



Being on Council has changed how Mike sees the places he visits: a recent cycling trip to the UK.

From farm to Council: Mike’s mission for Waipā’s future

Dairy farmer Mike Montgomerie swapped his gumboots for agendas in 2022, diving headfirst into life as a Waipā District Councillor - a role he has found both rewarding and challenging.

Mike says one of the biggest learning curves has been getting to grips with Council’s finances from the funding streams unique to local government to the many funding demands that come with it. “It quickly became apparent that Council manages a very large asset base with a relatively small annual budget. Farming has some similarities, but Council is next level.”

Mike chairs the Strategic Planning and Policy Committee, and is deputy chair of the Finance and Corporate Committee. While the workload is high, his motivation for entering local government is grounded in community service. “It’s important who we have acting as guardians of the assets Council looks after, and who helps guide the collective investments that shape the place we live. I can hardly believe how much Waipā has changed over the past few decades. Like everyone, I want to maintain the best parts of the small-town rural life as we continue to grow.”

Mike is really enjoying being part of something bigger than just his own business, working with fellow councillors and especially Council staff.

The Maungatautari ward representative and Cambridge Community Board member enjoyed

his first term learning from the established councillors and says it is refreshing to see so many new faces around the table this triennium. They bring new energy, skills and perspectives, he says.

Looking ahead, Mike says a lot is happening across the district. “I am looking forward to completing the Cambridge Connections project, helping shape what Council looks like once waters transitions to Waikato Waters Limited, and ensuring Waipā is well placed in the changing local government scene.”

Originally from a farm near Cambridge, Mike spent three years working as a lawyer in a large commercial firm in Wellington before returning to farming 30 years ago. His wife, Luci, was a GP at Cambridge Medical Centre before going on to specialise. They have four sons who have all left home but still love returning to the family farm.

“We are now beginning to travel, and as we move through countries, cities and towns, my Council role has really focused my attention on the way things work in other places. I’m always thinking what works better than how we do things and what is worse.”

Outside Council and the farm, Mike loves getting out on his bike around Waipā. Growing up in the 1970s, cycling was a big part of daily life. “While roads are busier now, Te Awa River Ride and growing urban cycle networks are giving today’s kids some of the freedom I had growing up.”



Working together in a crisis: Waipā supports Thames–Coromandel

When flooding struck the Thames–Coromandel District recently, the impacts were felt well beyond district boundaries. In response, three Waipā District Council staff stepped forward to support those affected, reinforcing the importance of collaboration and preparedness across local government.

Cathie Shaw, Gina Scott and Harry Baxter assisted with welfare coordination and operations support, working alongside Thames–Coromandel District Council, emergency management teams, and community organisations. Their mahi included supporting affected residents with information and practical needs, and contributing to coordination efforts during a challenging and fast-moving situation.

Follow us on Facebook or sign up for Antenno to keep up-to-date with weather warnings and other news!



Waitangi Day long weekend activities

Waitangi Day is tomorrow, Friday, February 6, bringing with it another long weekend. If you’re staying local and looking for something to do, take your whānau to Te Whare Taonga o Te Awamutu Museum or Cambridge Museum, where hands-on Te Tiriti displays, resources and a kids’ activity book will be available from February 5–9.

Recycling collections will continue as usual, just remember to have your bins out by 7am on your scheduled day!

Proposed Plan Change 25 submission period extended

Following recent severe weather events, we are extending the submission period for our **Proposed Plan Change 25 – Shelterbelts and Artificial Crop Structures to Friday, February 20.**

This is to give anyone who may be affected some more time to share their views.

For more information, visit letstalk.waipadc.govt.nz/planchange25

Your Elected Members Get in touch: waipadc.govt.nz/our-council/our-team/mayor-and-councillors

											
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