

Annual Plan 2025-2026

On 30 June, Waitomo District Council adopted its Annual Plan 2025-2026 (AP) after many months of planning and consultation.

The plan outlines the direction for the Council for the next financial year. Council carefully considered the district's infrastructure challenges alongside matters relating to the community, debt levels, and minimising rate increases.

Consultation topics included whether to renew a Council-owned section of seawall on Point Road in Mōkau, the future of Waitomo District Landfill and whether Council should start reducing the portion of rates for water and wastewater charged to all rating units in the district (District Wide Benefit Rates).

Council resolved to not repair or replace the seawall, not develop the next landfill cell and transport all waste out of the district once the current landfill cell is full, and start reducing the District Wide Benefit Rates for water and wastewater.

Rates affordability is a serious consideration for Council, and the impact of the rate increase has been discussed thoroughly during the development of the Annual Plan.

Individual property rates will vary due to how certain activities are funded and the services received by the property. We urge you to read this newsletter as it will help explain the reasons for your potential rates changes.

To find your property information you can access the Rating Information Database through our website. www.waitomo.govt.nz/council/rating-information/rating-information-database

In this issue:

- Check out the due dates for Rates for 2025/26.
- Read about the Rates Rebate Scheme. New thresholds have been applied so it's worth checking if you qualify. Find out how to apply, you could be eligible for up to \$805.
- Read how your property is affected by the 2024 General Revaluations
- The fees and charges for the 2025/26 year have been set. Read more about them in this issue.

Rates Requirement

The overall rates requirement for the 2025/26 year is \$26.2 million, a decrease of \$1.2 million compared to the same year forecast in the LTP. This equates to an overall rates increase of **2.91%** to cover operating costs and capital expenditure.

Council also confirmed the Uniform Annual General Charge (UAGC) will be set at \$250, a decrease compared to the current \$350. This was to moderate the District Valuation changes and reductions in the District Wide Benefit Rates.

Council also adopted the revised Rates Remission Policy, Revenue and Financing Policy, Fees and Charges 2025/26 and the Alcohol Fees Bylaw 2025, which will allow Council to set the amount it charges to alcohol licence holders (e.g. bars, alcohol stores and supermarkets), to help cover costs relating to alcohol licensing.

The Dog Control Bylaw 2025 and Dog Control Policy 2025 were also adopted.

Rates invoices and dog registrations by email

You now have the option to receive your rates invoice and dog registration invoice by email.

If you would like this option, please complete the form on Council's website or email: info@waitomo.govt.nz



Rates Remission Policy

Council has a Policy for the Remission of Rates which outlines the circumstances where it may remit rates. The following remission categories are available:

- Properties Used Jointly as a Single Unit
- Community Organisations and Clubs and Societies
- Organisations providing Care for the Elderly
- Rates on Māori Freehold Land
- Penalties
- New Residential Subdivisions
- Cases of Financial Hardship
- Cases of Land Affected by Natural Calamity
- New Businesses

For a copy of the Rates Remission Policy, application forms and due dates for applications, visit www.waitomo.govt.nz or contact our Customer Services team on 0800 932 4357 for a copy.

Are you having difficulty paying your rates invoice?

There are a variety of payment options available for customers to help them pay their rates and pay off rates arrears. If you are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to pay your rates in full by the due date, please contact us on 0800 932 4357 to check out possible options available to you. A 10% penalty will be charged on the unpaid amount after the due date. However, late payment penalties will not apply if a suitable payment arrangement has been agreed prior.

Rates due dates

To assist ratepayers in the payment of their rates, the Council operates a system of payment by quarterly instalments. Rates for the financial year commencing 1 July 2025 are payable in four equal instalments.

Instalment 1	29 August 2025
Instalment 2	28 November 2025
Instalment 3	27 February 2026
Instalment 4	29 May 2026



New thresholds for 2025/26 Rates Rebate scheme

If you have a low income and pay the rates on your home, you could receive up to **\$805** through Central Government's Rates Rebate Scheme. The threshold for SuperGold card holders has also significantly increased.

Applications are now open for rates rebates for the 2025/2026 rating year.

The amount you may receive is based on:

- Your income
- Your annual rates
- Number of dependants you have

You must be living at the property at 1 July and be the legal ratepayer. Download an application form from our website or contact our Customer Services team for further assistance.



Property information online

Did you know your rating and property information is available on Council's website, as well as access to our online GIS mapping system?

Here you will be able to see information such as your annual rates, the property valuation, aerial photography and much more.

Look for the property information link under **Online Services** on our website and search for property information using your valuation number or address location.

General Revaluation 2024

The Rating Valuation Act 1998 requires that every property in New Zealand must be revalued for rating purposes at least once every three years. Quotable Value Limited (as Council's Valuation Service Provider) completed our District's General Revaluation in September 2024.

The Waitomo District is now worth \$5 billion, which is an increase of 6.9% from the 2021 values. The largest increases in capital value were seen in the Mining, Utilities, Industrial and Lifestyle categories.

The residential housing market within the District has seen fluctuations in recent years with prices rising into late 2022, then following a falling trend. Since the last revaluation there has been little movement on the average capital value, with values largely now reflecting that of the market in 2021. On average, the rural towns have seen larger increases in capital value than Te Kuiti township.

Valuation notices were sent out in February and property owners and ratepayers were given until 14 March 2025 to object to the revised valuations. A total of 24 objections were received and reviewed by Quotable Value.

The new valuations are used for rating purposes from 1 July 2025.

Will the Revaluation affect the rates I pay?

A movement in a property's capital value does not mean that the rates will automatically change. This is because the revaluation does not impact the total rates revenue required by the Council to provide services. However, the revaluation can result in a change to the rates charged to individual properties with some increasing and some decreasing because the rates charged on the basis of capital value are split among all properties proportionally.

If you think of the Council's rates revenue requirement as a pie, the size of the pie does not increase because of the revaluation. However, a ratepayer's slice of the pie might get bigger or smaller depending on how their property value has changed in relation to the average change for the District. Only rates charged on the basis of capital value are affected by the revaluation.

General Revaluation Summary 2024

Sector	No. of Properties	CV % Change
Dairy	120	4.0%
Pastoral	832	3.2%
Horticultural	1	3.7%
Specialist	3	9.3%
Forestry	280	11.3%
Mining	5	32.1%
Lifestyle	1,376	13.0%
Residential	2,472	5.7%
Commercial	188	-3.8%
Industrial	107	14.9%
Other	534	15.5%
Utilities	43	24.1%
TOTAL	5,961	6.9%

RATING VALUATIONS VS MARKET VALUATIONS





Māori Freehold Land

In April 2021, the Government passed significant changes to reduce rating barriers for Māori land-owners. Most of the changes outlined in the Local Government (Rating of Whenua Māori) Amendment Act 2021 came into force on 1 July 2021.

Three key changes to the Local Government Rating Act 2002 include:

- Māori Land that is unused (as defined in the Act) is now non-rateable under Schedule 1 clause 14A
- The Chief Executive may write off any outstanding rates that cannot reasonably be recovered under Section 90A of the LGRA 2002
- Where two or more Māori Freehold Land blocks are used jointly by the same person and the properties are derived from the same original block of Māori Freehold Land the properties may be rated jointly as one unit.

We wish to assist landowners in the use and development of their land and encourage owners to contact us to discuss the use of the land to ensure that rates are being charged correctly, and to help assist owners/ratepayers with rates arrears.

CONTACT US

Our Customer Services and Visitor Hub hours are Monday - Friday 9am to 4pm

- Address: 160 Rora Street, Te Kūiti 3910
- Email our customer services team: info@waitomo.govt.nz
- Phone us - 0800 932 4357
- Visit our website – www.waitomo.govt.nz
- Or search for us on facebook: facebook.com/waitomodistrict/



Fees and Charges 2025/26

At the Council meeting on 30 June 2025, Council adopted the fees and charges for 2025/26. These fees and charges apply from 1 July 2025.

The dog registration fees were adopted by Council on 25 March 2025, and apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Due to the impact of rising costs Council has increased most fees and charges by 3% to ensure costs are recovered so that Council services are not subsidised further by rates.

The most significant changes are:

Changes to water, wastewater and stormwater connection fees

For new water, wastewater and stormwater connections it is becoming more difficult to recover costs through a set fee so in some cases ratepayers end up making up the difference. Connections will now need to be completed by a Council approved contractor who will invoice directly for the connection.

Landfill and rubbish bags

There is an increase in landfill charges and the cost of the official WDC rubbish bags due to increasing operating costs and the government's increase in the Emissions Trading Scheme charges and the waste levy. These costs are incurred for every tonne of waste going to landfill. The tonnage charges have increased by \$15, and the official WDC rubbish bags are now \$5.30 each.

Elderly housing

Elderly housing weekly rent has increased by \$40 per week as approved in the LTP 2024-2034. The new prices are \$190 for a small single, \$200 for a large single, and \$180 for a bed-sit.

Alcohol Licensing

On 30 June 2025, Council adopted the Alcohol Fees Bylaw 2025 that allows Alcohol Licensing fees to be set by Council. This will not impact Manager's Certificate fees.

The schedule of Fees and Charges for 2025/26 is available on our website.

You can request a hardcopy of the fees and charges by contacting our customer services team on **0800 932 4357** or email **info@waitomo.govt.nz**