

We have changed the way we process direct debits for rates this financial year.

You can now choose which working day you would like your direct debits to come out of your bank account. If you want to sign up for direct debit, simply complete our online form or contact us to request an emailed form.When you submit your form, let us know which day of the week you would like this to start.

If you are already on a direct debit schedule, please give us a call on 0800 801 350 to change your day.

Dog registration fees

Have you paid your dog registrations?

Dog registration notices for the 2026/27 year were issued at the end of June, and all dogs should be registered and paid for by the end of July.

Make sure you check your spam email folder if you don't think you've received your registration notice yet. Alternatively, give us a call on 0800 801 350 or call in and see us.

Dogs over three months old must be registered annually. You can register your dog and pay online at: **www.cluthadc.govt.nz/dogs**

Check out the What's On Guide

The Winter What's On Guide is here.

Scan the QR code to find loads of exciting events and activities happening throughout the district this winter.

If you have an event you would like included in the next edition you can email **events@cluthadc.govt.nz**.