

# Ngā pārongo hou

## Latest council news

Poutū-te-rangi March 2026 | Putanga Issue 91

# Grrreat new scheme to help lost dogs

Far North District Council (FNDC) is taking the lead in reuniting lost dogs with their owners with the introduction of a new text system as part of dog registration later this year.

Doggone's Text Reunite service is a fast, easy, and free way to reunite lost pets directly with their owner. The service has already reunited thousands of lost dogs across Aotearoa, with several other councils introducing the system.

By opting into the free scheme during the dog registration process, dog owners can be contacted immediately if their pet is found wandering. Only the owner's chosen phone number is shared with the finder – no names, addresses, or other identifying information are available.

It's common to see concerned members of the public posting about lost pets on social media, hoping the right person sees it. This direct connection helps get dogs home sooner, reduces stress for both pets and owners, supports safer communities, and provides an immediate, easy solution for anyone who finds a lost dog.

The Doggone app lets owners add important details about their dog in the Owner Notes section, such as diet or health conditions, which is shared with the person who finds the dog. It ensures the pet receives the best possible care while waiting to be reunited. The app also allows the council to send important animal welfare and dog registration updates directly to the owner's phone.



The new initiative is a partnership with Doggone and will be introduced as part of the annual dog registration process.

Hilary Sumpter, Group Manager – Delivery and Operations, says the Text Reunite service adds further value to the annual dog registration, giving owners a practical tool to help protect their pets.

"Far North District Council is committed to working alongside the community to support safer neighbourhoods and promote responsible dog ownership," she says. "By opting into this service,

dog owners give their dog the best chance of a quick return home if it ever strays."

FNDC is providing the free service in partnership with Doggone. Further information about the partnership and how to opt in will be shared in the coming weeks.

[For the full story go to fndc.govt.nz](https://fndc.govt.nz)

## Upgrade on the right track



Upgrades to Kaikohe's water reticulation system are progressing well.

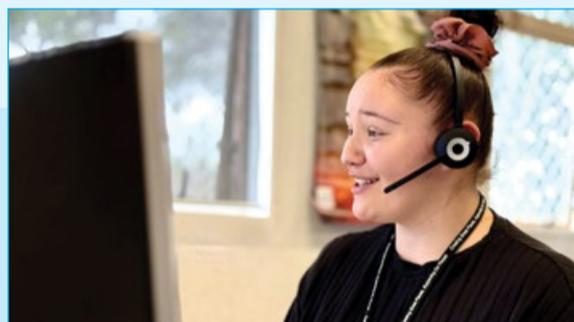
A multi-million-dollar upgrade to Kaikohe's water reticulation system is on track to be completed by the end of March, while wastewater connection upgrades will continue through until late 2026.

Upgrading Kaikohe's two key reticulation systems will enable new housing and improve services.

As work continues on the wastewater pipeline, road users are warned to expect some delays on Mangakahia Road, Recreation Road, Shaw Street, Cumber Rd and at the end of Wihongi Street.

Significant trench work is necessary creating patches of broken ground. As sections of the wastewater upgrade are completed, these areas will be reinstated.

## Ranking 10th in New Zealand



The new ranking is a good call for Far North District Council.

Far North District Council has been ranked 10th out of 54 district councils across New Zealand for customer experience, following the release of the 2025 Customer Experience (CX) Benchmarking Programme results by the Association of Local Government Information Management (ALGIM). The independent annual audit placed FNDC 15th nationally among all participating councils and council-controlled organisations, with an overall CX score of 97 percent.

The result marks a dramatic turnaround in performance in a relatively short period of time. Just one year ago, the council recorded an overall score of 66.6 percent and was ranked 61st nationally.

## Tune in to FNDC presentation



State of the Far North 2026 is now available to watch online.

The full recording of Far North District Council's second State of the Far North Address – Te Taumata o Te Hiku o te Ika is now available to watch online, following the successful event at the Turner Centre in Kerikeri.

The address, held on Thursday 26 February 2026, brought together community, business, iwi, hapū and government representatives to hear directly from Kahika | Mayor Moko Tepania and elected members about the district's progress, priorities and the roadmap ahead.

The full 2026 State of the Far North Address is now available to watch on the council's YouTube channel and social media platforms.

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