



Riverbank Beach Summer Events

Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River is Our Taonga, Our Jewel

At a time when water quality has been in the headlines for all the wrong reasons, The RiverLink flood protection project is gearing up to improve the water quality of Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River.

Do you have fond childhood memories of playing in the Hutt River and enjoying everything the river park corridor has to offer? The great news is that things are going to get better!

RiverLink will improve the health and habitats in and along the Hutt River. There will be more fish habitat, with a mix of pools, fast flowing shallow water, vegetation, rocks, and undercut banks - all the things that short-fin eel (tuna), trout, whitebait (inanga) and common bully (toitoi) need to thrive.

One of RiverLink's main goals is to make Lower Hutt safe from major floods. This means widening the river channel, raising the height of stopbanks and making more space for floods under Melling Bridge. These big changes present us with opportunities. Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council and the NZ Transport Agency are exploring how to maximise the benefits of working together to achieve our goals of better flood protection, transport and lifestyle for Lower Hutt.

Come see us at the RiverLink engagement container and have a play at the Riverbank Beach, join in our summer activities and learn more about RiverLink.

See you soon!

Schedule of Main Events

for more Riverbank Beach Summer events go to www.RiverLink.co.nz

SAT 10 FEB

10am to 2pm **RiverLink container open!**

SUN 11 FEB

10am to 2pm **Festival of Rock** – rock the beach! Rock art, rock skimming, rock sculpting, rock painting, rock hopping to see bugs, face painting, music and of course...coffee!

WED 21 FEB

6pm to 7.30pm **RiverLink Ramble** – Meet some of the project team at the Riverbank carpark next to Margaret Street for a guided walking tour of the RiverLink city section between Ewen and Melling Bridges

Bookings essential through Greater Wellington Great Outdoors 2018

SUN 1 APR

10am to 2pm **Easter Rock Hunt** – Hunt for a coloured rock, paint your design and score yourself a delicious easter egg. Before you hop on home come and visit our rocking face painter

Moving the Melling train station: Rail commuters have their say

The week of 20 November, the RiverLink engagement container was set up at the Melling train station and commuters were invited to tell the project partners what they thought about moving the Melling station south of its current location.

“The people who use the station every day have important insights that will help us shape the next steps of the project. We were delighted to hear that people largely support moving the station and are enthusiastic about our opportunity to rejuvenate Hutt centre,” says Rebecca Polvere, RiverLink project manager.

The project team were available at the container during the morning and evening commute to explain the proposal to commuters and hear their thoughts on how such a move would impact their commute. During this time about 200 people visited the container and talked with the project team.

While most commuters said that shifting the station 250 to 500 metres south of its current location wouldn't significantly impact their commute, many raised the merits of extending the Melling line further north so that additional suburbs would have access to public transport. A number of commuters also suggested extending the hours

of operation later into the evenings and offering weekend service.

Walking to the station and crossing SH2 from the western suburbs was one of the most frequently raised topics “There was strong support for addressing how people walk across the SH2 at the Melling intersection and we heard many comments about the safety and crossing wait time problems people currently experience, we heard so many stories about watching the train pull away from the platform while standing on the wrong side of the highway. People are very keen to have a new intersection that would be safer, quicker and easier to cross,” says Rebecca.

Parking was another hot topic. People strongly supported the proposal to provide additional parking at a new station but some wondered how the loss of the riverbank parking would impact parking availability for commuters. Several people mentioned that station parking is currently being taken by people who don't actually use the train but instead work in Lower Hutt and are attracted to the free parking. The project team were encouraged to consider ideas on how parking at a new station could be managed to meet the needs of the community.



Rail commuters sharing their ideas on Melling station with the RiverLink project team

Weather protection, walking and cycling access and security are top-rated amenities for new Melling station

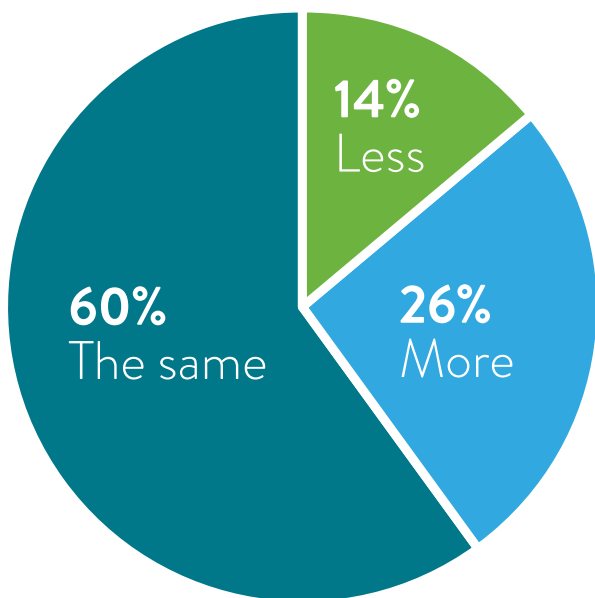
If a new Melling station is built south of the current station, there are opportunities to preserve what people like about the current station and to consider additional amenities. The RiverLink team conducted an online survey to learn what people would like to see at or nearby a new station. Forty-three people took part in the survey.

Topping the wish list of amenities were weather protected waiting facilities, good pedestrian and cycling access to the station and security measures such as security cameras and lighting. Suggestions of 'other' things people would like to see included: ticket kiosk, public toilets, bike lockers and post boxes.

The two most popular businesses and services people wanted to see near the station were a mini-mart and restaurant/take-away. Consistent with what the project team heard when talking to commuters, there were also numerous suggestions to extend the hours and days of operation and extend the line further north.

The survey asked if people would use the station 'more', 'the same' or 'less' if the station were moved. Sixty percent of respondents said moving the station wouldn't change how much they use it, while 26% said they would use it more and 14% said they would use it less. Those who said they would use it more cited the better access to the city centre and Queensgate that would be provided by the pedestrian and cycle bridge across to Margaret St. Most of those who said they would use a new station less, cited the additional walking distance from the western hill suburbs as the reason.

If the train station is moved, would you use it more, the same or less?



River of light

The RiverLink engagement container and project team were at Lower Hutt City's Highlight - Festival of Lights in October 2017. RiverLink partnered with Victoria University Wellington landscape architect students Nicole Crawford and Kadin Hegglun to create Down to the River, a river themed light and sound landscape inspired by the RiverLink designs and the River. Thousands of people walked through the experience and talked to the RiverLink design team.

Down to the River was one of around 20 exhibits and dozens of entertainers that attracted tens of thousands of people to central Lower Hutt over four nights.

Hutt City Council's Urban Design Manager, Paki Maaka, was delighted with the amount of interest in RiverLink and people's understanding of the project and its potential.

"For Lower Hutt, RiverLink is so much more than making us safer from floods. It's great to see so many of our residents taking an active and informed interest in the project and sharing their ideas about making Lower Hutt better. Later this year we'll share with the community more of the preliminary design and a model of what RiverLink will look like when the city turns to face the river," he says.

RiverLink provides an opportunity for Lower Hutt to refashion the area between the city and the river into a lively recreational belt around the Hutt City centre. A promenade will be created that connects to and over the flood protection stopbanks and will include a pedestrian bridge from Margaret Street to Pharaoh Street, opportunities for urban living in new apartments and space for cafes and retail overlooking the river.



RiverLink community engagement at Highlight - Festival of Lights

Is Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River your spot?

It's that time of year again: that time when the weather comes onside - when more and more Kiwis connect with their favourite local spot to exercise, play, hunt, eat, and immerse themselves in the mana of our region's water. To make sure these places are safe for us all, Greater Wellington Regional Council monitors water quality at sites across the region, plans for better water quality outcomes and works with users to ensure we all effectively manage this precious resource.

Tell us What Spot you connect with water in the Wellington Region <http://bit.ly/whatspot>

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Greater Wellington
Regional Council,
Hutt City Council and
NZ Transport Agency



For further information:

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