



Te Mahere-ā-Tau e tūtohutia ana 2026/27  
**Me mōhio koe**

Proposed Annual Plan 2026/27  
**What you need to know**

# E aha ana a Te Pane Matua Taiao?

## What does Greater Wellington do?

Greater Wellington works to create an extraordinary Region, with a thriving environment, connected communities, and a resilient future. Our focus areas include:

- Active Mana Whenua partnerships and participation for improved outcomes for Māori
- Leading action for climate resilience and emissions reduction
- Holistic approaches to deliver improved outcomes for te taiao (the environment)
- Improved access to environment and transport services and equity of outcomes through participation with communities.

Greater Wellington delivers a wide range of activities that protect our environment while also meeting the cultural, social and economic needs of our communities. We're specifically responsible for environment management, flood resilience and land management, provision of regional parks, and public transport planning and funding.

## What we do to make our region a great place to live, work and play



**Plan our region's future**



**Protect our environment**



**Look after regional parks**



**Manage public transport**



**Look after our harbours and coasts**



**Grow the economy**



**Prepare for and respond to emergencies**



**Create flood protection**

# Ngā panonitanga nō te wā o tā tātou Mahere Pae Tawhiti 2024-34

## Changes since our 2024-34 Long Term Plan

Annual Plans explain and update you on what we plan to do in the coming financial year. They also show how this compares with what we said we would do in the Long Term Plan, how much it will cost, and how it will be paid for. The 2026/27 Annual Plan covers year three of our 2024-34 Long Term Plan.

Before we adopt the 2026/27 Annual Plan, the Council will update the Long Term Plan to remove bulk water services from 2026/27 onwards. This change is required by new legislation under the Government's Local Water Done Well reforms<sup>1</sup>. For Greater Wellington and the four city councils in our region, this means moving responsibility for water services to Tiaki Wai, the new Council Controlled Organisation responsible for water services, from 1 July 2026.

This update removes water-related budgets, assets, projects, debt, performance measures, and policy references from the Long Term Plan from 2026/27 onwards. Because this change is required by law and reflects a change that has had previous public consultation, no additional public consultation<sup>2</sup> or external audit is needed.

Aside from this update, there are no significant changes to what we planned to deliver in year three of the 2024-34 Long Term Plan. For this reason, and in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002, we are not running a formal consultation on the 2026/27 Annual Plan. However, we still want to share some of the proposed changes and give you the opportunity to tell us what you think about it overall.

<sup>1</sup>For further information on Greater Wellington's Local Water Done Well reforms response, please refer to our website.

<sup>2</sup>Greater Wellington consulted in March–April 2025 on Local Water Done Well delivery model options. The consultation showed strong support for a multi-council water services CCO, which Council confirmed as its preferred model on 26 June 2025 (Council Report 25.250, Local Water Done Well Delivery Model).



Akatawara river flowing through Akatawara Forest in the Tararua Range

E whakaheke ana i te whakapikinga rēti ā-rohe mō te 2026/27 e hiki ai i ētahi o ngā taumahatanga kei runga i ngā hapori

## We're reducing the average regional rates increase for 2026/27 to ease the pressure on our communities

Rates pay for the essential services and projects set out in our 2024-34 Long Term Plan, but they are not our only source of funding. We also rely on government subsidies, transport improvement grants, interest and dividends, and other operating revenue such as fees and fares, as set out in our Revenue and Financing Policy.

Like many organisations, we are facing reduced government funding and ongoing cost of living pressures in our communities. To manage this, we've carefully reviewed everything we do. We've looked for efficiencies, adjusted the timing of some work, reviewed service levels, explored new revenue options, and held vacancies as we evaluate the overall number of staff, we need to accomplish our goals.

Together, these changes reduce the average regional rates increase for 2026/27 from an initially projected 13.3% in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan to 9.7%.

Central government is progressing several reform proposals that, if implemented, could have significant implications for Greater Wellington. We are engaging with the feedback processes and planning for their potential impacts. These reforms are:

- **Simplifying Local Government:** a proposal to remove elected regional councillors and replace them with new boards made up of local mayors, it also proposes that councils work together to develop plans for future structures for local government within each region.
- **Rates capping:** a proposal to limit annual council rates increases to between 2 and 4 percent.
- **Resource Management reform:** the Resource Management Act will be replaced with two new pieces of legislation, one focused on environmental protection and another on planning and development, to enable faster delivery of development and infrastructure.
- **Emergency Management Reform:** The Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act will be replaced by the Emergency Management Bill which modernises New Zealand's emergency management system.

Regardless of these proposed changes we're still focused on delivering what matters most to our communities. This includes responding to climate change, controlling pests that harm our environment, delivering public transport, and protecting communities from flooding.

The lower rates increase strikes a balance between affordability and continuing the services and projects our community told us were important when the 2024-34 Long Term Plan was developed. We're not adding new work or increasing service levels.

Instead, we are focusing on using our resources more effectively so we can deliver good value for money across essential services and major projects, while reducing the amount of additional rates funding needed.

The change in average regional rates increase for residential, business and rural can be seen in the table below:

	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week
Residential (Including GST)	\$83.83	\$1.61
Business (excluding GST)	\$695.70	\$13.38
Rural (excluding GST)	\$103.25	\$1.99

For a more personalised estimate of your draft 2026/27 rates, please check out our rates calculator on our website: [rates.gw.govt.nz/](https://rates.gw.govt.nz/)

### Assistance in paying your rates

If you need assistance with paying your rates and fit the criteria, rates remission and postponement can be applied for on our website: <https://gw.govt.nz/RatesRemission>. Rates rebates can also be applied for via your local council.



Walkers take to the trails at Pencarrow lake and lighthouse in Greater Wellingtons East Harbour Regional Park.

E panoni ana i te ara whakatutuki i ētahi o ā mātou mahi kua whakaritea

## We're changing how we deliver some of our planned work

We are still focused on delivering the services that matter most, even though money is tight. We will keep working closely with others across the region and strengthening our partnerships, including our ongoing commitment to working with mana whenua. To manage costs, we have had to make some trade-offs, which means some services will be reduced or delayed.

In 2026/27, we will deliver outcomes for our communities through three main areas of work:



A Metlink train pulling into Paremata Station on the Kāpiti Line

Environment, Metlink Public Transport, and Regional Strategy and Partnerships. Our 2024-34 Long Term Plan ([ltp.gw.govt.nz/](http://ltp.gw.govt.nz/)) explains this work in more detail.

To achieve the lower average regional rates increase outlined above, and to respond to central government direction and additional funding pressures, we are considering the below changes to how we work and what we plan to do in 2026/27.

### Ko te Mahere ā-rohe me ngā Rangapū – Regional Strategy and Partnerships

Changes in this Activity Group have contributed \$1.3m in reductions on rates (a 0.5% reduction on the average regional rates figure)

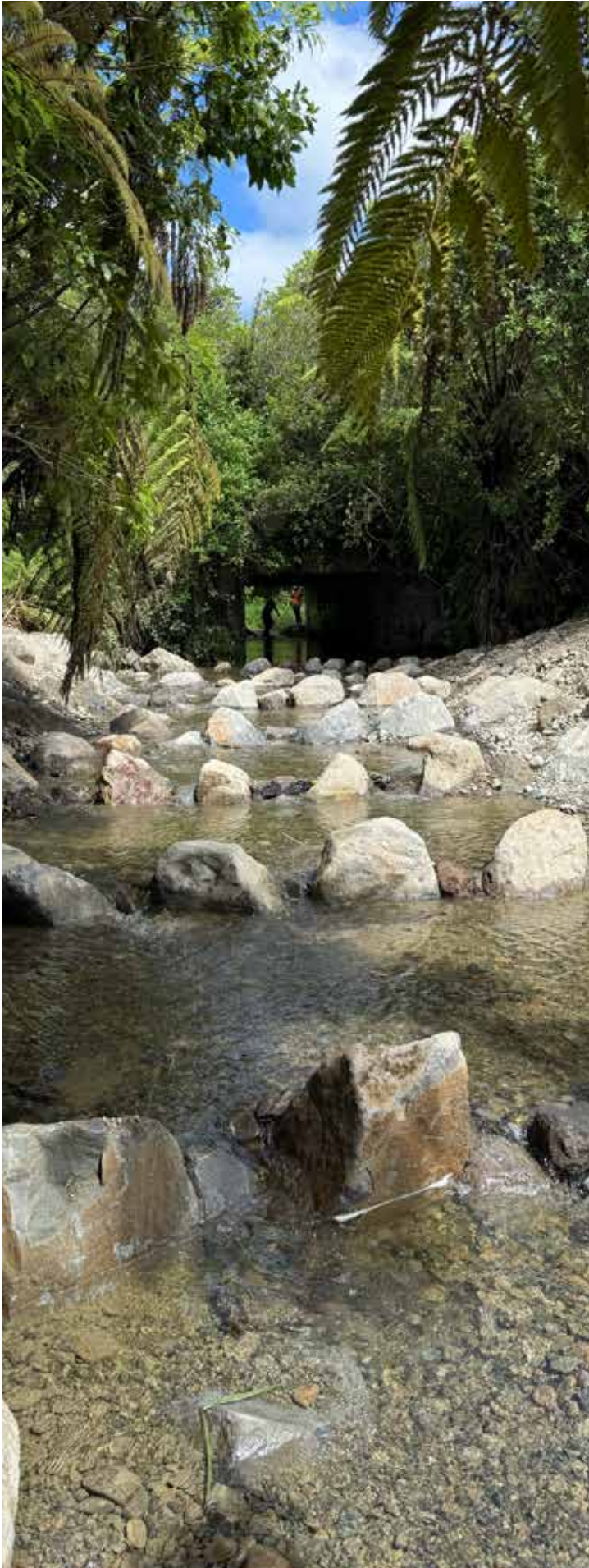
Increased revenue	Increased revenue options are being explored in several areas including changes to how we fund the Wellington Transport Analytics Unit, and revenue resulting from phase two of the Energy Transformation Initiative.
-------------------	---

### Ngā Waka Tūmatanui – Metlink Public Transport

Changes in this Activity Group have contributed \$4.0m in reductions on rates (a 1.4% reduction on the average regional rates figure)

Optimise public transport services	We would adjust our services to better reflect current patronage demand, and reduce operating costs
Review the need for blanket earthquake strengthening of rail buildings	We would review the need for a blanket earthquake strengthening of our structures to 66% of New Building Standards and instead take a risk-based approach to such works.
Reducing service design budget for new bus services	Changes to increase bus services would only be made if costs can be offset within the bus network service budget. This reduces the budget set aside for new services.
Defer a new network operating centre	We would not set up a new network operating centre that was included in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan. We would continue with current arrangements and avoid both setup and ongoing operating costs.

<b>Te Taiao – Environment</b>	
Changes in this Activity Group have contributed \$7.5m in reductions on rates (a 2.7% reduction on the average regional rates figure)	
Increase camping fees in regional parks	<p>We would increase camping fees across regional parks. Fees have been the same since 2020 and have not kept pace with increased costs of maintaining campgrounds and visitor facilities. The changes would also bring them closer to fees charged at similar parks elsewhere.</p> <p>The proposed new fees would be:</p> <p>Unpowered sites: \$12 for adults and \$6 for children</p> <p>Powered sites: \$24 for adults and \$12 for children</p>
Minimal reduction in parks restoration	We would marginally slow down the restoration across our parks network next year. This would mean a small reduction in planting across the parks, except for at Belmont where the rate of planting and grazing retirement would continue as planned.
Delay in Te Awa Kairangi flood protection projects	We would delay construction for the Norbert to Gemstone flood protection work by 12 months, and Manor Park flood protection work by 24 months. This would give us more time to complete planning, confirm costs, and explore possible Crown funding before the next planning cycle.
Reframing Pinehaven FMP Implementation	We are currently working with funding partners Upper Hutt City Council on options to improve the affordability of flood protection works. Further construction is delayed until this work is done, which reduces costs for the coming year.
Efficiencies in Flood Protection	We have considered efficiencies in how flood protection work is delivered, which means some of the additional resources originally planned for the next financial year can be deferred. These efficiencies will not meaningfully change the level of flood protection services provided across the Region.
Maintain Wairarapa Moana restoration work	We would slow down the increase in restoration work around Wairarapa Moana while continuing to work with the new Wairarapa Moana Statutory Board. Restoration activity will increase again in future years.
Reduce increase in Community-focused environment funding	We would not expand the Community Environment Fund as planned in the 2024-34 Long Term Plan. We would also stop the Environment Activation Fund from starting this year. Overall community focused funding would stay at a similar level as previous years instead of increasing.
Temporarily reduce Wainuiomata Orongorongo Water Catchment Zero Ungulates Programme (WOWCAZUP).	This programme supports forest regeneration and safeguards water quality by controlling the impact of feral deer, pigs and goats. We would temporarily reduce the funding for this programme for one year. While it may take longer than expected, we will still be able to achieve the planned outcomes of the programme.
Scale back Fish Passage Remediation work	We would scale back fish passage improvement work across the region. This would reduce operating costs by around 20–30 percent and capital spending by about 40 percent.



## **Our ongoing work to manage costs and improve efficiency**

During our planning process to prepare the 2026/27 Annual Plan, Council evaluated and reviewed its work programme and operating practices to better understand the cost pressures facing the organisation and identify opportunities to limit the impact on rates. In addition to the items outlined in the table above, other actions are already underway across the organisation, including in our back-office support functions, to manage expenditure, improve efficiency, and reduce the overall funding requirement for the 2026/27 financial year.

Council has already progressed a number of efficiency initiatives and targeted cost reductions. These include scaling back or reprioritising non-essential work, tightening operating budgets across the organisation, and seeking opportunities to deliver services more efficiently. Further efficiencies are being explored as part of a wider organisational focus on value for money and sustainable cost management which will continue through the development of our 2027-37 Long Term Plan over the next 12 months.

Alongside this, in February 2026, Council agreed to a general public transport fares increase of 3.1 percent and a change to the off-peak discount from 30 percent to 20 percent. This decision forms part of a parallel review of public transport fares and charges and helps reduce the level of general rates funding required to operate public transport network.

Together, these actions mean the proposed average regional rates increase already reflects a significant amount of work to manage costs before seeking community feedback on the specific changes included in this Annual Plan.

For a further breakdown of average rates and the services we are delivering in your area of the region please see our Area Fact Sheets.

Threatened fish species in Wharemaukū Stream, Paraparaumu, have an improved passage up and down the stream thanks to a new “rock ramp” fishway which is the first of its kind in the Wellington region.

## Te mahi tahi ki ngā mana whenua Working with mana whenua

Greater Wellington is committed to deepening and uplifting our partnerships with mana whenua. As these relationships continue to mature, we are embracing the shifts required to work in ways that honour the authority, knowledge, and responsibilities that mana whenua hold within their rohe.

With growing trust and shared purpose, we are moving from a model of embedding te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori within our organisation, to creating the space and conditions for mana whenua to lead this work in ways that reflect their tikanga, aspirations, and inherited obligations.

This evolution strengthens how we design, deliver, monitor, and evaluate our work, ensuring that true whitua approaches are shaped with and by mana whenua.

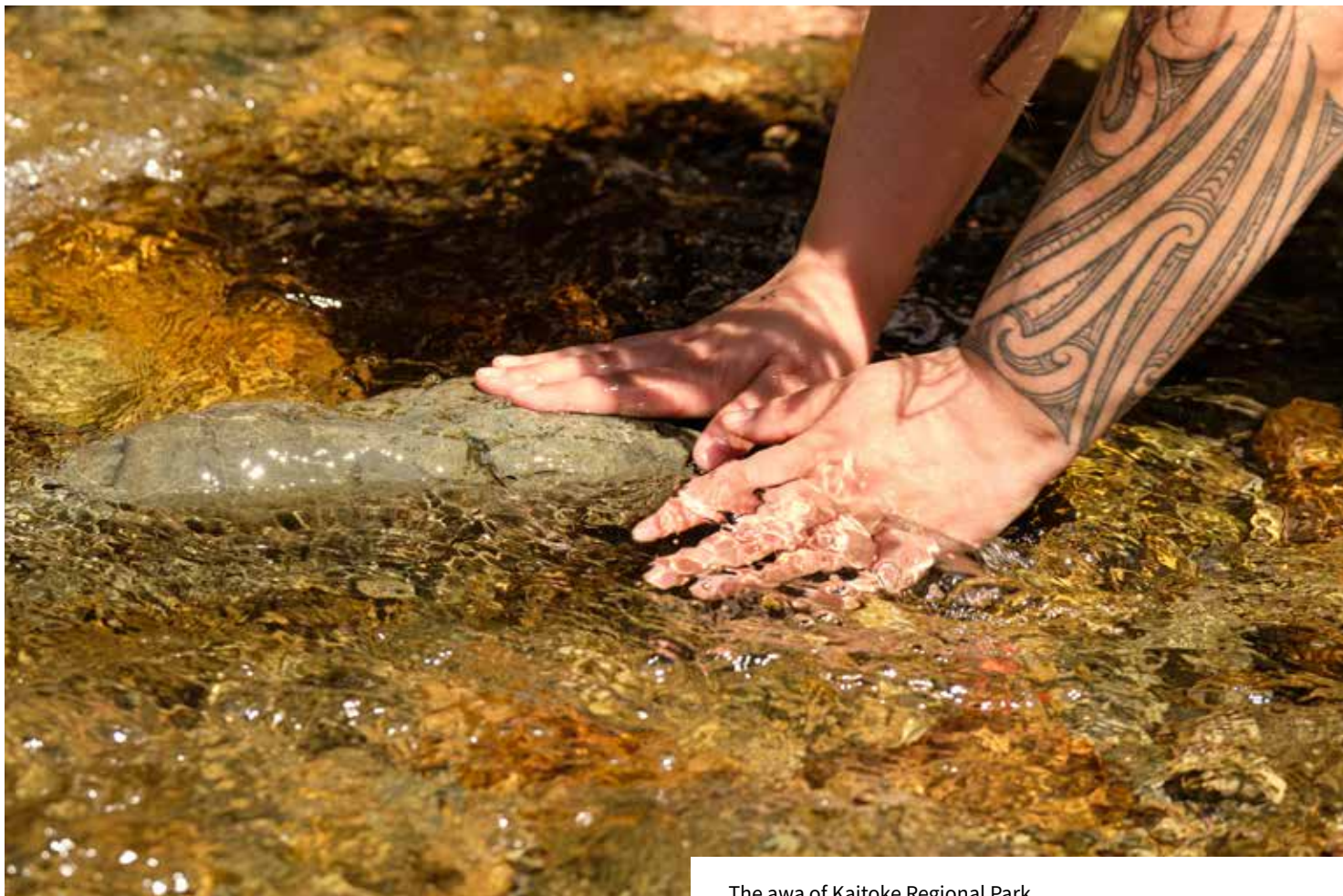
We partner with the six iwi of the region in recognition of their whakapapa and enduring kaitiakitanga of the whenua. These relationships are grounded in more than 30 years of working alongside one another to advance te taiao

outcomes and strengthen our communities. We will continue to work with pre and post settlement entities appointed to represent the interests of:

- Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki
- Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai
- Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira
- Taranaki Whānui
- Rangitāne o Wairarapa
- Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa

Our shared focus is delivering mahi that reflects the priorities of mana whenua and contributes to strong outcomes for the whole rohe. This includes supporting the success of existing and future Treaty settlements and the development of emerging Post Settlement Governance Entities.

We continue to work alongside mana whenua through kaupapa and tūāpapa funding arrangements, ensuring early engagement, partnership-led design, and delivery approaches that enable meaningful outcomes for mana whenua, Māori, our wider communities, and te taiao.



The awa of Kaitoke Regional Park.

## Kei te pīrangi mātou ki ō whakairo We value your feedback

We understand that there is a balance to find between affordability and best serving the needs of our environment and community, both now and into the future, and we are always interested in whether you think we have hit the mark.

Please let us know if you have any feedback. This may be about

- Our proposed 2026/27 Annual Plan
- Our priorities and/or how we propose to deliver our services during 2026/27
- The proposed changes outlined above, including camping fees in regional parks
- Anything else related to the way Greater Wellington delivers on our responsibilities and works with our communities.

### How to provide feedback

You can provide feedback online via our Have Your Say platform from 20 March through to 24 April 2026.

Find out more and register for a Coffee and Chat discussion with Councillors.  
([calendly.com/corporate-planning](https://calendly.com/corporate-planning))

- **Wednesday 1 April 6pm -Online**
- **Wednesday 8 April 10 am -Wellington City**
- **Wednesday 15 April 10am -Masterton**
- **Wednesday 22 April 1:30pm -Wellington City**

You can also post your feedback to us at the below address or drop it off to one of our offices up until close of business on 24 April 2026.

Please address your feedback to:  
**Corporate Planning and Reporting Team  
Greater Wellington Regional Council  
PO BOX 11646,  
Wellington, 6142**

Our offices are located at:

- **100 Cuba Street, Wellington**
- **34 Chapel Street, Masterton**

Council will consider a summary of any feedback received through this engagement period on the proposed 2026/27 Annual Plan, at its meeting in June 2026.

Please contact [Corporate.Planning@gw.govt.nz](mailto:Corporate.Planning@gw.govt.nz) if you have any questions relating to the 2026/27 Annual Plan.

### Help us to plan for the long term

Additionally, 2026 is the year we will review our long-term plan and consider the best way forward for the next 10 years.

Government reforms may change our responsibilities in the future, but we're still accountable for planning wisely right now and continuing to deliver high-quality services. We know there are rising costs so we will focus on the most important services first.

To make the best possible decisions for the Region, we need to understand what you think our priorities should be for the next 10 years.

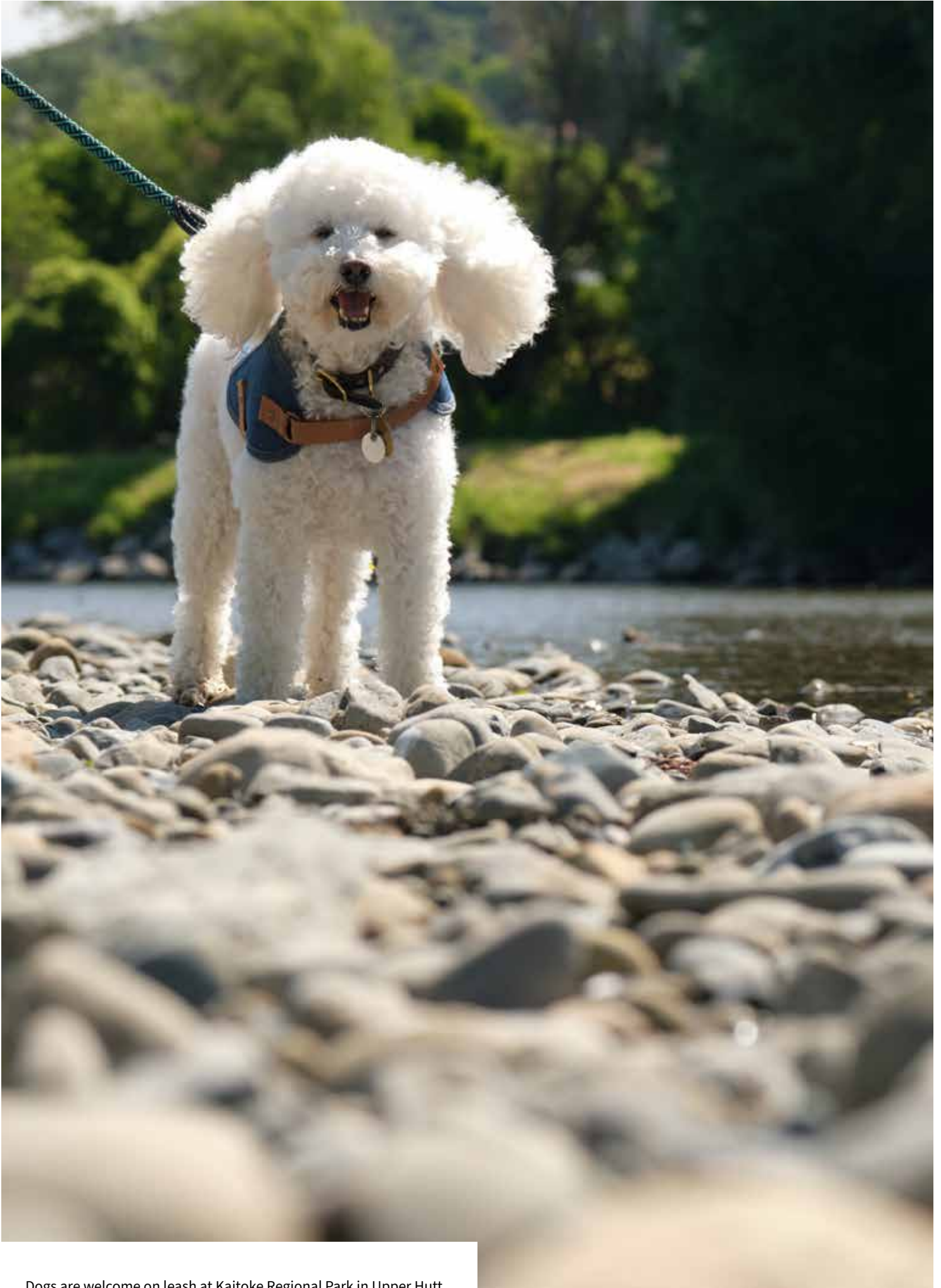
We will ask for your feedback as we plan, starting with developing our big goals. Check Greater Say this April, to find out more about them and share your thoughts.

### Privacy Statement

Greater Wellington will collect, store, use and/or share your personal information in accordance with the Greater Wellington Privacy statement ([gw.govt.nz/your-council/legal/privacy-statement/](https://gw.govt.nz/your-council/legal/privacy-statement/))

We don't require your name and contact details as part of your feedback but will ask you a couple of demographic questions. You do not have to answer those questions, but they will assist us with analysis of the feedback. All responses will be anonymised as part of the analysis, before overall themes are shared with Council and the public.

If you wish to attend the Coffee and Chat discussion with Councillors, we will ask for your name and contact details on the registration form so that we can contact you about the event if needed.



Dogs are welcome on leash at Kaitoke Regional Park in Upper Hutt.

## Proposed revised rating figures for 2026/27

Wellington City Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Wellington City	\$1,295.26	\$106.76	\$2.05	9.0%
Business (excl. GST)	Wellington City	\$5,587.75	\$332.53	\$6.39	6.3%
	Wellington City – CBD	\$17,212.35	\$1,436.36	\$27.62	9.1%
Rural (excl. GST)	Wellington City	\$987.63	\$111.96	\$2.15	12.8%

Wairarapa Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Masterton District	\$540.47	\$74.79	\$1.44	16.1%
	Carterton District	\$617.66	\$76.69	\$1.47	14.2%
	South Wairarapa District	\$718.31	\$77.64	\$1.49	12.1%
Business (excl. GST)	Masterton District	\$1,921.22	\$247.25	\$4.75	14.8%
	Carterton District	\$1,074.42	\$118.38	\$2.28	12.4%
	South Wairarapa District	\$1,551.29	\$147.52	\$2.84	10.5%
Rural (excl. GST)	Masterton District	\$828.89	\$121.02	\$2.33	17.1%
	Carterton District	\$897.76	\$113.37	\$2.18	14.5%
	South Wairarapa District	\$1,049.02	\$119.54	\$2.30	12.9%
	Tararua District	\$979.68	\$106.77	\$2.05	12.2%

Rates in Wairarapa have increased by more than the regional average, reflecting higher than average growth in property values. This follows from a lower starting base of rates compared with other parts of the region.

Porirua Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Porirua City	\$1,125.06	\$70.03	\$1.35	6.6%
Business (excl. GST)	Porirua City	\$2,791.63	\$192.98	\$3.71	7.4%
Rural (excl. GST)	Porirua City	\$1,276.36	\$76.96	\$1.48	6.4%

Kāpiti Coast Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Kāpiti Coast district excl Ōtaki	\$1,241.78	\$100.67	\$1.94	8.8%
	Ōtaki rating area	\$672.38	\$59.50	\$1.14	9.7%
Business (excl. GST)	Kāpiti Coast District	\$2,617.81	\$169.84	\$3.27	6.9%
Rural (excl. GST)	Kāpiti Coast District	\$974.45	\$96.09	\$1.85	10.9%

Upper Hutt Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Upper Hutt City	\$1,088.48	\$97.76	\$1.88	9.9%
Business* (excl. GST)	Upper Hutt City	\$3,021.64	595.42	\$11.45	24.5%
Rural (excl. GST)	Upper Hutt City	\$933.39	\$38.86	\$0.75	4.3%

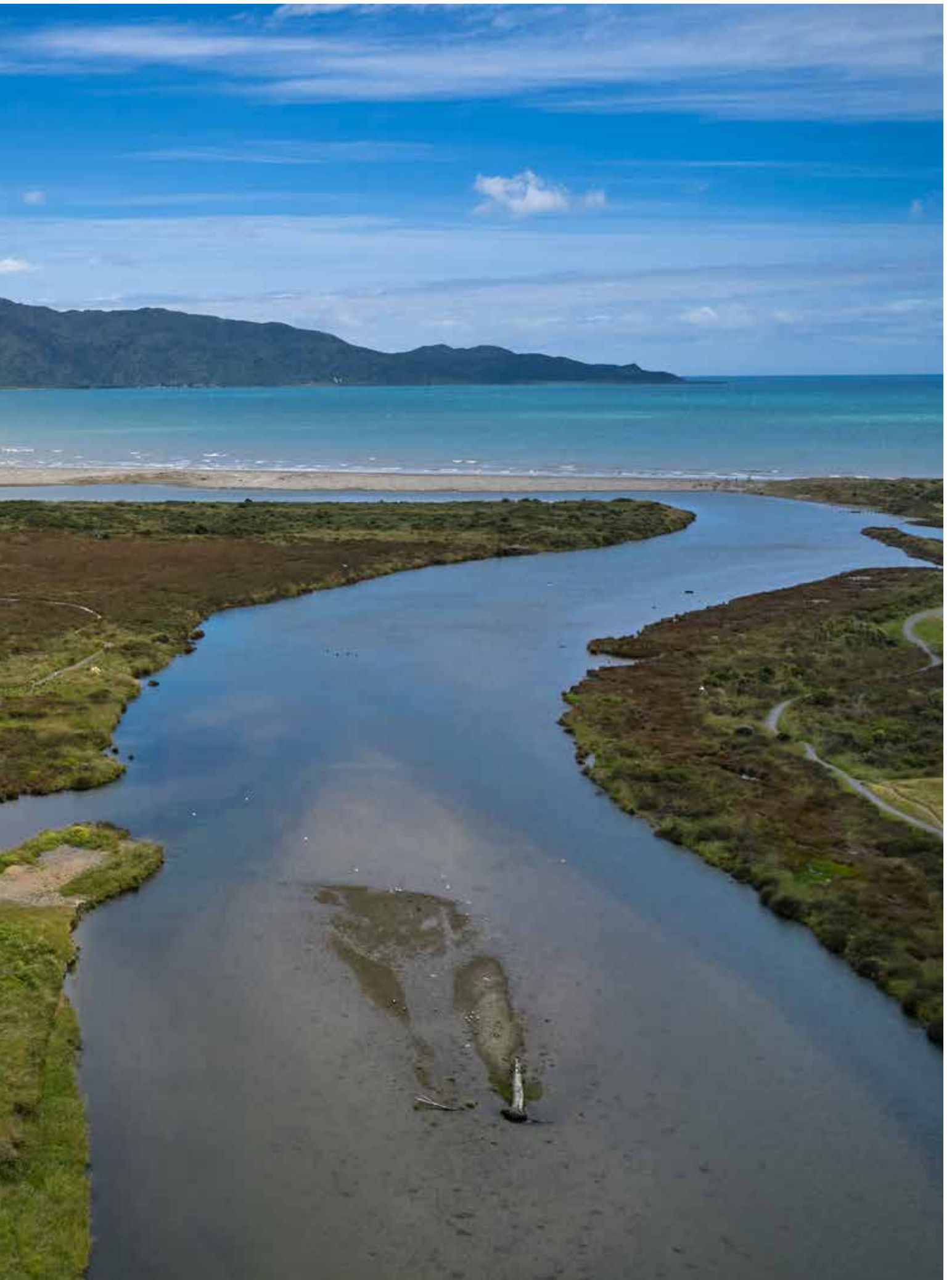
\*The business values for Upper Hutt exclude council utilities. Business rates in Upper Hutt are increasing because business property values have gone up while house and rural values have gone down. As a result, businesses now pay a larger share of the rates. To find out more about your specific rates you can visit our online calculator [www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/your-rates/](http://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/your-rates/)

Hutt City Average Rates		Average Rates 2026/27	Average increase per annum	Average increase per week	Increase %
Residential (incl. GST)	Hutt City	\$1,230.20	\$38.89	\$0.75	3.3%
Business* (excl. GST)	Hutt City	\$3,771.30	\$231.73	\$4.46	6.5%
Rural (excl. GST)	Hutt City	\$1,073.52	\$22.86	\$0.44	2.2%

\*The business values for Hutt City exclude council utilities.



Waikanae estuary



For more information, please contact Greater Wellington:

**Wellington office**

PO Box 11646  
Manners St  
Wellington 6142

T 04 384 5708  
F 04 385 6960

**Masterton office**

PO Box 41  
Masterton 5840

T 06 378 2484  
F 06 378 2146

[www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)  
[info@gw.govt.nz](mailto:info@gw.govt.nz)

 Facebook

March 2026

