

## A message from the Mayor

It is my pleasure to introduce Upper Hutt City Council's Annual Plan for 2011-12, which illustrates council's ongoing progress on behalf of the Upper Hutt community.

Upper Hutt City continues to be a lifestyle choice for many, particularly families. We offer affordable housing, highly regarded facilities and activities, everything you need in close proximity and we are surrounded by green trees and rural acreage. We welcome new residents and investors to our city and the diversity, economic prosperity and additional job opportunities that they bring. We must continue to be the place of choice for people in this area.

It is no news to any of us that this year has seen the world wide economic recession make its mark on our household budgets. Council has taken this into consideration when reviewing the budgets and have been extremely prudent. And while our responsibility, on behalf of the Upper Hutt community, is to protect our assets and keep them maintained for future generations, we also need to provide some new facilities that keep us moving forward as a city.

Unfortunately as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes all councils have been negatively affected resulting in insurance costs increasing by four hundred percent causing rates to rise this year.

The key projects scheduled for 2011-12 are:

- development of a full-size artificial hockey turf, a rugby/soccer turf including a practice turf plus an additional car park at Maidstone Park;
- extension of the Hutt River Trail along the stopbank from Moonshine Bridge to Poplar Grove;
- H<sup>2</sup>O Xstream maintenance – which will see the installation of a new roof, lights and general pool repairs and cleaning; and
- the development of a sustainability strategy – which will promote sustainability best practice across the council and the community.

The coming year holds some exciting possibilities for Upper Hutt. Firstly, we are delighted to welcome the New Zealand Defence Force and their new building development in the CBD and the consequential CBD business. This will result in a significant boost to the economy.

We are also excited about the Rugby World Cup in September/October, as this has the potential to bring great opportunities to New Zealand and Upper Hutt. The council has every intention of being part of the event and will be encouraging local businesses to support and be part of the World Cup. This event is for our citizens and visitors to enjoy.

Lastly, an important discussion on our minds is in regards to the ongoing governance of the council's within the Wellington region. An independent report proposes a number of options, including merging all the councils into one or having clusters of councils join together or keeping the status quo. The current government will not force this on Wellington City. We must decide what is good for Upper Hutt and the Wellington region. What is important are our low debt levels and our close working relationships with the community; however we will also be reviewing the provision of further joint services with other local councils where it is cost effective to do so. You will be consulted on any proposals that arise. Your views are highly valued and are always welcomed.



Wayne Guppy  
Mayor