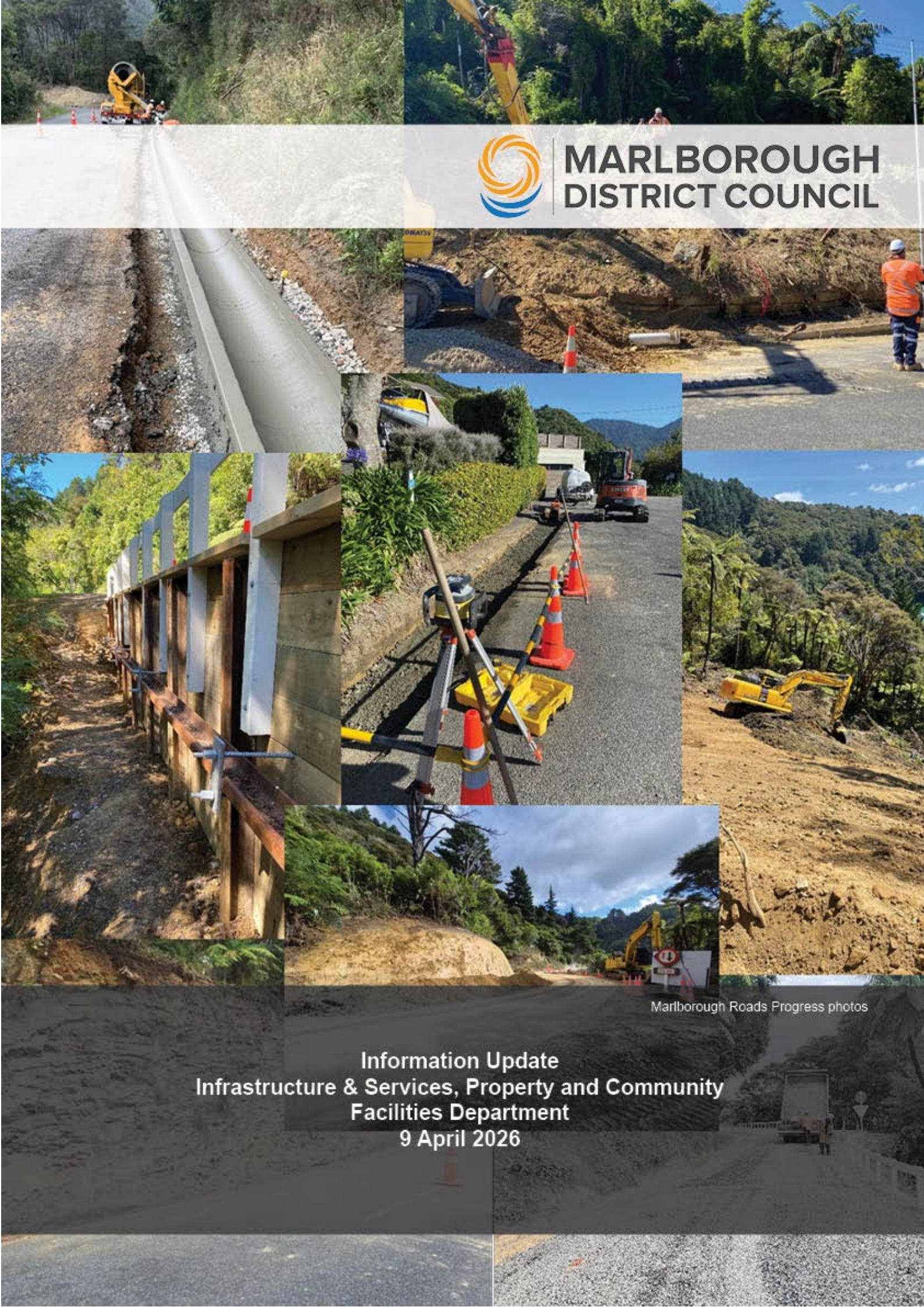




**MARLBOROUGH
DISTRICT COUNCIL**



Marlborough Roads Progress photos

**Information Update
Infrastructure & Services, Property and Community
Facilities Department
9 April 2026**

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Local Road Asset Management Report – March 2026

(Information prepared by Damian Ford)

R800-007-02

Summary

IDC negotiations are continuing with the JV Contractor, with a revised Schedule of Prices having been received and reviewed prior to further discussions.

Negotiations continue with WSP regarding the Professional Services contract which support the delivery of the IDC and the Sounds Contracts.

Preferred tenderers have been identified for the three the Marlborough Sounds Maintenance Contract areas and initial meetings have been held to ensure all parties understand / agree the approach intended.

Other Business

The renewal programme for the local roads surfacing, rehabilitation, drainage and unsealed networks is progressing well and as per programme, with an expected end date still being the end of March 2026.

Port Underwood Road Safety Improvements: the new signs have been installed and the next vegetation cut is programmed for April. Options for white lining, widening, deeper vegetation cuts, and batter works are being progressed to enable costs to be established.

Tumbledown Road: Signs should be installed week commencing 22 March 2026 along Tumbledown Road and a vegetation cut is programmed for April.

Queen Charlotte Drive Safety Improvements: New signs have been ordered, and the intent is for these to be installed by mid-April. A schedule of works continues to be developed to deliver an initial vegetation clearance. Options for additional white lining, widening, deeper vegetation cuts, and batter works are also being progressed to enable costs to be established.

Performance Reporting

Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) and pothole reporting are quarterly based, with the next reporting period due in April, covering the period between January and March 2026. On receipt of this data a more detailed update will be provided.

TTM has generally been accounting for 10% of the total costs of works, but this increases for short term works. As part of the new IDC contracts, the intent is to maximise the amount of works undertaken within a single TTM set up to improve cost effectiveness.

For State Highways there is a target of 100% of potholes to be repaired within 24 hours of reporting, which has been achieved every quarter for the last year.

For Local Roads the target is to repair 90% of potholes within 48 hours. For Quarter 3 and 4 in 2024/25 this level was exceeded. However, due to winter storm events there were nearly twice as many potholes in Quarter 1 in 2025/26 which resulted in the level of service falling just short of the target in Quarter 1 (86%) and Quarter 2 (83%) in 2025/26.

The progress against the proposed 2025/26 Programme for Surfacing, Unsealed Road and Drainage Renewals is summarised below.

	State Highway (lane km)				Local Road (lane km)			
	Proposed	Amended	Completed		Proposed	Amended	Completed	
			(Last Report)	(This Report)			(Last Report)	(This Report)
Chipseal	32.91	33.83	14.28 (42.2%)	32.52 (96.1%)	109.34	90.19	60.87 (67.5%)	90.19 (100%)
TAC/SAC	1.98	1.98	1.98 (100%)	1.98 (100%)	1.83	1.93	1.26 (65.3)	1.26 (65.3%)
AWPT	9.84	12.51	4.14 (33.1%)	6.35 (50.8%)	3.23	4.95	0.4 (8.0%)	1.76 (35.6%)
All Renewals	44.72	48.32	20.39 (42.2%)	40.85 (84.5%)	114.40	97.07	62.13 (64.0%)	93.21 (96%)

* Amended value due to deferred works / works brought forward

**Completed % against amended values

It is envisaged the Local Roads element will be fully achieved by the end of March.

Marlborough Roads Activities

Maintenance and Operations

The renewal programme for the local roads surfacing, rehabilitation, drainage and unsealed networks is continuing and will run through until end of March 2026. At the time of writing 96% of Local Roads works have been completed and 84.5% of State Highway works. It is envisaged that all works will be completed by the end of March.

Since the last report, within the rural area Marlborough Roads has delivered a coordinated package of maintenance and resilience works across the region, which formed part of our programmed asset management focussing on improving safety, drainage performance, and long-term network reliability ahead of the winter period, these have included:

- Deck repairs being undertaken on Brancott Road No.2 bridge and Enchanted Bridge, Northbank Road.
- 218m³ of new re-sheeting on Avon Valley Road, restoring surface quality and improving ride comfort and safety for residents and service vehicles. This treatment also strengthens the pavement structure, reducing the likelihood of potholes and reactive maintenance during the wetter months.
- 1.3km of high-shoulder drainage renewals on Peakes Road, addressing long-standing water retention issues and improving the road's ability to shed stormwater has been completed. While on site, several culverts were inspected, with corrosion and blockage risks identified and incorporated into our forward drainage programme.
- Replacing a failed culvert on Croisilles Road. This renewal restores proper hydraulic function, reduces the risk of washouts, and improves the resilience of this important rural connection.



Deck Repairs at Enchanted Bridge, Northbank



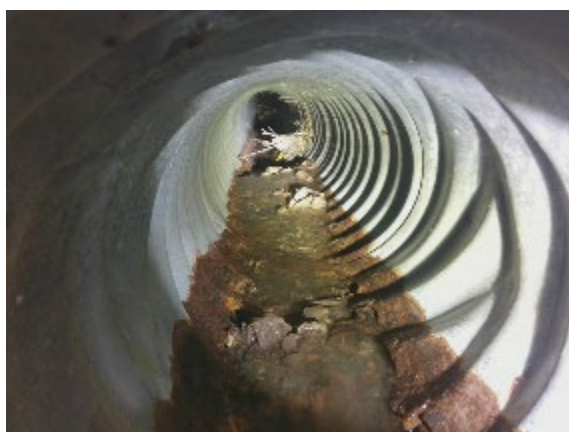
Deck Repairs at Brancott Road No.2



High Shoulder works at Peakes Road



Resheeting works at Avon Valley Road



Culvert on Croisilles Road before works



Culvert on Croisilles Road after works

Within the urban area, the annual footpath renewal programme has commenced, with repairs being undertaken to both concrete and asphalt footpaths. These works will continue over the next couple of months.



Example of footpath before and after repair work

In addition, the annual road marking repainting has also been progressed with works starting in Picton and continuing south. Other work which has been undertaken include improvements to the pedestrian crossing on Nelson Street, where a channel along the road created issues for those using the crossing with mobility impairments, as well as for all in wet weather. The channel has been 'bridged' with a steel plate to resolve these issues.



Nelson Street crossing before and after works

The smart lighting pilot is continuing, running until the end of April 2026. Post trial we will review the data to assess the overall benefits which could be gained by implementing across all streetlights.

Port Underwood Road Safety Improvements

Short Term - the new signs have been installed and the next vegetation cut is programmed for April. The more extensive cut of vegetation is still being reviewed and it is expected that these works will be completed by Q4 of this financial year.

Medium Term - options for white lining, widening, deeper vegetation cuts, and batter works are being progressed to enable costs to be established.



Tumbledown Road

Signs have been ordered and should be installed week commencing 22 March and a vegetation cut is programmed for April.

Queen Charlotte Drive Safety Improvements

Short Term - new signs have been ordered, and the intent is for these to be installed by mid-April.

Medium Term - a schedule of works is being developed to deliver an initial vegetation clearance. Options for additional white lining, widening, deeper vegetation cuts, and batter works are also being progressed to enable costs to be established.

Planning

A Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) feeds into the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) for NZTA subsidies and are considered with all the other RLTPs nationwide, with the next RLTP period running from 31 August 2027 to August 2030.

The first RLTP workshop was held on 17 February 2026 which gave background information and set the scene. The next workshop is on 20 April 2026 which will discuss the 30-year objectives, 10-year priorities and prepare the investment logic map. The workshops are open for all Councillors to attend in addition to the RTC.

The draft Government Policy Statement on Transport (GPS) is due to be released in May 2026 and will set the direction that the Government wants to take transport over the next three years. The GPS sets funding allocations for the NLTF. The 2024 priorities included economic growth, productivity, increased maintenance for potholes, and a more resilient, safe, and efficient, road and rail network. A change in Government in October could result in changes in the transport priorities and these would need to be considered within the RLTP.

In order to meet the legislation requirements for the Land Transport Rule – Setting of Speed Limits 2024, MDC is establishing a Speed Committee to overview the work and provide guidance to Officers.

Marlborough Roads have been working with the NZTA Picton Project Management Team with regards to the works in Picton, these being:

- Upgrade of Kent Street / Dublin Street / Queen Charlotte Drive / Lagoon Road roundabout
- Changes to Kent Street /Wairau Road (SH1) Intersection
- Safety improvements on Kent Street
- Proposed pedestrian crossing on Auckland Street, north of Dublin Street.

Multi Modal

Marlborough Roads are currently supporting Mayfield School in to implement a Walking Bus for Term 4. Engagement will start in the coming weeks and pupils will use the proposal as part of a school project. The school has asked for Marlborough Roads assistance with planning and designing, to provide an engaging route to school. Proposals include potentially providing a temporary 'play' element along the route, which would run from Pitchill Street, along Girling Avenue and onto Hutcheson Street.

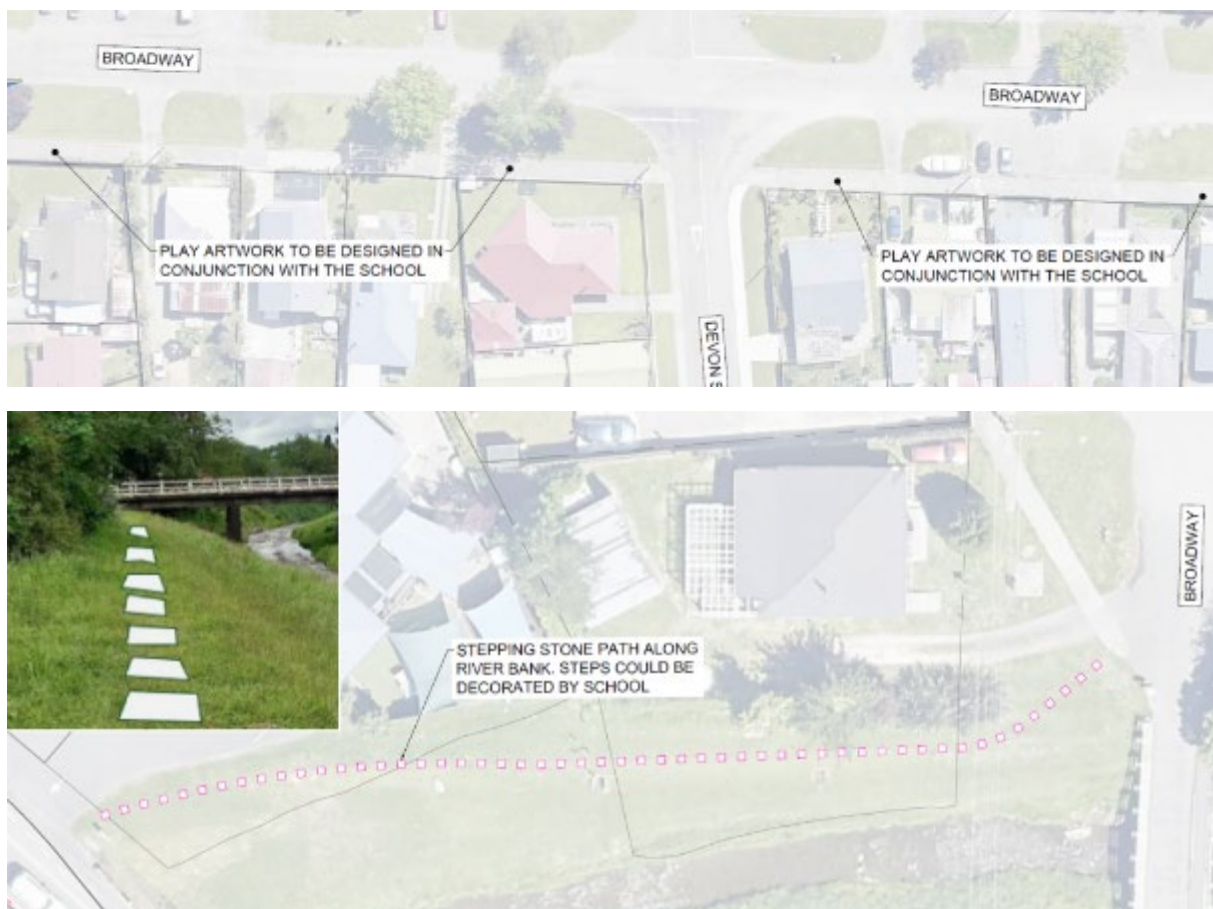




Possible 'play' options along Mayfield School walking bus route

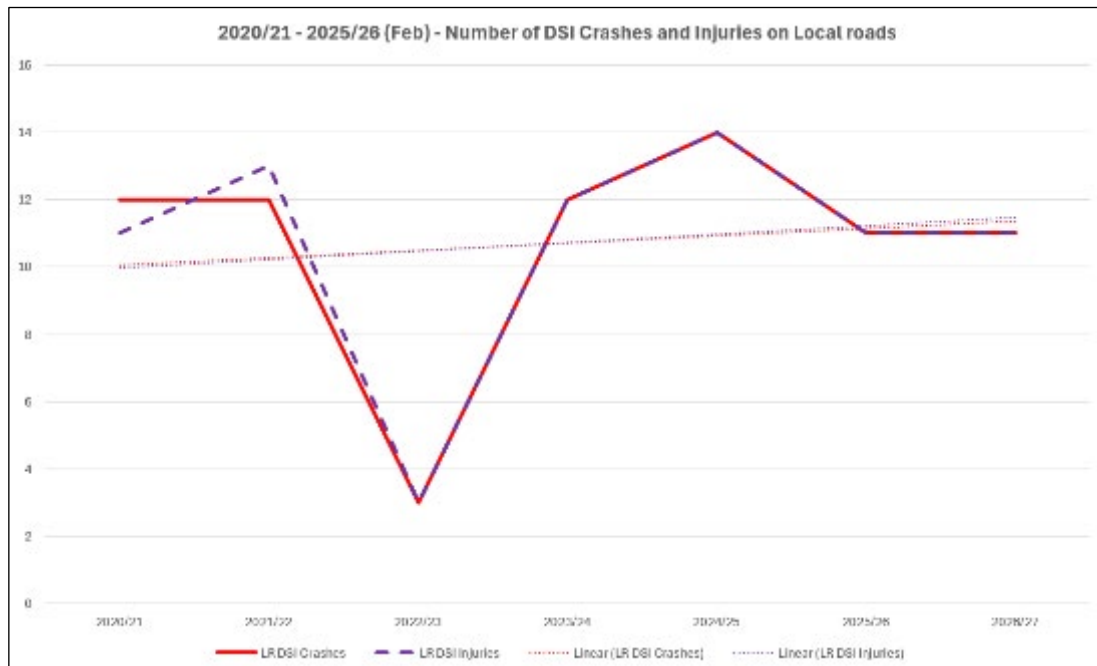
The approved changes to Eltham Road cycle scheme are being progressed with a contractor engaged, and the intent is that the works will be undertaken during the Easter holidays. Reviews of school crossings on Maxwell Road and Colemans Road are being undertaken to establish what improvements works are required.

Work is ongoing within the Picton area regarding the relocation of the Kent Street crossing which will occur as part of the wider changes to Kent Street. Work on the Picton School to Skate Park route are also ongoing with Abley Consultants leading design options.

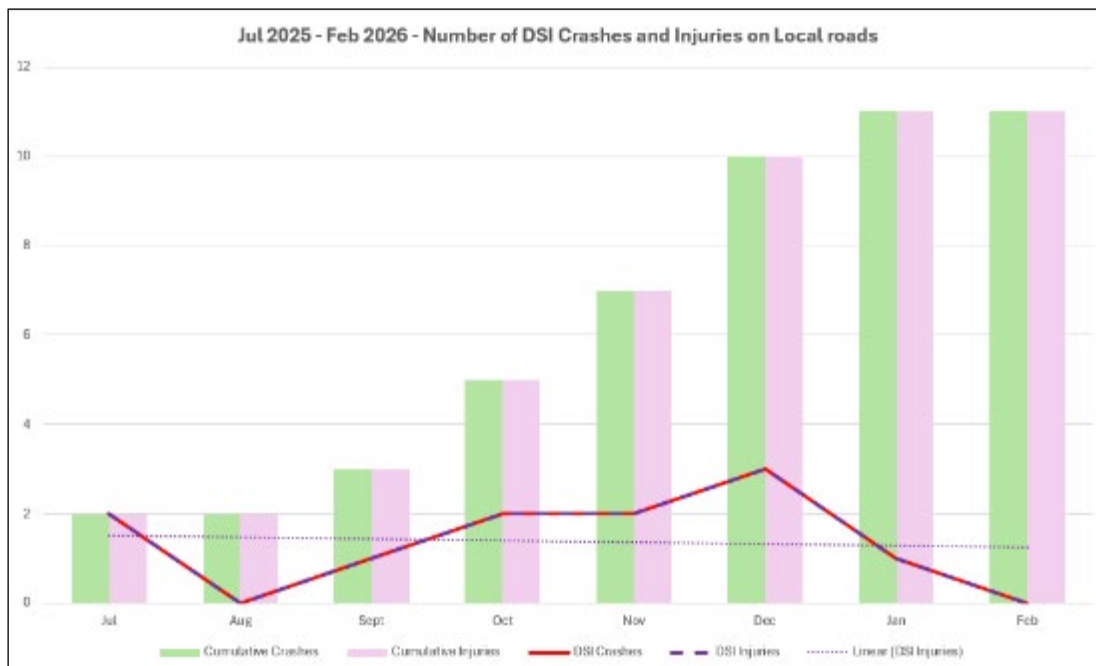


Road Crash Summary

The total number of DSI crashes and resulting injuries on Local Roads have seen a slight increase over the last six years, as illustrated below.



This financial year has seen an overall trend of a slight reduction month on month in terms of the number of crashes and number of injuries, as shown below.



Marlborough Roads Recovery February 2026 Project Report

Health & Safety

- One Life Saving Rule Breach in the period to 28 February 2026.
- No injuries or First Aid treatments.
- Target for Critical Risk Conversations was achieved for the Month – 20 against the 14-target, a great effort by the Team.
- No injuries, 3 incidents reported in the month.

Environmental & Sustainability

- Erosion and sediment controls are continuing to improve with further uptake from many Sub-Contractors.
- Increased Auditing picks up more holes in plans & controls, but response is generally good.
- Consent still required for repairs on the QCD foreshore submitted to Council.
- Land access agreements still being pursued.

Design

Design continues to progress well, with the continued focus on renewed priorities, and several designs closed out in the month. (3 for Phase 2; 3 for Phase 3; and 1 for June/July complex; plus 8 Simple Site Designs). Design Hub Resource has been reduced by 2 people as at the end of February. The remaining resource will be split with separate dedicated resource for the future designs and MSQA functions. Design projects are to be completed, hopefully by the end of March.

Construction

Construction continues to progress well, with multiple worksites on QCD and several sites sealed on Kenepuru with only one site remaining on KS2 (The box culvert behind the Linkwater office). Two more sites were commenced in the French Pass area, with Archers Road only requiring the seal to be repaired, and a Contractor is mobilising to Tennyson Inlet for the Block Wall in March. The first of three Box Culverts was installed in the Awatere Area. The restrictions on closure times in the Kenepuru Area together with a limited availability of sealing crews are continuing to have a significant impact and disruption to productivity.

Commercial

- Phase 2 remaining funding is currently tracking positive, with the latest forecast still showing a \$2.97M contingency.
- Phase 3 continues to deliver positive outcomes, still showing a \$16.52M in contingency funds to date.
- This achievement is largely the result of successfully negotiating contracts at costs well below initial estimates.
- The February 26 claim totalled \$3.288M.

Programme

The programme has been updated for February 2026 and shows good progress with further logic adjustments allowing the proposal to show slightly earlier 'than late 2027' completion. This remains a focus to track and ensure we continue to make improvements on the predicted completion date, even as we continue to detail the June '25 Sites into the work programme. We are continuing to improve co-ordinating the Design programme with the required Tender programme for future construction packages as well as the detailed Delivery programme for physical works.

Customer & Stakeholder

- There were 33 customer interactions in February 26, compared to around 21 a year ago. Over half of these enquiries related to the Kenepuru zone, with a further 20% related to Northbank.
- Three road closure notifications were sent out in February, along with two permits.

- The global closures on Kenepuru Road are providing better value for money with generally better co-ordination between sites & more control. These requirements are proactively updated to the Public.

People & Culture

- The team is working well, with lessons learnt being shared across the team in regular meetings. Hand over from Paul Begley (moving off to Picton Ferry Wharf) to Stefan Hurley (coming in from TREC) has happened. Paul has been an integral part of the Team with guidance to the younger team members, & a commitment to improving the sub-contractors' performance particularly around Health & safety, holding them to significantly higher standards than their norm. His influence has been significant both to the performance & culture of the Project.
- Career development opportunities for staff are being identified & communicated in order to maintain engagement.

Environmental

Consenting Progress

- The Archaeological Authority application for the Portage stormwater improvement project is currently in progress. A draft Archaeological Assessment and Management Plan has been completed, and Iwi have been engaged as part of this process. Feedback is requested by Friday 6 March, and following that, the application will be fully lodged. Resolution can typically be expected within 40 days. We will continue to monitor the application with Kirsty Sykes.
- Resource consent applications for the Queen Charlotte Drive foreshore works have been submitted to MDC.

Environmental Highlights / Low Lights

- Highlights:

Continuous education and environmental risk conversations continued throughout the month, reinforcing key requirements and supporting construction crews on the following topics:

- Resource Consents – key rules, conditions and responsibilities.
- Environmental risks and controls., including ecological considerations, erosion and sediment control, and safe management of works involving concrete, lime, and cement.

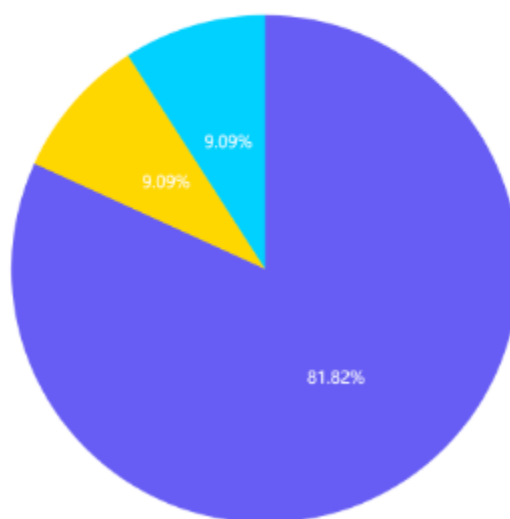
While the environmental risks identified on site remain manageable, they highlight the ongoing need for continuous improvement, training, and education for both internal teams and external contractors. Positive engagement from the crews has been evident, with a noticeable increase in environmental awareness.

In February, the environmental team focused on three key risk areas, with the majority of site activity involving earthworks. Structures and drainage activities were also inspected as part of routine monitoring.

WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL RISK HAVE WE LOOKED AT?

Inspections by Question • Last month

■ Erosion and Sediment control ■ Concrete/Lime and Cement ■ Wildlife



Key risks inspected in February

- **Lowlights:**

Key risks identified during the February site inspections continue to be associated with site and works planning. These risks primarily include:

- insufficient risk assessment and site monitoring,
- poor or ineffective environmental plans and controls, and
- incomplete environmental documentation.

The environmental team will continue to provide guidance and targeted advice on these matters during site audits to support improved understanding, compliance and continuous improvement.

Forward Environmental Risk and Controls

Excavations within Archaeological site

- **Heritage New Zealand Authority**
- **Archaeologist on standby on-site during ground excavations.**

Bat roosting tree felling

- **As the bat roosting season spans from October to March, MRRT have been assessing potential high-risk roosting trees for upcoming work to ensure any required tree felling in risk areas is completed within the appropriate seasonal window.**

Monitoring and assessment are recommended to continue until May; however, due to cooler temperatures and weather conditions, bat activity becomes more difficult to detect during the April and May months. This presents a risk to projects if tree felling is not planned well in advance and carried out during the optimal season.

- **One site had been identified as a possibility at 4385 Kenepuru Road however we are awaiting client feedback to proceed. One other potential**

site is also still being reviewed by the client.

Titirangi Dump site is nearing capacity

- **Environmental plan implemented as the site progresses. Extra controls deployed in rainfall.**
- **Have effective sediment controls and regular checks.**
- **Appropriate spill kit accessible on-site (oil absorbent kit).**
- **Check for stranded fish required.**

Working near/in waterways:

- Proposed works near/in streams are high environmental activities. Risks are Spill, sediment laden run-off, fish kill.
- **Zone managers keep in mind ESC controls during site visits.**

Summer/Autumn Works:

- Occasional periods of rainfall and increased chance of sediment discharges and strong wind.

Design

Design Update

Design continues to progress well. This month we said goodbye to Raquel and Liberty who have been integral in delivering complex designs for the project. Overall good progress across the board in the last month with several detailed design deliverables closed out and ready for procurement. Nine complex design sites remain across all zones and phases.

Phase 2 overview

All Phase 2 complex sites are now complete, aside from the close out risk assessment for DP-222 NOR-676-17530 Northbank Bluff site which is currently in construction.

Phase 3 overview

A number of sites completed since last month. Design hub continue to chase some consultants for remaining deliverables as some unexplained delays from consultants have occurred this month. Majority of Phase 3 sites to be completed by end of March.

Design Hub resourcing:

At the end of February, the secondments for two Design Hub members came to an end. They have been retained on 'as required' contracts to allow for smooth handover and close out of ongoing queries. Remaining secondment contracts have been extended until the end of May (approx end of design phase) at which time decisions will be made about ongoing construction resource.

This forecast leaves 1 FTE Design Hub member during construction which may be too light.

Construction summary

Progress Update

Steady progress continued the project for the month of February.

QCD had 2 work fronts operating with establishment made on the delayed counterfort drains at the Grove due to a favourable weather window.

Kenepuru saw several sites sealed, that crews had been holding until a pavement team was available. The end of the current KS2 package is finally in sight with only the box culvert remaining. This site is being completed under stop/go, so this package no longer has knock on implications to the programme.

French Pass crews established at two more packages of works. Archers Road only has pavements to complete, leaving one more package remaining on Tennyson Hill, the Block Wall which has a contractor engaged to start.

The Awatere team got the first of the 3 box culverts as part of this package installed. This is a good milestone to be achieving prior to winter with the small culverts these replace, having regularly caused the road to be washed out in heavy rain.

Construction Issues and Challenges

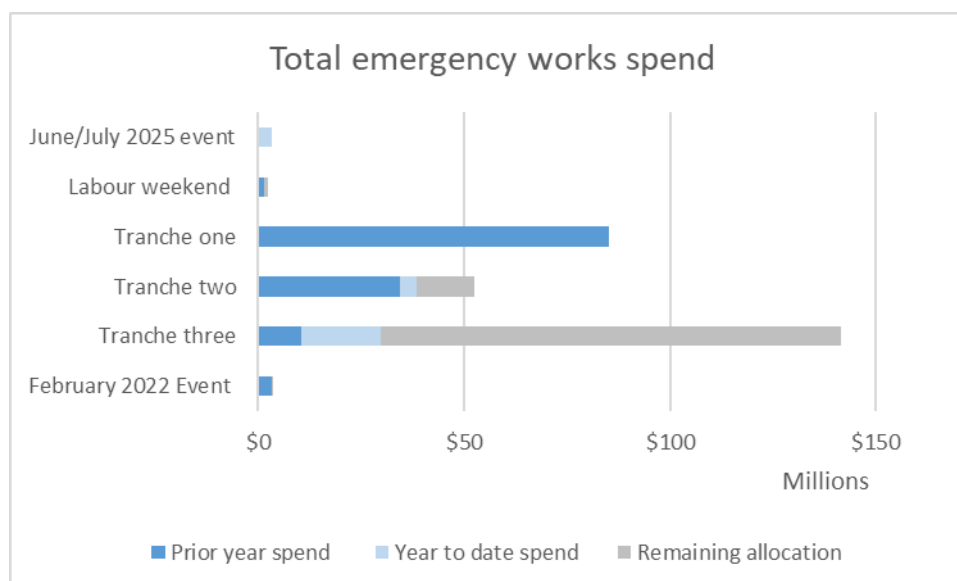
The current additional openings on the Kenepuru continue to cause challenges maintaining good production with the time it takes to get the public through all the sites, allowing us to close the road again.

Getting sealing crews in in a timely manner is also proving to be difficult, with a very limited local resource pool and strong focus on the NOC's reseal programme.

Financial

Roading emergency works - financial update to 28 February 2026

Overview



The emergency works for the phase one funding allocation of \$85.3M are complete.

The emergency works for the phase two funding allocation of \$52.4M are underway with the allocation being 74% utilised. There is \$13.8M in approved funding remaining, with \$5.0M of this being returned to NZTA.

The emergency works for the phase three funding allocation of \$141.4M are underway with the allocation being 21% utilised. A split per zone is completed below in this report. There is \$111.7M in approved funding remaining.

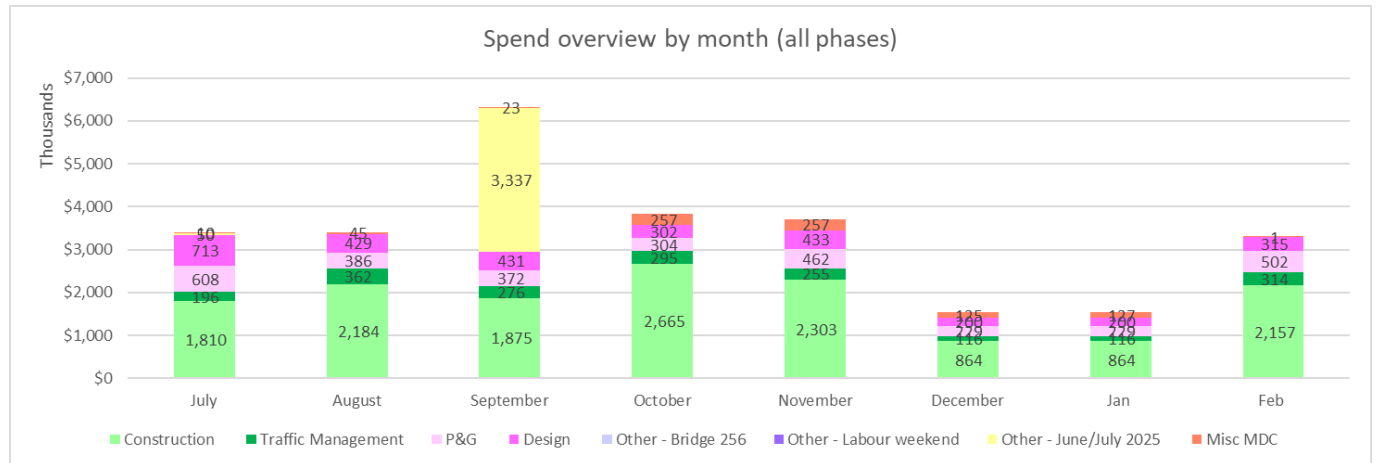
The emergency works for the February 2022 event funding allocation of \$3.5M are underway with the funding allocation being 94% utilised. There is \$0.2M in approved funding remaining.

The Labour weekend 2024 event has an approved funding allocation of \$2.4M with the allocation being 61% utilised. There is \$0.9M in approved funding remaining.

The June/July 2025 event has an approved funding allocation of \$3.4M with the allocation being 100% utilised. Further approvals are expected to be added for repair costs which have been incurred to date and additional work still to come.

In total there is \$126.6M in approved funding remaining for the program of works.

Current year expenditure by type



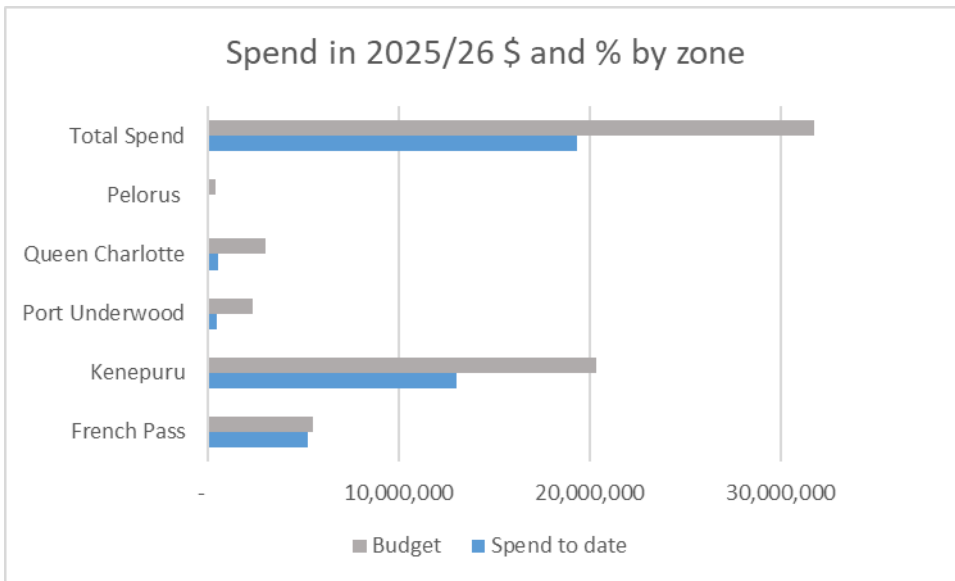
There is additional spend relating to the June/July 2025 event which has not been included as the funding allocation has not yet been approved.

December/January spending has been evenly split as the reporting does not differentiate between months.

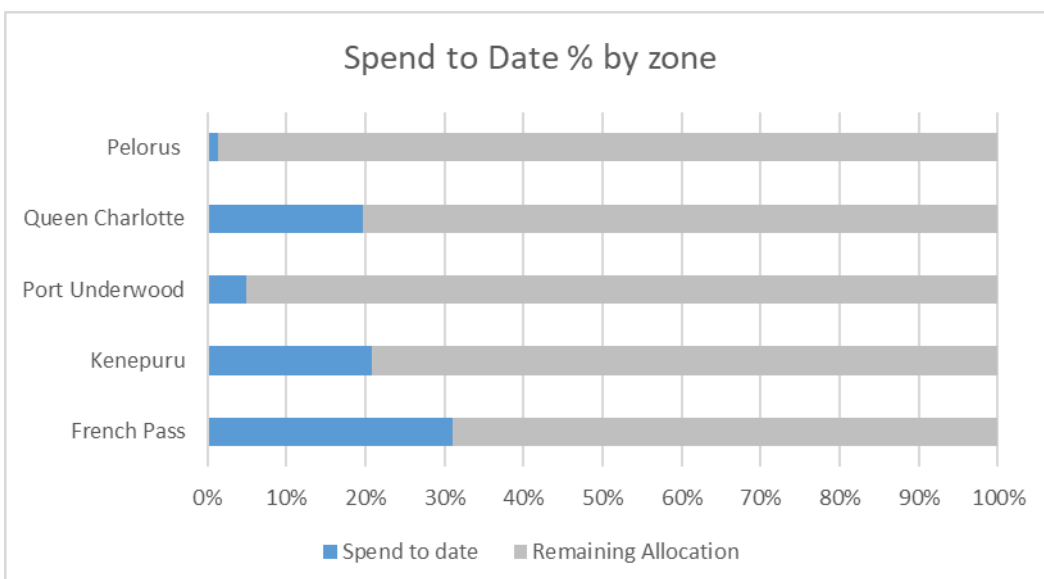
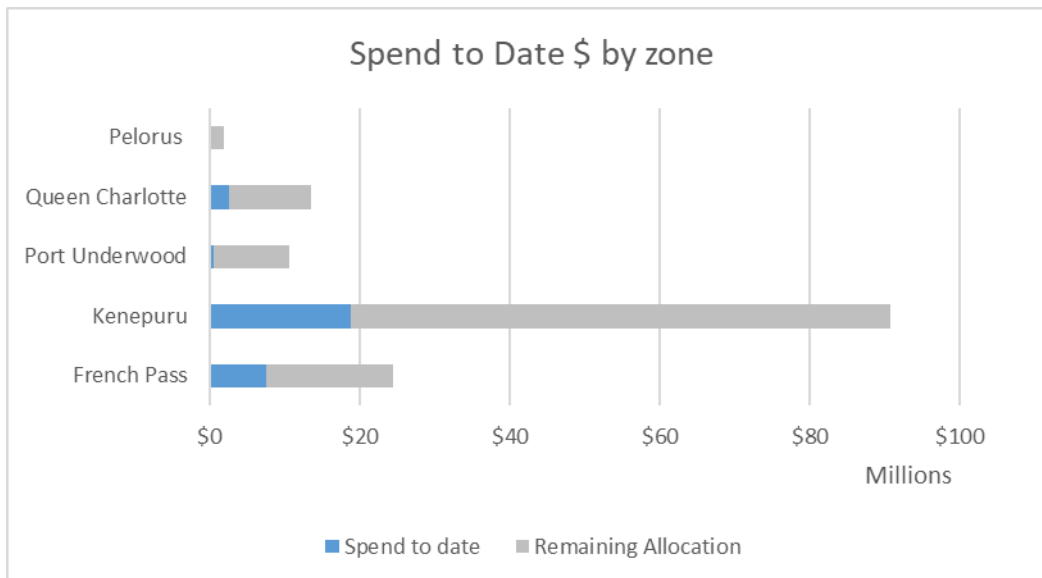
Phase three zone analysis

	Spend to date	Budget	Remaining Allocation
French Pass	7,587	24,531	16,944
Kenepuru	18,890	90,800	71,910
Port Underwood	523	10,630	10,107
Queen Charlotte	2,666	13,520	10,854
Pelorus	26	1,930	1,904
Total Spend	29,692	141,411	111,719

Phase three – current year expenditure compared to current year allocation



Phase three – total expenditure compared to total allocation



Phase 2

We have updated the design and construction costs according to the notices approved by the client up to Notice 1488 for both phases.

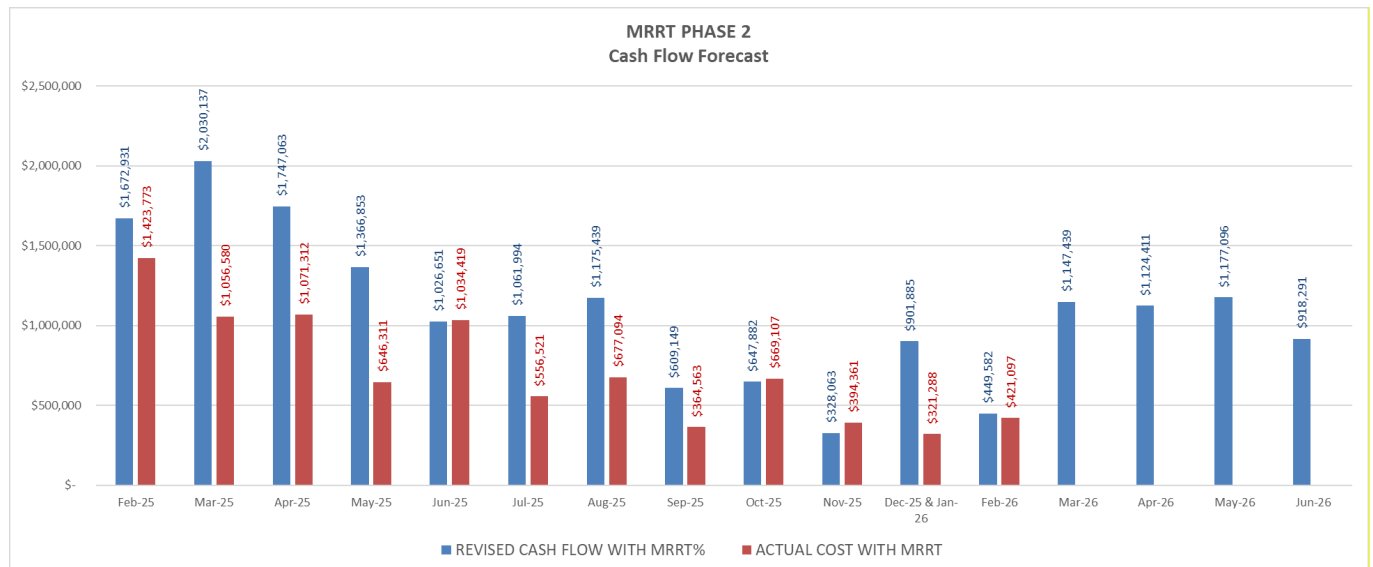


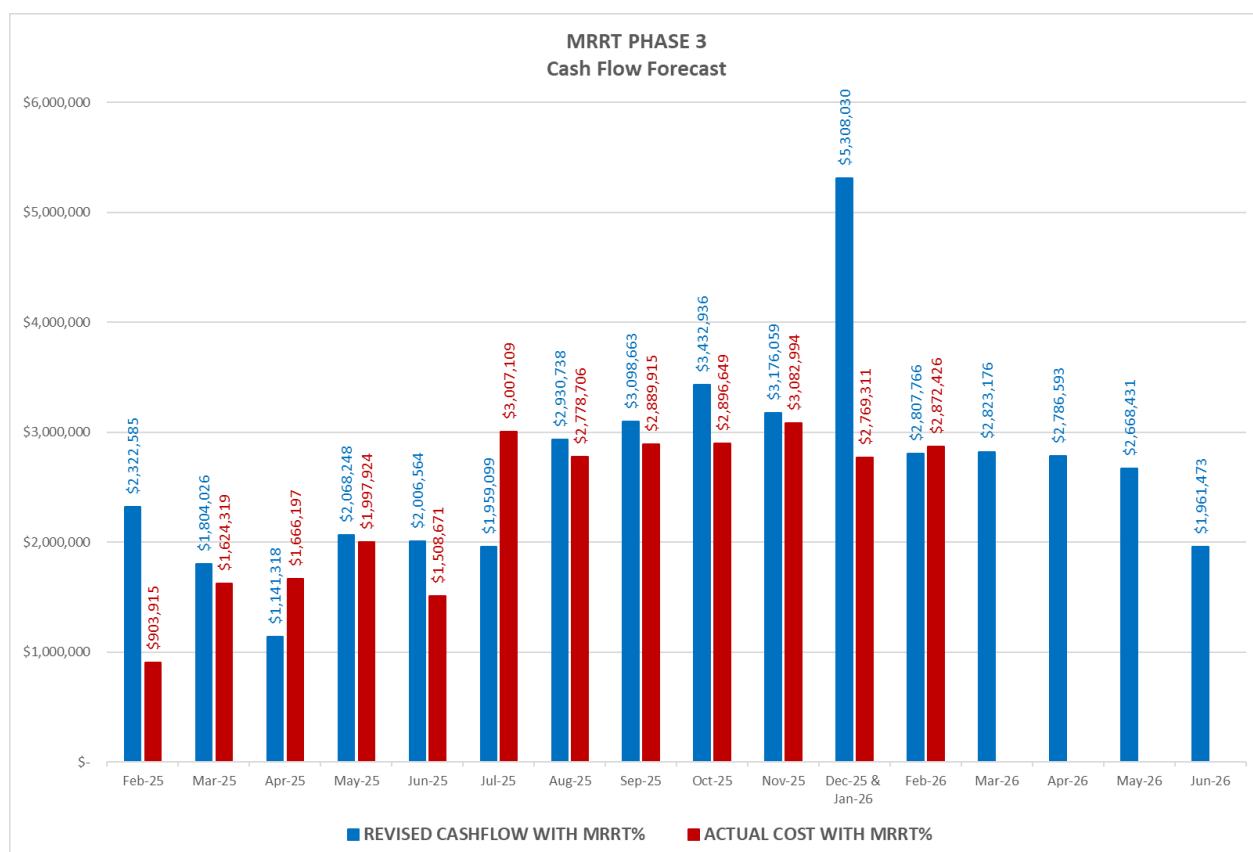
Figure 1 - MRRT forecast cashflow.

Phase 3

As outlined in the previous report, we are continuing to forecast only 70% of costs for the forthcoming months, given that design and construction expenses are still being received through the tender process. The remaining Design, Construction, and TM costs, currently amounting to \$12.3 million in the cash flow have been provisionally forecasted for July 2027 for easy control. This figure will be adjusted in line with client approved notices as they become available.

In addition, \$9.8 million is being treated as contingency for July 2027, an amount that is unlikely to be required. This figure is subject to change if the project scope is modified or additional sites are included.

All expenses related to the Winter-25 event works, totalling \$1.9 million to date for design and construction, are currently being treated as contingency. Likewise, \$2.2 million is being treated as contingency for July 2027, an amount that is also unlikely to be required.



Cost Summary

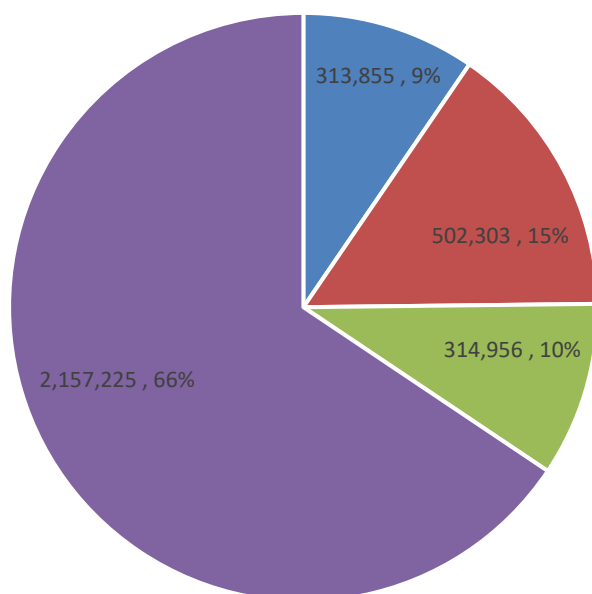
The February 2026 claim totalled \$3.288M with areas of spend can be seen in the pie chart below.

During the month there was constructional spend of \$2.157M, traffic management spend of \$313k and design spend of \$315k.

The major construction works undertaken by zone were as follows:

- Kenepuru \$1,079k
- French Pass \$ 798k
- QCD \$ 191k
- Northbank \$ 101k

NOC Recovery Construction Claim Spend Analysis



■ Traffic management spend ■ P&G Spend ■ Design spend ■ Construction spend

Communications & Engagement

Recovery e-newsletter

In February 2026, the weekly MRRT e-newsletter included information on planned construction closures across the Awatere, Kenepuru, Tennyson Inlet, French Pass, and Northbank. Works progressing under the construction closures included slip excavation, road retreats, retaining walls, the installation of culverts, and pavement preparation.

Information continued to be provided on current and future works, associated temporary traffic management and construction progress throughout the network. There continues to be an emphasis on providing advance information on work sites and closure details on Kenepuru Road, due to the dynamic nature of the global closure's length.

Over February 2026, the e-newsletter was sent to a subscriber list of 410 contacts, with an average opening rate of 57%. All recovery newsletters continue to be shared via the NZTA website, the Marlborough District Council (MDC) website and Antenno app, and are promoted by community groups.

Customer interactions

In February 2026 there were 33 customer interactions, a 30% increase compared with February 2025. Over half of these enquiries were for the Kenepuru, largely seeking road closure clarifications, progress of works and additional access needs. Northbank received the second highest number of enquiries with 18%, these were all regarding closure timings and access needs. There were a low number of enquiries for Queen Charlotte Drive and the Awatere Valley. Interactions were resolved within an average of 2.15 days.

Permits

Two permits were issued in February for overweight and overlength vehicles travelling in the Kenepuru. These permits were required for building supply delivery and stock relocation.

Stakeholder and Customer Notification

Three road closure notifications were sent out in February for closures on Ronga Road, Torea Road, and an extension for the existing closure on Northbank Road. Additionally, a closure was postponed on the Awatere Valley Road, to after Easter following community feedback. Closures continue to be conveyed using a range of mediums including letter box drops, MDC website alerts, Antenno, and the Civil Defence Emergency Management Map. VMS boards and social media are also used when practicable. Closure information continues to be routinely provided to affected emergency services and stakeholders.

Proactive updates continue to be provided to the community on the Kenepuru Road global closure, incorporating several work sites. This includes information on site locations, works progress, and the shifting start and end points.

Media

Two stories on MRRT were published on Marlborough District Council's pages in the Weekend Express in February. One entitled "Recovery Works Resume on Marlborough Roads" highlighted MRRT's positive progress as well as upcoming closure information. The story was accompanied with a media release which was published on Scoop NZ. A Facebook post was also published which received 36 likes. The second story featured progress specifically on the Northbank slip. A media release and Facebook post are planned for March, once earthwork at this site is complete.

Progress Photos



Services and Operations

Education Report – Term 1, 2026

(Information prepared by Annie McDonald on behalf of the education team of Annie McDonald, Angela Wentworth and Ramona Millen) E340-001-001-01

Marlborough District Council develops and delivers environmental education programmes supporting schools, kindergartens and early childhood centres to take positive action for our environment. These include areas like reducing waste, awareness of waterways and water use, improving landscapes and biodiversity, climate change knowledge and energy use.

Marlborough District Council has an education strategy with a goal of “Behaviours and actions that lead to positive environmental change.” This informs the work the education team do.

The environmental education programme has four areas of delivery including working with schools and ECE centres, supporting Enviroschools, providing opportunities and engaging with community.

The types of programmes delivered are on the MDC website [School Education Programmes - Marlborough District Council](#) and include a termly newsletter to schools called “*Greenchat*”

Each year we develop an annual plan for Enviroschools with a year long focus. This year the focus is on programmes, one of the Enviroschools key areas along with place, people and participation and practices.

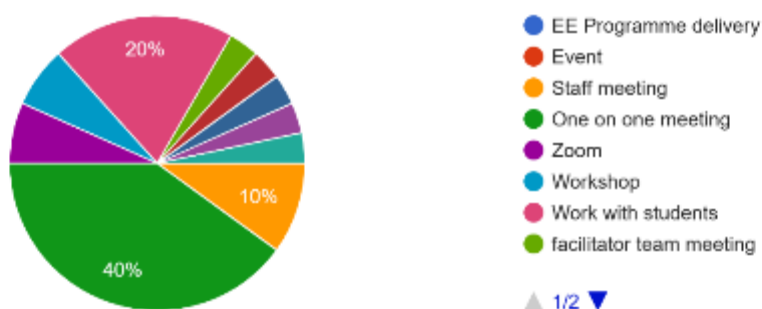
Examples of this term's work have been: Delivering a workshop to the Marlborough Kindergarten Association teacher only day on Energy. Delivering a marine based programme with the support of a marine educator to celebrate Sea Week. Running a nature connection workshop for Kindergartens and ECE's, holding a teacher workshop to share the contents of kits we lend out to schools on themes like waste, water, landscapes and energy and hosting a provider catch up for those in our region working in environmental education.

Stories of the education team's work are shared on our local website [Enviroschools Marlborough](#)

This year we have added in a more quantitative way of capturing what we do in our work.

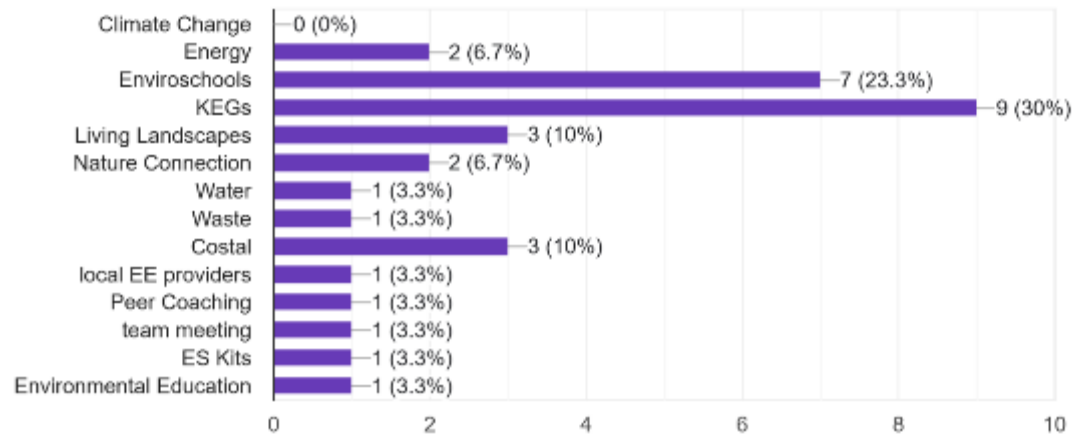
The education team worked with over 150 students and 45 teachers in term 1 on a variety of programmes and in many topics as shown in the graphs below:

Purpose
30 responses



Topic

30 responses



Marlborough District Libraries Activity Report – February 2026

(Cllrs D Dalliessi) (Report prepared by Glenn Webster)

L300-018-001-02

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the operations of the Library service.

‘Dazzlehands’



The Royal New Zealand Ballet (RNZB) are touring a childrens Ballet ‘Dazzlehands’ around the South Island in the first half of 2026.

Dazzlehands is a childrens picture book about a dancing pig by Wellington based author, Sacha Cotter and illustrated by her partner, Josh Morgan.

To raise the profile of the upcoming production the RNZB education unit have been conducting Dazzlehands workshops at pre-school venues - kindergartens and early childhood centres. Two further workshops were negotiated to take place at both libraries on Tuesday 24 February. These included the reading of the book, followed by an interactive session teaching dance moves to the children (and a few parents as well). Both proved to be enjoyable and well supported.

The ballet has a particular Marlborough connection as it was choreographed by former Marlborough resident Joshua Guillemot-Rodgers, who is now a principal dancer with the RNZB. The RNZB education unit will be returning to Te Kahu o Waipuna on the final day of the school holidays – Friday 17 April, to conduct two further Dazzlehands workshops open to children of all ages.

“Pirates of the CariBlenheim”

The morning of Saturday 28 February, was celebrated in Blenheim’s CBD with an interactive, pirate-themed treasure hunt featuring “mischievous” characters Captain Monkey D. Vishy and Captain Clay Sparrow, aka Real Estate Agents, Vish Prasad and Clayton Knowles.

According to the event lore, the captains had escaped Davy Jones and hid their treasure in the heart of Blenheim’s CBD, scattering map pieces across participating local shops.

Once all the map pieces were collected and put together, the final destination of where the ‘treasure’ could be found was identified as Te Kahu o Waipuna. This event brought many children and families into the facility to claim their ‘treasure’ attracted strong participation.

Picton Library and Service Centre

Picton Librarian, Lis Balderston, represented Marlborough Libraries at the Top of the South (TOTS) Library Wellbeing Network Teams meeting on 26 February. This group was established to create a more connected and supportive library staff community across the three Councils; Marlborough, Nelson, and Tasman.

Its shared vision is to foster an inclusive network that supports all library staff, promotes wellbeing, and helps ensure everyone has equitable access to information, resources, training, and representation. Meetings are held via Teams every two months on the last Thursday of the month from 2.00pm –3.00pm, with outcomes shared with the wider Library teams.

Lis introduced the group to a US based Librarian she follows, Bobbi L. Newman, who is a Certified Wellness Practitioner, and workplace well-being expert, dedicated to helping libraries create environments where individuals feel empowered, supported, and free to bring their best selves to work.

Staff News

Picton Library and Service Centre farewelled Wendy Brock from her part-time role on Friday 27 February. Wendy will however continue to work at Picton Library every second weekend.

Ingrid Kirk joined the Picton team, working every second weekend, replacing another staff member who left to pursue university studies.

Picton Library opens Saturdays 10.00am – 4.00pm and Sundays 1.00pm – 4.00pm.

Replacement students have commenced their shelving duties afterschool at Te Kahu o Waipuna.

OverDrive Meeting

Marlborough Libraries is involved in two e-resources consortiums. (eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines) OverDrive (Libby) - South Island and BorrowBox – Top of the South.

On Tuesday 3 February the Libraries Manager and the Collections Librarian attended an OverDrive meeting in Nelson with other staff from Nelson and Tasman Libraries and two representatives from OverDrive. There are currently 15 South Island Districts in the OverDrive consortium.

As part of this meeting the annual statistics for the 2025 year were presented. It was pleasing to see the year-over-year Checkout increases, ranging from 5 – 35%.



A recent introduction to the Libby New Zealand service is a monthly online book club, “Libby Reads” with fellow NZ author Jacqueline Bublitz.

Monthly, on the last Wednesday from 7.30pm – 8.30pm, Libby users can register to join a discussion with a recently published New Zealand author. February’s author was Jennifer Trevelyan.



Marlborough Libraries Usage Statistics

Membership

New Members

- 1 February – 28 February 2026
- TOTAL 155**

Renewed Memberships

- 1 February – 28 February 2026
- TOTAL 230**



Visitor Numbers (Door Count)

The number of people who visited **Te Kahu o Waipuna**, recorded via the RFID entrance gates, was:

2026 Visitor Numbers	2025 Visitor Numbers
1 February – 28 February 2026	1 February – 28 February 2025
22,483	23,584

The number of people who visited **Picton Library and Service Centre Waitohi Whare Mātauranga**, recorded via the RFID entrance gates, was:

2026 Visitor Numbers	2025 Visitor Numbers
1 February – 28 February 2026	1 February – 28 February 2025
7,255	7,626

Picton Library and Service Centre visitor numbers often fluctuate depending on demand from cruise ship visitors.

Average Daily Visitors Numbers: 1 – 28 February 2026

	Te Kahu o Waipuna	Picton Library and Service Centre
Weekday Visitors	893	305
Saturday Visitors	763	255
Sunday Visitors	612	105

Items Checked Out (Issued) and Checked In (Returned)

Checkouts and Renewals		February 2026		February 2025		Variance
Marlborough Library		27,610		29,859		-2,249
Picton Library		4,174		4,754		- 580
E-Resources		4,666		4,023		+643
TOTAL		36,450		38,636		- 2,186
Check-ins						
Marlborough Library		25,371		25,702		- 331
Picton Library		3,873		4,022		- 149
TOTAL		29,244		29,724		- 480

Fewer visitors in February, compared with the same month last year, resulted in a decrease in both checkouts and check-ins.

Room Bookings

The number of rooms booked by groups and individuals in February 2026 was:

February Room Bookings			Community / Library Use		Commercial Use		TOTAL Use
Te Kahu o Waipuna			199		6		205
Picton Library			89		1		90
TOTAL			288		7		295

Holds (Items Reserved)

The number of holds placed on items in February 2026 was: **3,990**



Internet Usage Sessions – Aotearoa People’s Network Kaharoa (APNK)

The following usage statistics were recorded in February 2026

	In-Library Computer Sessions	Wi-Fi (using their own device)
Marlborough Library	1,689	5,853
Picton Library	574	3,441
TOTAL	2,263	9,294

Parks and Open Spaces Activity Report

(Information prepared by Jane Tito, Brad Molony, Grahame Smail, James Gilmour, Kiri Whiteman, Lesley McIntosh, Regan Russell, Rachel Hutchinson, Robert Hutchinson) R510-009-000-01, R510-006-02, R510-005-04-02, R800-005-03

Blenheim Parks

Nature Exploration Area – Project Update

Over the past two years, staff have been working closely with local kindergartens and Enviroschools to co-design a nature exploration area along the Taylor River near Munro Street. Local tamariki shared their ideas throughout the process and staff brought those ideas to life in a way that encourages creativity, connection to nature and seasonal discovery.

The space has been designed to be dynamic and evolving. New natural materials will be added at different times of the year, while items that naturally break down will be removed. This ensures the area remains an engaging and ever-changing environment that encourages hands-on exploration.

One Environmental Educator shared the following feedback:

“I just want to share with you both a nice bit of feedback that I got today from a woman that I know. Her son goes to Montessori and he came with the group last week to visit the Nature Exploration Space.

He told his mum about it and later in the week when she was out with a friend who has a two-year-old — her words were that this two-year-old is very busy and usually has to be in places that are fenced in. However, they stopped to check out the Exploration Space and the two-year-old stayed engaged the whole time they were there... the mums even got to sit and chat!

She said that it was great and really liked the flax sticks there. She thought they were wonderful as they are lightweight, making them easy for children to use and not dangerous.”

This feedback reflects the intention of the project — creating a natural environment where tamariki of all ages can explore, be creative and connect with the outdoors.





Pollard Park

General maintenance has been the focus across the park over recent weeks. Annual beds have been weeded, deadheaded and cleared of any dead vegetation. Additional work has been carried out to keep the annual displays presentable until their scheduled removal next month, when they will be replaced with spring plantings.

Maintenance has also continued throughout the remainder of the park, including weeding and deadheading in the Rose Garden, Camellia areas and other key garden sections. Staff are currently working through the Rhododendron collection as part of a late-summer clean-up.

With cooler nights, autumn colour is developing and leaf fall has begun. Staff have started collecting fallen leaves for composting, which will be processed over the next year for use across the gardens.



Seymour Square

General maintenance throughout the square has been the focus over recent weeks. In the week following Easter, the four large garden beds near the clock tower will be cleared to allow installation of the ANZAC

crosses. The remainder of the square will be maintained to ensure it is in excellent condition for ANZAC Memorial Day.

Lansdowne Hub

Infrastructure Forum at Lansdowne Hub

The Marlborough Chamber of Commerce recently hosted its Marlborough Infrastructure Forum at the Lansdowne Hub with nearly every seat filled for the evening event.

The forum brought together speakers from across the infrastructure sector, including representatives from Robinson Construction, Port Marlborough, Keystone Archaeological Services, the Marlborough Roads Recovery Team and CMT Group. Presenters shared insights into current projects and future opportunities for infrastructure development in the region.

The evening concluded with a panel discussion led by WSP, followed by questions and discussion from attendees.

The well-attended event highlighted the value of collaboration across industry and provided an opportunity for local professionals to connect and share ideas about the future of infrastructure in Marlborough.

Raising Money-Smart Kids Event at Lansdowne Hub

An evening focused on building strong financial skills for young people was recently held at the Lansdowne Hub. The “Raising Money-Smart Kids” event brought together parents, families, educators and community supporters interested in helping young people develop practical money skills and real-world confidence.



“Raising Money-Smart Kids” Event at Lansdowne Hub

Moderated by Steph Benseman of Icehouse Ventures, the session featured presentations from Kendall Flutey, Steve Agne and Sir Ian Taylor. Speakers shared research, practical insights and ideas on how innovation can make learning about money and enterprise more engaging for young people.

The evening concluded with a panel discussion and audience questions, providing attendees with the opportunity to further explore ways to support financial capability in the community.



(Photos provided by Richard Briggs Photography)

Lansdowne Sport Park

Blenheim hosted the Evergreens softball fixtures over the weekend of 21-22 March, providing a valuable opportunity for visiting teams and supporters to experience the high standard of our local sporting facilities and the wider community environment.

The grounds presented exceptionally well, with contractors ensuring the turf was in outstanding condition, a level of preparation that was noted positively by players, officials and even highlighted during the event's broadcast coverage.



Renwick Parks

During recent checks, the old shade sails at Rousehill Reserve were found damaged. They are being replaced with durable new ones. The upgrade will bring better sun protection and a brighter look to the playground.



Picton Parks

Vicotria Domain

Specialist council contractors have been working across the Domain and out to the Snout to help control wood shrubs, trees and vines that are an ongoing threat to the biodiversity of the Domain. Over 50 wilding pines, phoenix palms and similar other invasive species were cut and or poisoned. A number of wasps nests were also dealt with when reported or discovered.

District Memorials

With ANZAC now a few weeks away the annual check, special clean and or minor maintenance is being undertaken across Council's soldier or war memorial sites. This includes a check of amenity plantings, turf and trees and shrubs, and plaques, seats and flagpole. Also a jet wash of the masonry and concrete aspects of the memorial structure and any paths, accessways or paved or other hard surface areas.

Port Marlborough Pavilion

Corvette Nationals 2026 in Picton

More than 100 Corvettes from across New Zealand gathered in Picton for Corvette Nationals 2026, a three-day event celebrating the iconic American sports car.

The programme began on 6 March with registration, a meet and greet and dinner for participants. On 7 March the public highlight took place at Endeavour Park, where the popular Show and Shine event gave locals and visitors the chance to see a wide range of Corvettes, from classic models through to the latest performance vehicles. The day also included a boat cruise and evening dinner.

The event concluded on 8 March with a cruise to a local winery, followed by lunch, the club AGM, prizegiving and farewells.

The event was well attended and provided a great opportunity for the public to view a wide range of Corvettes from across New Zealand.



Final Home Game for Waitohi Softball

The final home game of the season for Waitohi Softball Club was recently played at Endeavour Park, marking the end of another busy summer of softball in Picton.

Players, supporters and families gathered to watch the team take the field for their last home match of the season. The game provided an opportunity to celebrate the efforts of players and volunteers who contribute to the club throughout the season.

Waitohi Softball continues to play an important role in the local sporting community, with its teams bringing players and supporters together each season.

The final home game was well supported and a fitting way to wrap up the home season for the club.



Picton Colour Run – Sunday 19 April

The Picton Colour Run will take place on Sunday 19 April. This is a community-focused, family-friendly event open to all ages and fitness levels. Participants can walk, jog or run the course while local organisations help throw coloured powder along the route. The Fire Brigade will also be on site, spraying water to keep participants cool and add to the fun.

The event is designed to bring people together, encourage participation and celebrate community spirit. Families, friends and local groups are all welcome to join in the colourful, active fun.



Northern Marlborough/Sounds

Havelock Domain

The 2026 Havelock Mussel & Seafood Festival attracted around 4,500 attendees, who enjoyed a well-run event with Havelock showcasing its usual beautiful summer weather. Iconic New Zealand band Shapeshifter headlined and closed the festival. Festival organisers thanked staff and contractors for preparing the domain and surrounding areas, ensuring the domain was in excellent condition ahead of the event.



District Public Conveniences

District Public Toilets

Recently installed, new replacement toilet facilities in Blenheim and Renwick are all working well and appreciated by the community and visitors.

A number of the replacement toilet facilities and one new one, came through Council's Longterm Plan submissions process with a focus on meeting current and projected future demand.

Vandalism

Vandalism is an ongoing disruptive concern to our public facilities, both because of cost and also of the inconvenience to everyday use.

Over the past few weeks two sites, the Rifle Range carpark toilets and the Blenheim Railway Station toilets were vandalised.

District Cemeteries

Fairhall Cemetery

Further capacity is planned for Fairhall Cemetery with the installation of two tree ashes gardens and two memorial ashes gardens, to be constructed just beyond the cemetery entrance on both sides. These additions will provide more options as burial trends continue to shift nationally, with ashes gardens becoming an increasingly preferred choice. The image below outlines the planned layout for these new garden areas.



Flaxbourne Cemetery

Wild winds in Ward recently caused the breakage of the cemetery's flagpole, which is not unexpected given its exposed hill-top location and the strong south westerlies that regularly sweep in from the coast. A new flagpole has now been installed to ensure flags can be flown on request during services and at appropriate times.



Walking and cycling

Marlborough Vineyard Trail

Final repairs have now been completed on the Marlborough Vineyard Trail following damage sustained during the July 2025 flooding. Initially, the affected 200-metre section was considered suitable to wait until the next maintenance cycle. However, a well-meaning member of the public placed incorrect aggregate on the track, which meant repairs needed to be brought forward.

To minimise disruption, the works were deliberately scheduled for late summer, avoiding the need to close the trail for a full week during the busy peak-use period. Repairs were completed in time for the Easter weekend, allowing the trail to reopen for public use.

Playgrounds

Summary of Community Consultation – Tirimoana Reserve Playground

In 2021, Council approved funding for the installation of a playground at Tirimoana Reserve following requests from the Anakiwa–Tirimoana community. As several years have passed since that decision, staff undertook renewed consultation with local residents and ratepayers to confirm whether a playground is still desired, to understand preferred locations within the reserve and to gather feedback on what the playground should look like.

The reserve is a large area, so identifying the most appropriate location was a key focus of the engagement.

Feedback received showed that the majority of respondents supported the installation of a playground at Tirimoana Reserve, with a clear preference for siting it at the Tirimoana Terrace end of the reserve.

Based on this direction, staff are now progressing work to finalise a playground design that uses neutral tones and natural wood materials, ensuring the structure complements the character of the surrounding environment.

Policy and planning

Elected members received a briefing on 26 March 2026 on the Draft Open Space Provision Policy and Draft Cemeteries Management Plan, ahead of their presentation to Committee for adoption and consultation. The

briefing also included a discussion on Council's roles and responsibilities, and levels of service for community halls across the district.

A Hearing Panel for deliberations on the Te Whānau Hou Grovetown Lagoon Management Plan has been confirmed and the Hearing Report is currently being prepared. The Hearing Panel meeting will occur in April/May 2026.

Park Ranger's Report

Illegal dumping

Council Rangers have reported an increase in the level of illegal dumping across Council's reserves. The Rangers have managed to identify who the dumping was caused by and have made contact. There are fine for illegally dumping rubbish and similar in Reserves.

There have been a noted increase in the number of full house dumpings compared to previous years.

Freedom Camping

The number of freedom camping in Marlborough has shown an increase of about 25% across all of the eleven sites permitted through the Responsible Camping and Control Bylaw 2022. Council's freedom camping ranger tracks the number of freedom camping vehicles from 1 December to 31 March each year.

The below table shows the data collected daily by the Freedom Camping Ranger from 1 December 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Freedom Camping

Summary Table

1 December 2025 to 31 March 2026

Freedom Camping Site	Number of Vehicles	Numbers Asked To Leave	Number Of Tents
Alfred Stream Reserve, Rai Valley	831	9	3
Blairich Reserve, Awatere	3		3
Elterwater, Grassmere	7		
Lansdowne Carpark, Blenheim	521	87	
Opouri Road (Carluke Domain), Rai Valley	555	18	
Other	6	5	0
Renwick Dog Park, Foxes Island, Renwick	697	35	
Renwick Domain Carpark	1729	9	
Taylor Dam Reserve, Blenheim	1684	50	
Wairau Diversion Reserve, Blenheim	5592	16	17
Wash Bridge Reserve, SH63	3	1	
Wynen St Carpark, Blenheim	2708		

Play Advocate Update

The term “play” is often still misunderstood — commonly reduced to playgrounds or seen as something only for tamariki. In reality, play offers so much more.

In this update, I want to highlight how play is becoming a catalyst for smarter design, a stronger sense of identity, safer streets and a more connected Marlborough, reflected through the progress Council has made over the past 12 months.

- **Ongoing development of the Play Design Strategy**

I am continuing to shape our Play Design Strategy, which is being developed to guide how we design, plan and enhance play across our district. The strategy aims to ensure play is intentionally woven into our public spaces — supporting wellbeing, creativity, cultural expression, social connection and a sense of belonging for all ages. It will eventually serve as a practical framework for Council teams, helping us make consistent, thoughtful play design-informed decisions across projects big and small.

- **Scoping of new play-focused projects**

Several exciting project ideas are being scoped with staff from either the Parks and Open spaces team or Marlborough Roads. These include:

- A concept that connects natural landscapes, local culture and community engagement through playful design elements.
- A brief that explores multi-generational spaces where play design helps shape the “flow and vibe” of an area, making it welcoming and intuitive for everyone.
- Supporting the feasibility of playful footpath opportunities to support safer, more engaging routes to school—using design to make every day walking/wheeling feel accessible, fun, visible and safer for tamariki.

- **Completion of the Neighbourhood Play Systems (NPS) report for Picton**

Our NPS report for Picton is now complete and the next step is to run internal workshops with Council teams. These workshops will start in mid-April.

The NPS approach places the experiences of tamariki and rangatahi at the heart of understanding how play works in a neighbourhood. Through engagement with young people, whānau and local stakeholders, we have gathered rich insights that have shaped a set of Action Plan Suggestions aimed at improving daily play experiences.

The NPS complements existing Council projects, policies and investments by highlighting opportunities to strengthen play across our communities. It also reinforces the important reminder that play is for everyone aged 2 to 92 and when we design more playable spaces, we open the door for people of all ages and abilities to participate.

- **Recent professional development in Central Otago**

I recently joined eight other amazing Play Advocates from councils around Aotearoa for an intensive Sport NZ-funded development session in Central Otago. For over 72 hours we immersed ourselves in understanding the local landscape, community needs and council context. Together, the nine Play Advocates prepared and delivered a supporting resource and presentation to Central Otago District Council staff, Councillors, Sport Otago and Sport NZ.

Our presentation covered:

- The benefits of play
- The power of play (across Council departments, as a problem-solving tool, in cost-saving through smarter design, for Economic vibrancy, for Kaitiakitanga (guardianship),
- The process we undertook over our time there, where we gathered insights from and how we identified opportunities.
- Four examples of low-cost, quick-win play interventions tailored specifically to their region.

Record No: 2666574