

# New sports hub makes big splash

The new Te Hiku Sports Hub in Kaitāia has opened, boasting a state-of-the-art aquatic centre, gymnasium and function rooms. It took decades of planning and fundraising but the \$12.2 million complex is a game changer for the rohe.

The facility is made up of two 'wings', with the wet sports wing including four pool areas - an eight-lane 25m swimming pool, a hydrotherapy pool, a toddler splash pool, and a learn-to-swim pool. Aqua aerobics and learn-to-swim programmes will also be available.

The dry sports wing includes a 12m x 24m gym with a range of fitness equipment from free weights to cardio and resistance weight machines. Group fitness classes and personal training will also be offered.

The sports wing is also home to the clubrooms, changing rooms, kitchen, and a servery to the clubrooms and sports fields. The hub supports the nearby fitness track and multi-use sports fields, courts, and cricket nets.



Four pool areas in the wet wing plus a dry wing, boasting a gym, clubrooms, kitchen and other facilities, are a game changer for Te Hiku.

Te Hiku Sports Hub Incorporated raised more than \$11.8 million from a variety of sources to build the centre, including \$3 million in council funding. In February, Far North District Council approved

\$500,000 in additional capital funding to get the project across the finish line.

Watch our video at [fndc.govt.nz](https://fndc.govt.nz) to see how the new sports hub will help benefit the whole community.

## Dir-Gen confirms fluoridation

The Director-General of Health has declined an extension request by Far North District Council (FNDC) to the 30 June deadline for implementing the fluoridation of drinking water in Kaitāia and Kerikeri.



Cost and timeframe concerns put to the DG of Health were rejected.

Kahika Moko Tepania outlined the council's primary concerns in a formal letter to Dr Diana Sarfati, Director-General of Health.

Concerns include the costs, potential health risks, and the necessity for comprehensive community consultation. Kahika Tepania emphasised that the projected costs of \$6 million to introduce fluoride in the district, categorised as an area of high economic deprivation, presents a significant financial challenge.

Dr Sarfati declined the request, highlighting that the High Court decision on 24 May 2024 confirmed the validity of current directions, establishing that councils have a statutory duty to ensure mandatory compliance.

Failure to adhere to those directives constitutes an offence, potentially resulting in significant penalties. However, Dr Sarfati requested that FNDC collaborates closely with the Public Health Agency to develop a plan for complying with the statutory

requirements, then compliance dates will be reconsidered in accordance with the proposed plan and its timeline.

The council expects the detailed design to install fluoridation at both locations to be completed by July 2024. Budgetary provision has been included in the Long Term Plan 2024-2027 for construction to be delivered by 30 June 2025.

While fluoridation will be mandated, FNDC allows the installation of rainwater tanks for drinking purposes in reticulated areas for those who prefer an alternative, providing that the necessary consents are obtained and all District Plan requirements are met.

## New square for Kaitāia's centre

Kaitāia's new town square was unveiled with a dawn service on 5 June 2024. Located on what used to be the Pak'nSave carpark, the square provides a central location to relax and enjoy some local artwork.



A seven-metre high sculpture is a focal point of the town square.

This kaupapa was part of the Te Hiku Open Spaces Revitalisation Project. The square's main feature is a seven-metre-high sculpture by Awanui artist BJ Natanahira made of stainless steel and tōtara called Te Rerenga Wai o Tangonge. It symbolises the Kaitāia community working together with themes of intertwining cultures and belonging.

## Whānau refresh Simson Park

Te Rōpū Rangatahi o Simson Park recently invited all users of Simson Park Domain to have their say on what the future could look like for Moerewa and its sporting community.



Locals have been encouraged to have their say on Simson Park's future.

Simson Park is a vibrant hub for Moerewa, hosting sports, recreational activities, and various local events. It has a rich history of nurturing talented individuals and consistently producing top-tier sports teams.

Earlier this year, Te Rōpū Rangatahi o Simson Park was founded with help from Healthy Families Far North, which aims to improve community health and wellbeing. It has reviewed the existing Reserve Management Plan of Simson Park, along with the community, and has highlighted areas for enhancement. It aims to involve whānau and the wider community in future planning, focusing on empowering rangatahi to lead solutions on what Simson Park could be.

Suggestions so far include upgrading the park's infrastructure, improving sports facilities, developing more spaces catering specifically to children, enhancing the environment, and creating opportunities to improve health and wellbeing.

This consultation has been made possible with the support of the Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board.