



GEAR UP FOR GO BY BIKE DAY

It's almost time to hop on your bike for this year's Go By Bike Day!

Taking place on Wednesday, February 22, the annual event encourages people to think about cycling to work or school instead of driving.

Road safety coordinator Dianna Harrison said there were so many reasons to give cycling a go.

"Apart from being great for your health and fitness, cycling is a fun way to get to work or school, especially in the summer. What's more, we live in one of the most beautiful places in the country, so it makes sense to make the most of getting out there on your bike in paradise!"

Go By Bike Day kicks off at 7am at the Tongariro North Domain on Wednesday with a free breakfast for those who have registered. There will be spot prizes, loads of giveaways and fun activities followed by a 1.5km loop ride through Riverside Park before everyone heads off to work or school.

Visit taupo.govt.nz/roadsafety to register or for more information.



Teams of workmates, friends or individuals can also get involved in the Aotearoa Bike Challenge which is running throughout February. This fun, free challenge encourages people to experience first-hand the joys and benefits of riding a bike. It's all about participation and you only have to ride for a minimum of 10 minutes for the whole month. Sound easy? Sign your team up at www.aotearoa.bike to get involved.

BUILDING GROWTH IS CREATING JOBS



You may have seen the news recently that we've got some strong building growth here in the Taupō District. In the past 12 months over \$150 million of building work has taken place, up almost \$40 million since 2015. Council issued 304 new dwelling building consents in 2016, the highest number issued since 2006 and three times the number issued in 2012.

Driving around our district, it's always exciting to see new subdivisions growing and coming to life, and there certainly is a lot of housing being built at the moment. Long may it continue!

While a building boom is great news for all the obvious economic reasons, it's also great for our young people who are learning a trade and gaining employment in our district.

Construction courses at Taupō's Toi Ohomai campus help budding builders gain construction skills before becoming apprentices and provide introductory skills in safety, tools, materials, construction terminology, construction tasks and projects, processes, and techniques. I've been told that enrolments for the course are continuing to grow, which is a great sign more people are learning the skills they need to get a job. Construction has been such a popular career choice that Toi Ohomai is now taking enrolments for a second intake to keep up with demand.

Over 75 per cent of students who completed the course last year have already found employment and are helping builders keep up with the building demand. This is great news and it's fantastic that we have a training provider here in our district helping to give our young people a great introduction to a fulfilling career.

While many people see trades as a male occupation, there are a growing number of women who are enrolling in construction and other hands-on courses. Women working in trades bring a number of benefits to businesses such as stronger connections with customers and a greater diversity of leadership. The number of female builders around the country is growing and it'll be great to see even more women on building sites in our district to help with the continuing demand for construction workers.

For those thinking about a career in construction or another trade, go for it! There's no better time than now to get involved in helping grow our district for the future.

Mayor David Trewavas » dtrewavas@taupo.govt.nz

HAVE YOUR SAY ON FREEDOM CAMPING IN OUR DISTRICT

Want to have your say on freedom camping in the Taupō District? Now's your chance!

The Freedom Camping Act allows freedom camping in any district in New Zealand and ensures every council has areas where freedom camping can take place.

To do this, we write a bylaw that controls when and where freedom camping can take place. Bylaws are rules or regulations made by a council that affect how people live, work and play. They are there to make our district a safe and healthy place and all councils ask for community feedback before bylaws are finalised.

Mayor David Trewavas said the draft bylaw looked to ensure freedom camping would be adequately managed in the Taupō District into the future.

"We have listened to the community's feedback and have considered various areas around the district that could cater to the ever-increasing numbers of freedom campers. We want to ensure the community is comfortable with where camping is taking place while making sure visitors continue to have a good freedom camping experience while they're here."



You can have your say on the draft freedom camping bylaw from today until April 18 by visiting taupo.govt.nz/consultation

SHARE YOUR VIEWS ABOUT REID'S FARM

Many of us have spent time at Reid's Farm, but did you know this iconic Taupō landmark has been managed by a reserve management plan that came into play 20 years ago?

A lot has changed since 1997, and while the reserve has been a popular location for picnicking, sightseeing, kayaking and swimming for many years, it's increasingly becoming a popular freedom camping spot too.

We've recently worked on a comprehensive review of the management plan of the reserve to help make improvements, increase safety, address issues around camping and work with community groups to boost the overall visitor experience at Reid's Farm.

Policy manager Nick Carroll said after considering public feedback and the findings of a Reid's Farm working group, Council had proposed a number of changes to the reserve management plan.

"Council wants to reduce the length of time people can stay at the reserve, move campers away from Waikato River, and make the reserve management plan a lot more simple to help manage the reserve effectively."



You can have your say on the draft reserve management plan during the consultation period from today until April 18. To share your views, check out taupo.govt.nz/consultation

What's on?

- 17 Feb New Zealand Summer Drift Matsuri, Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park
- 17-18 Feb Great Lake Relay, Lake Taupō
- 18 Feb Hot Rod Public Display, Riverside Park
- Until 13 Mar Harry's Friends Too by Fiona Tunnicliffe, Taupō Museum
- Until 20 Mar If You Go Down To The Woods Today by Michael Angelo, Taupō Museum

For more information on Taupō District events visit www.GreatLakeTaupo.com



Mayor David Trewavas



Deputy Mayor Rosie Harvey



John Boddy



Zane Cozens



Barry Hickling



Rosanne Jollands



Tangonui Kingi



Anna Park



Christine Rankin



Kirsty Trueman



John Williamson