

24 April 2026

Students respond to call for pigeon nappies



Beachlands School students meet Panini, a pigeon rescued by Pōhutukawa Coast Bird Rescue. Full story on page 3.

New airport-to-Botany busway route locked in

The route for a major new 18km busway linking Auckland Airport, Manukau and Botany has now been formally protected, marking a key step toward faster public transport for east and south Auckland.

Auckland Transport Programme Director Andy Huang says: "Airport to Botany is ready to be Auckland's next busway. The hard planning work to decide the best route, identify the properties required and get a designation in place is complete."

"Confirming route protection is a major milestone towards delivering bus rapid transit between the Airport, Manukau city centre and Botany that supports Auckland's

growth and provides reliable travel options. There would be a reliable 34 to 38-minute journey between Botany and the airport on buses separated from other traffic."

The Airport-Botany busway will connect with rail services at Puhinui and Manukau stations, and with the Eastern Busway at Botany.

The project will be delivered in stages, with interim bus upgrades planned between Manukau and Botany ahead of full construction. Once funding is confirmed, the next phase will include detailed design, property acquisition

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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The PC Times 20 years ago:
 21 April 2006: Coast residents brace for up to 50 per cent rates rise.



Weekly Tide Chart

Date	Low Tide	High Tide	Direction
24 Fri	12:33am ▼ 3.3m	6:43am ▲ 0.9m	↔
25 Sat	1:34am ▼ 3.2m	7:46am ▲ 0.9m	↔
26 Sun	2:36am ▲ 3.1m	8:49am ▼ 0.9m	↔
27 Mon	3:37am ▲ 3.1m	9:49am ▼ 0.9m	↔
28 Tue	4:33am ▲ 3.1m	10:45am ▼ 0.9m	↔
29 Wed	5:25am ▲ 3.1m	11:36am ▼ 0.9m	↔
30 Thu	6:14am ▲ 3.1m	12:23am ▼ 0.8m	↔

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Guest Editorial by Franklin Ward Councillor Andrew Baker

The next few months are going to be extremely challenging for councils around the country as they all work to finalise their latest 10 year budget, something I spoke about in my last piece. As I write this, we are yet to receive a breakdown of the public submissions following the month long consultation period. It has become very clear that across NZ, councils are really struggling to manage their budgets, with reports that the average rates increase is 15%. Some areas are really scary - Greater Wellington Regional Council and Wellington City Council have proposed 19.8 & 16.4 respectively, Buller District is 31.8% and Hamilton 19.9%.

What that shows for me is that quite obviously costs of building and maintaining things has increased significantly but also that how councils have done things needs a lot of scrutiny and how the opportunities to sort out the massive challenges and lack of funding to fix our waste and drinking water provision were wasted by the path the last Government went down with their water reforms.

Now we are faced with a significant reversal that leaves councils scrambling and the reality they need to find some serious money. It also highlights what

I think is a need to have a look at the standards councils need to meet which have added to the complexity and cost. Government requirements and standards have been a major contributor to the ballooning costs which I hope will be reviewed.

The other thing I think needs to be looked at is the reliance on a property tax (rates) as a major revenue source. Councils do have in general an operational cost challenge but more importantly, they have a revenue generation problem. That is one of the reasons we proposed a Future Fund to help our ability to be less reliant on rates and the Government.

On any one day in Auckland, there will be over 2000 sites where work is happening within or alongside a road that requires what is called temporary traffic management (TTM). A huge percentage of those are projects not under the control of Auckland Transport such as cables, water and development. TTMPs and the number of orange road cones have quite rightly been at the forefront of public criticism. It has become an industry all in itself (a bit like scaffolding) and that is one of the largest challenges we now have - trying to rein it in. We are battling an industry that is doing very well about having as many cones and people sitting

in trucks as possible. The impacts on communities through the disruption has not been given due consideration.

Auckland Transport is responding to the noise with work and trials underway to redesign the framework so that TTM is assessed by risk as opposed to just having a one size fits all approach as currently exists. Alongside that, for our own AT projects we are imposing a maximum 10% cost cap for TTM. Currently some smaller projects have TTM costs between 20 and 30%. We will also look at imposing higher charges for other projects that need to happen in the road so there is an incentive to get things done quicker and with less disruption. The desired outcome is projects completed faster, with less overall disruption from TTM and reduced project cost.

AT has also been doing things differently of late, using different products like precast pedestrian crossings instead of constructing on site, working longer on weekends and bundling works in close proximity to get things done quicker and cheaper. So effort is being made to be smarter and being fairly close to it, I am pretty happy with that.

The views expressed in the Pohutukawa Coast Times Guest Editorial column are not necessarily the views of the editor or publisher.

38th name engraved on Ryburn Cup



Clevedon Tennis Club celebrated the 38th anniversary of its annual Ryburn Cup tournament recently. This year club member Jonathon Lawrie (pictured) took top honours.

New airport-to-Botany busway route locked in

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and construction.

The busway forms part of the wider Southwest Gateway programme, aimed at improving transport connections across south and east Auckland as the region continues to grow.

“Aucklanders consistently tell us they want a transport system that is convenient, well-connected, and accessible, whether they’re travelling by car, bus, train, ferry, bike, or on foot.” says Mr Huang.

“The Airport to Botany busway delivers on that vision, connecting the rapid transit network by linking to the Eastern Busway at Botany and the rail network at Puhinui. It will link key residential and employment hubs in south and east Auckland with a dedicated corridor for rapid transit, while also supporting walking and cycling.”

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Beachlands School students respond to call for pigeon nappies

Nappies - for pigeons? It seemed like an odd request when Beachlands School teacher Emma Klokke first spotted it on the local grapevine page. But on further reflection, she decided it could be a great way for her students to contribute to their local community.

Courtney O'Neill, who runs Pōhutukawa Coast bird rescue, currently looks after a large number of birds that cannot be released, including pigeons, sparrows, and a budgie named Indie.

"Indie was the lost budgie who lived wild in Omana Regional Park for about two years before we managed to catch her thanks to a member of the public. She is now very settled in and has a surprising love for the Bee Gees," Courtney says.

Many of the pigeons in Courtney's care are unable to return to the wild due to injury, illness, or being hand raised. The nappies being sewn by the students will make a significant difference.

"Hygiene is one of the biggest daily challenges," says Courtney. "The nappies will let them move around more freely and safely in a home environment without constant mess. This improves their quality of life enormously."

One special rescue is Panini, a pigeon found after falling from a tall palm tree in Maraetai. "When she first arrived she was very cold and weak. I was not overly

hopeful she would pull through the night. But she did, and quickly turned into this joyful, cheeky little character," Courtney says.

Being so used to humans, Panini was the ideal pigeon to take along to Beachlands School to model the nappies, so that students could see how they fit. Panini was an instant hit.

"As the students probably discovered, sunflower seeds are basically pigeon kryptonite. They are the fastest way to win a pigeon's trust, and Panini is no exception. She shows just how intelligent, social, and individual pigeons can be. They are often misunderstood, but they are highly adaptable, trainable, and capable of forming strong bonds with people. Most are very loving and enjoy kisses. Not all of them, but most do, like Potato. He is the main man bird in the aviary," says Courtney.

Emma already had a lineup of enthusiastic volunteers, after mentioning the project at a school assembly. "I asked any students who were interested in helping, to come to the technology room during their lunchbreak. About 30 students turned up, which was really great!" says Emma.

The students have learned how to use a sewing machine, and how to create the nappies from fabric scraps. It has involved a bit of trial and error, but now the students



Panini models the pigeon nappies being created by Beachlands School students.

are on a roll.

"It's very fun," says student Sorcha Fradley.

Classmate Brooke Dalbeth says: "I went home and told my mum I was very glad to be able to help out. You learn a lot through doing this. I didn't know there were so many injured pigeons around. You don't see many around Beachlands, so it's nice that Courtney is helping them."

Pigeons are fascinating birds, says Courtney.

"They are remarkably smart, they were even used to carry messages in war-time, they can make soft purring sounds like cats, and once they trust you, they are incredibly rewarding companions. For families thinking about a pet bird, a pigeon is often a much more manageable and suitable option than a parrot. They are easy birds."

Courtney says the students' efforts have had a real impact.

"It is wonderful to see the students creating something so practical and thoughtful. These nappies will have a real, positive impact on the birds' lives."

Tips for anyone who finds an injured pigeon:

Gently place the bird in a secure, well ventilated cardboard box lined with a soft cloth or paper towels. Keep it in a warm, quiet, and dark place to reduce stress. Do not offer food or water straight away, as this can harm a bird in shock. Water in particular can end up drowning them if given incorrectly. Contact a local bird rescuer, wildlife rehabilitator, or avian vet as soon as possible. Birds hide their symptoms well and can deteriorate quickly, so early help is vital.

About Pōhutukawa Coast Bird Rescue

Courtney O'Neill runs the local bird rescue, but works full time so is not always available to take in new birds immediately. In those cases, she directs people to the best available help. "From Wednesday to Friday and some Saturdays, Pōhutukawa Coast Vets Dr Maggie is a bird vet and I trust her with all our birds. If in doubt, contact them and they will get in touch with me."

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Takutai Charitable Trust seeks feedback on community activities

Got thoughts about what you want for your community? The Takutai Charitable Trust would like to hear from you!

Over six years ago the Takutai Charitable Trust started from a small group passionate about their community. Since then, the Trust's activities have grown to include Coastal Treasures, Coastal Community Garden and the Foodbank, which care for community wellbeing and provide opportunities for like-minded people to connect.

The Trust also focuses on inclusion and intergenerational connections through Silvertones, the Youth Council and sponsoring the Community Lunch.

Through managing the Log Cabin, hosting events, the Men's Coffee mornings, repair workshops and grants to community groups, the Trust continues to show their care for the community.

As the Pōhutukawa Coast grows, the Trust wants to continue supporting a connected, inclusive and resilient community. They are seeking input on what you want and what you would value the Trust focusing on. This feedback will help shape the Trust's strategy and delivery plan for the coming years.

Have your say in a survey using the QR code shown or head along to Coastal Treasures for paper copies of the survey

by 3 May 2026.

The Trust says it is important that all people in the community feel welcome, connected and able to participate. As the Coast becomes more diverse, input is welcomed from people of all backgrounds. If you can help the Trust reach areas of the community that may not feel included, please get in touch.

The Trust will also reach out to other local organisations to seek their views and discuss working together for greater impact. If you belong to a local community organisation - whether it is faith based, sport orientated or providing other services to the community - please contact

Karen Titulaer on karen.titulaernz@outlook.com.



Popular concert series returns to Clevedon church during May

The much-loved Sanctuary St James Concert Series is set to return this May, bringing an impressive line-up of professional musicians to the Pōhutukawa Coast.

The Autumn 2026 programme features four Sunday evening concerts, each running from 7-8pm at Clevedon's All Souls Church, offering audiences a relaxed and intimate live music experience close to home.

The series opens on 3 May with acclaimed violinist Amalia Hall, performing alongside her brother, cellist Callum Hall. The following week, on 10 May, offers a treat to fans of The Seekers, who



The Seekers tribute band 'Morning Town Ride' will play in Clevedon on 10 May.

came to fame in the 1960s with hits such as "Morning Town Ride", after which the

tribute band has named their group.

Gypsy-style ensemble Duo Vivo brings

violin and accordion together on 17 May, promising an energetic and rhythm-filled evening. The series concludes on 24 May with Heaven Bent, whose a cappella performances draw on African American, Māori and Pasifika musical traditions.

Organisers say that concert attendees appreciate the availability of leading professional musicians at a local venue rather than having to travel to the city.

Bookings and performer details are available at www.clevedonanglicans.org.nz/concert-series.html.

The series is supported by Franklin Arts and Auckland Creative Communities.

Notice to drivers



April road closures in Pakūranga

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Temporary lane changes Palm Avenue: 25 – 28 April

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Community volunteers tackle pest plants along Whitford walkways

A group of local volunteers in Whitford is making steady progress restoring native bush and removing invasive pest plants through the Turanga Restoration Project, part of Predator Free Whitford and supported by Te Ara Hikoi – Predator Free Franklin.

The community-led project was formed after residents noticed large areas of invasive plants such as woolly nightshade, gorse, Chinese privet and moth plant spreading through local reserves and choking regenerating native bush. Auckland is often described as one of New Zealand’s weediest cities, and Whitford has been feeling the impact.

Volunteers began holding regular Saturday working bees to remove pest plants from two important local walkways: Wades Walkway and the Potts Road Bridleway on the Clifton Peninsula.

With support from Predator Free Franklin, the team has already cleared significant areas along Wades Walkway and has begun work along the Potts Road bridle trail. Over the summer months, however, new pest plant seedlings have emerged, meaning volunteers are now revisiting previously cleared areas to keep the growth under control.

Removing invasive plants allows native vegetation to regenerate, supports birdlife and wildlife, and improves public access to these natural spaces. Just as importantly, organisers say the project is helping build



Whitford weed whackers: (from left) Ben Stockton, Stu Berry, Marcus Lonsdale-Cooper, Lily Vickers, Tom McCallum, Zachary Stockton, Jeremy Stockton. Photo by Kate Hindson.

community connection and stewardship of the local environment.

Looking ahead, the group is working with council to organise a native planting day near the wetlands at the northern end of the Potts Road bridleway this winter or early spring.

The group seeks more volunteers to join the Saturday morning working bees, saying that even one hour a month makes a huge difference. Participants are asked to bring gloves, loppers or secateurs, protective eyewear, first aid kit and plenty of community spirit.

For more information or to get involved, contact 027 233 0972 or email whitford@predatorfreefranklin.nz, or follow the group’s Facebook page Predator Free Whitford.

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Franklin Vets advice: supporting your pet through arthritis



- by **Dr Samuel Frost BVSc, Veterinarian and Branch Manager**

As the mornings get cooler, many of us notice our dogs slowing down a little. They might be taking a moment longer to get up in the morning or choosing the sunny spot on the deck instead of chasing the ball. These small changes are often early signs of osteoarthritis, a condition that becomes more noticeable as the weather cools and stiff joints protest a bit more.

The good news is that there's a lot we can do to help. Arthritis responds best when we tackle it from several angles at once.

A great place to start is with diet and supplements. Joint support diets can help reduce inflammation, while supplements containing omega-3 oils, green-lipped mussel, or glucosamine can support cartilage and tissues inside the joints. These work best when used consistently and as part of a wider plan.

Keeping your dog at a healthy weight is one of the most powerful ways to reduce pressure on sore joints. Even a small amount of weight loss can make a big difference to comfort and mobility.

Maintaining muscle mass is just as important. Gentle, regular exercise helps keep dogs strong without overloading painful joints. Many dogs benefit from physiotherapy or hydrotherapy, and at our clinic, we offer acupuncture, which can be an effective addition for reducing pain and improving mobility. Lots of local dogs have responded beautifully to it, especially during the cooler seasons when stiffness tends to flare.

In some cases, we will prescribe pain relief, which reduces discomfort and allows them to enjoy their normal routines again, stay slim, and keep their muscle condition.

A check-up with our vets is the best way to pull all these options together into a sensible, personalised plan. Every dog's arthritis is different, and a tailored approach means better comfort, fewer bad days, and a much happier winter ahead.

If you have questions about any other pet-related topic you'd like us to cover in future articles, we'd love to hear from you. Send in your questions via email to beachlands@fvs.co.nz with the subject line "PC Times Question"



Sarah and Elizabeth help alleviate Charlie's arthritis with acupuncture.



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Lest We Forget: Anzac Services

Beachlands/Maraetai

Residents of Beachlands and Maraetai are invited to attend a series of ANZAC Day services commemorating those who have served and sacrificed. The day will begin with a Dawn Service at 6am, held on the road outside the Chartered Club. Following the service, breakfast will be served at the club and Ambrosia from 7am to 8.30am. Tickets can be purchased in advance from the club bar or the office. Limited tickets are also available on the day if not sold earlier. Breakfast is priced at \$25 per adult and \$15 for children aged twelve and under.

The Civic Service will follow later in the morning, beginning with a march from the Chartered Club, up Wakelin Rd to Beachlands School. The march will depart at 8.45am, with the formal service commencing at 9am.

A third service will also be held this year at Pōhutukawa Landing retirement village, taking place at the care facility with a start time of 11am. All members of the community are welcome to attend and take part in the commemorations.

Clevedon

This year's Anzac Day commemorations in Clevedon will follow the traditional two-part format, with a short formal service at the Clevedon Monument, followed by an organised procession to the Clevedon Hall where a more comprehensive ceremony will take place. The Clevedon Monument service will commence at 9.30am, followed by a procession to the Clevedon Hall for a civic service at 10.15am, followed by light refreshments and a chance to continue fellowship and discussions. Enquiries to gina.sanders@xtra.co.nz

Whitford

Time: Gates open 6.00am, service at 6.30am

Location: at the flagstaff at the Whitford Pavilion, Whitford Tennis Club

Details: Commemoration will run for about 40 minutes, followed by a buffet breakfast funded by the Whitford Community Charitable Trust, cooked by volunteers. A donation bucket will be passed around during the service, with money collected going to the RSA's Poppy Fund for war veterans.

Kawakawa Bay/Ōrere

Time: 10.00-10.45am (9.50am assembly time for those marching from the school)

Location: Ōrere War Memorial Hall

Details: The service will be followed by morning tea in the hall. Please bring a plate if you are able.

Contact: Tay-Marie, 021 045 0307

Easter Colouring Competition April 2026



Samantha



Max & Mia



Peyton



Alex

Congratulations again to our winners - with so many entries handed in, it wasn't an easy task to pick our winners! Handing over the goodie bag prize packs was a real highlight for our team in the office. We hope everyone who participated had as much fun as we did!

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FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT

Choc chunk ANZAC biscuits

Makes: 8 biscuits

Ingredients:

- ½ cup flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- ¾ cup desiccated coconut
- ¾ cup rolled oats
- 60g butter
- 1 ½ Tbsp golden syrup
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2 Tbsp boiling water
- ½ cup dark chocolate chips



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C fan bake. In a large bowl combine flour, sugar, coconut and oats.
2. In a pot melt butter and golden syrup together over medium heat. Dissolve baking soda in boiling water. Pour baking soda mixture into the melted butter/golden syrup and mix until frothy.
3. Pour hot mixture into the dry ingredients and stir until combined. Mix in chocolate chips. Roll into equal sized balls and press down onto a lined tray so they are flat (ANZAC biscuits don't spread when baking).
4. Bake for 12 minutes, until golden brown. Remove from oven and let sit until cooled fully.



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Down: 1. Cabbage, 2. Bias, 3. Behold, 4. Screw, 5. Time bomb, 6. Waxen, 8. Nit, 9. Creep, 10. Idol, 16. Flypaper, 18. Queue, 19. Welcome, 21. Mere, 22. Fervid, 23. Abyss, 24. Level, 26. Law, 28. Taxi.

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LOCAL STUDENTS' NEWS, VIEWS & LITERARY TALENT

This column features news, views and literary talents of students from Beachlands, Maraetai, Clevedon, Brookby, Hunua, Paparimu, Orere and Ardmore Schools.

One student featured each week will be presented with a certificate and a \$20 book voucher, thanks to Barfoot & Thompson's Beachlands and Whitford branches.



This week's voucher sponsored by Stuart Fitzpatrick

Under the dense trees they didn't notice that the clouds were rolling in overhead. "Woah," exclaimed Becca. "It just got a whole lot darker."

"Yeah, I think it did," came Winne's voice through the darkness. Then suddenly white stuff started falling slowly.

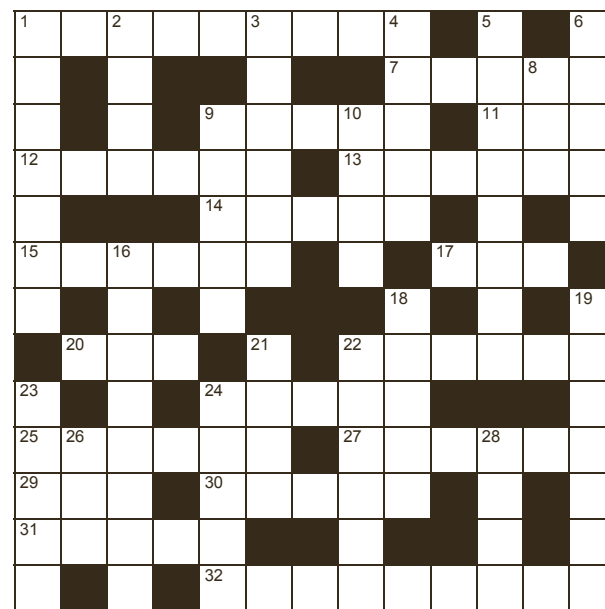
"Oh no!" said Winne.

"Oh no is a bit of an understatement," Becca replied "Chuck on your board and try not to hit a tree, we need to get down before the snow gets too heavy!"

Just as Becca finished saying that the snow started to dump, and when I say dump I mean you cannot see your own hand in front of your face. All you could see was white!

- by Amy Johnson, Year 8, Beachlands School

TEAM BRIE RAY WHITE CROSSWORD



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Across

1. Lads who attend ship's officers (5,4)
7. Crockery (5)
9. Preside over (5)
11. Interact socially (3)
12. Small restaurant (6)
13. Expunge (6)
14. Push past (5)
15. Having exceptional ability (6)
17. In favour of (3)
20. Stain (3)
22. Feel about (6)
24. Embankment (5)
25. School jacket (6)
27. Bucolic (6)
29. Shrill bark (3)
30. Vitality (5)
31. Root vegetable (5)
32. Overwhelming election win (9)

Down

1. A brassica (7)
 2. Partiality (4)
 3. See or observe (6)
 4. Threaded pin (5)
 5. Ticking explosive (4,4)
 6. Pale and translucent (5)
 8. Louse egg (3)
 9. Move stealthily (5)
 10. Figure of worship (4)
 16. Insect catcher (8)
 18. Stand in line (5)
 19. Gladly received (7)
 21. Only what is said and nothing else (4)
 22. Intensely enthusiastic (6)
 23. Deep chasm (5)
 24. Flat (5)
 26. Statute (3)
 28. Car for hire (4)
- Answers on page 9

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